

# Rock N Roll Purgatory

Issue #8

Dredged from  
the Cesspools  
of Rock-n-Roll



*Speed Crazy*

Marc Bristol of  
Blue Suede News

Josie Kreuzer

Stepsister

Philadelphia  
Experiment

Flathead Mike  
& the Mercurys

Writing to Please the Heathen Soul



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STEP SISTER Pg. 11

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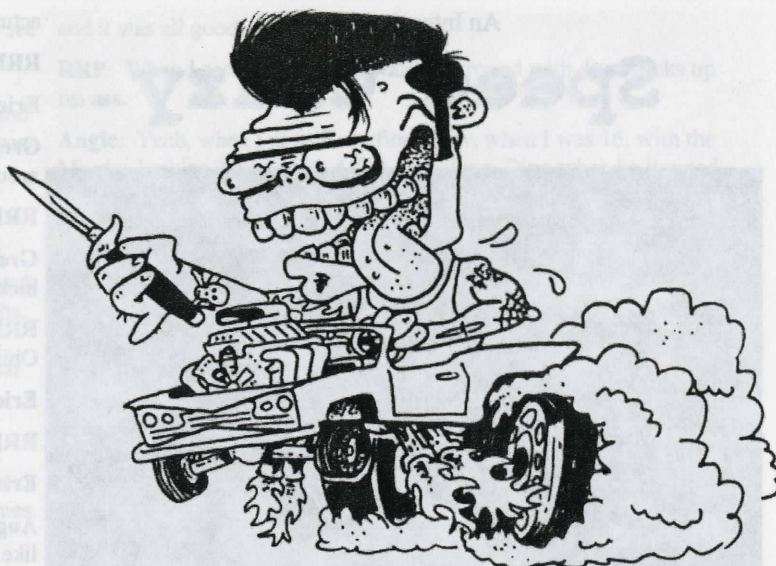
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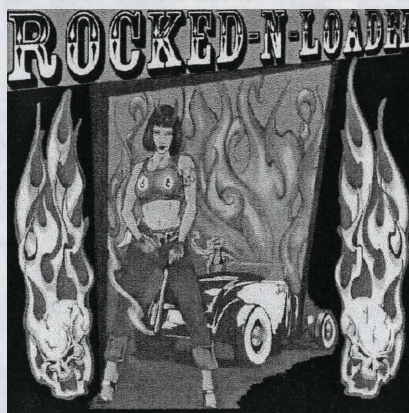
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\* All photos by Rock N Roll Purgatory, except for Philadelphia Experiment pics & Speed Crazy pages 2, 4 and 5.



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Josie Kreuzer Pg. 41



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An Interview with:

# Speed Crazy



I was nervous to interview this band because of the rumors of their antisocial psychoses, whimsical brutality, and fascination with small arms. Would I say the wrong thing and be filleted like a pathetic piscine as they laughed, sliced and chopped like deranged butchers mad with bloodlust? I could see vacancy in their eyes, that elusive hint of evil that foreshadows doom. I trembled like a scared child as the zero hour approached....

*Nah, that's not true. Actually, Speed Crazy are among the most amiable and unpretentious rock-n-rollers you'll ever meet. I met up with them in Long Island on June 22<sup>nd</sup> where they had just played a great show, and I had guzzled a great many beers. The following is an interview done late, late that night in the parking lot as we all crouched down around the recorder. They patiently endured my slurred questions being hurled at them with all the hard-hitting journalistic impact of a nerf football. Still, I think it turned out quite well. It was plenty weird, though, transcribing a conversation I don't hardly recall having. - BL*

## Speed Crazy is:

Greg Bury: lead vocals/guitar

Erica Kozak: slap bass/vocals

Augie Catarella: drums/vocals

[www.speedcrazynj.com](http://www.speedcrazynj.com)

**RRP:** How long have you guys been together?

**Greg:** We're actually gonna have a 6<sup>th</sup> birthday in about a week.

**Erica:** Of our first show, yeah.

**RRP:** How did you two meet, because I know Augie joined a bit later?

**Erica:** There was this old record store that was near where I used to live and I put up a flyer and Greg was the *only* person to respond to it. We were really lucky because he's such a talented rockabilly guitar player.

**Augie:** He's got an extensive background. He's played with some guys that were in the Polecats. He was in a band in the 80's called Jet Black Machine.

**Erica:** Original rockabilly legend met up with some punk rock kids and the hybrid of the two influences created psychobilly. We were

actually the first psychobilly band in our area.

**RRP:** Where are you from?

**Erica:** I'm from Asbury Park, New Jersey.

**Greg:** I'm from PA, but I've been around N. Jersey, New York, all around this area.

**RRP:** Where did you grow up in PA?

**Greg:** Out by Pittsburgh in Indiana, PA. In the boon docks; I'm a hick.

**RRP:** You were probably pretty close to where I grew up in Salem, Ohio, which is about an hour and half from Pittsburgh.

**Erica:** I've been to Stubenville! I went there once.

**RRP:** Stubenville, oh yeah ... Stupidville!

**Erica:** [laughs] Oooooo, yeehaw! Quite a fun time.

**Augie:** I grew up in Lacey Township, New Jersey. It was in the sticks, like a white trash town. Half the town was white trash, the other half was new development, filthy rich people who settled in there. It was really weird, like class stratification. There was a river that ran through the town, one half was the rich kids and the other was the Lakeside kids. So I always hung out with the Lakeside kids, but after I turned 12 or 13 I started charging my hair out and shit, wearing weird clothes, and they started lookin' at me real funny. I used to get chased down the street by people in their jacked-up pick-up trucks throwing bottles and rocks.

**RRP:** So how did you end up in the band, what happened to the old drummer?

**Augie:** Well, basically I am the third drummer that Speed Crazy has had. Their original drummer was Tommy Clemintone, who also played in TR6, another NJ psychobilly band. After him was Tony Stuppiello, who was on the "Unsafe at Any Speed" CD. I saw them with the original line-up at the Brighton Bar, it was a big rockabilly show, I was 17. You know, back then there wasn't much of a psychobilly scene, they were playing mostly rockabilly shows. I saw them there and I was hooked. After that first show I was hooked, there was nobody doing anything like these guys out there in the scene. I started going to their shows, but after a while I moved, and I hadn't seen them in like 8 months until their CD release party with the new drummer. I started hanging out with them more often then, 'cos I just moved up to North Jersey. I was livin' in Jersey City and I was going out to see them in the city at like Low-life Lee shows...

**RRP:** Haha! Low-life Lee! Everybody hates that guy!





**Augie:** Yeah, he's a cocksucker. So basically, I was going out to see them and then one day Erika just asked me if I wanted to join the band. She's like, "we have all these shows lined up and we're gonna play the Big Psychobilly Rumble with Demented Are Go and all these great bands." So I was like, "Fuck yeah!" you know, I wasn't doing much else with my life, except going to acting school.

**RRP:** You were going to acting school?

**Augie:** Yeah, I started playing in punk bands when I was like 13. My first band was called The Skullfucks, we were like a horror punk band. I was in a band called The Unemployed for maybe 3 months. From that became The 8200's for like six months, The Despised, The Pillage People, and another band called The Primitives, which became Void Control. After that I took a couple months off and moved away from the S. Jersey area and started going to acting school in the city. Around that time was when I was hanging out with Speed Crazy more often and was asked to join the band. It's been the best band I've ever been in, in my life. A lot of good times.

**RRP:** Cool. You guys were on the recent Raucous compilation, Sympathy for the Devil, which is a tribute to The Meteors. Were they a huge influence on you, and what other influences do you have?

**Erica:** Absolutely. The Meteors were one of the first psychobilly bands that I got into, and were one of the only psychobilly bands that I got to see in America as a teenager. They are pretty much the forefathers of psychobilly starting in 1976. Nigel Lewis was one of the first upright bass players and was a big influence on me. Still is actually.

**Greg:** Back when I was playing rockabilly I always had this idea that, though I was lovin' rockabilly, I thought it would be so cool if it had the intensity of punk. I always listened to old-school punk in the 80's and X and the Blasters were my big bands. But there was no genre I knew of; I didn't even hear psychobilly until I was with Erica and the band. It was almost like I ended up playing what I always imagined ought to be there. I didn't really know psychobilly before I started playing it. I always liked X and The Blasters, and Jerry Lee... I loved Jerry Lee.

**RRP:** After the New York Rumble you guys got to play with Sparky after he got out of jail. How did that go, and stories to tell?

**Augie:** It was a lot of fun. Especially the night before when we were up until like 4:00 in the morning practicing and drinking. Sparky was mixing me these fucking weird-ass whiskey sours with raw egg in them. I don't know what the hell was goin' on after that, but we must have did like 3 or 4 sets in one night, and one other practice before that. That and the warm up at the show was the extent of our rehearsal with him.

**Erica:** Yeah, we didn't really have much of a rehearsal. It was pretty interesting, I had just approached him on the streets of Manhattan. I knew he was eager to play and that we could easily pull off some Demented Are Go songs, so it was just a really fun experience for both of us.

**Greg:** It was crazy, you know, we learned the shit in like days, it was funny.

**Erica:** The cool thing about that show was that we got introduced as "Demented Argile" by Dino, the naked drummer for GG Allin.

**Augie:** He warmed up my drums.

**Erica:** Yeah, he warmed up his drums for him...

**RRP:** I know how he warms up drums...

**Augie:** With his ball sack.

**Erica:** So we got introduced by Dino of GG Allin's Murder Junkies

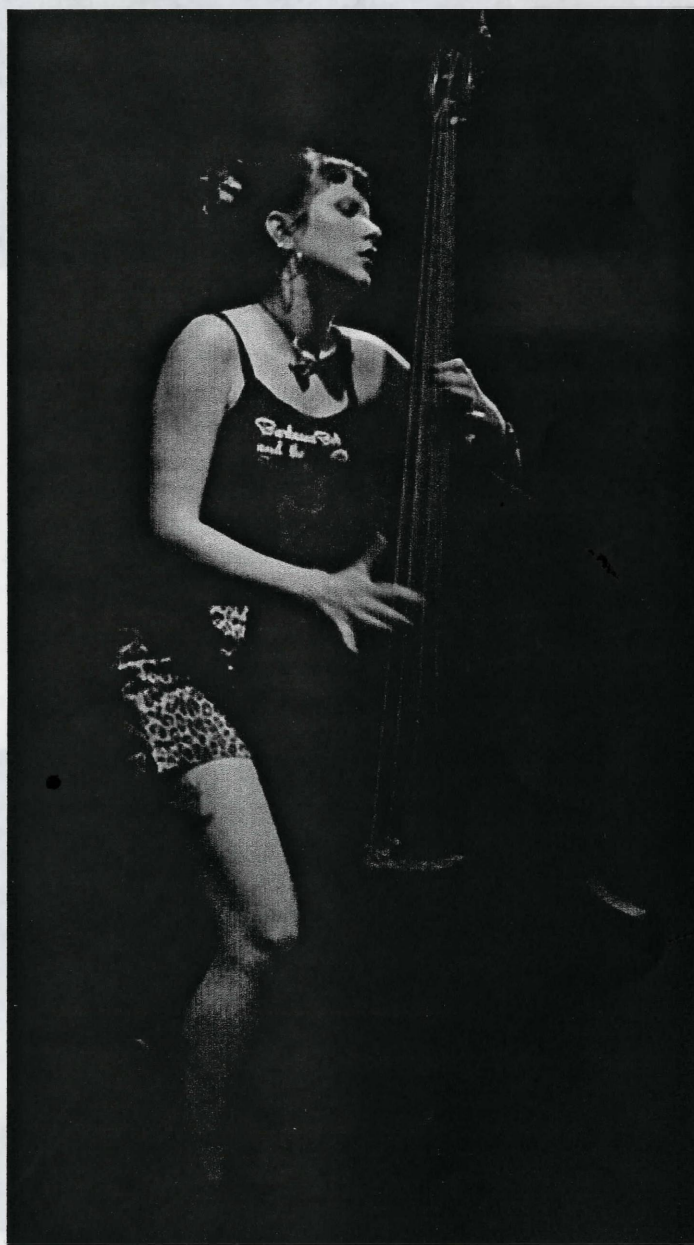
and it was all good.

**RRP:** When I saw Dino he was walking around with drumsticks up his ass.

**Augie:** Yeah, when I played my first show, when I was 16, with the Murder Junkies, I stood like 4 feet away from Dino when he jumped out in the crowd. He did this spoken word thing and he was just like "blaaagh!" And then in the middle he just stopped and said "long live GG!" Then he ripped down his pants, bent over, and gave some girl two drumsticks. She shoved one in halfway, and he was like, "come on, come on - shove another one in," and was waving towards his ass. She put another one in with her other hand, and he said "pull them like this" and motioned with his hands. So she fucking spread them apart like six inches and it made a sound like this [makes ripping sound with his mouth]. It was a creepy ass show.

**Erica:** Yep, that's who introduced us. All around it was a good atmosphere. It was just a lot of fun. Whiskey sours with raw egg and "Demented Argile" introduced by the naked drummer of GG Allin's Murder Junkies.

**RRP:** You can't get better than that, actually. I remember talking to you in Baltimore and you said that you got real good at bass while living in S. Dakota. I am wondering how the hell you ended up in S.







Dakota?

**Erica:** Witness Protection Program.

**RRP:** [with pause] Is that a joke?

**Erica:** Yes.

**RRP:** Oh, I didn't know. You are from Jersey, sounded plausible.

**Erica:** I got shipped out to S. Dakota and I had nothing else to do but hang out with the cows and play my bass.

**RRP:** But why did you go there if it wasn't the witness protection program?

**Erica:** It was something like that, let's leave it at that.

**RRP:** Greg, I understand that your daughter was in LA when you played the Wrecker's Ball. What does she think of your band?

**Greg:** Well, my daughter doesn't listen to psychobilly, so she doesn't know about the scene. But she's known Erica and Augie for a while...

**Erica:** I've known her since the band started. She'd attend band practice and she was always really cool and really into the music. She has an open mind.

**RRP:** You adopted her, right?

**Greg:** Well actually, no. She's my foster daughter, I never actually adopted her. Actually, I have two. Never adopted them, but they are both my daughters. They were both 14, and now they are both 22.

**RRP:** And Augie, you used to be on Ritalin, right?

**Augie:** Whaa... how'd you hear this?

**RRP:** You told us in LA when you were drunk. You went on a

big, long rant about it.

**Augie:** Oh yeah, Ritalin is great. In fact, I have a new song about it that I'm workin' on now: "Ritalin Rocker." It is gonna be the anthem for all the 16 year old kids on Ritalin in high school. Speed Crazy's following in the beginning was pretty much 21 and up from playing mostly bars, but I'm trying to get more and more all-ages shows because I care about, like, the kids, know what I mean? I wanna bring psychobilly down to the level of the kids because they are the ones who are gonna support it. So this will be their anthem.

**RRP:** So what sorts of jobs do you have?

**Erica:** Umm, I study strange things. I study circuits. Electrical and biomedical engineering.

**Greg:** I use computers to make maps for the Navy. Yeah, I am a major fuckin' nerd. That is why I play guitar. If I didn't play guitar I wouldn't be able to live with myself.

**Erica:** We are all nerds. We're into math, physics...

**Augie:** It's the nerd in us that really gives us that edge on stage, man. It's the geekiness that really brings it out.

**RRP:** So where does your nerd edge come from?

**Augie:** I'm a full-time telemarketer. That's what I do for a living. I annoy the shit out of you.

**RRP:** Nice. Well, since we made these questions up in the van on the way here, this is Dennis' contribution: How long have you ever gone without changing your underwear?

**Augie:** For me, I'd say maybe 3 1/2 days. I went on tour across country and I didn't take that many clothes with me because we had to pack as much gear as possible, so I just tried to get to as many Laundromats as I could.

**RRP:** Wow... he really revealed his innermost.

**Greg:** Yeah he did. I gotta count, what day is this now? Or better yet, call me back next week and I'll let you know; I'm workin' on a new record right now.

**Erica:** I don't wear underwear. I wear Depends.

**Greg:** She has the hardest fuckin' time finding those leopard print Depends too.

**Erica:** Yes, it's tough.

**Augie:** One time for a show we had to draw them on with crayon, so she would look right for the part. You gotta play the role, live the rock-n-roll lifestyle as some people say.

**RRP:** Yes, definitely. So what's the stupidest thing that you've ever done on stage? Have you ever injured yourself?

**Erica:** Yes!

**Augie:** I think it was when I beat up Erika with my drums.

**Erica:** I have scars! Once Augie threw his drums accidentally on top of me, and once I accidentally hit Greg in the head with my bass.

**Greg:** With a tuning peg, yeah.

**Augie:** I generally make an ass out of myself every time I play. I can't really count how many times.

**RRP:** So what was the absolute worst gig that you guys ever played?

**Erica:** Convention Hall! Because I was the only one sober enough to see how horrible it was. Not only were they completely drunk for the benefit for kids in Sudan, but they trashed the dress-



ing rooms so bad that I still hear about it every once in a while. Augie took a Sharpie marker, and he didn't just write Speed Crazy on the wall, he wrote it as big as he possibly could to cover the entire wall, like I wonder who did that.

**Augie:** Well, you were the one who wrote "fuck you" in pizza grease on the mirror, though. I can't lay claim to that.

**Greg:** Oh no, now it's gonna get ugly.

**Augie:** Yeah, it was you with the grease on the mirror!

**Erica:** Well, anyway, we, "we" plural, trashed the dressing room, we trashed whoever's instruments we borrowed, and we were just... trashed.

**Greg:** I thought I played alright.

**Erica:** And then we missed: [in a muppet-like voice] "does anyone have a tambourine?!!!"

**Augie:** Yeah, the band right after us, they were great. The singer had a guy off the side of the stage holding his equipment, and the guy goes, [again in funny muppet voice] "hey, has anyone seen my tambourine?" Then, BAM! A tambourine appears in his hand.

**Erica:** They were like the space psychedelic rockers or something.

**Augie:** Better than Rush, man, better than Rush.

**Erica:** Yeah, that was the worst. I can play trashed, but I don't think they can.

**Augie:** Okay, that's a challenge now, man. I was in my prime. That was the best drum thrashing I ever fucking seen.

**Greg:** Give me the tape, I wanna see it. I wanna burn it. Next question.

**RRP:** Well, for this question, please keep in mind that it was a long drive here on little sleep. So here's the fucked up last question. Which of the following do you most identify with (and keep in mind each of these figures have a cause): Woodsy the Owl with his "give a hoot don't pollute" campaign, Smokey the Bear ("only you can prevent forest fires"), The Crying Indian (with the one tear for this littered land), and McGruff the Crime Dog ("help take a bite out of crime")?

**Augie:** I most closely identify with McGruff the Crime Dog because he's got my dad's voice: "Augie, you're not making any money with this psychobilly shit, you gotta go with the mainstream, Augie! Ruff! Take a bite out of crime! Sounds just like my dad, dude.

{Here the tape recorder is taken from me by someone for impressions of Augie's dad answering the phone. You'd have to hear it to see why it's funny. Fucking hilarious.}

**RRP:** [After the recorder returns] That's pretty much the last question I had, unless you want to tell me about the secret meeting you had with Nixon?

**Erica:** All I know is that Nixon met Elvis...

**RRP:** Anything else you feel like divulging?

**Augie:** Just that, like, you know, I mean, it doesn't surprise me because Elvis was in cahoots with Nixon to get all the fucking British invasion bands out of the country. Keep them from touring, and get 'em out. If McCarthy was still in, he would have gotten away with it, but he tried to keep the Beatles out of the country.

**Erica:** And Elvis, being the drug administrator, would have aided in the exiling of the British invasion itself.

**RRP:** What was he?

**Erica:** I'm not sure what his exact title was, but he was some authoritative figure appointed by President Nixon.

**Greg:** I didn't know that.

**Augie:** In exchange for that, he tried to keep the Beatles out of the country.

**Erica:** But that was his own personal motivation. He was sick of bein' in the Oldies.

**RRP:** So you are saying that Nixon was in cahoots with Elvis to keep the Beatles out of the country?

**Augie:** Well, Elvis tried to get the Beatles out of the country before Nixon because obviously Nixon wasn't in office then. He had been in the army, and to get out early and be able to see his mother, he agreed to do some work for the government. So he comes back and turns over to Nixon and becomes the Drug Administrator. But he had tried to convince LBJ to keep the Beatles out. Or was it JFK, I don't remember who was in office at that time.

**Greg:** Well, there you go, you learn somethin' everyday.

**RRP:** I've learned a lot tonight.

**Augie:** And good for his hillbilly ass...

**RRP:** Hey man, I'm still in earshot. Anything else to add?

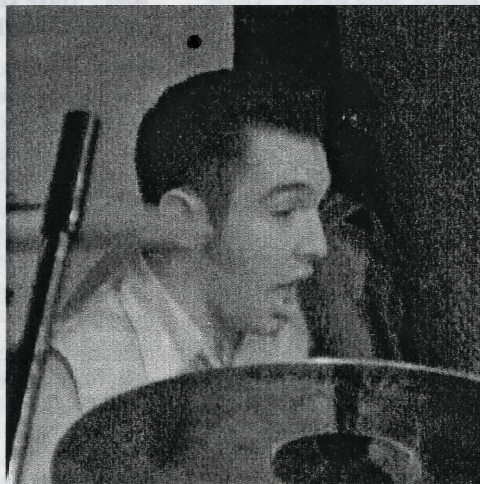
**Augie:** Nixon rocks!

**Erica:** I just want to say that I am glad that they've inducted Gene Vincent in the Rock-N-Roll Hall of Fame Museum. When I was there in 1997, he was not there and I was very upset. It was my one trip to Cleveland. They did have a nice Cramps and Dead Boys display, but no Gene Vincent, and I was pretty upset.

**Greg:** I think people should get off their asses, stop watching TV, and go see more rock-n-roll bands.

**Erica:** I think we should digitize this analog world. No, never-mind, they already did that.

**Augie:** I just have to say that this past month I was very sad to see a true punk rock legend fucking pass away. I just wanna let you know that the legend of John Gotti will surely be missed. Yes, the memory of John Gotti will live on in my heart. Okay. Thank you





# Marc Bristol of Blue Suede News

*If you are into rockabilly or roots music at all, you have more than likely already picked up a copy of Blue Suede News from your local newsstand. It has been in circulation for around fifteen years giving coverage to bands old and new that maintain a lifestyle and sound that refuses to let great musical traditions die. Be it blues, surf, honky tonk, rockabilly, they have featured everyone including: Carl Perkins, Big Sandy, The Ventures, Marti Brom, Ike Turner, Jimmy Reed, Sonny Burgess, Brenda Lee, Deke Dickerson, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, and countless more. The latest issue features Ray Campi and Cave Catt Sammy, so pick it up! I recently sent founder of the magazine, Marc Bristol, some interview questions. I thought it would be interesting to learn about the personality behind the magazine and what keeps him going, and it sure was. - BL*



**RRP: How old are you, and where did you grow up?**

Marc: 52. Did my best not to grow up for the first 21 years in Michigan, the rest here in Washington (details at [www.bluesuedenews.com/bristol.html](http://www.bluesuedenews.com/bristol.html))

**RRP: What sparked your love for the music that Blue Suede News focuses on? Early shows/records?**

Marc: At first I guess it was certain artists on the radio, like Buddy Holly, Everly Brothers, The Coasters, Brenda Lee and Dion & The Belmonts. When I first started really getting into music, The Beach Boys were my cousin Jeff's favorite, and became mine for a while. But then I realized the "Surfin' USA" was really Chuck Berry's "Sweet Little 16", and also Chuck got out of the slammer and had a couple great hits of his own - "No Particular Place To Go" and "C'est La Vie (You Never Can Tell)". Another cousin and I (Kurt) were listening to the radio one day and when that second title came on for the first time we almost broke our knuckles reaching for the volume knob to turn it up both at the same time. "Mean Woman Blues" by Roy Orbison was another track that knocked me out early on. Then the Beatles came on Ed Sullivan, and ALL of us were like "oh how stupid, they look like girls. Oh SHIT! I'm gonna have to get me a guitar AND a stupid haircut!" My best friend Scott and I both got electric guitars for Christmas (we had acoustic ones before that) that year, and I think that might be the same year I got Beatles '65 for Christmas. I'd liked those guys, at least things like "Twist And Shout" and "I Saw Her Standing There", but this album had a bunch of down stuff on it that I didn't relate to as much at first. But then there was "Rock and Roll Music", "Everybody's Trying To Be My Baby" and "Honey Don't" to tide me over until I realized that "I'm A Loser" was no joke, and he was

speaking directly to me through it. I got talked out of being a rock star by that song. Now we'll never know if I even had the potential to become one, will we? I also bought "Haunted House" by Jumpin' Gene Simmons, and have even cut my own live version on my CD "Rockabilly Rhythm & Blues" as a tribute to my own early rockabilly era. That first band with Scott featured every song we could find with E, A and B ("Louie, Louie", "Wipe Out", "Get Off My Cloud", "Hang On Sloopy", "Here Comes The Night" [the Them song, not Jimmie Norman, it was the first song I learned on my guitar], "I Want Candy", "I Can't Get No Satisfaction", "Game Of Love" etc.). The second band I was in, after my dad got transferred, was into the Kinks big-time, and we did all their hits. But I was most proud of myself for having the lick down for "Shakin' All Over", the Johnny Kidd & The Pirates tune that had come out by Guess Who. I also bought the remake of "Hippy Hippy Shake" by the Swingin' Blue Jeans. I debuted on vocals in this band singing "Hey Mr. Tambourine Man" just as the group started to drift towards folk-rock. We also did Bo Diddley's "Road Runner" in this band and "It's All Over Now" from the Valentinos via the Stones. Our break tune was a bluegrass breakdown played at breakneck speed on electric guitars. It might be called psychobilly today. It was certainly alternative country then (1966).

**RRP: When did you start the magazine, and who was featured in the premiere issue?**

Marc: I started it in '86, just after Rick Nelson was killed, and he was on our first cover, with a heartfelt obit for him and his band. There also were articles on The Magnetics "Rockabilly Fools" LP, The Jackals (Portland psychobilly group), The Dynamic Logs (eclectic Seattle R&B band whom I'd played the streets with occasionally in an earlier incarnation called Damp Saddles, and who featured Orville Johnson who now plays with me in File Gumbo), "Louisiana Beat", the local scene for Roots music and blues, and general editorials on the "State Of The Art".

**RRP: Why did you start the magazine? Was there a niche for this type of publication that you felt needed filled?**

Marc: That's pretty much it exactly. I was visiting a friend who had a rockabilly band called The Moon Dawgs that I thought had a particularly authentic sound but needed some original material that I was wanting to supply to them. Michael Bonin was pacing and raving about how The Rocket (our local rock rag) wouldn't cover any of the great roots music we both played and the other stuff we liked - Seattle had a great blues scene that they ignored. I suddenly realized that my experience (having written for a national magazine, designed promo and posters for my acts etc. etc.) added up to me being the guy who should probably do that. The first couple years we just were a Northwest regional publication, trying to boost the scene up here. I left that to a couple of subsequent publications up here when I realized there seemed to be the same hole nationally.

**RRP: Have you been able to support yourself with the mag, or do you have another job? If so, what is it?**

Marc: Well, I didn't make ANY money at it until the early '90s, and gave up for a year during 1988 to regroup and get a cover price on it, get national distribution etc. Wrote a screenplay and such. My other job, and the one that still brings in part of the income was playing music. Now, after I imported talent all the way from Europe to help on the magazine, my wife has a "real" job, which is more than half of our income in the household. After my Mother Earth News gig dried up (1977 - 1983), my whole income was playing music between 1983 and about 1992, when BSN started to turn what is euphemistically called a "profit". Actually, even when it got to be twice what I was making playing music, it still wasn't what most Americans would call a living wage. But I had really learned how to live cheap being a musician, so it basically seemed like 3 times what I was used to living on.

**RRP: How has the rockabilly scene changed since you began Blue**



## Suede News, and what do you think of the changes?

Marc: Well, there wasn't hardly a rockabilly scene when I started it, just a few of us hanging on wondering what happened to the revival that seemed to be happening with Robert Gordon and the Stray Cats. There were 3 or 4 bands around town up until a little before I started, and the Moon Dawgs plus a couple more that were a bit on the "Oldies" side after. But there was a good blues scene, and 3 or 4 big "Oldies" type acts that actually played some real good '50s rock'n'roll and R&B. In my own case I was playing rockabilly, country rock, country blues and honky tonk country out IN the country, but not noticed much in Seattle, though we played there sometimes. About the time I started back up in '89, there was stuff happening that I didn't know about at first, down in California, with Big Sandy, and in Texas with High Noon, and a little later with Dave & Deke. When Big Sandy made his turn towards early '50s Western Bop sounds I was totally amazed, because the band I had during the last revival was doing sort of hillbilly boogie and proto-rockabilly among some other similar styles of things, but it just wasn't happening as part of THAT rockabilly revival. The fact that it is more and more now is really great, to my way of thinking. I've heard some folks talking like this revival is dying out a bit now, I don't know. It may be that there are fewer gigs around Seattle lately, but there are some, and some great new bands. Possibly the biggest things that have happened are a saturation of the recording market, a downturn in CD sales, and the swing boom and subsequent bust convincing a few people that "it's over". Of course it started long before Brian Setzer's Gap commercial, and the boom was more of a negative than anything, except that a bunch of people learned how to swing dance that might want to still do it. I say it was a negative mainly because it was doomed to last only a couple years as soon as it became a big fad. Of course the REAL swing boom started in the late '60s or early '70s with Roomful of Blues (who just hired my friend and GREAT singer/harp player Mark DuFresne - a guy we've been touting in the mag since the begining), Asleep at the Wheel, Comander Cody & The Lost Planet Airmen, etc. Swing dancing has been a big part of the folk music scene in Seattle since the '70s.

**RRP: What are some of your favorite bands that you've been able to interview and meet - who made the most memorable impressions and why?**

Marc: Almost too many to mention, and I haven't interviewed all of them yet. Plus others have done a lot of the interviews I've printed. It was a thrill to interview and meet Ronnie Dawson, and basically all the original guys (and gals! - Janis Martin, Wanda Jackson, Barbara Pittman). Buddy Knox lived in our area the last couple years of his life and came around to hear my band File Gumbo almost every week for about 8 months. Having him tell us we were his favorite band was a biggie. Jackie Lee Cochran was a subscriber, and said "God Bless You for caring about us old rock'n'rollers!" to me on the phone while renewing his subscription about a month before he died. I'm sure glad I got to seem him perform! Lew Williams has been an e-mail pal I'm really looking forward to meeting in Green Bay. Same with Sonny West, a big hero of mine. Ray Campi is a great guy. I really like the bands mentioned above, along with The Raging Teens, The Horton

Brothers, Marti Brom, Kim Lenz, Josie Kreuzer, the Paladins, Deke Dickerson, Eva Eastwood, the Derailers, BR549, Wayne Hancock, Cave Catt Sammy (who will be in our next issue), The Starlight Drifters, so many many more. The EMP had Sun Records month and we met Jack Clement, and heard him interviewed AND play some songs. Wow! We also met Sam Phillips and heard him pontificate some, an experience everyone should have. I mean, Paul Burlison, Sonny Burgess, Rocky Burnette, DJ Fontana, Rudi "Tutti" Grayzell, Joe Clay, Mac Curtis, Rockin' Ronny Weiser, and on like that. It really has been interesting and inspiring.

**RRP: What sorts of musical projects have you been involved in yourself, aside from the magazine?**

Marc: I've been performing since the mid-60s, and have been appearing on recordings since Jef Jaisun's 1978 LP "Brand New Rose". My own first record was the "Okie Doke Band" EP from 1980 (well, to us it's 1980. Technically UPS didn't deliver the pressings to my house until Jan. 2, 1981). Next was "This Feelin'" with me and Okie Doke in

1982. A couple cassette albums and various compilations and then 5 CDs with File Gumbo, 2 under my own name ("Rockabilly Rhythm & Blues" with the Shack Shakers and "Sweet Misery Moan" with Clarence Blisswater Revival). The latest project is a compilation of NW rockabilly and rock'n'roll that will feature (among several others) The Magnetics, The Kingsmen (doing an original rockabilly song previously unsued), Jerry Lee Merritt, Bobby Wayne, the Dusty 45s, Jo Miller & Her Burly Roughnecks, Dizzy Elmer, the Bughouse 5 and several others. The title is slated to be "Jukebox Fever" after Jerry Lee Merritt's tune on it. He's another guy I really enjoyed meeting, interviewing, finally getting to see perform, and talking to on the phone before he passed away.

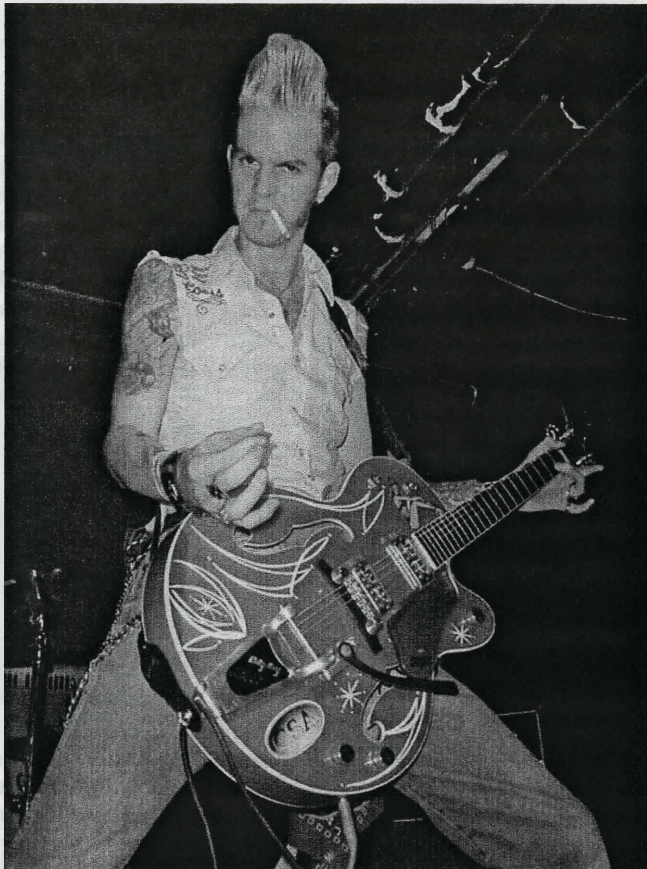
**RRP: What keeps you going; what's the best thing you get from remaining so involved in helping maintain and spread the rockabilly/blues music scenes?**

Marc: I think my wife is the best thing I have gotten. It wouldn't have happened unless BOTH of us were dedicated in the same way to this idea. But I really enjoy the people I know in the scene, and I wish we could attend more of the bigger events like Viva Las Vegas. We're lucky if we can get to one a year, outside of the Rockabilly Ball up here. It really is exciting to know that there are younger artists as good as Marti Brom, the Derailers, Cave Catt Sammy and all of them carrying on the music styles. So I guess another best thing I get is when I hear another new act that REALLY has a passion and talent for rockabilly, western swing, honky tonk country, country blues, cajun/zydeco R&B - all of that stuff we love! And of course every time I get to meet one of the original artists is always a best thing to get. As I've told my wife, who's just learning the upright bass - actually playing the music gets you that much closer to it, which is even better. But I've always been the sort of person who just wants great music. If somebody else plays it, I'm an enthusiastic audience. I've never been that, "gimme that guitar, I'll show you how it's done" type. But if nobody will play it, then I'll play some, by golly!





# Flathead Mike & The Mercurys



*Out of Atlanta, Georgia comes a band so vile, decadent, and immoral that their own families wince at the mere mention of their names. So deliciously wicked that churches lock their doors and preachers hide their virgin daughters. So wild and void of common sanity that psychiatric professionals lack the words to describe their heinous maladies. These chain-smoking hot rod psychobilly freaks chew the lid off of Pandora's box and release the fumes of bestial rock-n-roll into the stale air surrounding the ever-popular indie rock drudgery. Flathead Mike and the Mercurys are about being straightforward, having a good time, and rocking out with reckless abandon in maniacal, whirlwind fashion. The following is an e-mail interview done with these miscreants in late July 2002. - BL*

**RRP: How long have you been together, what is the current band line-up, and how did you all meet?**

Mike: Well I've had this band for I think 3 years, but DJ joined a year ago & Capers two years ago. The line-up is yours truly on guitars & lead vocals, DJ on slap bass & vocals & Capers (Johnny Suede) on drums & vocals. I met Capers on a smoke break & DJ through a past roommate from hell.

Capers: I've been in the band 2 years, met Mike through his hair.

DJ: I've been in the band about a year and a half. I knew Mike for about a year or so before that.

**RRP: How old are you guys, and have you been in any bands in the past?**

Mike: I'm 28 and this has been my 12th or so band.

Capers: I'm 17, and The Mercurys are somewhere around my 21st or 22nd band.

DJ: 27- this is my first band. Mike asked me to join as soon as he heard I had bought an upright bass. I did not even know how to play the damn thing yet.

**RRP: Would you consider yourselves psychobilly in the European sense (influenced by Demented Are Go, Meteors, Guana Bats, Mad Sin), or do you draw also from wider, different influences? How do you describe your band's sound?**

Mike: Well, since I didn't listen to European Psycho at first I'd say that we don't really draw from it too much. We mostly sound like Jerry Lee Lewis after a fat bag o' crack!

Capers: We can have that European sound in some songs, but we are true HOT ROD PSYCHOBILLY

**RRP: I noticed that you have car club links from your web page. Are you in any clubs? Do you have (or want) any classic cars or hotrods?**

Mike: We all have ties to The Re-Animators one way or another. I own a 1961 Buick LaSabre four door sedan.

Capers: Reanimators, '50 Chevy Fleetline DeLuxe Sport Sedan "Josefiend"

DJ: An Atlanta Car Club called the Reanimators. I have a 55 Ford Fairlane

**RRP: What sorts of jobs do you work currently, and what's the worst job you've ever had?**

Mike: I am head of security for Junkmans Daughter in downtown Atlanta. The worst job I ever had was working for McDonalds when I was 14. Contrary to popular belief, McDonalds does not score you the chicks.

Capers: Hand, and the worst was of course, Blow.

DJ: I work at 'a major telecom company' who is recently bankrupt. Yep. Bankrupt- I need a new job!

**RRP: I was recently reading an interview with a band called**





the Starvations that was slamming psychobilly for being "about the hair and hot rods," and having "no real life vibe" because it is "all thought up and rehearsed." How would you respond to somebody with that view?

Mike: All thought up and rehearsed? Fuck off!!! What the hell isn't rehearsed?! Fuckin' indie-rock bands with stupid "The \_\_\_\_\_" names piss me off to no extent!!! Everything has been done already, but so what? Bands that don't know a thing about another scene shouldn't make comments about it. Who made those guys a damn expert? Just shut up & play what you fuckin' know alright?! If a certain sound is what you like then it has plenty of "real life vibe" to it. This is what I know, what I live & what I play. Anybody that says that kind of bullshit crap about my band will be guaranteed a equal opportunity ass-kicking via Flathead Mike!!

DJ: I'd kick them square in the nuts right after I ran over them in my hotrod. Then 'd comb my hair.

**RRP: What releases do you have out or forthcoming?**

Mike: We have "Attack" (self-released) & "Slap Yo Mama" (coming soon to a theatre near you!)

**RRP: What was the first show you saw, or record you heard, that made you say "fuck yeah, that's what I want to play"?**

Mike: My ex-wife (Satan fuck her soul) turned me onto The Reverend Horton Heat. The album was "Smoke 'Em If Ya Got 'Em" and it made me realize that country could be as angry as heavy metal.

Capers: I guess I was 9 or 10 when my brother played me *Demons are a Girls Best Friend* by The Nekromantix. Shortly after I picked up some Meteors, and was floored.

DJ: Was not my first show, but one of the best shows was when I got to see Thomas from the Frantic Flintstones play with the Love Cowboys here in Atlanta. He is by far the best psychobilly bass player I have ever gotten to see live. Incredible bass player and really cool guy.

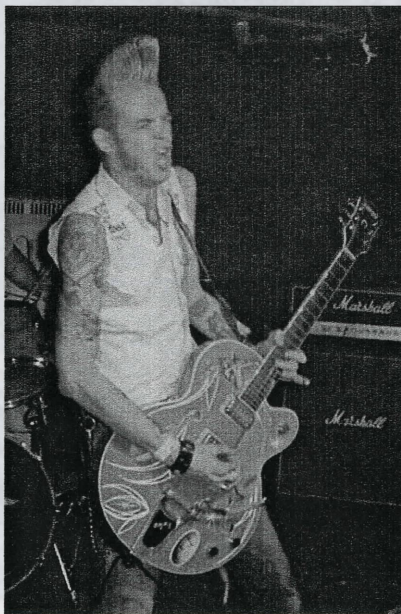
**RRP: What sorts of hobbies or interests do you guys have aside from music?**

Mike: I rack up hours & hours on my PS2. It is totally consuming. If I get pissed off during the day (which happens a lot) I go home and shoot the shit out of some bastard mofos, and, voila, I feel loads better.

Capers: Hockey, Teaching drums, Finding gainful employment, Masturbation... Not in that order.

**RRP: What are some of your favorite films, comics, porn stars, and washed-up has-been celebrities?**

Mike: My favorite film would have to be "Ferris Beuler's Day Off". It has taught me everything I need to know about shirking responsibility, and getting away with it. Nothing can beat 1970's Spiderman. I like amateur porn, so I like any chic that is willing to slob a knob for the camera. Fuck washed-up has beens, who needs em?



Capers: My all time favorite film is *Oh Brother Where Art Thou*, followed by *The Shaw Shank Redemption*. I don't read comics. Jayne Mansfield in any porno of hers you can find. Leif Garret is a wonderful wash up.

**RRP: Everyone remembers where they were when The Challenger exploded, or JFK got assassinated. Being from the state where Larry Flint got shot, do you remember where you were on that tragic day?**

Mike: I know that when I saw Woody Harrelson get shot for that I was getting' a blow-job from some chic that I was seein' at the time. Does that count?

Capers: I was born in 1985, so I think I wasn't even a spoooge mark in my mother's eye yet.

DJ: We- well Mike and I (Capers was not born yet) were hanging out with Woody Harrelson when we heard the news. We were all very saddened and we wanted to do something for our friend Larry, so we did a movie about a bar in Boston.

**RRP: Have you ever considered re-naming a member "Freddie" and making him wear sequined spandex?**

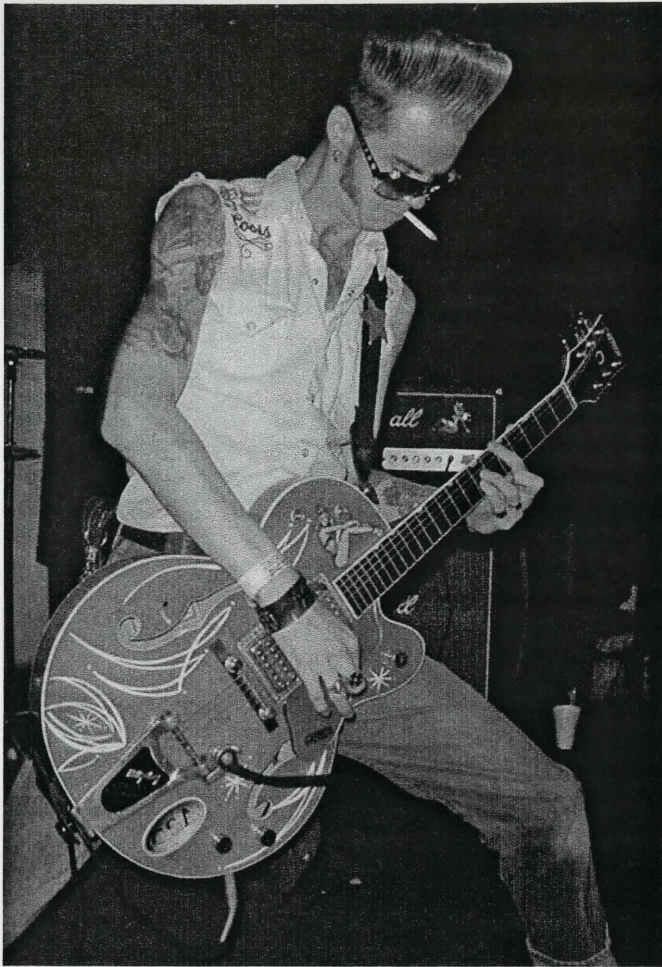
Mike: We planned on renaming our drummer "Freddie Kroger" & making him wear a spandex thong with metal spikes on it, but we thought better of it.

Capers: Mike's pretty gay, it'd suit him just right.

DJ: Yeah- I could see Mike being that guy.







**RRP:** Are you a defensive driver, or more prone to bouts of road-rage when some jackass cuts you off? Do you feel badly after giving somebody the finger if they have a large flag sticker stuck on the side of their car?

**Mike:** Well, I no longer drive, thanks to the Georgia State Gov't, but when I did I fucking let everybody have it. Furthermore anybody that has a flag sticker on the side of their car probably should get the finger, 'cause they more than likely wouldn't know what this country stood for if it landed on their face & stared to wiggle!

**Capers:** Mike doesn't Drive, D.J. throws coins at people, and I was shot at for giving some asshole the bird.

**RRP:** If science ever gets to the point where you can clone replacement body parts from your own DNA and therefore prolong life indefinitely as long as you are careful, would you ever consider cloning, say, your own arm and eating it just to see what you taste like?

**Mike:** Oh hell yeah I would! I have been marinating in whiskey & smoke for 12 years now, and I'm sure that I have a nice Texas smoked flavor about now.

**Capers:** I don't know if I would eat myself, I think I would use the technology for a higher cause. I would clone my

dick. Then I would distribute my dick to all the females in the world, so for once they'd get some Good, Scottish, Magnum Dick.

**RRP:** What do you think the number one thing is that the government doesn't want us to know?

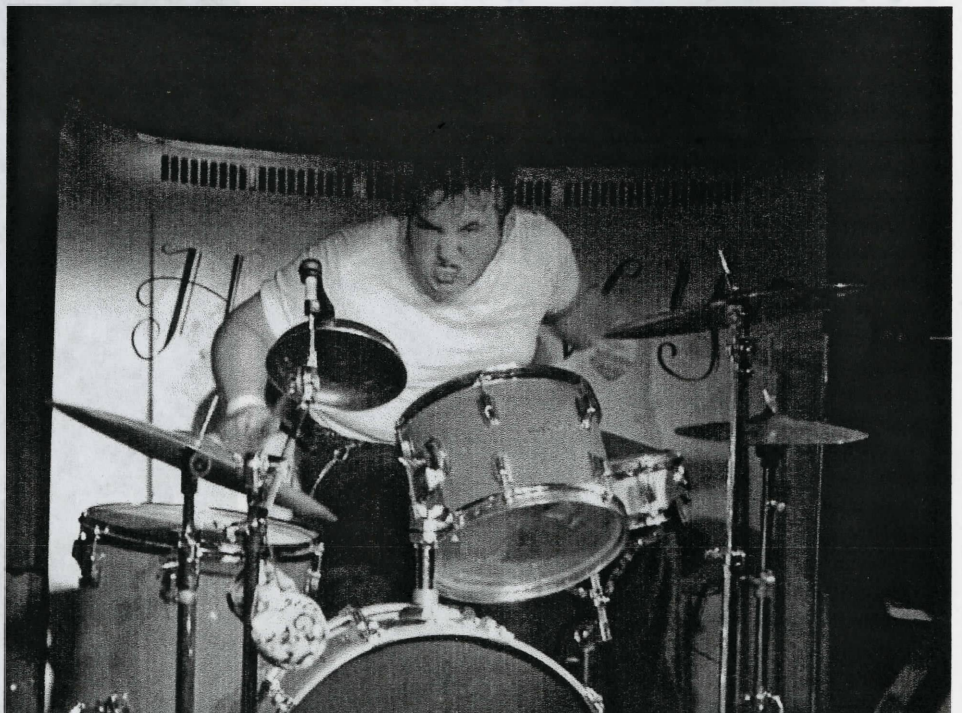
**Mike:** That they couldn't carry on a conspiracy if they tried. They can't even fuckin' deliver my damn mail right, much less plot some super secret agenda.

**Capers:** There are no Aliens, conspiracy theories are really just that: theories. Bush knew about the attack. And, while each we try to make a better, more democratic Union, we constantly slip into a socialist belief system...baby steps of course, but I see it happening.

**RRP:** Is there anything else you'd like to throw in here, shocking anecdotes of debauchery and excess, a diatribe on the cultural impact of the Monkees, cathartic rants about whatever's currently grating on your sanity, anything at all?

**Mike:** Ok, here goes. My Satan's soapbox involves the following topics... Christians, pop music, hit television, indie-rock, the state of music today, back-stabbing lying mother fuckers, & cattle mentality. I have NO room for any of these things in my life. If you are apart of any of these things, then stay out of my way. I will not put up with you, nor give you any credence. I have NO tolerance for ingrates, & I will destroy you. I will tear down all the towers of mediocrity that you have built. If it's that last thing I do, I will make sure that you have no more power over future generations. Do not try me, for I am the enemy that you are not prepared to battle. But if you stand for intelligence, individuality, rational thought & all things enlightening, then I will be your strongest ally. All Hail Rock 'n' Roll!!

**Capers:** My bandmates always make fun of me for just wanting to hang out somewhere...like, a diner, just to grab a NeHi, grape if they have it. It makes me so mad. I, Hate, each, and, every, one, of, you, guys. (shuffle) (shuffle)





An Interview with:

# Step Sister

*From the industrial wastelands of northeast Ohio comes a band that will make your ears bleed and your brain numb as the skull-pounding punk rock beats you into submission. I first heard of Stepsister through various friends who had seen them and said the band left quite an impression on them. I decided to check them out and found them to be not only an amazing rock-n-roll band, but a great group of guys as well. I conducted this interview in the bar parking lot, crouched down among the garbage and litter on June 22<sup>nd</sup> after their show with Anti Seen. Singer Tom Dark and bassist Tony Erba were more than cooperative during my extremely inebriated state, and this is the result, enjoy! - Lisa Marie*



**Lisa-** I am here with Tom Dark and...

**Tony-** Tony Erba the people's bassist, the men's threat the ladies pet. Parma's greatest natural resource.

**Lisa-** These are some pretty generic questions since I don't know a lot about you all. Please feel free to improvise. But I want to start off asking how long have you been together and where are you from?

**Tom-** We are from Cleveland, Ohio. We have been together since '94, but...

**Tony-** We have been together two years with this current line up. We are from Parma Cleveland, the West Side, West Side best side.

**Lisa -** West Siiiiide!!

**Tony-** West Side Nigga!

**Lisa-** Haha, what past bands have you been in and what style of music has it been?

**Tom-** It's been punk/ hardcore. The Dark, Knifedance and now Stepsister.

**Lisa-** How did you all meet each other?

**Tony-** Uh, I ripped Tom off on a dope deal.

**Lisa-** You guys smoke crack?

**Tony-** Well, I was trying to get into some crack. She didn't show up but Tom did. No, actually I met him at a record store, My Mind's Eye, and we discussed the MC5 and rock n roll and we decided to play together.

**Lisa-** Tom, do you agree with his version of the story?

**Tom-** I agree with it, but since the dope deal didn't go down, and he didn't have payment going down I said well, my bass player just left and you can try out for Stepsister. He tried out and he is like, the hardest working person in the rock business. Aside from James Brown and Henry Rollins.

**Lisa-** Why did you chose the name Stepsister?

**Tony-** Ask Tom, he named the band.

**Tom-** Actually, John Brannan from Negative Approach, Laughing Hyenas, Easy Action fame... we were walking down the street going to the fleet in Ann Arbor and the first thing that came out of his mouth was Stepsister. And I loved the name.

**Lisa-** Like 'I'm gonna beat you like a fuckin' red headed stepsister'?

**Tony-** Um, it's stepchild.

**Tom-** Yeah, and that's how the name came about. So basically it was John Brannen's influence.

**Lisa-** Do a lot of people think Stepsister is a girl band?

**Tom-** At first when we started out and there were bands like the Heathers, they thought we were like that.

**Lisa-** What day job do you have?

**Tom-** I am a grocery worker.

**Lisa-** A grocery worker? Like in the frozen food?

**Tom-** No, like I am a grocer, like...stock. No frozen foods, no produce.

(At this point I noticed Tony wandered away and was smooching with fans)

**Lisa-** Hey Tony, you fucker get back here and do this interview!!

What's your day job?

**Tony-** My day job? I work for the Cable Company.

**Lisa-** You're the cable guy?

**Tony-** Yeah, I'm the cable guy.

**Lisa-** What was the first concert you ever went to?

**Tom-** Um, boy...

**Lisa-** It wasn't Kiss was it? It better not have been Kiss...

**Tom-** No, it wasn't Kiss...uh...

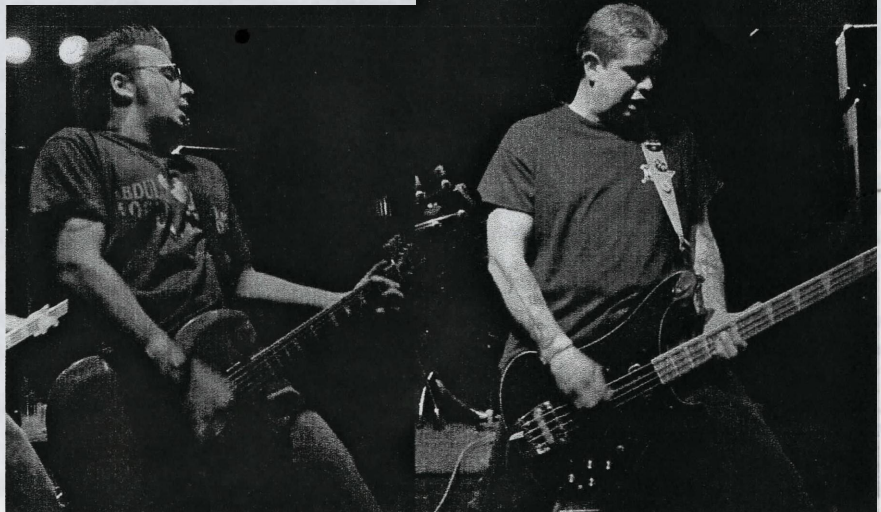
**Tony-** I already know mine.

**Lisa-** Ok, what was it?

**Tony-** Mine was World Series of rock 1978. Ted Nugent, ACDC, Scorpions, Thin Lizzy and Journey at the Cleveland Stadium. I was 10 years old; my dad took me I don't remember anything except seeing Ted Nugent in a fucking loincloth fucking swinging from the fighting rig.

**Lisa-** Tom, you know yours yet? You ready?

**Tom-** Yeah, it wasn't a concert it was James Brown on Soul Train.





James Brown was one of my main influences. As a matter of fact Hot Pants was the first 7" I ever bought, ever, EVER! And Alice Cooper, my mom turned me on to him and the next day I went and bought Easy Action.

**Lisa-** I know you get pretty aggressive live, what are some of your most memorable shows that you have played over the years? Have you ever went kick ass spaz and gone out into the crowd and beat some fans down?

**Tony-** With Stepsister? Uh, the Bear Creek Amphitheater last summer where we fucking got two songs through and the campground shut us down and we threw fireworks at the soundman.

**Lisa-** Why did they shut you down?

**Tony-** Because we were too loud and it was 3 in the morning.

**Tom-** A lot of loud music, a lot of destruction, a lot of like, balls out rock n roll because when we play we go for the balls.

**Tony-** We go balls deep!

**Lisa-** Who is your biggest role model?

**Tom-** My biggest role model...Hmmm. James Brown, Iggy Pop, the singer from the Sonics, John Brannan, too many to name.

**Tony-** MC5, The Stooges, punk rock, straight edge, hardcore and..

**Lisa-** Straight edge?!

**Tony-** A man's got to have his roots somewhere.

**Lisa-** Are you straight edge?

**Tony-** No, look at me I'm a mess!

**Lisa-** What kind of kids were you growing up?

**Tom-** Um, I had a real good relationship with my parents and my brother..

**Tony-** not me!

**Lisa-** Is your brother older?

**Tom-** No, he's younger. We are 4 years apart. Suburbs, actually Cleveland. Scott and I got into rock n roll been doing it ever since, still doing it (Scott is Stepsister's drummer).

**Lisa-** So you weren't born and raised in a trailer or anything?

**Tom-** No, no.

**Lisa-** Do you have kids?

**Tom-** No, none of us have kids.

**Lisa-** What irritates or worries you the most in the world? What really pisses you off?

**Tom-** As far as, since we are talking about music, I would say how underground music, punk music, has become all money and fashion, and that's not at all what Stepsister is about. We are trying to give back to the people what influences us, what we thought was exciting. You, included, give back excitement by doing a fanzine, a magazine, a record label, a band or whatever. And we are still carrying balls to put rock n roll underground. And there are bands doing it, but it doesn't start with Blink 182, Green Day or all that kind of stuff. There are still people out there doing it. You could say we are going for like, the dirt under the nails kind of thing.

**Tony-** Lisa doesn't like me anymore.

**Lisa-** Fuck you.

**Tony-** Why are you angry with me? Why?!

**Lisa-** Tony, what would you rather do than watch the Scooby Doo movie?

**Tony-** What would I rather do? Watch the fucking Josie and the Pussycat's movie sequel. Yessss!

**Lisa-** Why, cause there are hot girls in it?

**Tony-** No, because there's hot girls in it.

**Lisa-** Tom, what would you rather do than see Scooby Doo?

**Tom-** I'd go rent out horror films, cult stuff.

**Lisa-** What's your favorite horror film?

**Tom-** Favorite? Too many to name.

**Tony-** Blood Freak!



**Tom-** Yeah, Blood Freak. He just hit it on the head. Blood Freak.

**Lisa-** When you are beat down, tired, in the mood to relax, and getting in contact with your inner self do you ever put on a John Tesh album and let the soothing music of the new age savant inspire you to... (I couldn't even finish the question because Tony was so eager to share).

**Tony-** I'll be honest with you, I put on my Yanni DVD.

**Tom-** After any concert, I usually put on Miles Davis or John Coltrane.

**Lisa-** Kind Of Blue baby, Kind Of Blue!

**Tom-** That's like my favorite album of all time. .



**Tony-** The first Monhibish-new Orchestra (?) album and Hawkwind double live.

**Tom-** Any Howlin Wolf. That guy made Tom Waits who he is today.

**Lisa-** What's the best advice you can give, or the best advice you have been given?

**Tony-** Avoid going to college, play fucking dirty punk rock.

**Tom-** I would say this: don't fuck people over, be yourself, always believe in what you do and don't ever do it half-assed. Always do it all the way. Just like sex.

**Lisa-** Anything else you'd like to add?

**Tony-** I'd like to add 3 plus 3 equals 6. No, I'd like to thank Rock N Roll Purgatory...great magazine, great comp. We love the Hudson Falcons, we love Lisa Marie, and we love

the magazine, thanks for coming down. We are a fucking working man's punk rock n roll band and we don't care about looking pretty so fuck all y'all.

**Lisa-** Haha, you're pretty.

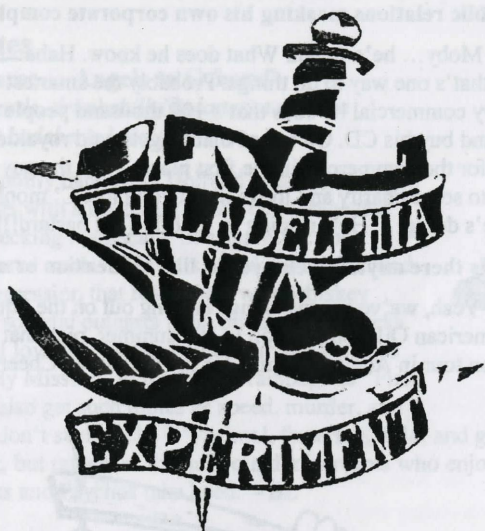
**Tony-** I am pretty and you know what? I am the man's threat, the ladies pet, the people's bassist, the chancellor of passion, a natural resource.

**Tom-** Keep doing what you enjoy doing. I appreciate the interview and you all coming down. Live fast and rock n roll!

Visit their site at: [www.elkgirl.com/stepsister/](http://www.elkgirl.com/stepsister/)



## An Interview with



*Hailing from Butler, Pennsylvania, this young band hammers out Street Punk/ Oi! with the passion and overall respectability that is missing from many rock-n-roll bands these days. Having played with the likes of the Hudson Falcons, Brassknuckle Boys, The GC5, and Sixer, as well as being featured on an upcoming Squig-tone compilation, this band is one you are sure to be hearing about in the future if you are not in the know already. This is an interview I did with Thom (guitars/vocals) over e-mail just before the U.S. soccer team lost to Germany in the World Cup semi-finals.*

**RRP: I know your band started in 1999. How has the band's sound and approach changed since then?**

Thom: Since then we've mellowed out a bit, slowed some stuff down, laid off on the hardcore influenced stuff and became better musicians. We're still a street punk band but the songs are less about the typical "streets" and boots n' braces" stuff. We're going deeper with the lyrics and the songs are coming out more personal. We still call things as we see them and play rock n' roll from the heart, I guess that's what matters.

**RRP: What line-up changes has your band gone through and why? I understand one member left to be a hippie. Is that correct?**

Thom: Haha, yeah... Rob, our original drummer, couldn't hang and basically left to become a hippie. That was almost two and a half years ago. There's no hard feelings. Aaron stepped up and helped tighten up the sound. He's one of those talented types. So we have Ian doing the vocals, Ace on drums, Nerm on bass, Eric on guitar and myself on guitar and vocals.

**RRP: Could you tell about the band's name? It was taken from a movie, right? What was it about?**

Thom: Hmmmm, it's a cheesy b-flick, they actually made two of them. Nerm thought it up and we were too tired to argue so we said "what the hell" and went with it. I'm not such a big fan these days.

**RRP: Are all of you from Butler; PA? What is life like there? How big of a town is it? Is there much of scene for punk rock?**

Thom: Life in Butler can be interesting sometimes. Trouble always shows up and we're usually there when it does. It's a decent sized town, not too big not too small. In a 15 minute drive you can go from projects to suburbs to farms and it's all in Butler. The scene is kinda weird. When we started there was maybe two other punk bands and the rest was a huge metal/ hardcore scene. That died and emo and pop punk took over. A street punk show here has a pretty good draw so it's not all bad. It's mostly the same kids at every show and there's normally two shows a week. It's weird for us because Pittsburgh is a hometown to us too.

**RRP: I've heard that you try to incorporate different stuff into your songs to avoid sounding like the cliché Oi! band. What music and bands, current and old, have influenced they way you play?**

Thom: I'm into CCR, Buddy Holly, John Cougar, AC/DC... good rock n' roll stuff. I can get into acoustic stuff and stomach some indie and emo at times. Currently I'm listening to Sinners and Saints, White Trash Rob and Mark Ducky's new band. It's the bad-ass wussy album of the year! Ian is into garage rock and post punk stuff, Aaron likes his rockabilly, we all have some different influences we work into the music. Then there's the basics like Menace, Sham and Cocksparrer and the newer stuff like Pressure Point, Hudson Falcons, Swingin Utters, Beltones, Ducky Boys, Sixer, One Man Army, The Trouble...blah, blah, blah. Oh, the new GC5 is rad too!!!

**RRP: Occasionally you'll hear or read someone bashing a band for being too political or serious that it ceases to be fun... or conversely, sometimes I hear bands accused of being too escapist or irrelevant with their songs about nothing of any grand importance. I think there are points to be made on each**





side, and I fall somewhere in the middle, loving both serious and facetious songs. Where do you stand, and what sorts of topics do you deal with lyrically?

Thom: We don't hide things in our songs. What it all comes down to is picking your fights. We didn't set out to be a political band; we try to write the songs any kid can relate to without alienating them. I mean, most kids feel alienated enough that what they really need is someone or something to identify with. We write about growing up, working, depression, love, loss, pride, pain, brotherhood... etc. I think what really matters is how committed you are to what you're doing. I can listen to Better Dead Than Red and then listen to The Unseen. Two opposite ends of the spectrum but they are both passionate about it. That's what counts to me.

**RRP: I read where you said it was kind of weird seeing people here and there with your patches on. Is it uncomfortable or flattering... or both?**

Thom: Both. It's cool but at times it's a little weird because you're not always ready for it. Some kid came up to me at a Warped Tour once and wanted his picture taken with me. I was freaked out. His friend took the picture anyway so I'm probably making some weird face or something. But the girl in Massachusetts with our thong on... that was cool. I'd like to see more of that.

**RRP: Are all of you avid skaters? How long have you been skating?**

Thom: Eric and Ian are the most into it. They've been skating, probably, 10 years. Ace will go every once in a while. I used to skate years ago, back in junior high. I tried to get back into it last summer but I'm old and I drink too much.

**RRP: Are you also into soccer? What do you think of the U.S. team's surprising success? The United States had technically never made the quarterfinals, (advancing to the semis in the first World Cup (1930) before a quarterfinal round existed). Do you pick them to go all the way?**

Thom: Well, I woke up early to watch them get eliminated. It's cool that they made it as far as they did. I'm guessing the sport will probably take off here in the next year or so. As for us... a game has been known to break out here or there. I blew out a tire in my car trying to get to a Pittsburgh Riverhounds game on time last year.

**RRP: What do you make of soccer hooliganism? Is it damaging to the sport, or is there an allure to it most people won't admit to? Do you see it too often linked with extreme nationalism or racism (I just watched a documentary about that)?**

Thom: No, I don't think that the racist stigma still applies. Roughing up the other team's fans is part of the game. Those guys are die hards. They are probably the best kinds of fans. When you're on the field giving your all it's comforting to know that some crazy is up on the terraces chasing the other teams fans around.

**RRP: Recently I heard songs by The Clash (selling alcohol) and The Specials (selling diapers) on television commercials. How do you feel about this? Does it cheapen the music and the artist's integrity (especially with the Clash who purported to be against consumerism and globalization), or is this a valid way to be heard and make money?**

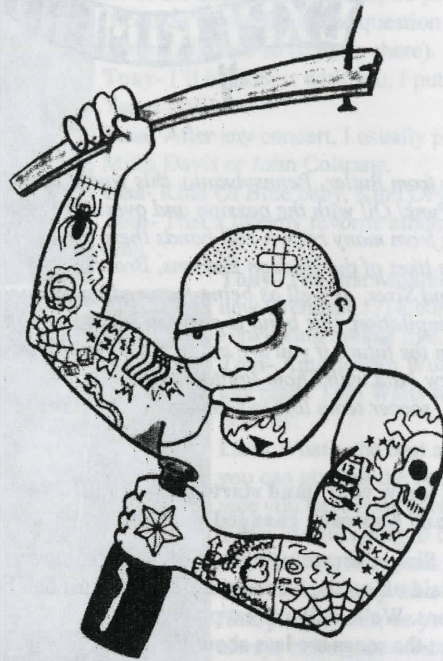
Thom: It's up to the artist. The Dead Kennedy's thing was weird because "Holiday in Cambodia" isn't the best song to sell khakis to. I think eminent domain applies to some of the situations. The Clash and the Specials probably didn't have a say. CBS and Chrysalis, respectively, own the rights so it's their call. What would they care about the integrity of an artist? I think it's cool to hear some of that stuff on TV.

**RRP: I heard that techno guy, Moby, say that he does music for commercials since they will just pay someone to imitate his music anyway, then he donates the money to organizations that counter those same corporate interests. Do you think that is a clever way to be subversive and even ironic, or do you think the whole thing is just public relations masking his own corporate complicity?**

Thom: Moby... he's vegan. What does he know. Haha... I dunno, maybe that's one way to do things. Probably the smartest way, because for every commercial he does that's 100 thousand people who hear his music and buy his CD. On top of that he gets paid royalties and the money for the commercial in the first place. Then the guy donates the money to some charity and looks like a good joe. C' mon! can't you see what he's doing.... He's ripping us all off! That bastard!!!!

**RRP: Is there anything else you'd like to mention or add?**

Thom: Yeah, we've got two songs coming out on the Squigtone Records American Oi! Compilation in late summer, pick that up and check us out on tour in August. Thanks for the interview! Cheers!





# Music Reviews

## The Cenobites

### **"Demons to Some... Angels to Others"**

*Drunkabilly Records, drunkabilly@planetinternet.be*  
*Postbus 87-9050 Ledeborg 1-Belgium*

This rabid Psychobilly band from Holland cranks out fast, skin-peeling songs with a blistering punk rock fervor that will have you wrecking maniacally like syphilitic ape hopped up on crystal meth. There is a real insurgence and straight-ahead aggression that reacts best with whiskey soaked brains or societal outcasts fresh out of give-a-fucks. Needless to say, I love it! Songs range from the glorious blasphemy of "My Mission" to the fed-up rampage of "Fuck Off." Then you also get such topics as speed, murder, and pretty girls who don't suck cock. It's primal, festering, wild, and gritty. Not for the meek, but rather for the hellbound miscreants who enjoy a good time. Punks and Psychos take heed. - BL

## The Spitzz

7"s

*Tario Records, PO Box 501 / Cambridge, MA 02238-0581*

The Spitzz so far have two 7"s, and are not to be confused with "The Spits," who are from Washington state I believe. These guys are from Massachussets, and are comprised of most of the people from Showcase Showdown. Whereas Showcase had a definite British influence, these guys sound more American. *Take Me to the Hospital* actually really reminds me of the Dead Kennedys a lot, and *Get Kicked* puts me in the mind of US Bombs a little. In my opinion, though, the 7" with the dog wearing a gas mask ranks superior with some vital, unpolished punk rock that will make you thirsty for some PBR. - BL

## UK Subs

### **"Drunken Sailor" 7"**

*Captain Oi! Records, www.captainoi.com*  
*PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England*

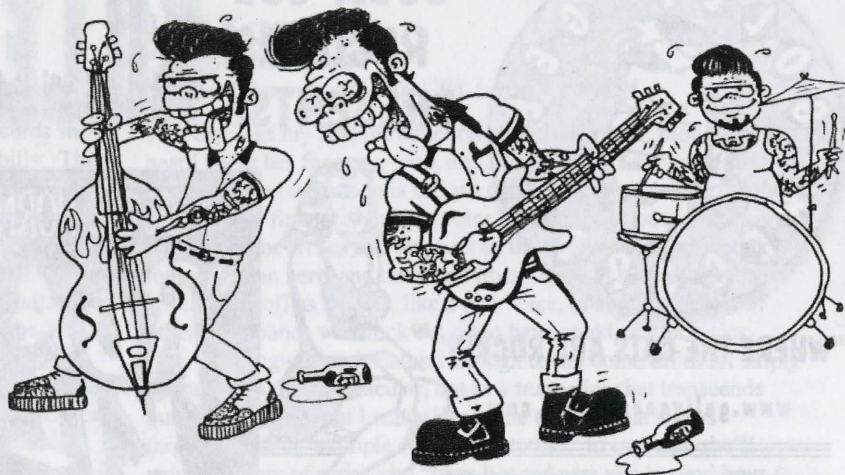
The A-side of this is actually a really good Irish traditional arrangement that manages to sound completely alive rather than like a banal flogging of the Gaelic bandwagon. It is done with violin, coarse guitars, and bar-room vocals, making it really hard not to like. The B-side of this is really good also, with its rough edge and energetic snottiness that shows that all veteran punk bands are not slackers. Good stuff here. - BL

## Keystone All-Stars

### **"Man's Ruin"**

*Jumpstart Records, www.jumpstartrecords.com*

These guys play punk rock that reminds me a little at times of The Ducky Boys, and even a little touch of Social D. on the excellent *One for the Road*. There's lots of melody, and elements of straight rock-n-roll, yet they retain the roughness you'd expect of a punk band that plays in a whiskey-fingered rage about real life. On *My Father's Son* singer Brian Dumm recalls his father telling him as a "broken down man with broken down dreams" to "never doubt what you can be." But years later he finds himself: "My father's son and all I need is a warm embrace, the blood and the sweat hide the tears on his face, I stand alone in the footsteps I've traced." *Down* shows a man dragged lower by his own vices: "pulled away from something new, many times I wonder if I'll wind up getting by with my dependency on sin." *Crown of Thorns* is about the slander-ing done in the interest of public relations of kids shot by cops, and *Irish Epitaph* is a poetic suicide note from a broken-hearted man who has lost it all. The latter song is a semi-acoustic number accompanied by a flute.



There is even a hidden track cover of John Cougar Mellencamp's "Authority" song. Check these guys out. - BL

## The Marauders

S/T EP

*Eight One Four Records, X814X.com*

The Marauders hail from Pennsylvania and play a great 50's inspired rock-n-roll with some country thrown in as a chaser. They also have a good sense of humor with songs about eating roadkill rabbit (a subject that reminds of my friend Gabe) and about the impact of discovering that you are dating a prostitute. Track #2 starts off with the dirty country of "Sapphire" then segues into "Oh My My," which presses the gas pedal and takes off with a spin on "Hot Rod Lincoln." They have an upright bass keeping that back-road rhythm, and the guitarwork is clean and skilled. On songs like the upbeat greasy rocker "New Tattoo", the laid-back country beaters "Sweet Misery", and "Last Laugh" there is even some cool slide work. These 6 tracks were recorded and mixed in a matter of hours, but to me it still sounds great. I expect wonderful things from this band. - BL

## V/A - "Sample This, Too!"

*BYO Records, www.byorecords.com*  
*PO Box 67609 / Los Angeles, CA 90067*

Here we have a collection of 16 songs from various punk groups. We have a pretty rocking tune from Bouncing Souls "No Security", The Filthy Thieving Bastards "The Killing Kind" and The Forgotten's "Respect & Lies". There's a really good track from Rancid, "Vanilla Sex", that starts out slowly with just vocals and guitars and then kicks into their song about perversion and our right to privacy. Some other notable bands that contribute to the compilation are The Beltones, Sixer, Anti-Flag, and NOFX. Not bad. -Lisa Marie

## The Slanderin' **"Psychobilly Lives"**

*Destroy All Records, 3818 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90026*

What a great psychobilly band! I was unaware of these guys till I saw them perform at the Wreckers Ball in L.A. They are fast, catchy and sound awesome! They have a real raw, punk guitar sound and the bassist totally bombards your eardrums with dangerous vibrations. The singer has a distinct sound and fits perfectly with the melodies of the rest of the band. You get treated to ten songs including "L.A. Girls Carry Daggers For the Devil", "Mad Dog", "Ain't No Devil In Hell" and "Burn. Burn. Burn". Fans of psycho, pick this one up! -Lisa Marie





**GOLLY GEE  
RECORDS  
PRESENTS:**

# KILLER ROCKABILLY

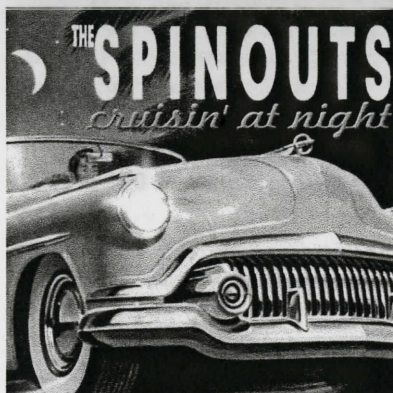
"WHERE THE CATS ARE ROCKIN'"™

[www.gollygeerecords.com](http://www.gollygeerecords.com)



If you're looking for red-hot, original modern rockabilly, then look no further! The Long Island Hornets' "ROADKILL" delivers the goods. Howard Raucous of RAUCOUS RECORDS says, "Thundering American Rockabilly from a superb 4-piece. A fine debut album... Powerful...pounding rockabilly".

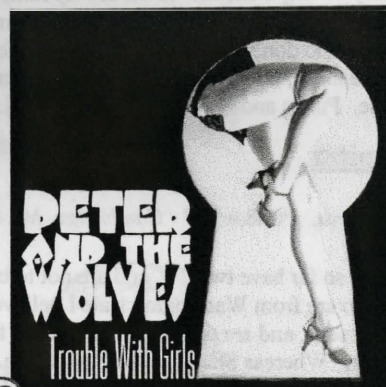
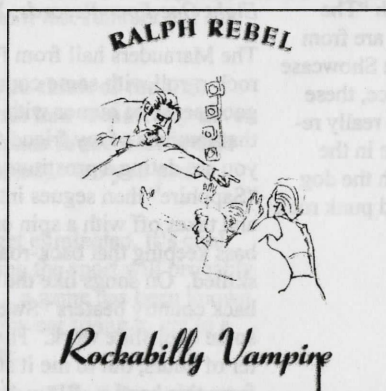
So hop in, hang on and brace yourself for 12 tracks of *WILD* rockabilly mayhem!



The Spinouts are three bad greasers that have kept the hot rod soul of traditional rockabilly alive and kickin' butt! This CD is a dangerous collection of hard slappin' original tunes that run right over you from the opening song!

**DON'T BE NO SQUARE...go**  
*cruisin' at night with the Spinouts!*

Peter & The Wolves are on the prowl... and their jaws are dripping with some of the hottest vintage sounding rockabilly and rock an roll since 1956! These kool kats are veterans of Long Island's legendary music scene and have played with rockabilly greats such as Robert Gordon, Brian Setzer and Tim Polecat. **HOWLIN' GOOD!**



Fast, powerful and raw rockabilly delivered by the bastard son of Dick Dale and Betty Page. Rockabilly Vampire explodes from your speakers and drags you along breathlessly. This is the ultimate soundtrack for some hard-rockin', hell-raising fun!

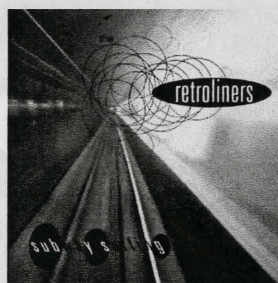
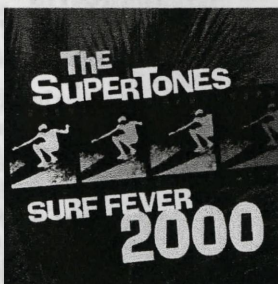
**Now available through Hepcat Records! call 1-800-404-4117 to order  
...and righteous surf, dude!**



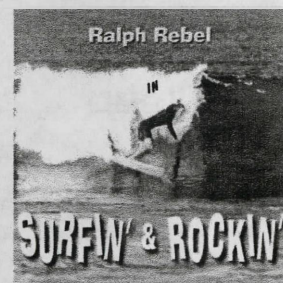
Surf music rules the universe and The Supertones are it's royal ambassadors! Robert Silverstein of *20th Century Guitar* magazine says, "The Supertones are great. Clearly one of the best American (and the entire world's) guitar-based instrumental bands." So bolly up to the whammy bar and dig The Supertones!

"For my money, of all the modern bands it's the **SUPERTONES** who best represent the spirit of The Ventures."

Alan Taylor, Pipeline #44



The Retroliners capture the sinister and seductive contours of urban struggle, conveyed in alluring melodies that never stray far from the classic surf idiom. With intriguing nuances, the Retroliners pay tribute to such notable influences as The Ventures and Los Straitjackets.



As the renowned surf DJ Phil Dirt of KFJC said, "This surf-rockabilly restyling is spectacular ...very well played and sometimes very originally arranged..."

If you love guitar music, then Ralph Rebel's *Surfin' & Rockin'* is essential listening!



**WWW.GOLLYGEERECORDS.COM**



## **V/A – “Rockabilly Rumble”**

Golly Gee Records, [www.gollygeerecords.com](http://www.gollygeerecords.com)  
Raucous Records, [www.raucousmusic.com](http://www.raucousmusic.com)

This joint release between Golly Gee and Raucous Records showcases their bands in the vein of more traditional rockabilly. This ain't no small dose either; this CD is packed full with 24 songs of rebellious anthems and cruisin' tunes. The CD revs right up with rollicking guitars of Bill Fadden and the Silvertone Fliers, then Peter and the Wolves deliver the goods with enough cool to spare. Other great bands on here include the amazing red hot guitars and great vocals of the Rebel Rockers, the feral sounds of The Wildcatz, the straight-up suaveness of the Blue Flames, and the 8-cylinder churning of the Long Island Hornets. There is also Ralph Rebel's excellent swing along with "Set 'em Up Joe" and Union Avenue singing Motorhead's "Ace of Spades," which sounds strangely like Johnny Cash doing it accompanied by some cool harmonica playing. Other quality cuts are by The Spinouts, The Accelerators, Tennessee Trio, The Arousers, The Slingshots, and more. Fans of Rockabilly won't be disappointed unless they happen to pass this one up! - BL

## **V/A – “War of the Surf Guitars”**

Golly Gee & Double Crown Records  
4001 Kennett Pike, Suite 134, #520, Greenville, DE 19807  
[www.gollygeerecords.com](http://www.gollygeerecords.com)

This is instrumental surf that the Big Kahuna could play on his boom box while cresting a tsunami caused by El Niño weather patterns as it obliterates some silently doomed seaside town... or something like that. Every time I get a surf CD I am always tempted to whip out some sort of ocean metaphor, and as you can see, I'm not one to resist temptation. Though my imagery is lame, the music on here is top notch. Ralph Rebel kicks it off with the swaggering strut of *Sabre Jet*, followed by the Boss Martians with their flowing guitarwork. In fact, I can't go through these excellent 32 tracks one by one. Let's just say you get instrumentals that are spy-fi, exotic, psycho, smooth lounge, sixties garage, and more: all delivered with great talent and a mixture of guitar tones and phrasings. With so many instrumental tracks you might think this would get monotonous, but it really doesn't. I can't imagine any fan of surf music being disappointed with this split between Golly Gee and Double Crown Records. Some bands included are: Estrume'n'tal, The Retroliners, The Supertones, The Volcanoes, The Penetrators, The Honkeys, Big Ray and the Futuras, The Del-Vamps, The Untamed Youth, and more. A few of these songs are unreleased by The Coffin Daggers, Johnny and the Shamen, The Krontjong Devils, and a live track by The Supertones. Pick it up and love it. - BL

## **Mighty Mighty Bosstones**

### **“A Jackknife to a Swan”**

Side One Dummy [www.sideonedummy.com](http://www.sideonedummy.com)  
POB 2350 Los Angeles CA 90078

I've never been a big fan of the Bosstones, but this is a pretty good album. Ska guitar and brass with some heavy punk thrown in makes this an ok listen. "Mr. Moran" is a decent track with vocal harmonizing and is about a mafia turncoat who used the alias 'Moran' after testifying against John Gotti and the Gambini Family. I really like the hard edge this band has and the vocals aren't what you typically hear with ska, and I like that. The best track on here by far is the last track, "7 Ways To Sunday", which is an acoustic, blues influenced tune complete with harmonica and hand claps. Personally, I think the Bosstones would be great if they ditched the brass, but they have a huge fan base so I must be wrong. -Lisa Marie

## **Josie Kreuzer**

### **“Beggin’ Me Back”**

She Devil Records, PO Box 1298 Jamul, CA 91935

This disc was my first introduction to Josie Kreuzer, though I've heard about her for some time, and I have to say I am very impressed. The production is full yet captures a vintage feel, the musicianship is first rate, and her voice is destined to be one of my favorites. She writes and sings all of the twelve rockabilly/honky tonk songs on here, and does so with aptitude in both arenas. The lyrics come off as sincere, like a real voice, in contrast to lots of other roots bands who rock but often have cookie cutter lyrics. Here the songwriting is natural enough to not come off as an empty caricature of 50's vernacular, but as a true voice that transcends pure nostalgia. What I really like is the attitude that shows through, making a simple song come to life. In one tune she'll paint a picture of a girl who "likes hot rod cars and hot rod boys / Wild, wild men are her favorite toys / She lives 90 miles minute, true to form / She's a good time girl and a thunderstorm." While elsewhere she displays a more vulnerable yet resilient side:

The earth will keep on turnin'  
And the sky will remain blue  
The sun will keep on shinin'  
After I stop lovin' you ...  
Time will keep on tickin'  
& the tide will surely rise  
As the days roll on my darlin'  
My love for you will die.

Rather than me going through all these gems, you might just want to pick this one up. After a good listen, I'm sure you'll likewise be charmed. - BL

## **UK Subs**

### **“Universal”**

Captain Oi! Records, [www.captainoi.com](http://www.captainoi.com)  
PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

*Last Man Standing* starts off this disc with a great apocalyptic beat on this primal tune that proves after 25 years, these Brits are still blowing their nostrils at the establishment. Being the brand new studio release, you might think they've gone soft and bought a quaint little cottage along the seashore where they read Victorian poetry at tea-time. Well, rest assured; they haven't trod in those dainty footsteps. You get songs about hating Hollywood, the universal scourge of war-hungry assholes, dishonesty in the media, and the economics of prosperity and deprivation. On *Don't Blame Islam* Charlie Harper antagonistically ridicules that very notion expressed in the title by singing sarcastically, "Don't Blame Islam, don't blame the church. They never kill in the name of God," then concluding that "Religion is evil, the rape of the poor." The music is pretty upbeat punk without over-doing the melody, but also not being hardcore, obviously. Just good stuff. - BL

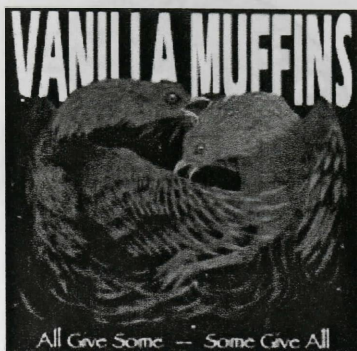
## **Tom Waits**

### **“Alice”**

Anti Records (Epitaph), 2798 Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90026

Originally done as an avant-garde opera in 1992, "Alice" has been dubbed 'the lost Tom Waits masterpiece' and for good reason: it's beautiful. Fifteen tracks ranging from delicate instrumentals to monstrous, creepy ballads that give you goose bumps that don't want to go away. Tom Waits expresses a certain longing in his lyrics, the kind of want that causes your heart to feel it's drowning. He is, by far, my favorite songwriter and composer across all genres of music. The title track combines the jazz elements of saxophone, piano and trumpet and then layers Waits deep, jagged vocals across the awe inspiring lyrics to create the world where "Alice" lives. A song that actually scared me as I sat in a dark-





ened room listening to this for the first time is "Kommienezuspadt". I heard an interview with Waites where he said he used to scream into pillows so that his voice would sound old and distinct. In this song he sounds like a demon, his voice harsh and ravenous against the odd musical background filled with sax, cello, and a clarinet that sounds like something from a deranged Muppets movie. Another strange, yet touching track is "Poor Edward," a song about a man named Edward who had a face on the back of his head. The face was his devil twin that drove him to suicide and a life in hell. All this melancholy, lyrical content is perfectly paired up with the sounds of a viola, violin, piano and cello. Lastly, my favorite on here is an instrumental called "Fawn", which lodged a lump in my throat the first few times I heard it and made me tear up. Wait's best songs are always the shortest, damn it, and "Fawn" is no exception at 1:43. Remarkable disc. -Lisa Marie

### **The N.Y. REL-X**

**"She's Got A Gun / Paranoia"**

TKO Records, [www.tkorecords.com](http://www.tkorecords.com)

3216 W. Cary St. #303 Richmond, VA 23222

I love this CD. This is female-fronted punk rock that runs the line between a late 70's and mid-80's NY sound. I don't know exactly what the hell that means, but it is intended to be good... very good. Erika's vocals are sung rather than screeched, and carry a lot of character. The guitars are blazin', and the songs are just right. Their lyrics go from serious topics (such as an Orwellian future manifesting), to less serious ones (at least I hope they aren't serious) about a woman with a taste for murder, and *Fuad's Delight* where mass murder collides with cannibalism. "Now I'm so excited, the time has come / For the feast to start cause the killing's done." These songs originally came out as two different EPs, but are collected here for your enjoyment. Don't pass it up. - BL

### **Speeddealer**

**"Second Sight"**

Palm Records, 601 W. 26<sup>th</sup> St., 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10001

These guys used to be called REO Speeddealer, but REO Speedwagon sued them. How funny is that, to be sued by the most irrelevant band I can think of? Here you have worthwhile metal produced by Jason Newsted of Metallica fame. They do have a Metallica feel (in the sense of older Metallica, especially on "Second Sight," which absolutely rocks. They also some Southern metal sounds, maybe even a little Pantera (sorry) and often an 80's kind of feel that even reminds me of crossover bands like Excel. The vocals don't always sound the same and monotonous, but instead have range, with even the drummer singing on some songs. "Kill Myself Tonight" actually reminds me of a punk rock song, and is a great track. These guys also mix tempos nicely, and include one epic metal instrumental. I know this isn't a metal publication, but I have to say, this fuckin' rocks with songs like "All the Things You'll Never Be," "Fractured," and "Blinded." If you grew up on metal like I did, or are itching to check out a new metal band that doesn't rap with their pants down to their ankles or just simply suck, check out Speeddealer... it's very worth it. - BL

### **The Dynotones**

S/T

Dynosonic Records, PO Box 1666, Orange, CA 92856

Damn, here's an earful of some great instrumental surf! The Dynotones hail from California, and play a pounding surf rock that'll knock you back ashore to cough up some saltwater until you regain enough strength to dive back in to these monster waves of reverb and B-movie fuzz guitar. You get 14 songs here that are diverse enough to make the entire CD listenable clear through... and then you'll want to start over. At times scary; sometimes traditional; other times exotic; all the time good. Snag this one up like a Great White chomping down on a hapless surfer. - BL

### **Radio 69**

**"Reality-Punk"**

Knock Out Records, [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken Germany

Street Punk. Oi!. Whatever you wanna call it, Radio 69 does it quite well. They remind me a little of Oi The Arrase. The vocals are harsh and gravelly yet sung, and the music is tight and upbeat with professional production and lots of energy. They are able to have catchy choruses and melody without sounding poppy at all, but rather these songs fall on you like volcanic rock. Songs are about lower-classes being denied rights, privileges, and ultimately existence by people who don't wish to acknowledge the homeless, junkies, and people on the streets as they live in their isolated safe and happy parts of town. Like vocalist Erik Regnér sings on *Open Your Eye*, "You just choose to see what you want to see and let the rest be left behind. Now I wish they'd all come back one day take it out on all of your kind." The lyrics also issue forth some good advice on *Single-minded Fools*: "Never trust a man who says he's got all the answers. He's either Lying to you or lying to himself." The 15-track disc ends with a great cover of The Blitz's *Someone's Gonna Die* done at double speed. Radio 69 prove that quality street-level punk rock is not a thing of the past. - BL

### **Los Gatos Locos**

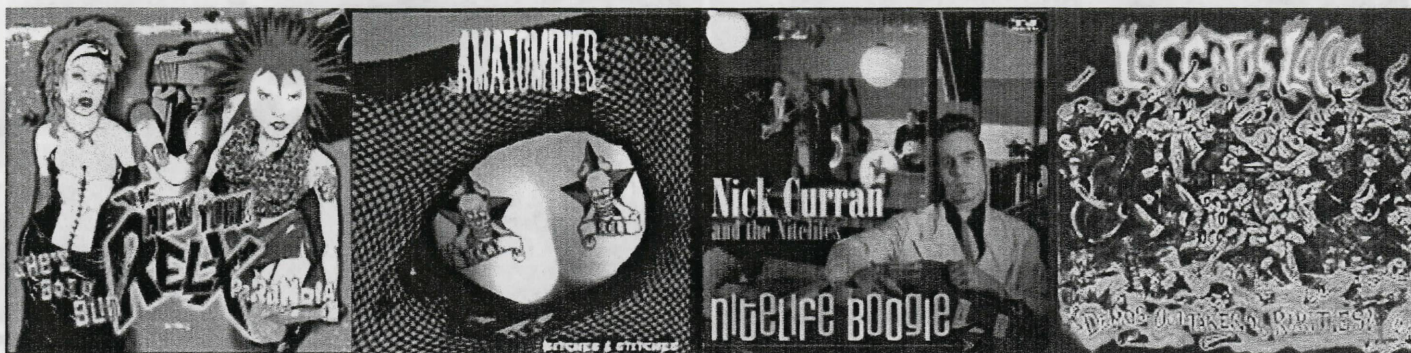
**"Demos, Out-takes, & Rarities"**

Spindrift Records, [www.spindriftrecords.com](http://www.spindriftrecords.com)

1411 Washington Ave., Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442

This disc is just what it says it is: demos, out-takes and rarities from the Los Gatos Locos basement. The first three tracks are from the '96 Thingmaker release and include "Rockin' Dead", "Tombstone Boogie" and a great cover of "American Nightmare". Tracks 4-7 are from the '95 Juvenile Delinquent 7" and includes a ferocious title track, "Jet Town Krew", "Orgy of Blood", and "Spoiler". Tracks 8-13 are all Lo-Fi demos from '95 and include "All Tore Up" and "Attack from Outer Space". You also get their version of "Somebody's Gonna Get Their Head Kicked in Tonight". This is a great slice of irreverent American psychobilly that fans need to have in their collection. -Lisa Marie





## **Speed Crazy**

### **"Chicken Fried Valentine EP"**

*Slow 'n' Sober Music*

259 Crescent Lane, #2, Cliffside Park, NJ 07010

This 3-piece from New Jersey has come up with perhaps their best release to date. What I like about Speed Crazy is their ability to be psychobilly without being derivative – not trying to emulate Demented Are Go or any other classic psycho band. Instead, these guys (and gal) dish out seriously rocking tunes that don't sound like something you've heard before, replete with lots of changes and vocals shifting from one member to the next on different songs.

"Damaged Goods" kicks off this 6 song EP with a 50 caliber guitar rhythm courtesy of frontman Greg Bury, and steel-fisted bass punching by Erica Kozak. This song also has a cool breakdown digression that shows how easily they can change tempos within a given song. "House of Cards" begins with a heavy, almost death metal guitar riff that morphs into something rockabilly-ish yet creative and unusual. Elsewhere, Erica sings absolutely beautifully in Spanish on "Por Que te Vas," which is probably my favorite cut, competing with the title track that exposes the twisted imagination of drummer Augie Catarella, who sings about chopping up his lover with a machete and deep frying her. And he doesn't stop there either... "well I wrote a brand new recipe, gonna cover this world like an angry sea / It's a brand new world, and a brand new taste, gonna chicken fry the human race." There is also a heavier re-recording of "Pursued" on this, making it an excellent acquisition. – BL

## **The GC5**

### **"Never Bet the Devil Your Head"**

*Thick Records, www.thickrecords.com*

This second full-length CD by Ohio's GC5 was recorded in their own basement and produced by Ryan Foltz of the Dropkick Murphys, and the sound quality comes off strikingly professional. This album slightly departs from the street punk of their debut, with more country and rock-n-roll influence tempered by an aspect of melodic punk. It's nice to see a band take chances and progress. The country beat on "When All Else Fails" finds accompaniment with Ryan's mandolin playing (albeit a tad low in the mix). That song is one of the great tracks on here, dealing with one's time passing with no direction while trying to gain some sort of piece of mind. "Lies and Prophecies" also takes a mellow approach with clean guitars as Doug sings of uncertainty and restlessness in resisting the temptations of ordinary life and its shallow pursuits. The lyrics still come from the same place politically as in their past, but Doug's writing this time has more of a personal approach that allows for deeper connections. The songs here deal with growth, relationships, rejection, and loneliness. The CD starts ironically with "The Long Goodbye," which deals with manipulation by people who are "discontented but entertained, dangerous but easily contained." This theme rises again on "Turn Their Backs" where "they'll package inspiration like a product on a shelf, killing any inclination to find it for yourself." Here it seems to be about youth being guided toward the ideologies of the past that come fully pre-packaged with forged desires and aspira-

tions. This tendency towards the easy and the dominant leads to the conclusion that "hope is like finding your footing on a slippery slope." The lyrics detail a search for meaning and a clinging to that slope, and show inward contemplation rather than overt sociological debate. As you might expect, the music is still quite well-conceived and played, and I think they are heading more and more into territory that is distinctly their own by combining many influences into something that leaves no direct traces. Highly recommended listening. – BL

## **Photon Torpedoes**

### **"Creature Double Feature"**

*Spindrift Records, www.spindriftrecords.com*

1411 Washington Ave., Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442

Photon Torpedoes play a raw psychobilly driven by a passion for horror movies and sleazy rock-n-roll. With songs like "I Fuck on the First Date," "Midget Porn Boogie," and "Alien Vagina," this would probably get Ani DiFranco's panties in a wad. Amen for that. Anyway, I really like the production on this. It is unrefined and close to the bone, with throaty vocals, thumpin' bass, and guitars so raw they leave a bloody trail. Aside from a great Dead Boys cover, these guys also remain true to the scumfuck tradition and cover GG Allin.

What more can you want? Sure, the lyrics are uncouth, immature, and even stupid, but in a world so goddamned serious what's wrong with a temporary regression back to the mindset of a 15-year-old where, in the words of The Dwarves, "blood guts, and pussy" are all that matter? This is whiskey chugging music for mutant perverts looking for a psychological revelation into their repressed primal selves. – BL

## **The Dicemen**

### **"Johnny Walker" EP**

*Crazy Love Records, www.crazyloverecords.de*

c/o Guido Neumann, An Der Schmitte 9, 42781

This is a smoking 4 song EP that may be short in length, but is full of rock n roll urgency that makes you remember why you got that last tattoo. Complete with a thundering upright, sizzling guitar and driving vocals the Dicemen have a sound very similar to the Amazing Crowns. The first track, which is my favorite, is an intense beating to the brain called "Kicked in the Teeth" that has an intensity that may cause seizures if you are a Celine Dion fan. This is an awesome EP and I am hoping to get my hands on a full length soon! – Lisa Marie

## **Vanilla Muffins**

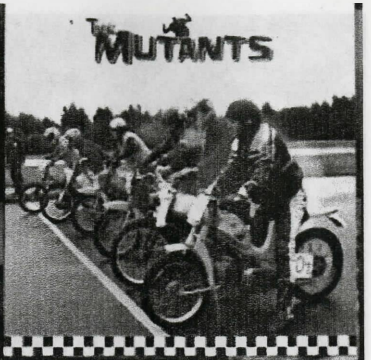
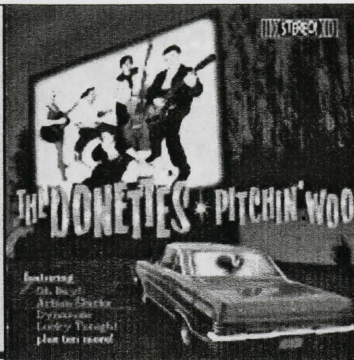
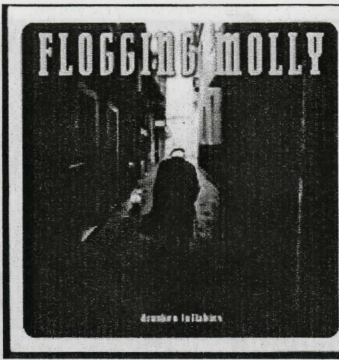
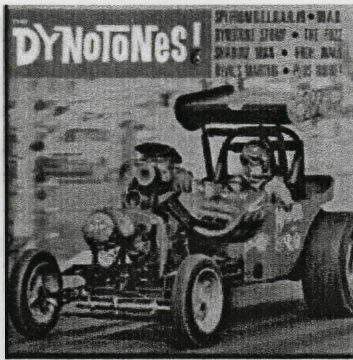
### **"Sugar Oi! Will Win!!"**

*Haunted Town Records, www.hauntedtownrecords.com*

1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647

This trio from Switzerland play what they like to call Sugar Oi!, which is upbeat and happy with out being corny. This is a re-release from 1994 and contains 11 tracks including an awful song called "Good Night Elvis". Ok, so it's a good song, but when someone





sings "have you seen the fat Elvis, have you seen his pig-pelvis" I get a little miffed. The rest of the disc is full of songs about skipping school to watch soccer, hanging out with your friends, and getting beat up by girls. "Capucine (Sans Elle)" is all in Swiss with only the chorus in English, but I still don't know what it's about. This is a good album, just not the Vanilla Muffin's best. -Lisa Marie

## **The Casualties**

### **"Die Hards"**

*Side One Dummy Records, [www.sideonedummy.com](http://www.sideonedummy.com)  
6201 Sunset Blvd. Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028*

Here's 13 songs by New York's long-running hardcore punks, and they haven't let up at all. They still play fast and loud, and still connote bands from the 80's like GBH, Exploited, Discharge, etc. The lyrics occasionally are pretty interesting too. "Divide and Conquer" talks of this tactic employed at the level of government and media to keep lower classes fighting each other, as well as in-fighting on a smaller scale within the punk scene. On "City Council" Jorge sings of rent control petitions to fight a corrupt city hall that sides with the rich to force the poor out of their homes. "Down at city hall I state my case / The city counsel has all been paid / They stand for the people, so they say / You filthy liars, I hope you rot in hell." There's an undeniable rage and urgency in his words that lets you know he's really going through this bull-shit...nothing phony here. I like this album, but the songs tend to run together like a lot of Casualties releases. Still, it's mighty good when you are in the mood for something loud and proudly punk. - BL

## **Popeye's Dik!**

### **"Take Your Punishment" EP**

*Puerto Rican Porn Dealer Records, [john.mcvicker@talk21.com](mailto:john.mcvicker@talk21.com)*

Here you get three songs, and all have a 50's sound and haunting half-spoken/half-sung vocals. The guitars also sound really clean and well played. The first song is about going to Graceland and digging up Elvis' grave, then finding him to be alive in the grave. The next song, "King Sperm" sings the praises of his bionic spunk, and is another catchy tune with odd lyrics. I can really see where women might find it disgusting, but when he says that his scrotum wears a crown I crack up every time. The last track is "Lonely Boy" and it is good also, and to me seems to have an 80's teen movie feel to it. There is a really unique sound to these guys, and if you don't mind lyrics like "I'm King Sperm, you can be my queen / My balls are full, my mind's obscene / love pulls hard, it's time to fly / Up your nose and in your eye." It may be lewd, gross, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade... but it makes me laugh. - BL

## **The Indifferents**

### **"Lessons Learned & Demos 09.07.01"**

*[www.theindifferents.com](http://www.theindifferents.com)*

This is an 11 track demo of a Pittsburgh band that I am pissed I

haven't had the luck of hearing earlier. They look pretty young in their band picture, but they all play their instruments really well. They are fast, urgent and kick ass...they actually kinda remind me of old Rancid with more of an Oi! sensibility. Some outstanding tunes are "On the Radio," "Road to Ruin" and "Roots Rock Rebel". Also included is an acoustic song called "Strong" which has pull at your heart strings without being corny, and shows just how flexible these guys are. Excellent. Pick this up! -Lisa Marie

## **The Paybacks**

### **"Knock Loud"**

*Get Hip Recordings, [www.gethip.com](http://www.gethip.com)*

Ten original, straight up rock-n-roll songs from a gritty, Detroit band who even come complete with an androgynous front person. I don't mean questionable sexual preference like David Bowie or Freddie Mercury, I mean like sexless vocals and a commanding presence like Iggy Pop. Ok, the singer is a girl named Wendy and she also plays lead guitar on a few tracks and wrote the majority of the songs herself. All the songs are good, but my favorite would have to be "Just You Wait" which is choppy, fun, and well put together with a cool guitar solo. I'd definitely put this in my car CD player and listen to it cruisin' down the road. -Lisa Marie

## **The Mutants**

### **"S/T" CD**

*Green Cookie Records, [www.colorcookies.moonfruit.com](http://www.colorcookies.moonfruit.com)  
PO Box 50501, 540 13, Thessaloniki, Greece*

If you've read past reviews I've done for The Mutants' 7" records, you know that I am a big fan of this stuff. Here you get the songs from their past 7"s and more, all on one ultra-suave disc. The first two cuts resonate like beautiful spaghetti western scores, while following tracks bring out aspects of 60's funk, surf, and even horror movie soundtracks. All instrumental, this band's ability to be evocative, entertaining, and original sets them apart from most. In addition to many guitar sounds and fine bass playing, you get lush organs, brass that doesn't over-power or become obnoxious, and two drummers, enabling some of those crazy elaborate beats that sound a bit Cuban jazz-like. If you are looking for something different and enjoy bizarre, creative instrumental music, you'll want to pick this up for certain. - BL

## **Gore Gore Girls**

### **"Up All Night"**

*Get Hip Recordings, P.O. Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317*

This is some pretty good, garage rock with a bit of Cramps flavor and a big dose of '50's girl group sound. This all girl trio hails from Michigan and mostly all the 12 tracks are originals. There are some really kickin' songs on here like "Automatic Love" and "Shotgun Wedding", which are my two favorites. There's also "Your Last Chance", and "Keep Your Hands Off My Baby," which are strongly influenced by girl groups like The Shirelles, The Crystals, and The Chiffons, and comes complete with handclaps and "ohhh wee-oh wee oh" backing vocals. If you don't like the older





doo-wopish influence there are plenty of other tracks that keep the more modern rocking' feel. There are only two girls pictured in the CD liner notes though, what happened to the other girl? -Lisa Marie

### **The Adicts**

#### **"Smart Alex"**

Captain Oi! Records, [www.captainoi.com](http://www.captainoi.com)

PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

"Ode To Joy" starts off this 1985 re-issue of 12 original tracks plus 8 bonus tunes. You get songs like the title track, "Smart Alex", "Crazy" and "Bad Boy". I am not really too keen on this album, however I must say that the bonus tracks are especially well done. The first half of the album falls flat for me, it seems a little dull and unanimated. But starting with track 13, the CD seems to come alive and take on a new life. Maybe it's the neat '80's dance beat, the operatic female vocals in the background, or the synth that I find so enjoyable...whatever it is "Falling In Love Again" is one of my favorite tracks on here and you get two versions of it. I don't think this is one of The Adicts' best albums, but if you are a fan of them pick it up for the bonus material for sure. -Lisa Marie

### **Sondaschule**

#### **"Lieber Einen Paffen" EP**

Knock Out Records, [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken Germany

Man, these guys like weed. On the cover there is a close up of a guy smoking a joint, the CD is covered in cannabis design and in the liner notes there is a picture of a leaf. I bet if I knew German I would be able to tell they were singing about getting high, but I can't understand German so I will never know. What I do know is they are a pretty good ska band with an awesome funk guitar and bongo drums that keep it interesting. They have a nice full sounding brass section and mix up the style a lot. It's only a 5 track EP but there is an extra 6<sup>th</sup> track that is unlisted. Decent stuff. -Lisa Marie

### **Souls On Fire**

#### **"Collars Up!"**

Knock Out Records, [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken Germany

If this were food, it'd be a Wendy's hamburger. This German street punk band reminds me of Oxymoron a little bit, and aren't half-bad... but they ain't no giant, juicy sirloin served with Texas toast and a baked potato that's the size of your head doused in sour cream. I do like them, though, like a trusted burger that, while it could do with some cheese, is blissfully uninfected by mad cow disease. Seriously, these guys are pretty decent. Songs like *Proud Without Prejudice* show their staunch support for the "Good Night - White Pride" campaign, and *Trackmarks and Memories* is in honor to those who "fought for their unions, their rights, and their families." Other songs like *Wankers on Parade* has them rejecting the common instilled goal of money and fame: "Won't be a fool from birth to death, no fucking crawler from the first to the last breath." I really like

where they are coming from, but the music is sometimes just a little plain to me. - BL

### **Cave Catt Sammy**

#### **"Love Me Like Crazy"**

Rubric Records, 75 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013

Someone told me recently that Cave Catt Sammy sings too many songs about girls. I dismissed it, but then started noticing that almost every song is about a girl in some way, and this album is no exception. While this band really has a good traditional sound going on with their Texas flavorings, this album isn't as good as their two previous outings, which I liked very much. Somehow I think the lyrics are a bit less cleverly conceived, and I'd like to hear more of Stephen Scott's excellent guitarwork, which you get much more of live. With that said, however, I don't want to come off as slamming this band because this is still high quality music. There's a little honky tonk, as well as a cool instrumental that caps off the disc too. Fans of Cave Catt Sammy will be happy with this, even if it is a slight lull in the band's progression. - BL

### **Vanilla Muffins**

#### **"All Give Some, Some Give All"**

Haunted Town Records, [www.hauntedtownrecords.com](http://www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647

Here we have a 4 track EP from the Swiss devils of Sugar Oi, the Vanilla Muffins. It's energetic, well done and catchy with songs like "What's Mine is Yours" (about getting your stuff repossessed, I feel you man) and "Tell Your Mother". "Not The Same Fool" is a bit slowed down and doesn't really do anything for me. The last track is a new version of "Angel" which is probably the best track on here. - Lisa Marie

### **Ghoultown**

#### **"Give 'Em More Rope"**

Angry Planet Records, PO Box 141092, Dallas, TX 75214

I was really looking forward to putting this disc in the player because I was fond of their last album. Ghoultown plays a Spanish, old west influenced 'billy type of music that incorporates trumpets and dark lyrics. There's something about the vocals in this album that bother me though. They kind of drone on without any variance and get boring. For that reason, the best two tracks on here are "Smoke Break" and "Bandito Sunrise" which are both beautiful instrumentals featuring acoustic Spanish guitar and the spaghetti-western sound. -Lisa Marie

### **The Business**

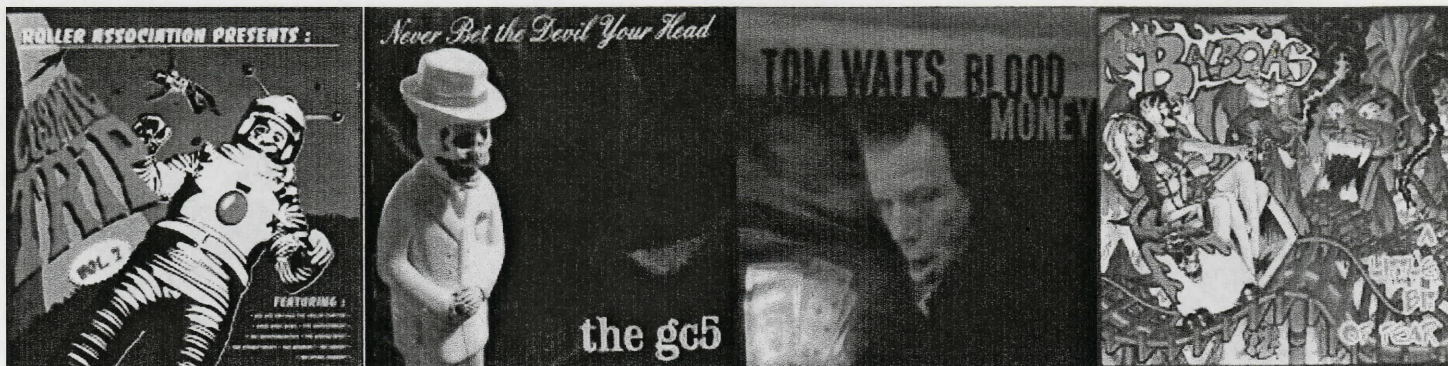
#### **"Suburban Rebels"**

Captain Oi! Records, [www.captainoi.com](http://www.captainoi.com)

PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

What can I say of this classic album that hasn't already been said? So many great Oi! cuts from the early 80's when it was originally released on Link Records. This re-issue contains 4 bonus tracks:





"Smash the Discos," "Disco Girls," "Dayo," and "Loud Proud N' Punk." While The Business haven't ceased releasing quality music, this album still reads like a best of... "Blind Justice," "Suburban Rebels," "Real Enemy," "Harry May" and "the politically incorrect "Drinking and Driving." All the songs here are good, if not great. On the fold-out poster insert there are newspaper clippings from the period of its release that are pretty funny. One article slams the Business for being phony and living in "a neat anti-world" because of their stance against disco and their characterization of the skaghead lice that listened to it. Must have struck a nerve there! I wonder what flavor-of-the-month music that writer is listening to now. Not standing so tall without their platform shoes I bet. Haha! - BL

## **The Balboas**

### **"A Little Bit of Fear"**

Burn & Surf Records, [www.balboas.com/reverb@balboas.com](http://www.balboas.com/reverb@balboas.com)

This is some fucking good surf. Catching waves, hanging ten, salt water in your eyes...you get it all on this 14 track disc. The tunes are full of energy, have great variation (you know, some surf all sounds the same) and keeps the retro vibe all throughout. I do have a complaint though, and it's a pretty big one. The vocals on here are pretty sucky. I can't even listen to the few songs that the singing appears on, which is a bummer because the music is so kick ass. Some notable tracks on here are a cover of Dick Dale's "Shake and Stomp", "16 till Indo" (which is a very spooky, cursed Tiki type tune) and "Attack of the Fire Ants". "Driver's Side Hairbag" has a smooth, jazz feel while "Sea of Flame" for some reason makes me want to go undercover and spy down on the pier. All in all this CD is a real good catch for fans of surf, I just recommend skipping the vocal tracks. -Lisa Marie

## **The Quakes**

### **"Last of the Human Beings"**

Orrex Records, PO Box 40893, Mesa, AZ, 85274-0893

This latest release by the Quakes puts forth some well-crafted mid-tempo neobilly that denies easy categorization. The guitars range in sound from various levels of distortion to clean, and one track even puts some flange on the upright. It becomes easy to see that this band doesn't follow the paths most traveled. Something in this reminds me of the 80's for some inexplicable reason. It's like a new wave undertone of exploration and weirdness that I like. While I expected something a little more psycho, this album with a smoother sound has really grown on me. The best tracks are the catchy title track, "Future Shock Rock," and "Revenge Is Mine." The hidden track is really cool too, an instrumental with an old-time feel and steel guitar. Interesting stuff, although I wish the tempo was a bit faster. - BL

## **The Kaisers**

### **"Shake Me!"**

Get Hip Recordings, [www.gethip.com](http://www.gethip.com)  
P.O. Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317

Oh man, talk about a being transported back in time. This quad of Scots has duplicated the British Invasion sound with an uncanny like-

ness (ok, well the guitar is better). You get 14 tracks of Herman's Hermits, Beatles, Dave Clark Five sounding tunes that really sound like vintage recordings of yesterday. "Jenny G" features a harmonica and has a blues feel, while "Paradiso Twist" is a sweet surf instrumental and "Trick Shot" is another awesome instrumental that uses a saxophone and piano. "Shake Me" has the vocal harmonizing of the early '60's boy bands down pat, it's scary. -Lisa Marie

## **The Adicts**

### **"Sound of Music"**

Captain Oi! Records, [www.captainoi.com](http://www.captainoi.com)

PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

*A Clockwork Orange* inspired a lot of things when it came out. Aside from inviting an uncomfortable identification with a deranged anti-hero, it provided the basis for a look, vocabulary, and frame of mind for many disenfranchised and angry punk rockers. Not the least of these was The Adicts from Britain. However, these guys weren't necessarily into ultra-violence and ferocity as much as good times and pageantry. They played upbeat, catchy, and fun punk that was at once both irreverent and accessible. Pop punk before it became truly nauseating. This CD was originally released in 1982, and was their second full album. It includes well-known songs such as *Chinese Take-away*, *How Sad, My Baby Got Run Over By a Steamroller*, and many more. While most of the songs remain light-hearted, *Eyes in the Back of Your Head* takes a vicious turn, warning of an attack when least suspected. "Everything is alright, everything is fine / All you got is money and all I've got is time ... You better be alert / 'Cos you're gonna get hurt / And you better beware / 'Cos no one will care." They have also tacked on 3 bonus tracks: *You'll Never Walk Alone*, *Too Young*, and a cover of The Ramones' *I Wanna Be Sedated*. Perhaps the most notable track on here is *Joker in the Pack*, which strangely enough features a violin, and also appeared on *UK/DK: a film about punks and skins*. Borrowing that tape off a friend of mine actually started my interest in punk rock to begin with, and The Adicts hooked me way back then. - BL

## **Peter and the Test Tube Babies**

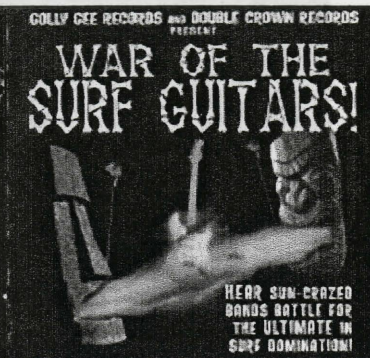
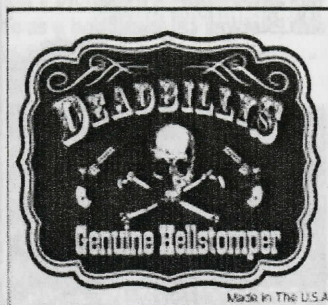
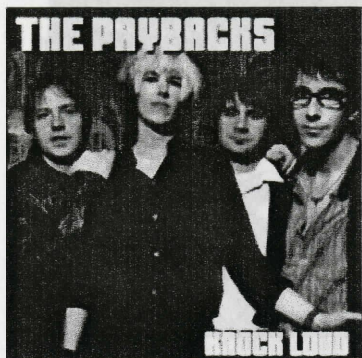
### **"The Mating Sounds of South American Frogs"**

Captain Oi! Records, [www.captainoi.com](http://www.captainoi.com)

PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

This is a re-release of the Testies first studio album, which was originally released in 1983 and has the original 12 tracks but also has bonus material! There is a total of 22 tracks and the last 10 tracks are all single versions, re-mixes and B-sides. This is a great fucking CD; it's not repetitious, power chord punk. The band mixes up and adds unusual elements not commonly found in punk rock. For example, on "Let's Burn" it starts out as a slow, acoustic, beautiful instrumental and then kicks into a blazing song about arson. "One Night Stand" is a fast, punk tune that suddenly slows down in the middle for a female vocal solo and then kicks back into the furious UK punk. Some of the outstanding tunes on here are "Easter Bank Holiday '83" which is balls out and fast as fuck, "Pissed Punks (Go For It)" which has a





strong funk influence and even has brass. My favorite though would have to be one of the bonus tracks, "Zombie Creeping Flesh", which has some excellent drumming and some unique guitar sounds. If you are a fan of Peter and the Test Tube Babies, you owe it to yourself to pick this disc up. -Lisa Marie

### **Speed Chicken**

#### **"Drei Mann Zum Hochbeamen"**

*Kamikaze Records*

*PO Box 1607 / 49114 Georgsmarienhuetten / Germany*

This CD is well worth the effort to seek out. The first track is instrumental and is a bizarre take on the Star Trek theme song. In fact, here you get a lot of instrumentals, more than half, and many of them are rearrangements of familiar songs. "Springfielder Polka" is a wild take on the Simpson's theme, and they also do an instrumental version of Elvis' "Viva Las Vegas." In addition, Speed Chicken also performs a theme song of their own, which goes with singer/guitarist Hank Ockmonick's comic hero, *Psycho Chicken*. In the booklet to this CD there is even an episode of this comic, but unfortunately for me, it is in German. Throughout the disc, Hank has a super-cool tone with his guitar, and obvious proficiency on it. On the vocal track, "Don't Wanna Talk," he even plays some slide guitar alongside his distorted vocals on this upbeat and strange bluesy number. In fact, I'd say this whole CD is pretty eccentric and refreshingly original. Perhaps my favorite song, "Chicken Shake," is another instrumental with a sort of Southern vibe mixed with an exotic, kind of Eastern European sound. Very cool. Check it out! - BL

### **The Resonars**

#### **"Lunar Kit"**

*Get Hip Recordings, www.gethip.com*

*P.O. Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317*

There is a lot of potential in this band, that plays a sort of early British rock in the vein of The Who or the Hollies. They are very talented, but the vocals don't always work so well for me, with a bunch of these songs sounding way too flower-childish, like "Way Way Way Out." For some reason, with the band name and album title, I was hoping for something more like Man or Astro-man. Not even close. It's not all that bad, though. If you're into the 60's, you might love it, because they are better than the fucking Beatles. "Little Spoiled Baby" is a very cool blues tune, and "Retro Rocket" has a real nice guitar hook. Plus, they are talented musicians, and put together some tight songs with fine guitarwork. Not something I am getting into much at all, though. - BL

### **Buzzsawyer**

#### **S/T CD**

*www.angelfire.com/band/buzzsawyer*

Guitar-centered, .45 caliber rock-n-roll, Buzzsawyer reminded me of a late 70's/early 80's metal band, and when I heard their cover of Kiss, I knew I wasn't far off. I'm not really a fan of Kiss, and

luckily they don't sound all that much like them. There are some really good songs on here lined up like 100 proof shots of degenerate rock-n-roll. Cool guitar and an overall good feel. Pretty decent stuff. - BL

### **The Spinballs**

#### **"Hell & High Water"**

*Black Sky Records, www.blackskyrecords.de*

*Berhard-von-Weimar-Str.5, 90768 Furth/Germany*

Wow, what a distinct sound these guys have. I can't really put my finger on what it is, but I really like this psycho group's style. Of course they have a kick ass bassist, the drummer is incredible, and the guitar has a real unique, almost southern flavor that matches the cool grimy vocals. There is a definite horror influence to these guys with songs like "This Coffin Ain't Big Enough", "Living Dead", and "Adopted By The Devil". These guys are fast and chaotic while remaining tight and unique. -Lisa Marie

### **Deadbillys**

#### **"Genuine Hellstomper"**

*www.deadbillys.com*

I never knew it was called voodoo country, but I really like the style of authentic country music touched by the cold hand of death. This disc has 14 tracks (it only lists 13) with shared vocals between Heather Dickson (bassist) and Bobby Dickson (guitar). You can definitely tell the Man in Black influences these folks, as Fred's vocals are almost uncanny. They cover some great songs like "Kawliga", "#13", "Halloween", and "Horse With No Name". There is also a great cover of Johnny Cash and June Carter's "Jackson" which is my favorite on here. The originals on here share the spooky, spaghetti western feel that is blood soaked into this disc. There is also a steel guitar and juice harp that adds a great touch. Kudos to Heather for sportin' the Nekromantix shirt! - Lisa Marie

### **The Ritchie Whites**

#### **"Snitches Get Stitches"**

*TKO Records, www.tkorecords.com*

*3126 W. Cary St. #303 Richmond, VA 23221*

These guys are pretty proficient garage rock musicians, however the vocals aren't too great. Maybe it's because the vocals seem a little low in the mix, or maybe it's because it sounds like he is whining instead of singing. His voice is high pitched and gets on my nerves so that I can't really listen to the disc. I'm sorry to the rest of the band. -Lisa

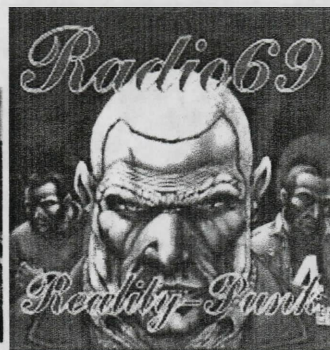
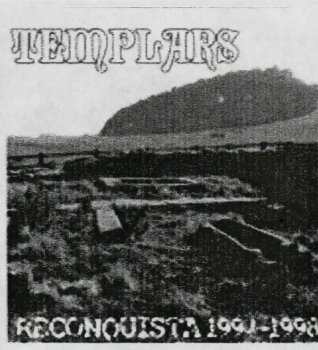
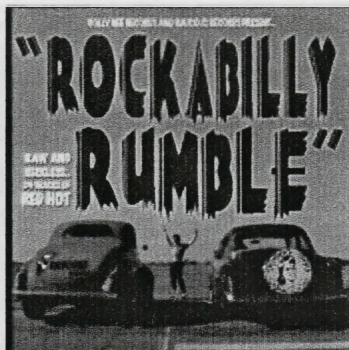
### **The Templars**

#### **"Reconquista 1994-1998"**

*GMM Records, POB 15234, Atlanta, GA 30333*

Here you get a bunch of the hard to find tracks from The Templars' various compilation contributions and 7"s. This is hard Oi! with





their trademark rough production (done in their own garage studio), and it has more punch than a 17<sup>th</sup> century port town tavern. All of the songs are original, with the exception of "It Ain't Right" taken from a tribute to The Oppressed. If you are familiar with The Templars, you know what to expect, but if not, this is New York Oi! with sandpaper vocals and guitars that sound hard without being over-laden with distortion. If you weren't lucky enough to pick up this stuff when it was available, this is your saving grace. - BL

## **Manifesto Jukebox**

### **"Remedy"**

**BYO Records**, [www.byorecords.com](http://www.byorecords.com)

**PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067**

I give these guys high marks for original sound because I can't think of anyone they sound like, though that may be because of my limited frame of reference. It is like a leftist art-punk with rough vocals and lots of arpeggios and weird chords. It definitely makes for an interesting listening experience. The lyrics are also well-crafted and deal with things such as the passivity of the consumer who is valued by their possessions and earning potential, and are fiercely competitive in an effort to simply carve a trail "from mediocrity to banality." They note the "atrocities of consumer-friendly minds" manipulated by something that calls itself a "corporate conscience" and leaves in its wake "corpses floating in the fountains of prosperity, riddled with hails of shrink-wrapped happiness." I really like a lot of the language they use, which bangs out familiar politics without ever mentioning any sort of -ism. Who can deny the beauty of a sentence like: "I want to make your flag fall in love with flames"? They make many points throughout the course of this disc, but I'll just touch on the idea that "disgust and rage are safety valves," that they'd rather "hurt than feel nothing at all." That would mean to conform to the desensitized docility and servile complicity that is apparent in people everywhere who are "surrounded by blossoming concrete" and shattered wills. - BL

## **Oxymoron**

### **"Feed The Breed"**

### **"Best Before 2000: The Singles"**

**GMM** [www.gmmrecords.com](http://www.gmmrecords.com) / **Knockout Records** [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de)

I'm sure you have heard of this German punk group that formed in 1992 and have been breakin' necks and taking names ever since, and if you aren't familiar with Oxymoron what are you waiting for? I was lucky enough to receive two discs from this band to review and I am really into both. *Feed The Breed* has 14 tracks plus an acoustic hidden track. Some of my favorite tracks are "Don't Call Me Cunt", "Under Pressure" and "Psychopath". *Best Before 2000: The Singles* contains all tracks previously released on vinyl 7"s, split EP's and various compilations. This disc has got some awesome tracks on it like "Dead End Generation", "Beware, Poisonous", "Crisis Identity", and "Borstal". You also get covers of Blitz's "New Age" and Cock Spar-rer's "A.U." along with a video clip of "Run From Reality". Some great music, pick these up. -Lisa Marie

## **Abandoned Pools**

### **"Humanistic"**

**Extasy Records**, [www.extasyrecords.com](http://www.extasyrecords.com)

If you like Smashing Pumpkins and Placebo then you'll like these guys. Described as a "carefully weaved tapestry of grunge, emo, punk rock and synth pop" they feature ex-Eels bassist Tommy Walter. I don't know where they get a "punk rock" influence, though; I don't hear it at all. While I can appreciate the musical skill that has gone into this disc, I can't really say this type of music gets me going. It kinda drones on in a depressing manner although the synth edge is pretty interesting. -Lisa Marie

## **Eddie & the Hot Rods**

### **"Thriller"**

**Captain Oi! Records**

**PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England**

It first struck me as very 70's, and I then read that it actually is. Released the first time in 1979, this is their third album, and apparently it is more over-produced than the previous ones. I get a feel of The Who, The Flys, and even Meatloaf for some reason. Probably none of those are anywhere close, since I don't listen to those bands, but that's where I put 'em. That said, there are some solid tunes on here, like *Echoes*, *Livin' Dangerously*, *Take It Or Leave It*, and so on. Some songs also use harmonica, and they are good musicians all around. I guess it just sounds too vanilla for me in most parts, especially the choruses. Two bonus cuts are included on here, the first of which, *Horror Through Straightness*, is instrumental and atmospheric like old Pink Floyd a bit. They apparently paved the way for punk rock by being a missing link between R&B and the Pub Rock movement according to Mark Brennan's liner notes, so their importance is documented. But while its not that bad, I just don't know anyone I'd recommend this to. - BL

## **Argy Bargy**

### **"Songs From the Streets"**

**Captain Oi! Records**

**PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England**

Argy Bargy are UK Oi! and have a hard, low vocal style that put me in the mind of a slower Mau Maus. The first song is a crushing skin-head stomp called "Attitude," followed shortly thereafter by "Immaterial Girl," their greatly altered version of Madonna's hit. Daryl Smith serves up some solid guitarwork, as well as the outstanding bass-lines throughout this recording. I'd say one of their only shortcomings is the tendency to repeat choruses too much, especially toward the end of songs. On "Stereotypes" vocalist Jon Richards sings about misconceptions people harbor about everything from cops to skinheads to Cockneys and things I don't even know what they are, like Tesco's and Scousers. "Broken Glass" is about revenge on woman abusers and "Suits You" explores the pathetic existence of people in upper-management, banking, and sales. You may think that's just stereotyping like the others he sings of elsewhere, but when



you take in "Saturday's Glory" you get a picture of a white-collar upper-class scrapper living a double life as a hoodlum. At any rate, this is a good album that will please most fans of skinhead rock-n-roll. - BL

## **Angelic Upstarts**

### **"Sons of Spartacus"**

Captain Oi! Records

PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

Having played for over two decades as an overtly Socialist punk band, Angelic Upstarts have now dished out their newest plate of anti-fascist rock-n-roll. Unfortunately, for my tastes, it is only lukewarm. The well-produced melodic mid-tempo punk doesn't grab me by the balls and twist (I like it when it does that). *The Great Divide* actually sounds like John Cougar Mellencamp meets Phillip Glass. It's not all bad news, though, I like Mensi's vocals and there is some decent guitar (albeit with an 80's cock-rock tone, not that that's necessarily bad). They also do a traditional singalong song, *Bandiera Rossa*, which is one of my favorites on here. Elsewhere, *Maxwell Dynasty* carries a bit of a ska beat and utilizes an organ to no grand effect. A couple songs are acoustic and folk-like, but still something crucial is missing for my tastes. Lyrically, they sing of action figures training kids toward war values and subservience, their own nazi opposition and the flack they get for it, and NATO being on the warpath again, leading to the sarcastic plea: "Come back Ronnie Reagan, you've just missed your cue." - BL

## **V/A- "Cosmic Trip vol. 2"**

6, Cour Des Trois Rois - 42 Rue Losserand 37100 Tours

I had never heard of these bands before, but I really dig this CD a lot. The first two tracks by *Bee Dee Kay* and *the Roller Coaster* have a wild 50's rock-n-roll sound with minimal and absolutely cool use of sax and psychotic rockabilly vocals. I especially like after their first cut the single guy clapping and yelling "yay!" Next up is even more lo-fi weirdness with *The Boeingtones* doing a reverbed blues riff with helium-voiced people talking and chanting here and there. This band's next track, "Graveyard Motel," has a cool, deep, creepy voice, and they finish up with "Nippon Weapon" that sounds like stripped down delta blues from a parallel universe. Very odd, and really cool. As for the surf bands on here like *The Wangs* and *The Undertakers*, both have a lo-fi psycho-surf sound that I love. *The Beachbreakers* donate 3 tracks also that are stripped down gritty rock-n-roll with female vocals, a surfy flavor, and a saxophone. Great. *The Atomic Spuds* keep the party going with their instrumental "Howlin' Mother Vibrations" and their crazy punk rockin' "Kill All The Fat Men." *Dare Dare Devil* also keep the spastic raw punk rock moving at top speed, while *The Barabas* take an almost ska approach and *The Astro-zombies* deliver more cool surf instrumentals, including covers of "Apache" and "Pipeline." I really dig the lo-fidelity, enthusiasm, and uniqueness of this comp. It's just damn cool. - BL

## **The Mutants / The Cannibals**

### **Split 7"**

<http://run.to/mutants>

<http://come.to/cannibals>

The cover of the Mutants' side is hilarious. Some fat redneck guy in front of a rebel flag with a T-shirt on that reads "Blow Me." Their track, *Monster Mutant*, covers their entire side with some stomping 60's fuzz guitar coupled with the exotic Cuban percussion of the dual drummers. They have an upbeat, instrumental, garage/psychedelic thing going on that is such a gestalt mixture of influences that it is hard to describe (surf, spy, jazz, Latin, etc). Very original, and executed perfectly. The Cannibals give us three tracks, which are also great instrumentals. The first, *Hardcore Prophet Stole My Virginity*, has that 60's garage feel with a little Spanish breakdown. Next you get an excellent version of *Malaguena*, then a great rocker in the vein



of Link Wray. All in all, this 7" is like a delicious piece of cheese, and more critical than your mother. - BL

## **Peter and the Test Tube Babies**

### **"Loud Blaring Punk Rock"**

Captain Oi! Records, [www.captainoi.com](http://www.captainoi.com)

PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England

These 18 songs were recorded originally in 1984. The CD sleeve tells the story of how they wrote, rehearsed, recorded, mixed, and drank copious amounts of alcohol, all in less than 24 hours. The result is more crude than what Exxon Valdesse left in the ocean. Punk rock raising its flaccid lips to reveal tobacco-stained teeth and rotting gums just before it bites you in the ass. And they have a sense of humor too. Songs about picking your nose (and eating it), being a man with breast cancer, masturbating vicars, and Tupperware parties are sure to cause the collapse of western civilization. Fuck it then. I'll listen to tunes like *Oral Annie* and *I Lust For the Disgusting Things in Life* as the world deteriorates into a primitive society of grunting flatulent freaks. - BL

## **Mad Heads**

### **"Mad in Ukraine"**

Crazy Love Records, [www.crazyloverecords.de](http://www.crazyloverecords.de)

c/o Guido Neumann, An Der Schmitte 9, 42781

These guys are amazing musicians and their style is all over the place, hooray! The first track, "Invasion (Aliens in Town)" is what I would call instrumental, surfably with awesome guitar work and sound clips from old b-horror, alien movies. The Mad Heads combine surf, rockabilly and jazz to make this a very enjoyable listen. Some outstanding tracks are "Ukrainian Horror Show" and "Tram In Lunacy," which both have unbelievable upright playing, "Undertaker's Party" and "Treat Me Bad" are both bluesy, jazzy tunes that add a nice variety. On some tracks the vocals are hard to get used to, but the music more than compensates for it. -Lisa Marie

## **Brassknuckle Boys / Riotgun**

### **"With Friends Like These..." split 7"**

Haunted Town Records, [www.hauntedtownrecords.com](http://www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647

The Brassknuckle Boys hit you straight off with the great opening track from their last full-length CD "American Bastard." Then you



get an un-released recording of the Pogue's *Thousands Are Sailing* done in a house while on tour with the old line-up of the band. The B-side is Riotgun, who play pretty good hard punk rock. *Glory* is a patriotic tune from their album "Shortcuts to Nowhere," and *Misinformation* is previously un-released. They are fairly decent, but the choruses get a little repetitive. - BL

## **The Penguin**

### **"Orang Utang Boogie"**

Black Sky Records, [www.blackskyrecords.de](http://www.blackskyrecords.de)  
Berhard-von-Weimar-Str.5, 90768 Furth/Germany

There are 4 songs on here, and aside from the drums, the Penguin himself plays all the instruments. The title track is a primal Bo Diddley-beat number delivered with his great throaty ape voice. The next track, *Boo Hoo*, is my favorite. It retains the gravelly vocals with a more up-tempo, John Waters movie vibe. *Pink Furry Pussy* on the B-side is a rugged rockabilly number that's loaded with charm and not over-produced, and *Ain't Got You* issues forth a 60's aura that sucks you in. Very cool stuff here. - BL

## **Stepsister**

### **"Autopilot Stuck on Get Down"**

Smog Veil Records, [www.smogveil.com](http://www.smogveil.com)

Hard, dirty, and dark, Stepsister pound it out with sledgehammer vocals and carbide-tipped guitars. They come off to me like the Laughing Hyenas with some Southern influence. This is not one for the pretty people fad-followers, but more for the people who chase their liquor with beer and wear the same stained T-shirt for days on end. Right up my alley. The CD chugs over you like a locomotive hauling toxic chemicals. Hailing from Cleveland, these miscreants were borne of the Cuyahoga River when it was aflame, and have served time in such notable hardcore punk bands as Knifedance, False Hope, Face Value, and more. Stepsister are out there somewhere and have a bullet with your name on it. - BL

## **Sixer**

### **"Beautiful Trash"**

BYO Records, [www.byorecords.com](http://www.byorecords.com)  
PO Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067

These guys can play good rock-n-roll with some country-inspired harmonies and riffs coupled with pop hooks and a little punk rock snarl. Choice tracks on this latest offering of these folks from Virginia are *Truckstop Jesus*, *RS3*, *Whiskey Sour*, and *Furious and Outdone*. They are greased and rolling with some good driving rhythms and some nice riffs from Southern-fried over-drive guitars. A bunch of songs on here are a lot more pop-oriented, though, and don't do a lot for me. It might just be over-produced. I'm just not hooked like I really want to be. However, they obviously can put together and play some decent songs. - BL

## **V/A - Warped Tour 2002 Compilation**

Side One Dummy Records, [www.sideonedummy.com](http://www.sideonedummy.com)  
6201 Sunset Blvd. Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028

Oh boy. There is some good stuff on here, some great stuff even (balls out punk), but there is also some reeeeeeally bad music on here (horrible emo/pop punk). This is a two-disc compilation of all the bands on the 2002 Vans Warped Tour and each disc has an impressive 25 songs. Disc One starts off with "Three On Speed", a fast track from NOFX and then goes into a Bosstones tune. Some of the more memorable tracks on this side are Swingin' Utters "Pills & Smoke", The Casualties "Nightmare", and a band I never heard before Manic Hispanic and their song "I want to be a Cholo". On disc two we have a band I'm not familiar with but I really like called Madcap with their punk rockin' "These Old Feel-

ings." You also have the amazing "What's Left Of the Flag" by Flogging Molly which has got to be my favorite track on this whole damned thing. Speaking of damned things, The Damned are featured on here with "Lookin' For Action". Overall, though, I wouldn't wait in line to buy it (especially since Sum 41, The Ataris and Lagwagon are on it, ick). -Lisa Marie

## **The Donettes**

### **"Pitchin' Woo"**

[www.thedonettes.com](http://www.thedonettes.com)

Putting this in your player is like putting your faith in a higher being and gleefully discovering that there actually is a god. Holy shit in a reverend's rectum, this is good stuff!! This rockabilly band from Seattle features three gals, two guys and some great songs. Most of them deal with sex in some way, shape, or manner, and let me tell you, these are some perverted girls. From the hilarious lyrics on "Action Slacks" that deal with seeing a nice package through polyester pants, to the clever and not-so-subtle overtures on "Hey Little Boy Scout," you'll be hooked. It's not just the wild-sex-crazed lyrics that carry this disc either. The production is done extremely well, leaving it dirty, vital and old-fashioned yet not too muddy. Also, Rebecca Kemberling's vocals can be siren-like and beautiful on the honky tonking "Not Right With You," while elsewhere being wild and dynamic on tunes like "Oh Boy" and "Tom Cat." Hell, she can even yodel. The back-up vocals on this are great fun too. You also get a really kick-ass instrumental that would go well with dirt track racing or moonshine mischief. I love this stuff. - BL

## **Nick Curran and the Nightlives**

### **"Nightlife Boogie"**

Texas Jamboree Records, [www.texasjamboree.com](http://www.texasjamboree.com)  
PO Box 161148, Austin, TX, 78716

Soulful 50's-inspired blues done perfectly; almost certainly this will be one of your favorite albums. Simply awesome. Nick Curran's explosive guitar stylings and warm, vintage tone throughout these 14 tracks, especially on the instrumental "Space Guitar," will give you goose bumps, as will the thick grittiness of his voice that seems more appropriately matched to an seasoned black singer than a relatively young white guy. Also on this recording you'll be driven to ecstasy by the superb saxophone players and a wickedly good pianist that really fills out the sound. Fans of blues and roots rock alike will love this. Damn! - BL

## **Phantom 409**

### **"Mustang Ranch" EP**

Jungle Records, [www.junglerecords.fi](http://www.junglerecords.fi)  
PO Box NO 9, 28301 Pori, Finland

Cool vocals, raw swamp-grass production, juicy guitar licks in all the right spots, and catchy song-writing make this some exceptional stripped-down rockabilly. The six songs here leave you wanting more. Their politics may not be my thing at all from what I can make out in their song "Democrat for President" (not that I'm a democrat), but their music certainly is right up my alley. "Hot Rod Mama" and "Smooth Ride are my favorite cuts, along with the smarmy swagger of "New Raunchy." Lots of attitude and character make this a good slab of raunchy rock-n-roll from Finland. - BL

## **The Amazombies**

### **"Bitches & Stitches"**

[www.xcommunicated.biz](http://www.xcommunicated.biz)

Formed in 2000, The Amazombies are a 3-piece from Seattle that crank out some really solid punk rock with thick, distorted guitars and appealing melodic female vocals. Actually, the drummer pro-



vides the only male vocals on "That's Right." The lyrics throughout take a personal, genuine approach with songs about relationships, losing family members, drinking at the bar, and just trying to make some sense of life. There is also a cool re-make of "Riot in Cell Block 9," which is the only cover on this full-length. The more I listen to this disc, the more I am liking it. The Amazombies are a cut above the average punk band. - BL

### **Annita**

#### **"What Good'll It Do Me"**

*Continental Records Services, www.continental.nl  
Vadaring 92, 6702 EB Wageningen, The Netherlands*

Annita from Holland plays honky tonk and vintage country with equal doses of feeling and authenticity. This album is loaded with guest performers including appearances by Nick Curran, Dave Gonzalez (Paladins), and Kevin Smith (High Noon). The real gold here, though, is her voice that brings new life to the 19 old-time songs covered on here. Whether it be a honky tonk ballad like "This Should Go On Forever" or the rockabilly sizzle of "Friction Heat," Annita electrifies and charms her way throughout. Some songs do satisfy better than others, but there is more than enough here to make this highly recommendable for fans of traditional, real deal country. - BL

### **The Blue Moon Boys**

#### **"Johnny Lighter" EP**

*Beat Time, PO Box 445 Zanesville, IN 46799*

Here we have 3 tracks from the forthcoming full length "The Mud, The Blood & The Beer" and the last track is over 30 minutes of a live show at the Embassy Theatre. "Little Black Book" is a honky tonkin' tune while "Toss, Turn & Roll" has a more rockabilly feel. "Johnny Lighter" is more of a straight up rockin' tune that has several guest star musicians including a harmonica and piano player. As for the live set you get a broad range of BMB tricks from a Spanish influenced song to a Beatles cover. The guitarist is amazing and Nic on vocals is a strange mix between Elvis and a 12-year-old in need of Ritalin. I recommend seeing these folks live, as their CD doesn't do them justice even though the CDs are very worthy of picking up. -Lisa Marie

### **The Jolt**

**S/T**

*Captain Oi! Records  
PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA England*

Formed in 1976 in Scotland, The Jolt were one of the very first mod bands anywhere. At first they described themselves as "punk" but they soon found that word led to cancellations at clubs and bad press. They have been compared to the likes of The Who, The Kinks and The Stones and were often thought to be a rip-off of The Jam. On this CD you get 19 tracks and 7 of them are bonus songs. These guys have a nice, early punk sound and in my opinion are way better musicians than those they were compared to. Probably my favorite track is the cover of "Route 66" which has raw, snotty vocals and great guitar and bass. I guess these guys disbanded right before the big break for mod/punk bands and never got to capitalize from their effort. It's too bad they didn't go down in history as one of the bands that gave birth to this movement because they deserve it. -Lisa Marie

### **The Hotrod Hillbillies**

#### **"Let's Alcoholass"**

*www.hotroddhillbillies.com*

I'd describe these fellas as white trash-abilly, in a good way! They are proficient musicians and the vocals are pretty decent and the majority of their songs revolve around typical, hillbilly topics. Songs about race cars, whiskey, farm animals, bitches and a comfortable couch all

fit into this 11 track disc. "Chickens & Pigs" is probably my favorite track which starts off slower, in a kind of bluesy, southern way. Then it kicks in fast and you hear the singer say "I've got chickens, I've got pigs" then it goes back into the blues mode again. Overall, these guys produce a comical, southern 'billy, sound that is fun to listen to. - Lisa Marie

### **Red Hot Poker Dots**

**S/T**

*www.redhotpokerdots.com / redhotpokerdots@hotmail.com*

There's 7 tracks on this and I can only listen to one all the way through and that's the instrumental. I feel bad because they are putting forth a seemingly genuine effort, but I can't get into this at all. There are two singers and what the guy lacks for in style, she more than makes up for in annoyance in vocals. Although there is a funny track about a yodeling punk in which she yodels...quite badly. I'm sorry. - Lisa Marie

### **V/A - "Worldwide Tribute To The Real Oi! vol. 2"**

*Knock Out Records, www.knock-out.de  
Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken Germany*

This double LP also comes with a glossy booklet in which each band tells what Oi! has meant to them, as well as notes on the project by co-coordinators Roger Miret and Onno Cromag. Here you have mostly newer bands covering classic Oi! songs by many of the great early eighties British groups. The bands come from the U.S., England, Germany, Belgium, and Holland, and vary in their interpretations of this classic material. Roger Miret and the Disasters do "New York Belongs to Me," Brightside does a powerful 4-skins, and Hard-sell carry on the Oi! banner with great covers of Burial and Vicious Rumors. Harley Cromag & Friends do stinging versions of Cockney Rejects and Last Resort, the latter of which gets capably covered again by Death Threat, who in turn also pay homage to Combat 84. To complete the Last Resort triad you even get Last Resort themselves covering Warzone, and Millwall Roi from that band doing Agnostic Front. Other great cuts are by Beans covering Blitz, Powerhouse covering The Strike, and Funeral Dress doing The Business. Then there are decent cuts by Vison doing Cocksparrer, Second Chance NL doing hardcore treatment to The Blood, Murphys Law tipping the glass on "Drinking and Driving," and also The Bouncing Souls taking on Cockney Rejects. I have to say this is a pretty good comp, with only a handful of tracks that don't move me. - BL

### **Tom Waits**

#### **"Blood Money"**

*Anti Records (Epitaph)*

There is a dark, 1920's dustbowl, carnivalesque aspect to this CD that holds an earthly, primitive, and carnal appeal that is both ominous and sharply emotive. It is as though he's singing with his creepy yet alluring voice from the tar pits of our collective past, eerily summoning memories like hitchhiking strangers. The CD is actually based on the socio-political play "Woyzeck" that was written by the poet Georg Buchner, and later adapted and directed by Robert Wilson. It is based on a true story of a German soldier who goes insane from "bizarre army medical experiments and infidelity, which led him to murder his lover." The lyrics read like dark poetry of loves and hopes dashed against hard rocks. Like Waits' says, "I like a beautiful song that tells you terrible things." Early on, he enters these sanguine pleas:

The Face forgives the mirror  
The worm forgives the plow  
The questions begs the answer  
Can you forgive me somehow  
Maybe when our story's over  
We'll go where it is always spring



The band is playing our song again  
And all the world is green

However, on *The Part You Throw Away*, and as a even more broken man he sings, "I want that beggar's eyes / a winning horse / a tidy Mexican divorce / St. Mary's prayers / Houdini's hands / and a barman who always understands." The music evokes at least as much atmosphere and feeling as the lyrics, with a variety of crooked beats and instruments including piano, accordion, clarinet, violin, cello, harmonica, marimba, and more. A few tracks are instrumental, like the demented "Knife Chase" and the spooky calliope instrumental that makes me think of the movie *City of Lost Children*. Waites plays it, the 1929 pneumatic calliope with 57 whistles that can be heard up to five miles away, and which apparently is quite a drain to play. At any rate, this is a brilliant album. When I die I want to be listening to this and drinking scotch. -BL

## **The Slackers**

### **"Wasted Days"**

*Hellcat Records*

This latest offering from New York's finest Ska emissaries further dips their latitude into not only the warm waters of Jamaican Reggae, but also into the sweltering Bible Belt of the American South with their offering of "Sermon" to lift your spirits high above the self-effacing schlock of humdrum religion. You do not simply receive the gospel according to the "Reverend Q-Maxx and the 420 Short Bus Tabernacle Choir of E. 3rd Street," but it is delivered to you in true Southern preacher style, complete with rallying "hallelujahs" and cheesy church organ sure to elevate you to a point where your soul can commingle with lofty ideals of self-affirmation and inner-peace. Along with this enlightenment comes some songs illuminated with a remarkable interweaving of some pedal steel guitar and violin, further challenging the extant boundaries of where Ska can go.

In fact, while this disc retains the classic Ska feel, it also fluidly incorporates some dub, country, soul, and even a touch of 40's jazz influences, which simultaneously relaxes and keeps you interested throughout (a tricky balance to be sure). You get the sense that there's no rush, and often songs are allowed to expand beyond the typical three minute mark so you can really get involved, whether dancing or reclining. "Pets of the World" and "Tales of the Mongoose" dish up the delicious dub, while "The Nurse" issues some good trumpeting and pretty odd lyrics: "God isn't coming, Sweet Jesus has told me, says if you lost him to please send a basket, fire your musket over my casket." The jazzy "Old Days" comes off so smooth and mellow, with great sax and trombone soloing bundled with velvet vocals, that it will soothe your arthritis acquired from the tension of years spent clutching lesser CDs. Elsewhere, "Dave's Friend" wanes serious, dealing with the topic of sticking by a friend stuck on drugs; "I may not be a friend you want, but I'm a friend that you need." While it is doubtlessly difficult to pick a favorite cut off this release, perhaps the pinnacle of Slackers accomplishment is the cover of Bon Jovi's "Wanted Dead or Alive" done with their ultra-suave Ska stylings, of course. -BL

## **Flogging Molly**

### **"Drunken Lullabies"**

*Side One Dummy Records, www.sideonedummy.com*  
6201 Sunset Blvd. Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028

Following their phenomenal debut, "Swagger," I was curious to see if Flogging Molly would again hit that high mark, and indeed they have composed a sophomore album equally worthy of praise. "Drunken Lullabies" continues in their tradition of pairing earnest, emotive, and often poetic lyrics with their inspired rendering of the celtic/punk rock hybrid. Whereas contemporaries such as the Dropkick Murphys proudly weigh in heavier on the punk rock, Flogging Molly are foremost Irish, fully armed with all of the Irish folk musical amenities (barring perhaps the bag-pipe). Singer and primary song-writer Dave King sings songs that tell stories of love, death, struggles, days past

and lessons learned... and delivers these lyrical gems with a tenacity and passion that raises the blood-pressure. The last track, "The Son Never Shines (On Closed Doors)," is a beautiful melancholy acoustic number about an aging mother's longing to see her son.

She said the son never shines on closed doors  
I open to find only hurricanes blow

Take me away back to the green fields of May

Because the son never shines on closed doors

Death Comes like a thief in the night

To steal while you sleep

Your soul's flickering light

Well maybe it's then

She said, I'll see you again

Because the sun never shines on closed doors

Elsewhere, the lyrics on the title track poses the question "Must it take a life for hateful eyes to glisten once again / Cause we find ourselves in the same old mess / Singin' drunken lullabies." From there, "What's Left of the Flag" touches on the death of King's father when he was ten, and also personalizes political strife in Ireland (he grew up in Dublin), while "May the Living Be Dead (In Our Wake)" reveals a appealing sentimentality as he sings of a girl: "Her breath pure as whiskey my heart fell in love / Now the devil is courtin' a different tune / And I laugh as his tears wash the rain." Actually, pulling quotes out of the context of the song somewhat weakens their impact, and it's hard to decide where to make the incisions, but you get an idea.

King does not write all of the songs here, however, as there is a cover of "The Rare Ould Times" by *Pete St. John*. Also Nathen Maxwell (electric bass) has written and sang one of my favorites on this platter of plenty, "Cruel Mistress," a coarse sea-faring tune that has perhaps a bit of a Spanish feel. Another stellar song on this release, "Another Bag of Bricks," brings the Pogues' "Turkish Song of the Damned" to mind. However, they do enough to embellish this exotic gypsy-inflected track so as not to appear overtly derivative. In fact, I'd say Flogging Molly has carved a niche for themselves, not only as top notch musicians and song-writers, but as a band with their own distinctive sound and style... and perhaps best of all, enough heart to fill that vapid arena housing the majority of modern music

**\*\* Additional music notes:** Knockout Records has also release vinyl versions of UK punkers **The Yobs** "Worst of the Yobs" and **Slaughter and the Dogs** "Beware of..." Contact them at: Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken Germany, [www.knock-out.de](http://www.knock-out.de). I also want to highly recommend contacting the excellent psycho/rockabilly band **7 Shot Screamers** and getting a copy of their CD: [the7ss@aol.com](mailto:the7ss@aol.com), PO Box 947, High Ridge, MO 63049, [www.rockabilly.net/7ss](http://www.rockabilly.net/7ss)). And finally, please pick up an issue of *Blue Suede News* for the best coverage of traditional and neo-rockabilly, blues, honky tonk, and more ([www.bluesudenews.com](http://www.bluesudenews.com)).

## **Book Reviews**

### **The Truth About Elvis Aron Presley- In His Own Words**

By Donald Hinton, M.D. with "Jesse"

*American Literary Press*

8019 Belair Rd. Ste. 10, Baltimore, Maryland 21236

So I'm at work and a blurb comes on for the 10 o'clock news and they say there is some doctor in Kansas who claims to currently treat Elvis. Needless to say, I am glued to the tube at 10 sharp waiting to see what this is all about. Dr. Hinton is interviewed and he says he is treating Elvis for chronic pain and he has become good friends with him over the past five years and that Elvis wants him to write his memoirs. Fox 8 News decides they are going to hire professionals to check out the Doctor's evidence to see what they come up with. They find that the handwriting sample can not be confirmed nor denied to be The King's. here



is a photo of Elvis at his current age (67) with his grandson and it is found that the photo was not altered in any way. The Doctor claims to have DNA evidence that he is treating Elvis and Fox 8 say they are testing it out. I went home and ordered the book that the Doctor and Elvis allegedly wrote together. The book arrived and I read it completely and thoroughly more than one time. I was very skeptical about the validity of this book and after reading it I still don't know what to make of it. The "biography" starts out with an introduction by Elvis stating the purpose of the book (informing his fans what really happened on August 16, 1977), and then he goes into how he left so many clues that he wasn't really dead. These clues are what some may call coincidences, but Elvis states they are a result of a carefully planned out numerology hijinx.

All throughout the book Elvis claims that his death was not a hoax and he credits his few good friends and praises them the entire time. He goes over the top trying to convince the readers that he is alive and to iron out any details that may prove otherwise. For example, he says the picture doesn't really look like him because he had plastic surgery. His handwriting isn't dead on because he now has horrible arthritis. The book isn't an informational and factual as I was hoping it would be. Where is the DNA evidence? Why hasn't he come out in a more public manner? Why hasn't Lisa Marie heard about this? And why would he chose to have a chintzy, 88 page booklet written by his physician instead of his spokesperson, a real author, or someone more reliable like his daughter? It's too easy to assume it's a money scam because of these questions I have and therefore I don't believe it to be true. I mean, if Elvis were still alive his re-entrance into the world wouldn't be a little five-minute thing on the evening news. Elvis, if you are alive and that book is your attempt to apologize to your fans, it's more of an insult. No one would be tickled more if you were still alive than me; I just find it hard to swallow. -Lisa Marie

## **Glue & Ink Rebellion**

**By Sean Carswell**

*Gorsky Press, P.O. Box 320504, Cocoa Beach, FL 32932*

Sean Carswell's collection of short stories uses simple language lacking in pretension but glowing with an understated eloquence. He has the cynical humor of an outsider, but one who isn't too jaded to see something good now and then in the crumpled beer can that is modern life. I found his style of fiction easy to relate to, thoroughly absorbing, and often revelatory of some sort of subtle epiphany or impacting beauty. Each story comes off as a peak experience squeezed from the mundane everyday of under-class existence. Perhaps that is what makes his writing so powerful to me, as it reminds you to step back and see the aesthetic that occurs when you go against the grain. You get tales of roommates settling household disputes and establishing hierarchies through backyard boxing, or hanging out with a group of Hopi construction workers after being stood up at a bar. In "Couch Space" a story about being the "sucker who owns a truck" when someone needs help moving starts to take on a philosophy of vehicles and class when the landlord's BMW is mistaken, much to his chagrin, for a Miata by a pretty young tenant. "Nowhere, Alabama" is about being stranded due to car trouble in a small town and seeing a place that, for the time being, has its own identity with small community owned stores, and isn't yet over-run by corporate franchises. He goes on to describe the layout of his generic hometown, with the Walgreen's, Burger King, Firestone Tires, and Blockbuster, in a way that "you could read that description ... and wonder if you were from the same place" (73). "Springtime Tallahassee Noon" weaves in a surfing metaphor about choosing the wave you want to ride to mirror how life also comes in waves that you either wait out or choose to follow. I could go on and on about the ideas and characters embedded in this collection, but that might take away from your enjoyment in reading the book for yourself. Though these stories contain much that is thought-provoking, they don't ever get too bogged down in rhetoric or come off as disconnected academic expositions. I actually read the entire book in a day; I found it so enjoyable. Highly recommended. - BL

## **Zine Reviews**

### **Razorcake**

*PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042, www.razorcake.com*

This is a great bi-monthly fanzine that isn't overly limited in its coverage. You can read interviews with Shag, Deadbolt, Swingin' Utters, Jello Biafra, Smut Peddlers, and more, just to give you an idea. While the interviews range from serious and thought-provoking to sometimes amusingly chaotic (The Adicts come to mind), I found the interview with The Beltones especially engaging. In addition you get lots of columns with varying degrees of allure to give the publication even more personality, including regular contributions by Rich Mackin and Sean Carswell among several others. Of course, they also do lots of zine, book, and record reviews. The layout is thick with a glossy cover filled by newsprint, much like Flipside used to be. This is definitely a good one to seek out. - BL

### **Under The Volcano**

*www.underthevolcano.net*

Here you get a good newsprint zine out of NY w/ color cover, columns, reviews, classifieds, and plenty of interviews. Bands featured in #68 include A Global Threat, Jones Crusher, The Reunion Show, Thrice, Prevent Falls, and also a great conversation with Jello Biafra. Not a bad fanzine. - BL

### **SLUG**

*www.slugmag.com*

This is a free zine for the Salt Lake City Underground that has been going for 13 years. You get interviews with national and local bands, zine writers, filmmakers, and more. Also included are short fiction, concert previews, letters from readers, reviews, and articles. Their anniversary issue includes an absorbing interview with the local chapter of Indymedia.org, a comprehensive listing Utah bands, a feature on local snowboarders, a local gossip column, an interview with the Supersuckers, and more. Check it out. - BL

## **LIVE SHOWS**

### **The Pit Bulls**

### **Lords of the Highway Hellvis**

### **G-Spot Tornadoes**

*April 5, 2002 @ Hi-Five Club, Columbus, OH*

This show kicked off with the G-spot Tornadoes, who did a really solid set of gritty rock-n-roll that did well to give a foothold on what came next in the way of crushing Dixie-fried rock-n-roll a la Hellvis. Having some Jim Beam and beers freshly in me, I was firmly prepared to embrace their sinful sermon without resistance. Seriously, this was a great set of some of the hardest, dirtiest whiskey-rock there is... and that's the truth. Next on the devil's checklist came Lords of the Highway, who also successfully steered some drifting souls in the direction of sonic salvation with their premium blend of rockabilly, surf, punk, and straight-up energy. Once they finished up, I was well-primed and liquor-lubricated for the intense reaming that was The Pitbulls. If you like explosive hardcore eighties style, you'll like these guys almost as much as I did. They reminded me a bit of Vampire Lezbos, at least that's what I thought of in my drunken stupor. The singer, who also fronts a talented and hilarious Columbus gospel band (Broken Circle Gospel Deluxe), had certainly taken sabbatical from the Lord's work. He entered the stage in a bra and ski mask, and a very bad attitude... you know, not enough bands these days taunt and insult their crowds like an abusive freak on a tirade. There was again, just that 80's sort of nihilistic irreverence that I love - and their music had so much bite, I didn't realize they had played some songs twice. The guitarist, who also fronts Cult of the Psychic Fetus, had a great sound, while the bass player was dressed like a school girl, albeit an ugly transvestite version of one. I may have been exceedingly drunk this night, but damn it if it wasn't a great





show. I think the Pit Bulls are planning to release a 7" soon, so seek that out like the holy grail if it sounds anything like they did here. - BL

## Southern Culture on the Skids

### The Paladins

#### Satan's Satellites

June 9, 2002 @ Beachland, Cleveland, OH

I arrived while Satan's Satellites were already into their surf inspired, organ-laden instrumental/60's garage rock set. I headed for the bar to start my night with the first of several Little Kings and chatted with a few friends I ran into. I had never seen the Paladins but have heard tremendously good things about them, and so I was really looking forward to seeing them tonight. The trio played a mix of blues and rock n roll that scorched my soul and left me beggin' for more. Songs included in the set were "Powershake", "She Tears Me Up", "Tore Up" (which I was this night, whew!), "Big Mary's" and "Mercy." While Dave is one of the best guitarists I have had the pleasure of seeing live; the upright bass player Thomas is one of the strangest. I mean, I have seen a lot of unusual antics on the bass, but Thomas is peculiar in a way all his own, I think it's the faces he makes. Nonetheless, a very enjoyable set. Southern Culture came up next and I kept trying to get them to play my favorite song "Wish I Was In Love", but it was a no-go. They did however play all their standards starting off with Link Wray's "Run Chicken Run" and then went into "House of Bamboo" "Eight Piece Box" "Shotgun", "Camel Walk" and "Soul City" among many others. A special treat was a surf medley of Dick Dale and Link Wray songs that got the crowd twistin' and grinnin'. About half way through their set I need to piss like a racehorse so off I went. When I got to the restroom there was a girl passed out on the floor in her own vomit. Needless to say, I sympathized with her because I had been in her spot

several times. Well, maybe not that exact spot. I helped her out of the bathroom into the hall where she proceeded to vomit not only on herself and the floor, but myself as well. I drug her outside where she got plenty of fresh air and water, and I basked in the inebriated glory of being a Good Samaritan. - Lisa Marie

## Flogging Molly

### The Slackers

#### Avoid One Thing

April 28, 2002

The Agora Theatre, Cleveland, Ohio

What a pairing of bands! *The Slackers*, who as most people probably already know, have been around over ten years as one of the leading ska bands in the scene today, melding aspects of reggae, soul, swing, rocksteady, and jazz together, to assure their take on the genre is not just a bland reiteration of something familiar. Nor does this band rely on the pop-punk-ska gimmickry that once heated up the charts and made 13 year-old girls swoon. Instead, what you get is seven talented musicians doing it their way, taking leads from such diverse influences as the *Skatalites*, *Bob Marley*, *Lee Perry*, *Bob Dylan*, and *Curtis Mayfield*. Knowing them to be from New York City, I was pretty confused hearing Organist/Vocalist Victor Rugiero mention something about being from Medina, which is a small town Southwest of Cleveland that happens to be where Lisa works. Anyway, this band has been getting lots of attention in recent years, even appearing on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," and it seems the attention is well-warranted. Their show in Cleveland this Sunday night showcased some of the diverse and original songs from their new CD, "Wasted Days," as well as several tunes from their past releases. They not only treated the crowd to some excellent traditional Jamaican ska during a long and riveting instrumental, but also threw in a Calypso tune that kept the crowd in motion. At one point the whole band dropped to their knees to observe the mock sermon delivered by their vocalist, who goes by Q-Maxx 420, with all the inflections of a Southern Baptist, about having faith in yourself. Apparently the gospel penetrated the obdurate crowd, because the next song made a sea of heads bob in the choppy waters of the syncopated rhythms. Vocals were shifted around during the evening between Q-Maxx, Victor, and Glen - each with

their own style and range, helping to keep people from becoming too habituated to the soothing Rocksteady sounds. I dug T.J. Scanlon's almost

Chuck Berry guitar tone, and actually each musician was quite talented. However, my hat goes off to their saxophonist, David Hillyard, most of all. He got some sounds from that thing I didn't know were possible, and really soloed with a great feel for jazz.

Being the first time I've made it out to see *The Slackers* live, I have to say that I left the Agora rather impressed, and somewhat depressed I hadn't checked them out before during one of the many times they've played the much smaller Grog Shop.

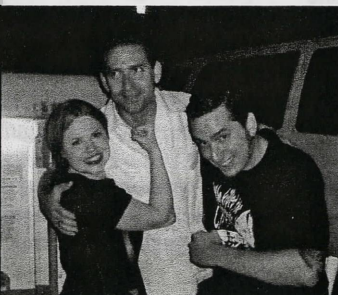
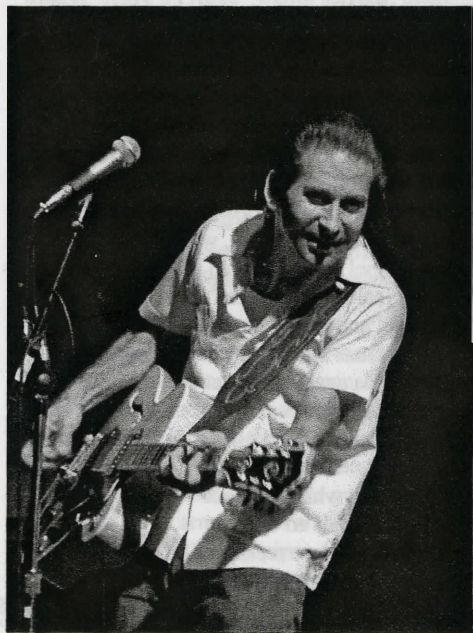
The last time I saw *Flogging Molly* was over a year ago at a small venue in Columbus, (Little Brothers), and it was a show I will remember for years as one of the best I've experienced. I wondered if this show would match the effect of that one, being in a larger, less-intimate venue with worse acoustics, but my fears were laid to rest as they hit the stage running, and most sound problems were worked out after the first song. Actually, they translated easily to the bigger venue, even having a blackout before they came on, coupled with some riling intro music the way the *Ramones* used to do. After that, they dominated the stage for the next two hours with their special brew of traditional Irish folk and blazing punk rock kick. Robert Schmidt went back and forth between mandolin and his banjo, Bridget Regan on the fiddle and tin whistle played exceptionally, and Hensley squeezed fresh notes out of his accordion. They also had trumpet player for "Delilah," which had huge crowd singalong response... "why, why, why... Delilah?!" He also came back to the stage for their last festive tune of the night, "Sentimental Johnny," which has a sort of Mexican party sound to it.

Dave King, (vocals, acoustic guitar), fronts the band with equal parts charisma, energy, and charm as they went through many of the outstanding songs from their new album "Drunken Lullabies," interspersed with tunes from their debut CD, "Swagger." While the crowd relished it all, the more familiar old favorites really had the biggest response on the floor. Crowd favorites were songs like "Selfish Man," "Devil's Dance Floor," "Worst Day Since Yesterday," and of course, "Black Friday Rule," with its cruching guitar solo and rousing fiddle breakdowns. From the new album, "Rebels of the Sacred Heart" also whipped into the crowd like a self-flagellating Catholic. Everyone got a kick when the lyrics came to "now bless me father for I have sinned" and he added an aside, "but then again father, so have you..."

When King was not singing and strumming the guitar, he'd pick up a bodhrán and keep the beat while high-stepping all across the stage. This night he wasn't drinking from a pitcher of Guinness like last time I saw him, but rather drinking straight whiskey from a plastic cup. As always, they seemed to have a great time playing, which infects you by proximity.

*Flogging Molly* have a dynamic performance made intense not just by musical skill and passion, but their ability to write empathetic songs

Photos: Dave Gonzalez (Paladins)





with depth and meaning that are pieced together perfectly with the music. Plus they also go from dead quiet to explosive energy outburst quite often, giving you a little adrenaline injection.

As a couple of the best bands out there in a sea of banality, you really have to see *Flogging Molly* and the *Slackers* live to fully appreciate them, although their discs are quite fantastic too.

*Avoid One Thing* had opened this show with some Massachusetts mid-tempo melodic punk rock. They are apparently an all-star band with members of *The Mighty Mighty Bosstones*, *Darkbuster*, *Pilfers* and the *Raging Teens*. I never heard of them prior to this brief exposure, but what I caught of them wasn't bad despite missing most of their set. - BL

### **Cave Catt Sammy**

*Beachland Tavern, Cleveland*

*April 17, 2002*

This was Beau Sample's (singer/upright) 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, but I think I was doing more celebrating than he was. It is kind of my tradition that when Cave Catt Sammy comes to town; I get extremely drunk on Little Kings, which are the cheapest way to get a buzz on at the Beachland. A regular beer is \$2.50 and only 12 ounces, while you can two little Kings for a buck a piece, and get 16 ounces. Just a tip. Man, I sound like a lush, but really I am just poor and resourceful. Anyway, Cave Catt Sammy play traditional rockabilly and honky tonk, and are easily one of the best bands doing it today. They come off with soul, energy, and bundles of skill. Stephen Scott's leads are dead on, and Beau can really slap with the best of them. My good friend Gabe enjoyed their set immensely also, although he doesn't remember it. It is things like ripping your shirt off of your body like the incredible hulk and dancing like a nut that really livens up a show.... especially the swing/breakdancing combination that even got the band smiling. He also decided he preferred the company of women while pissing, rather than using the men's room all night. Gabe is a strange man full of complexities and intrigue. That's why we love him. - BL

### **4th Annual Rockabilly Freakshow**

**Featuring Psychocharger,**

**Bob's Country Bunker,**

**Lords of the Highway**

*At Nemeth's Lounge, Painesville, Ohio*

*April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002*

Bob's Country Bunker started the night off with some country music fused with elements of surf and blues. They are one of the only bands from the Youngstown area that plays this sort of music, and the guitarist/singer, Joe Shelby, really impressed me with his guitar skills. I especially liked the instrumental tunes that they churned out. After them was Psychocharger with their demented set of rockabilly

affixed to a dark industrial frame. Sandpaper vocals scraping along the heavy chugging of distorted guitars with tape loops going in the background make these guys one of the most unique acts out there. With a regular industrial band you might expect songs about dejected godlessness funneled through the façade of true evil and contrived angst, Psychocharger instead treat you to tunes about Elvis and graverobbers from outer space, delivered by a man wearing a bondage mask, a painted superman emblem, and little else. You gotta love it. After them came the Lords of the Highway, who put on a good show as usual. This time, however, I sensed something wrong after about five songs. A disturbance in the force, if you will. It was then that I knew that Mike, their Jedi drummer, and myself would clash in a deadly bout to determine the fate of the world. In the corners I awaited, under the cloak of shadows and murky bar smoke. As he pounded the drums I seeped into his mind and infected the very core of his being. His soul would be my trophy as I could see his eyes run red with murder. Our battle to the death would happen indeed, but not tonight. This night his brain was as my own thumb, to flex and bend according to my personal sickly whims. Just as I had him primed to execute the two other members of the so-called Lords of the Highway in heinous ways, a voice in my head begged, "why are you doing this? Why... why?" My concentration was wrecked with beautiful images of puppies, and children playing with wooden boats in city gutters. It seemed a rainbow had wrapped around the dark void at my center, vanquishing my plan to destroy all that was good in this world. I knew then that the force was strong in this drummer, and that swaying him would not be so easy as I had hoped. But rest assured, Michael Chipchak, I will turn you into the wicked scoundrel that you always feared becoming. That person inside who likes horror movies a little too much, who burned insects in the school yard with a magnifying glass, who hates the feeling of guilt when an inexplicable impulse has you bite the head off a rat... that person will attain sovereignty of your body and smash the goodness out like pulp inside a juicer. 'Till we meet again, Chipchak... may the seeds of hatred grow fertile in your belly. - BL

### **The GC5**

**Stepsister**

**The Thumbs**

**The Corporates**

*@ Bernies Distillery, Columbus, OH*

The Corporates from Mansfield, Ohio began the show with a good set of hard jagged punk rock. They seemed a bit loose at first, but quickly tightened up into a solid sound. After them came Stepsister from Cleveland, a band louder than a jet engine and just as dangerous to put your head too close to. Singer Tom Dark perpetually looks as if something

snapped in his brain and he's going to go GG Allin on you, which I think adds a bit of welcomed tension to the basic rock-n-roll show. He's a actually a very nice guy too. Their set was hard as a Swedish porn star, and it ended with some crazy extended Lynard Skynard soloing that walked that shady line between comical and cool. Next up was The Thumbs. I'm not sure where they were from. They play a good sloppy punk rock that at times hooked me, and at other times threw me back. Lastly, was The GC5. This was probably the loosest I've ever seen them play, but it still connected like an uppercut to the chin. They banged out a bunch of great new songs, and even had guest vocals on "Straight Outta Luck." At one point they indulged a man who looked like a homeless, toothless alcoholic (sorry guy!) by playing the theme from Batman. Apparently this guy has done this for years in Columbus, and it comes off almost as depressing as it is funny to see this guy grunt incoherently into the microphone. Almost. Later he returned to the stage, I think uninvited, to mumble some more. Pretty damn strange. However, the atmosphere there was fun, though not quite as wild and packed as the last time The 5 hit Bernie's. - BL

### **West Coast Wrecker's Ball**

*The Galaxy, Costa Mesa, California*

*May 31<sup>st</sup>-June 2<sup>nd</sup>*

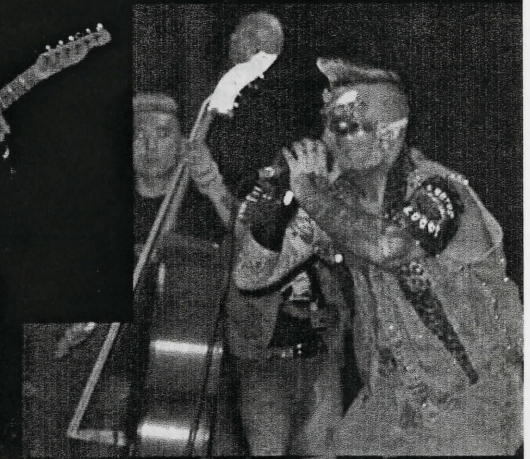
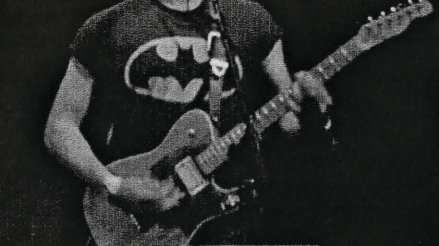
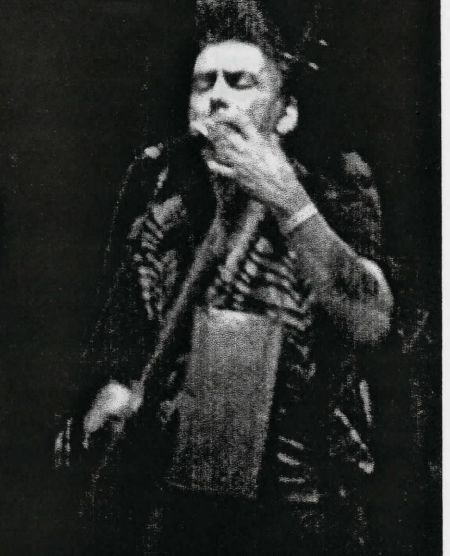
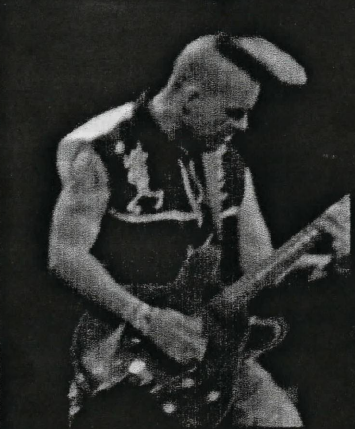
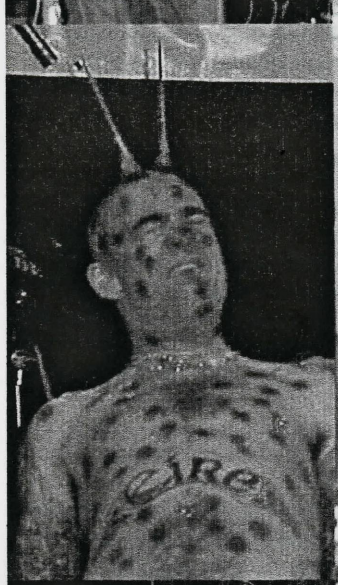
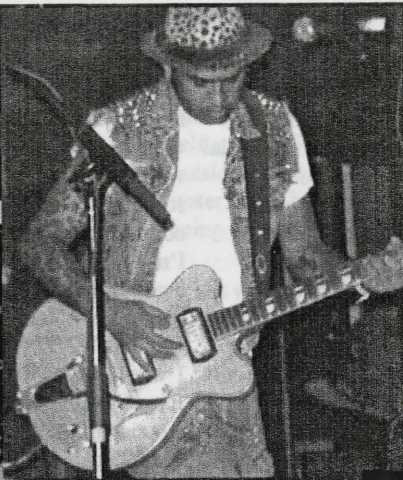
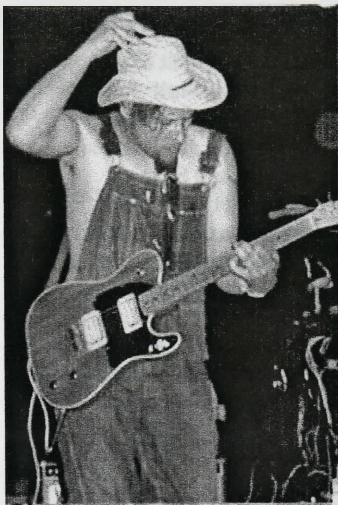
#### *Night One*

After killing time on the plane for 4.5 hours by sharing headphones to watch the boring in-flight movie while drawing sick and compromising pictures of each other, we finally arrived in Los Angeles. We'd been looking forward to this show for the last six months... so many of the great acts in psychobilly in one place! And, as it turned out, the bands we never heard before turned out to be excellent as well.

The first up on Friday was The Slanderin', a local psychobilly act that drives it in hard and heavy. The played songs from their CD, "Psychobilly Lives," and despite little stage presence, they still impressed me a lot with their powerful songs, and that's what's important.

After them came Speed Crazy, a three piece band from New Jersey that has a very unique sound that is very difficult to describe. Vocals for this band are split between guitarist, Greg, and upright bassist, Erica, mainly, but their drummer, Augie, sings as well on "Chicken Fried Valentine" from their new EP by that same name. Greg plays grids out the riffs with a heavily distorted, gritty sound that accompanies Erica's skilled maneuvers on upright. Her voice on "Por Que te Vas" was amazing. On the last song Augie did his dead man's stage dive with the snare drum, sealing the set with a bang.







The Photon Torpedoes also hail from the same area of the country, and they maintain a love for all things stuck to the bottom of society's shoes. This is proven by their drunken pervert B-movie lyrics, their raw delivery in a classic psychobilly sense, and their covers of both GG Allin and Dead Boys. The singer at one point switched with the bass player, which was cool, but they didn't seem too excited on stage. Nevertheless, they sounded good. Hayride to Hell, not to be confused with Hellbound Hayride, came next. I thought their performance in NY for the Psychobilly Rumble was a bit lackluster, but here they really did a good job, albeit with a different line-up. (Coincidentally, I think the Photon Torpedoes line-up was completely different from their line-up at that show too.) Anyway, Their upright bassist, I believe his name was Rob, had some sweet moves on the bass, and a handlebar mustache too! At one point he stood on his bass and did a split with his other foot over top the neck. After that he demonstrated one of the many uses of duct tape: to repair ripped pants during a concert performance. Another staggering move was his complete spin with his bass, while on top of his bass. The man was nuts, and a fine player too. I remember getting up one morning at the hotel and he was still walking around with an ice bucket and a bottle of Jack Daniels. Good times.

Next up came The Hellbilys from California, whom we've wanted to see for years now. They had candelabras lit on-stage and a fog machine for effect as Barrie came out in a priest's uniform and dyed white strips on his tall pomp that reminded me of horns. They did great originals like "Bondage A-Go-Go" as well as covers of Sam Hain's "All Murder, All Guts, All Fun" and T.S.O.L.'s "Code Blue." The guitar player definitely had a serrated metal edge to his sound and his riffs, and it cut through the crowd nicely. The drummer was also quite energetic and pretty evil-looking as he played often standing up, lit from the floor with a red hue. All around a really strong performance by this long-standing CA psycho outfit.

I had never heard The Klingonz before this show, and fuckin' hell in a hollow point shell, these Irish bastards were incredible. It reminded me of the intensity of 80's hardcore punk, mixed with the deranged sensibilities of the almighty psychobilly devil. They came out with nothing on but tattoos and thongs (the guitar player didn't even have that), and they were covered head to toe in green spots. The singer has two red spikes at the crest of his forehead that look like foot long antennas. Coupled with the dots, you might think they had some sort of alien anthrax infecting their souls, or were the results of mutant insect spores combining with human DNA. Whatever they were, they were fast and crazy, and I fuckin' loved it. The even did a cover of Dead

Kennedys "Too Drunk To Fuck." Unfortunately they kept having technical difficulties with the equipment, and played as long as they could until it became ridiculous.

Now, we were among those who missed Demented Are Go a year and a half ago, so we were crossing our fingers that they'd play to-night. They are one of the bands that I picked up years ago that catapulted my interest in psychobilly music, and are one of the bands that so many others try to emulate. Sparky came out as the official rubber buccaneer, clad in rubber pants and a rubber LAPD uniform shirt. His face was done up like an evil troll with a pointy nose, bloody gashes, and pointed ears. He led the band through songs like "Holy Hack Jack," "Queen of Disease," as well as many new, fast and deranged tunes that peel the skin off polite society exposing the undead carcass of rock-n-roll thrashing about in all its gory glory. What was especially cool was the insane cover of "Funnel of Love" by the queen of rockabilly, Wanda Jackson. The 4th rate college football team security bastards who had delighted in shoving those who tried to keep a wrecking pit going had finally backed off helplessly as people crammed onto the floor. (One of those pussy bastard fucks actually busted my nose earlier). At any rate, I was not disappointed by Demented Are Go at all, despite no pyromania or sex with vacuum cleaners... haha! Great Show!!

I did feel really bad though that my friend Ezra came all this way just to see them primarily, and got kicked out early in the night because a drunk girl kept giving his under-age ass beers. Apparently he earned himself the nickname of "Roadrunner" from the staff, though, because of his bright red wedge and the swiftness with which he outran security twice that night. That's hilarious because, come to think of it, he does look like Roadrunner... a lot!

### Night two

With the whole day to kill before the show at 6:00, we decided to head to the beach, since all but a couple of us were virgins to the land of California and wished Her to embrace us in her filthy arms like a suckling pervert children. Jagermeister and body-surfing are a fun combo. I've been to the east coast a few times, but the waves here are superior, of course, and the weather was perfect. Shit, I think half of us, myself included, want to move out there for the music scene, culture, weather, water and women. It is also fun to go to the beach with a Creature from the Black Lagoon rubber mask, but it was short-lived due to a little girl starting to cry when she saw it.

Anyway, this night at the show I wasn't fuckin' around with all the over-priced tiny beers, and managed to get flasks of whiskey past security who were patting everyone down worse than airport security. This kept me nice and happy, and I stayed up front all night. Graveyard Shift from Seattle started off the evening in style, if you wanna call a bass

player that looks like something from Hell-raiser and a frontman that is wearing a strait-jacket and a severed arm handcuffed to his own, in style. That's class in my book! These guys are relatively new and have a truly sick slant, even dedicating a waltz to Ed Gein, in which he uses his victim's peeled skin as a slip'n'slide. Horrific, sick, and splendid. Obviously, it's done with a sense of humor, unlike those freaky Norwegian black metal guys who eat each other brains. When you pick out lyrics like "my mommy is a zombie and she's coming after you," you just gotta smile. The singer also busted out the harmonica and played well through his ripped-up face. All in all, I really dig these guys a lot and hope to hear more of them soon.

The Dragstrip Demons came up next, and I think they had Gator (Ex-Slanderin', current Coffin Draggers) playing upright. This guy is one smokin', down-to-business, kick-ass bass player. He also had a light inside of his bass that glowed through the F-holes, which was a nice touch. Manuel, who organized this great event, sang, and their set was really good and energetic heavy psychobilly for people with questionable taste and even more questionable morals. In other words, right up my alley. I seem to remember them doing a really good cover of Mad Sin too.

I remember seeing Calavera in NY and being blown into infinitesimal bits by their outstanding performance. This night wasn't quite as good, largely due to technical problems with loud feedback and they couldn't hear themselves in the monitors, but they were still damned excellent. Calavera are from CA also, and many of their songs are in Spanish. They add unusual elements of Mexican flavor and a lot of slide guitar to their super-psycho sound. Unfortunately, the trumpet/harmonica player wasn't there, though. Everyone in the band is really talented, and they have lots of energy and personality. I'm really looking forward to hearing something new by these guys.

Los Gatos Locos came up next and frontman Charlie Splatterhead was done up to look like a Satanic redneck imp. Their set would have crushed your head in a vice and licked up your spilt brains. Great fuckin' band with a raw sound all their own. They did soon-to-be-classic songs like "God Ain't Listening," "Juvenile Delinquent," and "All Tore Up" as well as covers of Misfits' "Hollywood Babylon" and "Someone's Gonna Get Their Head Kicked In Tonight." Shit-kicking, gut-wrecking rock-n-roll from down below.

Ahhh, next came Os Catalepticos from Brazil, a band that I figured I'd never see. One of my favorites, heavier than a cast iron arm and more wicked than a jail cell filled with priests: Os Catalepticos set the place on fire. Gus, on a borrowed upright instead of his bass made from an actual coffin, stands at two full meters tall and plays so fast and furious that it sounds like a deadly juggernaut is barreling through your cranium. Vlad on vocals and guitar is no less talented, as he gushed molten intensity



into the air. What a goddamn awesome band! Songs like "Freaks" and "Henry" went over great. They even got called back for an encore. I hope one day to see these guys again. Really, really hope.

The last band in this night's amazing line-up was Mad Sin from Germany, who have been around since the mid eighties. Their singer, Koeft, was no small man either, but one hell of an energetic guy, doing kicks in the air and always on the move. Holly, their ultra-cool and friendly bass player, was also wound up and wild, despite appearing to be one of the most normal looking people at the show. He'd unleash some German fury with precision on the strings, yank his bass up over his head, and always still look like he was having a blast doing it. He also did an incredible solo. At one point in the night Nick 13 from Tiger Army came out to do a song with the band. They ended their set with a really damn good fire-breather that launched some serious flames into the air. Perfect end to a brilliant night.

### *Night Three*

After a full day and night of drinking whiskey on Saturday, I got up with everyone at 6:30 Sunday morning to head to Hollywood. Fuckn' A, we're all tourists and want to see shit. While I was dizzy, dehydrated, and delirious, I still managed to keep up with everyone as we walked all along Sunset and Hollywood Blvds. We hitched a ride with Larry Gogh from The Slanderin' - he was going there to sit in with a bluegrass band that plays in the farmer's market there for tips. Sugar (Lords of the Highway), who came with us, and Erika (Speed Crazy) both sat in with the band for a bit. The market was pretty huge with all manner of produce, but none of it appeals to someone who is wretched from whiskey belly. We all strolled along and got funny pictures with the stars on the sidewalk... whether it be the Hank Williams, Rod Serling, or the much sought after Don Knotts star. Hell, there is even a picture of me kissing the John Tesh star... he has meant so much to me, getting me through some rough patches in my life by inspiring me with his life's grand works. Haha, right! My friend Scott found a tattoo parlor and got some work done across his stomach, while we hung out. I really want to thank Larry for being such a good host and showing us some of the town.

When we got back to the hotel I was dead beat, but drinkin' helped me start to liven up. When we got to the show, we missed the first band, though, and just caught Plan 9. They are a Misfits tribute band that features Barrie from the Hellbillys on bass. They were pretty good, and it was nice to hear all those great old songs.

Barnyard Ballers, also from CA, came next and brought with them their perverted psychobilly raunch-n-roll. The guitar player had bib overalls and no shirt with a straw hat, and the singer belted out songs about nudie bars and other deliciously sinful things. At one point

they invited the crowd on-stage to get rowdy and sing. These nipple-pinchin', beer-swillin' psychos have barroom humor and a love for good times that rubs off.

Probably the biggest discovery I made this whole weekend was the Milwaukee Wildmen, who I believe are actually from Holland. These cats were great! They played fast as hell, and it was really tight and well put together. It was like an atomic explosion on-stage. I really dug their unique and altogether perfect vocals. Man, these guys were so good that Kim (Nekromantix) and Koeft (Mad Sin) both came out and were wrecking on the stage. What can I say but "holy shit!?" They even did their cover of The Meteors' "Slow Down You Graverobbing Bastard."

The Phantom Rockers had a tough act to follow, but they did so admirably. They mixed their sound up well, with some more melodic stuff and some more down-n-dirty stuff. I thought it was especially cool that they covered Anti-Nowhere League's sleazy anthem "So What," as well as The Exploited's "Sex and Violence." Actually, I understand that one of these guys was in The Exploited at one time. At any rate, these guys were also first class musicians and wumped out a really good set.

The last band of the night was the Nekromantix from Denmark, and they put on one of the best shows that I have ever seen. Their brand of spooky psychobilly with really fascinating guitarwork and thundering bass is amazing live. The dual vocals back and forth between Kim and Pete are awesome as well. In our interview with them Pete claimed that he was a lazy guitarist, which seems to me quite erroneous, because he was really giving it his all, and the stuff he plays is so distinctive and intense. He had that look of someone so pumped up, that if it were a fighting situation, he'd go off like a rabid badger. Kim is also a consummate showman with his self-made coffin bass and antics that just ooze character from every pore. He'll slap the bass with the intensity of a lovesick demon, get it down on the floor and really flog it, then sit on it and fret with his feet, looking so carefree and casual. They played a good long time and people ate it up like communion wafers. Now that's the way to end the best weekend I've been too. Fuck Yeah!!!! - BL

### **Cowslingers Highway 13 The Mighty Underdogs**

*Friday May 31<sup>st</sup>*

*At the 31<sup>st</sup> Street Pub - Pittsburgh, PA*

*By Billy Angel*

Aaahhh...the Pub in Pittsburgh. It's always worth the drive from my hometown to the Home of Rock n Roll to get into one kind of trouble or another. Seems I always get myself into a certain kind of trouble when I head to the 'burgh thanks to the evil powers of rock

and roll, but that's a story for another time and y'all can pull up a barstool and buy me a beer if you really want to hear about it...

ANYWAY I arrived early enough to catch the opening band the Mighty Underdogs, a 3-piece featuring an ex-member of the Polish Hillbillies. I was familiar with his guitar and pedal steel playing in a couple other bands so I was curious to hear his latest project. They had more of a rock sound (on the punk side of rock) than I expected given that lineage. Nothing wrong with that in my book though. Their bass player pulled vocal duties but from where I was throwin down at the back of the bar I couldn't really make out too much. Sure these guys were green, but had some good riffs and fast tunes so hell what more do you want to start yer night?

Highway 13 took the stage next and treated the growing crowd to a set of pure rustbelt rockabilly. What can I say, I've seen these sumbitches many a time and they still surprise me. On this particular night Woody, Blair, and Wes seemed to kick it in higher gear in response to all the hootin', hollerin', and yee-hawin' going on. "Run Rabbit" kicked it off and from there it's a bit of a beer blur for me as to the rest of the songs except for "B-Movie Queen," "Boneyard Boogie," "Hey Bettie," and "I'm Gone" which I'm not sure but I think I requested twice. I can tell you the songs were aces as always and even more driving than usual with Woody tearing up the geetar with a hint more abandon than I've seen before. A tip of my cowboy hat to these guys for being Steel City's rockabilly workhorses, always ones to work up a sweat and never disappointing when they punch the rocknroll clock come their shift at showtime.

Well shit, by this time I had even tried one of those weird imports in the Pub cooler (I think it was "Corkendonk") and was still ready to rock with the 'slingers. Is there anything about a Cowslingers show I can tell ya you don't already know? These guys are great live. Chances are if you are reading this zine you've already seen 'em but if you haven't, what the hell's wrong with you? They are funny, charismatic, and have a guitar player so damn good you wish you could hate him but actually are glad he's in this band with people as equally as talented and energetic. Their tunes will definitely get yer feet stomping, and they played a wide variety from their numerous releases. The ones that stand out in my remaining brain cells are "Cheap Trucker Speed," "West Virginia Dog Track Boogie," and "#1 Hit Record," as well as a hilarious preaching/story/rant about a Sammy Hagar solo album during one number. Now I would say I've done a pretty good job of faking it as a reviewer up to this point, but the truth of the matter by now is I regretfully can't remember the names of the guys in the band to give them the further recognition of their individual merits they deserve for their fine rock and roll performance. If there's an ass-kicking to come from the 'slingers because



of that, well, darn all I can say is I hope I'm feeling as far gone as I was when they closed out the night with their version of "Burnin' Love" so I won't feel a thing!

And I think that about says it all right there. I wasn't going to this show just to write some high-falutin' review. I wanted to go hang out with my friends, get a little loaded, and listen to some real rock n roll that would make it all come together. That's exactly what I got at the 31<sup>st</sup> Street Pub from these bands. Amen.

## Dick Dale

### Lords of the Highway

Top Cat's, Cincinnati, Ohio June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002

Anyone that has seen Dick Dale knows that he's an amazing performer. He'll play all night, like he did here, even to a small house. He blazes the guitar with wicked fast surf that kids half his age can't parallel. He also jams out some blues, or Mexican-sounding songs, or perhaps an Animals tune to keep it interesting. In addition, he'll flirt with every girl he meets: old, young, big or small. As I heard him say to a young lady after the show, the trick is to get rid of all the mirrors in your house... that's what reminds you to act your age. Dick certainly doesn't act his age, and that's what keeps him interesting and alive, rather than drinking coffee at McDonald's at 7:00 in the morning. He's also a great showman, doing a drum solo on the same set at the same time as his drummer, or playing the trumpet, or even playing the electric bass with drumsticks. It's well worth your time and money to go see him play at least once if you haven't already.

Before him came the Lords of the Highway who, after a bit of a cold start really got the evening running. This night I focused on steering Sugar, their upright bassist, down the path of evil with my sinister mesmerism. I knew the ice in my stare would wilt her like a flower in acid rain, and then I could guide her to sacrifice her band on-stage as an offering to the gods of rock-n-roll. She looked at me and I hooked her in my frigid gaze. Hers were like the eyes of a deer before the impact of an 18-wheeler, a faint haze of recognition of her impending fate. As she picked up her bass to pummel Mr. Dennis Bell, to squash him like an insect on the kitchen wall of civilization, a ray of light entered the room, as though it were a stairway to heaven. The sound of harps plucked my ears and I felt as though a group of angels were lifting me through the air towards salvation on a soft, fluffy blanket. It seemed like the inside of my skull was covered in Care Bear wallpaper for a moment. Then I realized what had happened to foil my evil mischief once again... it was that fleeting glimpse of conscience that I call Chipchak. Mike Chipchak. As he sat there smiling behind the drums I resolved to destroy him. Next time, my respected foe! - BL

## The Drones

At the Mohawk Place, Buffalo, NY

July 6, 2002

Review & Pics by Super Dave



Mother always told me that if you've nothing nice to say, say nothing at all. I must not leave out any review of bands 1,2 and 4, I shall not even mention their names. The only mention of them will be as such: I have been more entertained by empty paper bags. Furthermore, I now know what it would be like to endure eating a five-gallon bucket of Grape Nuts cereal, toothless and without milk. That said, please allow me to heap due praise on the trio from the streets of San Antonio Texas known as the Drones.

The Drones found themselves in Rochester NY to play a local pub on a typical Saturday night. As I was working the door, I had not the good fortune to see their entire set, but could only be teased, squirming at my post as I stood collecting money while the crowd came in and had their night turned into anything by typical. After the show, the Drones expressed an interest in returning, this was realized the following Wednesday when they returned from NYC, to play a free show receiving only unending quantities of Pabst Blue Ribbon as recompense. Saturday, 4 others and I followed their trail of half-eaten ham sandwiches and beer bottles from Rochester to Buffalo NY and found them at the Mohawk Place. Enduring bands 1, 2 and 4 was well worth it to catch the Drones doing what they do best, providing the crowd with a show that far surpasses time alone with an empty paper bag. In the true spirit of working-class rock and roll, the Drones came alive. The punk rock melodies poured out of them from the second Victor slammed our faces to the floor with the first of many powerful beats from his drum kit. I confess, up until that night I had not seen a band whose set is devoted almost exclusively "love songs". I don't mean mushy pussy love songs lacking soul. I mean REAL love songs; love songs you can believe in. Love songs that warm your heart as you listen to tales of others who've had theirs cut in two, literally. I learned love isn't just about picnics and sunshine, true love is something more. It's about blood and pain, death and revenge. True love to the Drones can make you kill and when they closed their set with their original, "I think I'm gonna kill myself", the message of love had

really sunk in for everyone. Frank delivered this message to the audience with passion as he laid down the bass lines that rumbled through our blackening hearts. You could also see love in David's eyes as he took the crowd by storm with his six string. Chord after chord, solo after-solo, rhythm upon rhythm his hands did not stop except to reach for his booze. These three guys did on stage what so many bands try in vain to do, be true and original. It's refreshing in this age of cookie-cutter musicians and stage show circus freaks, to see a group of guys that can play music that you don't have to try to convince yourself is good. When fate deems you worthy to catch these guys live, you'll know that not only are you ready to learn of love, but also be entertained by real American rock and roll.



## Social Distortion

### The Hangmen

Agora Theatre, Cleveland

June 14, 2002

Much to my own, and my friends' dismay, these Hangmen hail from L.A. and aren't the UK psychobillies by the same name. They would have been okay, though, if it weren't for their Goo Goo Dolls-LA hipster-looking frontman's vocals. They did a sort of garage rock, and the guitar player was quite solid, though being completely buried in the mix for the first few songs. Not the worst band I ever saw by a longshot, but they still didn't interest me much.

The Agora was jam-packed... not to mention King's X were playing across the hall in the Ballroom. I stood at the bar trying to get a friggin' beer while 30 minutes elapsed eventlessly from my sad, sad life. This was the first actual Social Distortion concert I've seen, and I didn't know how they'd come off. Would Ness be bored after 20 plus years of playing their mixture of punk and outlaw country? Would it be lifeless, heartless, and poorly delivered? Fortunately, the answer was a resounding "no." At least that is how it came off to me this night. They came out swingin' some knock-out quality punches, with "Mommy's Little Monster" and "1945," so I was pretty fuckin' happy straight off. It was interesting for me to discover Mike Ness took a lot of the leads, rather than simply being a rhythm player. He also had the attitude and stage presence that gives a band personality, where so many these days are lacking. I was also surprised to hear that the sound was really decent, despite the Agora's bad acoustics. Usually the bands sound very noisy and jumbled. Ness's vocals didn't falter either, although his temper did lapse a bit for our enter-



tainment. Beers were flying through the air (and who can afford to throw a \$6 beer anyway? goddamn yuppy fucks... I was hoping one would fly my way and I could catch it). One of them landed apparently too close for Mr. Ness's comfort, and so between songs he asked "is that some sort of hip Blink 182 thing," then betting the unknown tosser \$300 that he wouldn't have the balls to meet him out by the bus after the show. When someone up front owned up, despite the beer flying from the back, he took off his guitar and headed down off the stage. No violence ensued, however (dammit!), and he regained his composure and apologized to the crowd.

The band then proceeded to crank out great songs like "King of Fools," "Cold Feelings," and many more. Towards the end of the show, Ness brought up the youngest kid there, who was probably 12, and asked him what he did for a living. "I mow lawns," was the reply. "A man who's not afraid to work," Ness quipped, shaking the kid's hand, seemingly truly happy to be influencing another generation. The show ended with their cover of Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire," and I have to say it was a really good night of rock-n-roll. What the hell else can you ask for, aside from maybe one of his groupies? That bastard! - BL

### **The Briefs** **Standing 69s**

*Beachland, Cleveland 6/19/02*

The first band had the guitar tone and riffs that I'd love to play... just good hard-driving seventies US punk with lots of rock-n-roll favor. The singer wasn't that great, though tolerable, but damn if every song didn't rock out. They were called the (something) 59s. I can't remember what it was, though, and have been completely unable to find out. Next was The Standing 69s from Cleveland. They play cool drunk punk in the vein of Angry Samoans perhaps. They had a dirty, sloppy sound with sneering vocals that gave a lot of character. Good stuff. Last was the Briefs, and they came off with so much energy along with an 80's feel and attitude that you couldn't help but be sucked into their Toy Dolls-esque spasms. There is a new wave sensibility with a striped-down and sped-up guitar sound that infects you like a dirty needle. Each bleached blonde, sun-glassed member sings on different songs ranging in topic from killing Bob Seger (Amen my brothers!) to suspecting your lover is a communist. The bass player even knocked out a couple ceiling tiles jumping around like cartoon freak on crystal meth. That's good shit. - BL

### **Hudson Falcons** **Stepsister** **Drop Gun**

*Lime Spider, Akron 6/29/02*

I had to go to this show utterly alone. Everyone else was in Pittsburgh watching The Templars, so I headed over after my shift at work. I really liked the venue, lots of different beers to drink,

although I feel they were a bit pricey. However, once I got there, I was no longer alone because several of my friends were there to make me feel at home. Drop Gun took the stage after what seemed like the longest sound check ever, and gave the crowd their Akron style punk rock. I had seen these guys a few times previously when they did mostly covers, so I knew they played "Rat Patrol," and even though I hollered for it, it was never played. They did however play a set of all originals, except for a cover of the Stooges "I Wanna Be Your Dog". While Drop Gun has definite potential, I feel they are lacking that certain something that could make them stand out from all other punk bands. Next up was a band faster than a speeding bullet and able to burn down buildings with their blazing tunes. I learned from the last time I seen Cleveland's own Stepsister to have ear protection before seeing them again, as they are one of the loudest, balls-out, punk rock-n-roll bands I have ever seen. These guys are the real deal, there isn't one bit of fakeness or posturing among any of the band members, and the energy just consumes you. Singer Tom Dark charges into the audience scaring away even the most drunk and determined moshers and looks you dead in the eye as he sings. Tony Erba on bass runs maniacally over the stage, rolling around on the ground all the while bleeding like a sieve from the head. A wild and scary time for sure.

The Hudson Falcons from Jersey were up next and jumped right into their blue collar, street rock-n-roll set. A new bass player was on stage, and Uncle Chris wasn't there so Craighton and Russ were filling his space. While Ben pounded out drum beats, Mark wailed on lead and sang. They played all their great songs including "Revolution", "The Rat Is Dead" and "Sweet Rock N Roll Bad Ass Bitch". They also played some newer songs, including the gloriously impolite "Whose Talking Shit," which the crowd found easy to sing a long with. They capped off this intense night with a cover of "New Age" by the Blitz. A great show; I'm glad I didn't miss it. -Lisa Marie

### **The Templars** **The Traditionals** **Weekend Warriors**

*31<sup>st</sup> St. Pub, Pittsburgh 6/29/02*



Hell, I really wanted to go see the Hudson Falcons and Stepsister in Akron this night, but how the fuck often do you get a chance to see The Templars? I've loved this band since the mid 90's, and didn't want to miss a rare chance to see them live a second time. The show began with the Weekend Warriors, who didn't really impress me much. They did

a cover of The Adicts pretty well, though, which was cool. After them was The Traditionals, also a native



*Carl Templar & Ben*

Pittsburgh band, and I think they had a different singer than last time I saw them. They too didn't really make my eyes light up like a kid's on Christmas morning. Their set was really long, and I think it cut into the Templars' slot, because it seemed they only got like 10 songs out before the bar shut them down due to time. Despite the seeming brevity of their set, though, The Templars really shined with songs like "New York City," "Victim," and their theme song. Rather than relying on heavy distortion, they instead maintained a clear yet gritty sound that makes your limbs swell with hypertension. To my mind, these guys are the epitome of American Oi! done right, and good people to boot. All in all, it was a gripping performance by one of my favorites that ended way too soon. - BL

## **Heavy Rebel Weekender**

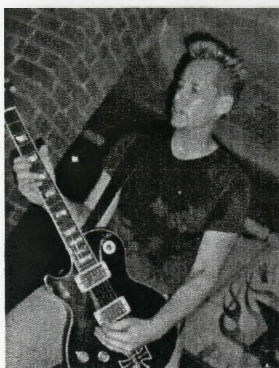
*Winston Salem, North Carolina*

*July 5, 6, 7 2002*

You say you want a Warped Tour without any of the crappy pop punk bands, and where the only sports are marathon drinking and co-ed pudding wrestling? Well, the Heavy Rebel Weekend may be just what you need to cut loose and wipe the stain of moral living from your brow. Here you get bands ranging from straight rock-n-roll to rockabilly, psychobilly, heavy metal, honky tonk, and punk rock. And when you weary from the deluge of bands on the three stages (one in an old jailhouse), there are things like car shows, guitar contests, and wet wife-beater contests. On top of that, just about everyone you'll meet, and you'll tend to meet lots of people, is really friendly and fun to hang out with. There was lots of spontaneous wrestling (Lisa even knocked out someone's tooth accidentally), nudity (you see the X-rated pictures we came home with!), and all-out beer drenched debauchery.

The first night commenced with the immediate influx of PBR and vodka into our systems, a pattern that did not cease but for brief periods all weekend. We started off with the Alphabet Bombers in the Jailhouse, who pulled out a great set of aggressive psychobilly. Their singer, Rich, has a sort of Demented Are Go style but the music is played more clean with great musicianship in this young band. We then leapt over to the Underground stage to catch some Brimstones, who offered some cool surf/garage music, before popping upstairs to the main stage for the Kings of Nuthin'. These guys put on an excellent show, with a piano engulfed in flames, as well as fire coming from the baritone sax. The music is a punked-up jump blues, and their singer has one of the roughest, most sandpapered cool voices I've





Dave Quick

Allin didn't. Anyway, their upright player was in great form, really slapping some crazy shit and throwing his bass in the air and spinning it. It was a high energy set by a band with stage presence and talent. Later we went downstairs and caught the vile hedonistic rock-n-roll debauchery of The Pits. These guys engage in beer can wars with the crowd while playing, the drum set is often knocked over and reassembled during a song, and the singer/guitarist is done up like a zombie doctor as he chops into some raw, Cramps-inspired decadence. They recently acquired a new female bass player who only has need for two strings to bang out the rock-n-roll, so that's all she has on it. They ended with Dusty Booze crashing head first through his drum set and hitting seemingly hard into the wall behind it. Great stuff by a band that the faint-hearted would like to ignore. The Straight 8's were on after them, playing a fantastic straight rockabilly with a standing drummer who exuded lots of charisma and endurance. He was all over playing mic stands and just giving it everything he had. After this band everything starts getting a bit blurry in my recollection. I remember seeing Dexter Romweber, but not really being over-awed by him, although I thought it was cool when he was out front on the sidewalk later playing guitar alongside his drummer. I also know that I watched Last Vegas, but couldn't tell you a damn thing about them. The night ended with Jack Black, which features Dave Quick (one of the organizers of the event along with Mike Martin) on guitar. From what I gleam out of my foggy memory, he was one hell of a guitarist too, and they played a sort of hard country rock with some blues influence. By the end of the night we somehow made it back to the hotel where we



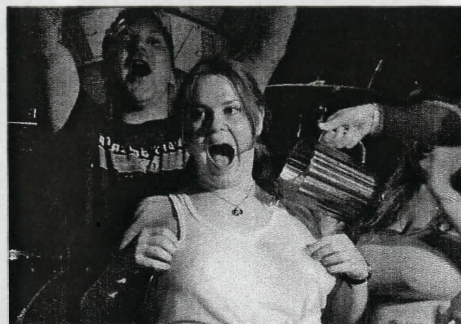
End of Night 3, Heavy Rebel

heard. I swear, when he opened his mouth on the first song, his teeth flew out of his mouth, making for one of the most memorable images of the weekend. He never put them back in either, and I am certain I was not just seeing shit. Who needs teeth anyway, GG

had lucked out and got a suite for dirt cheap with a living room, kitchen, and huge double bedroom. Unfortunately, though, dinner came from a vending machine, a pattern that endured for the next two days to come.

Waking up on day two went surprisingly smooth and void of headache. That is until we went to get my shoes from the car and discovered Sugar's vehicle had been broken into and her bass cabinet stolen along with some other equipment. The police came and even brought a crime scene unit to take fingerprints from the car. The bastards apparently pushed a wooden stick in between the window and door and really damaged the door. One thing weird about this weekend, unrelated to the show, is that we know of two other cars that got broken into and one that was stolen. Anyway, this is why we missed the classic car show and pudding wrestling going on at the venue. The first band we saw was 7 Shot Screamers from Missouri. They play a wild rockabilly/psychobilly that I really dug. The guitarist was especially good, and the singer comes off with a lot of character and presence. This is definitely a band to check out, and they even covered The Sharks. After them were the Lords of the Highway, and despite Sugar's having to use someone else's bass rig, they played one of the best sets I've seen them deliver. For someone like me that has seen the band a hundred times to say "damn," they really pulled out all the stops. Then it came, the wet wife-beater contest with my drunken girlfriend in the running. You see, Lisa is not usually much of a drinker, but when she gets rolling there's not stopping her. I have to say, there were some nice breasts upon that stage, but if she had borrowed a wife-beater that fit here better, or at least capitalized on the fact that her breast fell out of it for a moment, she would have stood a better chance of winning. At any rate, I always get a kick out of shit she does when she's all pumped up on liquid courage. Go Lisa! Later I checked out Holy Smokes, a really cool rockabilly band to take note of, as well as Frank from the Frantic Flat-tops' side band White Devils, who actually seemed to clear the room and weren't up my alley at all. The Belmont Playboys played later, offering up a great performance that moved from amped-up rockabilly to raging surf to whiskey-drenched country. The last band of the night was a cover band called Bitch, who played stuff like the Rolling Stones and a dead-on Bon Scott era AC/DC. They really weren't my flavor, but they were good at what they did. Raising the rebel flag to sing Lynard Skynard is just too much for this northerner to handle, although it does have a comic aspect.

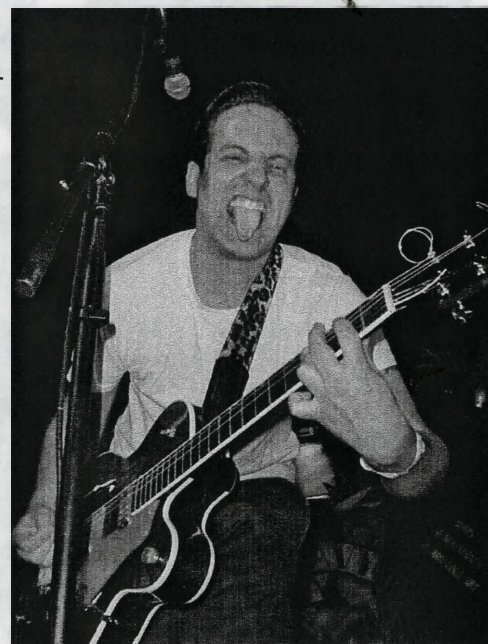
The third day had me beaten down, but not defeated. I went as long as I could without taking a drink, and made it most of the night, but the call of demon alcohol beckoned me back. The T-Bucket Terrors kicked off this evening for me with a great set of punk-



Lisa in the wet wife-beater contest

in-

fluenced abrasive rockabilly, complete with covers of both Chuck Berry and The Misfits. I think those guys were from Orlando, Florida, so check them out. Willie Heath Neal was another new band I got introduced too, that played a gripping up-tempo country that kept a raw edge and wasn't too slow to keep a drunken mind entertained. The Marauders from Pennsylvania also bashed out a fantastic set in the Jailhouse of rockabilly and country. I don't know if it was their doing, but that was my first spotting of the sign above the band that read "will eat pussy for beer." Beautiful. Anyway, this band is one to look up and go see if you have a chance. Flathead Mike and the Mercurys were next on my hitlist, and hell if these guys don't put on a show. This Georgia psychobilly trio boasts a crazed drummer that goes berserk and a singer/guitarist that has a punk rock attitude if ever anyone did. Drink, smoke, and play fast until you drown in your own 90 proof sweat. I especially like the skillet integrated into a permanent part of the drum kit... sweet. After them I checked out the Hotrod Hillbillies who were pretty good with their Texas country rock, and the Blue Flame Combo, who I just couldn't get into much at all. Rocket 350, on the other hand, tore the roof off the place, despite having no bass player anymore. It is strange, but this



Rocket 350

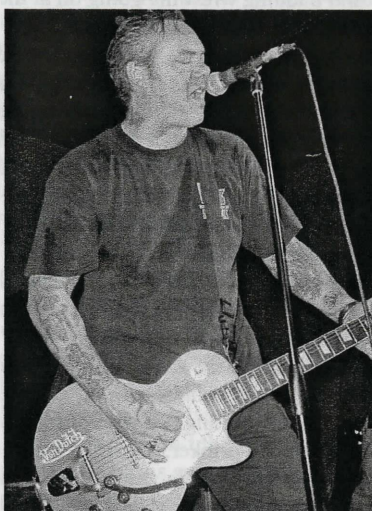
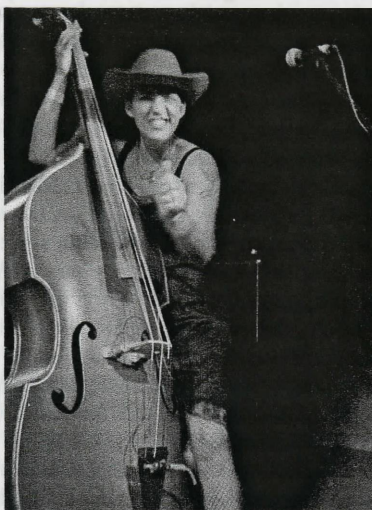


performance with just guitar and drums was one of my favorites of theirs. Responding to singer/guitarist Phil Stair's taunting, the band was bombarded with beer cans and a drunk girl up front spitting beer all over them, but it was all in good fun. At one point, the singer, Mike, from 7 Shot Screammers came up and sang a song, and then shortly after there were tons of people on-stage singing back-ups. I noticed "Tiger Beat" Tony had his bass drum decorated with the Mickey Mouse club as he played in his milkman uniform and recently acquired blue mohawk. Very nice. This band is one of my favorites, and here they were in top form. I should also mention that I caught some of Johnny Knox earlier, and was really taken aback by his guitar technique, and also his bass players voice when he covered a Roy Orbison song when a guitar string was broken. Both were amazing. The night ended with the Cigar Store Indians, who play a sort of hillbilly country rock and put on a really solid performance that got the drunks a-dancing... and what a sight that can be. When two women you know incorporate spanking into their dancing repertoire, you know it's a good yet delicate combination of great music and booze that made it happen. After them everybody went outside for some fireworks, then continued to drink and party till late that night. I remember Rocket 350 crashing on the hide-a-bed in our posh hotel room, but anything else, including how we arrived there, is a complete mystery. Must have been a good time, though, because I didn't get beat up and no one was pissed off at me later. Cool. - BL

## Rockin 50's Show

Oneida Casino, Green Bay, Wisconsin  
July 8-13 2002

Continuing on from the Heavy Rebel Weekender, we drove 6.5 hours home, crashed for a few hours, then headed the 11 hours up to Green Bay, where we checked into the hotel really quick and headed straight for the show like a couple of dim-witted zombies strung out on cough syrup. Seriously, we were so strung out I think people suspected extra chromosomes when speaking to us after we arrived on the second day of the festival. Regardless, though, we not only made it in time to catch all of Marti Brom, as was our over-riding goal, but having failed to consider the time change between Ohio and Indiana, we actually arrived an hour early. This was quite fortunate because we caught Wildfire Willie and the Ramblers from Sweden, who really rocked the place. Marti Brom, though, was as incredible as we remembered her from Viva Las Vegas. Her voice completely filled the room, and her smile lit it up as she sang songs about hard drinkin', hard lovin', and a murder ballad tossed in for good measure. She did some new songs too from an upcoming album with Finland's Barnshakers, who were with her for this performance as well as on her last CD, "Snake Ranch." One of the new songs absolutely blew me away, and I was happy also because she played all of my favorites from her recordings. Live, this woman is something else, a veritable force of nature that dominates the room with her playful poignancy. After her was Rockin' Lloyd Tripp &



*Heavy Rebel Photos*  
(top to bottom):  
Lords of the Highway,  
Belmont Playboys,  
7 Shot Screammers

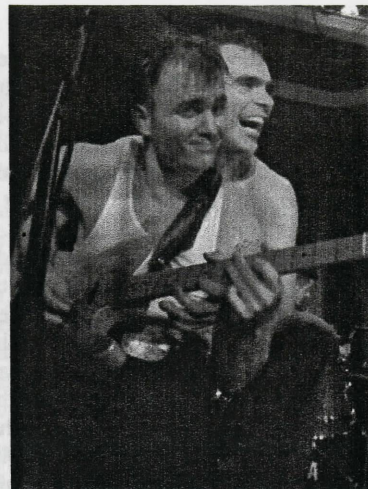
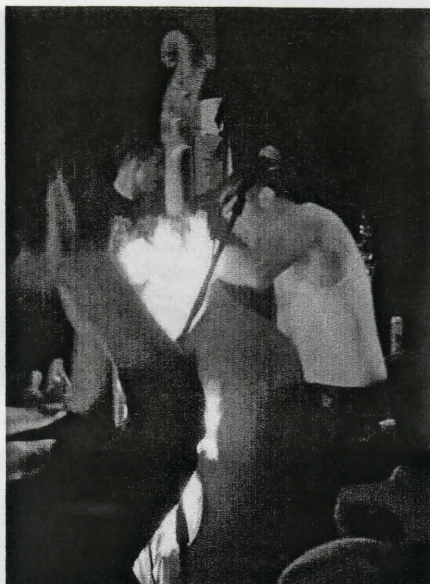


the Zipguns, followed by the surprisingly exceptional voice and sound of Jack Baymoore and the Bandits from the UK. By this time, though, we were passing out on our feet and Lisa had a headache, so we had to head back to the half-star motor inn and missed Ray Condo and His Ricochets. I've seen Ray before, however, and I have to say, his music is magnificent and very well worth checking out if you get a chance. I expected the city of Green Bay to be much larger for some reason, but it is only barely over 100,000 people, and it is very spread out. Driving to the venue from our cheap-ass motel it didn't even seem like we were in a city, despite it being located across from the airport. On one of the days we were there we checked out a wildlife preserve where they had owls, hawks, and other animals. It was there that we befriended a hissing goose. Mostly, though, we hung out in the hotel where the walls were so thin you could clearly hear people talking in the next room - and sometimes they weren't just talking! But hell, what do you expect for \$35 per night? Wot a bargain! The casino was pretty nice though, with a main stage, ballroom, and a lounge - all rather sizable. We played the slots a little, but I'm not much of a gambler. Slots give me that feeling you get when you put your money into a vending machine and nothing comes out. You know, how you want to shake and punch the metal money-sucking bastard until it is splintered across the landscape into little tiny shards that will one day cause minor cuts to the soft feet of some bare-footed child playing in a field of broken dreams. Who the hell needs that? Anyway, instead of trying to list the bands in order for each day, I'm just going to rattle off memorable moments that I recall.

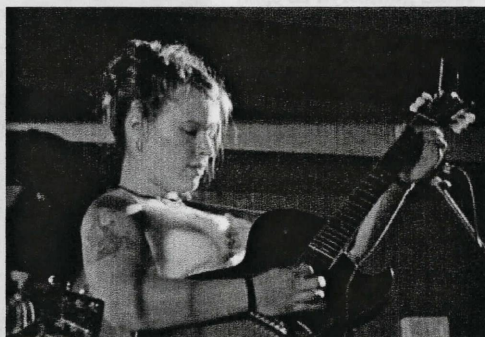
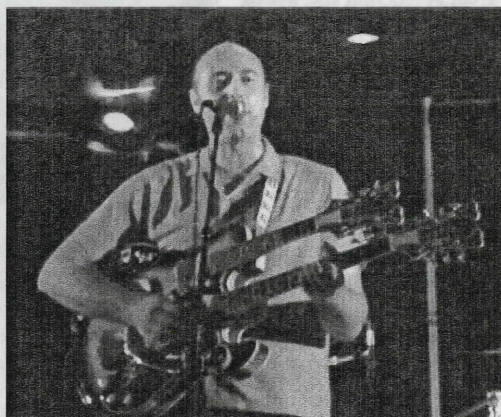
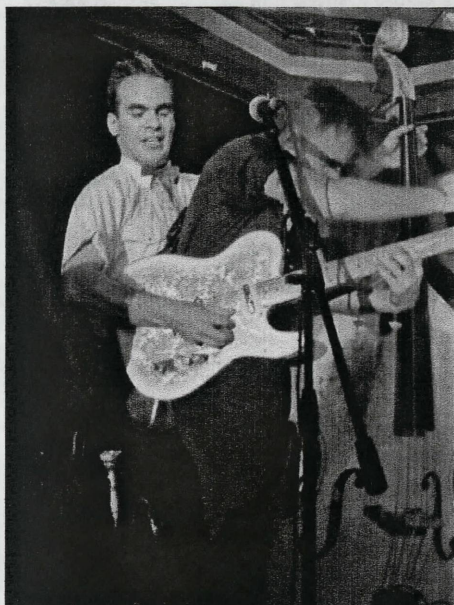
One of the most active Sun recording artists from the 50's, Billy Lee Riley put on a cool show, playing some blues and his astounding classic "Flyin' Saucer

Rock'N'Roll," which he really belted out, giving it his all. I also caught some of the Space Cadets, whom I'd never heard before but were really good. The singer looked older but he definitely had the rock-n-roll spirit as he climbed to the top of huge speakers stacks 20 feet in the air and seemed to contemplate jumping. He also taunted the crowd to throw beer cans, one of which he jumped up and knocked out the air with his head in one of the coolest moves I've seen. Some bands really didn't grab me though, like Robert Gordon, The Crickets, Marvin Rainwater, and for some reason James Intveld wasn't jiving with my biorhythms. However, such acts as Holland's Annita, who played with the Austin Playboys, were amazing. Not only was she a remarkable honky tonk singer that captivated the entire room, but she is quite beautiful as well, doubling her charm. But looks aside, she can really belt out a song with a perfect feel for the 40's-50's era in country. Later she also joined California's Paladins on stage for a couple extraordinary songs. What a pairing, Dave Gonzalez's criminally insane guitar work and her pure and soulful voice; it doesn't get much better folks. The Paladins also whooped ass on the rest of their scorching set, as did The Di Maggio Brothers from Italy. Marco is another of the most amazing guitar players I've ever seen, with an immaculate high speed picking technique that especially comes out on the instrumentals they did. He and his brother also have great singing voices too, and I really liked their cover of "King Creole." While on the subject of great guitarists, though, I have to mention Deke Dickerson. This was the first time I'd seen him, and it





Green Bay Rockin' 50's Photos (clockwise from top): 3  
Bad Jacks, Nick Curran, The Dempseys, Annita, Marti  
Brom, Marco Di Maggio, Josie Kreuzer, The Dempseys.  
Middle: Deke Dickerson, Raging Teens





wasn't a let down. He plays a double-necked guitar, and is strikingly clean and proficient. He did his Pabst Blue Ribbon song from his Untamed Youth days, and each band member sprayed the cheering crowd with PBRs. Deke actually turned himself into a human fountain, turning his back to the crowd, tilting his head back, and somehow shooting the beer into his mouth and having it spray 5 feet to either side of him. That wasn't his only stunt, though. For the end of his set he brought out 12 different guitarists from different bands and had them all playing at the same time on three guitars, two of which were double-necked. It made for a mighty strange spectacle to cap off his set.

Perhaps one of my favorite bands of the week, though, was the Raging Teens from Massachusetts. They played with resounding charisma, and featured Jack Swinger from the Amazing Crowns thumping exquisitely on the upright bass. Perhaps their coolest asset, though, is the female guitarist who absolutely rocked. She had a great tone, and played lead like no one's business, something I think sadly is a rarity to see a woman do. I'm not qualifying it as saying she was good for a gal, hell no... she was just plain excellent. And speaking of excellent females in rockabilly, I have to mention that Josie Kreuzer put on a hell of a show in Purcell's Lounge. She carries a distinctive voice, striking presence, and just plain great songs that she writes herself. Her band also is tight, rounding the whole ensemble out to be one of my favorites.

Purcell's Lounge was the smallest of the three rooms with live bands. This is where we saw some of the best performances of the week. Topping my list would have to be The Dempseys from Memphis. First off, their upright bass player is probably the best I've seen, I mean, this guy couldn't be more intense if he were on fire. Actually though, all three of them are extraordinary musicians, and what makes it crazier is that the guitarist and the bass player will switch, and they are even amazing on each other's instruments! But then the guitarist will jump on drums and the drummer will take the upright for a while and kick ass. Not to mention the stunt playing, with the guitarist and bass player on the same guitar at the same time, one picking what the other is fretting and vice versa. When they finished that, they were like "what? You want it faster?"... and they friggin' did the intricate song again at double speed. Insane. I could go on and on about this band, who are probably the most entertaining band I've seen.

Following them, though, was Three Bad Jacks, who ripped it up with their dirty and hard rockabilly. They set the drums on fire and melted the top of the kick drum, then also lit the upright on fire while the guy was playing it engulfed in flames. I'd be surprised if he had any arm hair left because he had to keep patting the flames out. Their set kept the high energy flowing and really impressed me. They did their cover of "Ace of Spades" by Motorhead, and strangely enough, they weren't the only band that week to do that song. Detroit's Twistin' Tarantulas also did it, and both were balls-out renditions that would make Lemmy proud (especially since Lemmy loves rockabilly). The Twistin' Tarantulas, did some great songs. The one about ADHD kids sticks out the most, and Pistol Pete made the quite believable claim that he was one. He played the bass with speed and

agility that would earn him a gold medal if it were an Olympic event. If you wanna talk about Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity, though, you gotta bring up Nic, singer from the Blue Moon Boys out of Indiana. This guy never stopped moving, jumping, kicking, and being just plain peculiar in an outrageously funny, engaging, and possibly troubling manner. He never got winded, though, and actually has a really good voice. Their guitarist had me looking on in wonder too, with some crazy moves on the frets that I'd never seen before. Even the guitar player from the next band, The Starlight Drifters, came



*Deke Dickerson & as many guitarists as will fit on two guitars.*

*Below: Jack Swinger w/ Raging Teens*

out to get an up-close view. He was no slacker on guitar either, playing both the electric and the steel guitar back and forth, often in the same Starlight Drifters song. I really enjoyed those guys.

The Kings of Nuthin' also played this room, cramming their entire band on the small stage, which was no small feat considering they travel with a real piano and have six people in the band including baritone sax. The sound here was pretty rough and louder than hell, but their energy and talent showed through. There was a lot of fire set to the piano and saxophone, and damn near a mosh pit in the crowd. The upright player was chugging Mad Dog between songs, then finished that and actually guzzled the better part (if not all) of a pint of Jim Beam. That man either is a serious drinker, or got seriously sick later that night. Anyway, they jammed out their jump-punk-blues-ably and mocked the other bands for using keyboards instead of real pianos. Man, that thing has to be a pain loading and unloading... much respect.

Another band that really seized my attention was called Number Nine. They just have a perfect RAB sound and the singer's vocals were probably my favorite for the weekend... actually reminiscent of Charlie Feathers' voice. The Casey Sisters were also pretty good, being backed up by Cave Catt Sammy, whom we unfortunately missed on the first night. I also was pretty upset to have missed Big Sandy, although I've seen him several times in the past. I did, however, catch the last two songs of The Extraordinaires from England, who are a great doo-wop band. I really got excited by them, and I don't particularly care for much of that style. The just had a lot of energy, great voices, and some really cool dance moves. I couldn't really describe the moves, but they just seemed to be going nuts in a very calculated manner. The one guy was doing splits, bouncing up, spinning, then doing splits the other way. Ouch! I watched a little of Rip Carson too, who I really wanted to see, but his normal band wasn't there and I figured it would be mostly covers. So I went back to watching another RAB legend, Ronnie Dawson, jam with High Noon on the main stage. Ronnie may be pretty old, but this guy can still rock, taking many of the guitar leads and singing with that great, now more seasoned, voice of his. At one point he started playing alone this primal heavy beat that rolled over the crowd like the treads of a tank. Eventually, the female drummer joined in and they pounded back and forth in a primitive offering the gods of rock-n-roll. It was fantastic.

We also checked out Nick Curran & the Nightlifes, who for the show we caught, were playing 60's garage rock'n'roll covers rather than their bluesier stuff. He was wearing a leopard trench coat and a translucent lime green shirt... now that's style. Haha! His muddy guitar sound and incredible voice really captivated the crowd. I want to mention also that we caught some of Dale Hawkins, and also a bunch of great songs by the Restless, who really rocked. While we saw tons of performances, we probably missed a lot of great ones too. In fact, while most of the performers this week played traditional rockabilly and honky tonk, it never really got old or stale like I suspected it might. Instead, the music really came alive and we had a blast. Plus, it was all free. You just can't beat that. - BL



An Interview with:

## Josie Krenzer

*We were very excited with the chance to see Josie a second time in a matter of weeks and to get a chance to sit down and do an interview with her. She's one of the truly inspiring women in the rockabilly scene these days. With her own label and three CDs to her credit, she's definitely not one to wait patiently for things to happen. I sat down with her after a great show at the Beachland tavern, wherein a Miller representative had been giving away free tall boys, much to my demise. As wrecked as I was, Josie was gracious enough to answer the list of questions that we had prepared. This is what she had to say. — Lisa Marie*



RRP: First, could you tell how long your band has been together, and how you met the current players?

Josie: Well, I've been doing this for a long time, but my current band, the one I'm on tour with right now, we've been together about a month. I brought two of them over from Australia; their names are Jon Lynn and Rupert Jenner. Jon is on acoustic bass, and Rupert is on lead guitar. I actually met Jon in Australia when I took a tour there last August. He backed me up for the shows that I did, and we basically hit it off and got me Rupert. So that's how we got the band together currently. Unfortunately, though, they are going back in August, but I'm going to do what I can to get them to stay here. My drummer, Eli Rineck, is from San Diego and used to play with a band called Johnny and the Blades out of Albuquerque. We haven't been together very long, but actually, with this current line-up we've gotten the best response out of anyone I've ever played with. We just seem to hit it off and are fun together on the stage.

RRP: Yeah, you seemed to be having a lot of fun.

Josie: We have a lot of energy. I don't know, there's something about us when we get on-stage, we kind of just click and go wild.

RRP: Why did your all-girl rockabilly band, Whistle Bait, break up?

Josie: That's a very hard question because I think there were a lot of reasons. We all kind of had different directions in the way we wanted to take the band, and we just didn't see things eye to eye. We were together for two and a half years, and we had so much fun and there was a lot of learning that we did together. We basically grew up in the band together because none of us had been in a band before and we were all learning everything. But at the same time it became like oil and water at a certain point so we had to go our separate ways.

RRP: What inspired you to start your own label (She Devil) and release your own records? What sorts of compromises do you feel you would be faced with, or affronts to your integrity as an artist, do you think the major labels represent? Also, why not go with an indie label?

Josie: What really inspired me to start my own label is that I just can't sit around and wait for something to happen, I have to do it myself. That's just the way I am. I'm not going to just sit and watch my life go by. It's like I'm on a train and you can get on it, hop off, or you can follow me. No matter what it took, I really wanted to get out that first CD, and also I felt that if you really put your all into something, you can do anything. That's what first inspired me to start my own record label and do it myself. Once I got into it I named it *She Devil* as a tribute to unsung women in rock-n-roll, because there are so many woman artists that are unrecognized like Charlene Arthur or Sparkle Moore, or even Cordel Jackson or just the little people. Even Wanda Jackson or Janis Martin to a certain extent, they weren't recognized and still aren't except in the rockabilly circuit. I think *She Devil* is a tribute to that. Also, another aspect is that I know how evil record companies can be and how the business is. I figured after seeing so many of my friends who were musicians get screwed by indie labels and major labels, I figured I could do this myself and give it my all. No, I don't have the funds to do a full page ad in *Rolling Stone* or anything like that, but I feel I've really had success in what I do because I've reached a lot of people. Another thing is, and I don't think a lot of people realize, is that we're in a new renaissance in music with the internet. People are going to look back in ten or twenty years and say, "wow, the Internet really changed the whole music industry." Now people can be heard all over the world and not have to have a distributor to put them there. Right now I think I'm kind of riding on that wave and doing what I can. Of course I can't do what a major label can; I can't give myself hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of advertising and publicity, but at the same time basically a major label is just a bank. They are just giving you a major loan and you have to pay it all back. Ani DiFranco inspires me a lot because she's gotten to that level, and she's done it without that help. I think it can be done, it's a struggle, but it can be done with trade-offs. The other thing about major labels is that you definitely have to sacrifice your integrity as an artist. Your creative control is totally taken away from you, you're usually teamed with a producer you can care less about, and they want to make you into this model of what they think will sell — like a Britney Spears or Christina Aguilera. On the other side of things, I really respect also people like Dwight Yoakam, who have maintained their creative integrity and do what they want. That's a very hard thing to do.

RRP: You are going to have a song on the soundtrack to the new film "Rambling Cats." How did this come about, and what do you know of the movie itself? When does it come out?

Josie: I was playing at the Derby in Los Angeles and the director happened to see me there playing a gig. I had received an e-mail from him some time after asking if I'd like to be in the movie: not just the soundtrack and album, but being shown on-stage in a scene. I love that kind of stuff, so I said "yes." It's still in the works, because when you're doing an independent film it is such a long process. He's still in the developing stage with producers and all the logistics of it with financing and





everything. I've already gotten like six revised copies of the script and even wrote in a speaking part for me, which is pretty neat. So, I'm just kind of waiting for me to be called in and do my thing. Yeah, it all started out with just him seeing me at a show.

RRP: How was your experience playing at the huge Green Bay show? Who there really impressed you and did you discover any new great bands?

Josie: Green Bay was an exciting experience, but also an exhausting experi-

ence. I mean, there were 150 bands and a lot of them were overlapping, so you had to run back and forth, which I'm kind of familiar with because Jazzfest in New Orleans is the same way. You're seeing all these legends and they're playing in all these different tents at the same time. You're just running back and forth trying to see even pieces of people. I think the Green Bay thing was incredible, just the way they put it all together and the organization they had with the musicians. They treated the musicians *so well*! It was an experience, and there were so many bands that I hadn't seen, and so many bands that I missed as well because I played on Saturday night and had to get everything ready for my show. Gosh, it is all still kind of mushy in my mind; I'd really have to look at a schedule to see which bands really rang my bell, so to speak. The new bands, like the Extraordinaires from England blew my mind, as well as the Lonely Blue Boys who are from Southern California and did some stuff with Big Sandy when he did his Doo-Wop album. Also, all the legends that were there like Billy Lee Riley and Janis Martin, I mean, you just can't beat that. Who else, Joe Clay... it was just amazing: a once in a lifetime kind of thing.

RRP: I've read that you started writing songs at the age of eleven, which is very cool. What sorts of things does an eleven-year-old songwriter write about?

Josie: Not very important things. I think I was more into melodies at that time, a lot of my songs were about drawn melodies. Growing up in the 80's I heard a lot of songs that didn't have actual melodies, like all those rock songs, but listening to old style songs that have melodies and progressions like that, which you can sing along to, were great. I just wrote silly songs with good melodies.

RRP: What was it like for you being a teenager in New Orleans, where you were surrounded by great jazz, blues, Dixieland, etc., and also able to get into the bars?

Josie: Well, back when I was growing up... especially in New Orleans which is a 24 hour city... I swear I was 16, and even though the legal drinking age was 18, in New Orleans, (which is known as the city which care forgot), no one really cares. It's probably not that way anymore. I just always managed to find good music. You don't really even have to go into bars, there's great music one the street there. You'll walk down the street and hear a saxophonist playing alone, just echoing down the streets, or you'll hear a ragtime band just sitting on the corner playing. You really can't escape music in New Orleans. Even though at the time I was a teenagers and didn't fully appreciate what was there until I left and realized what I was missing, just being there and walking down the street you're influenced by so many great, great things. You can just walk past the bars and hear the music coming out.

RRP: Now that you live in California how do you find the rockabilly/honky tonk scene there?

Josie: A lot of people argue with me about this, but being in a band and playing across the country, the best and best and biggest scene I've ever seen is in Southern California. I think a lot of it has to do with a lot of young kids that are into it. In other places I've never seen so many youngsters, we're talking like 12 on up to 18, that are so into the music. That's why I think the scene is California is bigger and wider than anywhere else. It's not only a lot of older people listening to it, but a lot of kids, younger sisters and brothers. Also, the array of bands that come from there: Deke Dickerson, Big Sandy, I'm there, Lucky Stars, Smith Ranch Boys. We've got so much talent there and I think that helps introduce a lot of the younger kids to the music.

RRP: Do you think being described as a "blonde bombshell" and so on, ever threatens to overshadow your musical achievements? There seems to be two extremes where you wouldn't want to be trivialized or objectified, but then also you don't want to be desexualized either, since there is obviously a libidinous aspect to rock-n-roll. Is any of that a concern at all?

Josie: That's a huge, huge concern. Actually, that's like the best question I've had in any interview. I think a lot of people really don't even pay attention to my lyrics and stuffs, but just see the blonde with the big boobs (excuse my language). Believe it or not, I've actually thought of dying my hair brown and getting a breast reduction, and just fuck it, I want them to hear my music, you know. That's why I wrote that song "Just Lookin' Pretty" that I have on my album; that's what that song's about. I wish people would see past that, but I'm on the stage, I have to wear pretty clothes and play my part. Especially in the rockabilly scene where people are very particular about the way you dress, and your nails have to be done, and your hair has to be perfect. Sometimes I almost wish I could give up being a performer and just write songs for other people because they would appreciate what I create. I think that's a major, major issue with me. Major. I get a lot of flack from guys and girls - more guys than girls I think. I think a lot of it might stem from jealousy: "Oh, the only reason that she is doing that and selling so many CDs is because she's blonde, you know. But the fact is I wouldn't still be selling my first as well as my latest CD if it was not good material, because people would not buy it if it sucked. They would not buy it for a pretty picture on the front cover when they could go buy a Playboy magazine if they want that. It's silly, but it is a big part. In a way it keeps me going because I have to prove to them that I'm not just a pretty face up there. I'm doing what I love, and I've been doing this forever and it comes straight from the heart. I may not sing in perfect key, but it does come straight from the heart and when I write a song it's from my soul. Take it or leave it. If you don't like it, walk out the door, don't pay the cover.

RRP: Well, it seems like everyone needs to get going. Is there anything else that you would like to mention or talk about?

Josie: Just that I have a new CD out and the producer on it is really special to the CD. His name is Mark Neill and he does a lot of The Paladins' rockabilly CDs and he did the first Big Sandy CD. This new CD, he really put a lot into it. He specializes in





vintage recording and we did this all old-style. He did such a wonderful job with producing, and I just wanted to mention that. It's my favorite CD out of all three I think, altogether with the production, the lyrics, and the songs.

RRP: Well, thanks so much for doing the interview!

Josie: Thank you! I hope it doesn't sound too bad.

RRP: Oh no, it was great. Okay, I'm going to hit the stop button... and I think I'm going to go barf in the parking lot.

Josie: Oh no!

## **EXCLUSIVE: ELVIS IS ALIVE!!**

### **& REINCARNATED AS A BABY-EATING GOAT FREAK!**

An INTERVIEW with the MAN, the MYTH... the GOAT!?



Can you tell the real Elvis goat from the blatant imposter?  
Answer on page 43.

For every one cynic out there, there are ten believers. I used to be in that minority of clear-sighted rational people that derided conclusions from empirical evidence, rather than having faith in the fantastic for fear of the oblivion that the truth holds for us all. Recently, however, I had opportunity to observe a phenomenon so completely absurd that my own sanity has been called into question. I have been scoffed at by peers, turned on by friends, and referred to treatment facilities by skeptical family members. I have been lumped into that category of sad, poor wretches that see Elvis making crop circles, or buying a Slurpee at a 7-11. Perhaps my claim here is even more dubious and probably ludicrous to most. I can not blame those who do not believe what they are about to read. At times I even questioned my own sanity, and after seeing my mother's tears when I insisted on pursuing this matter, have even considered taking one of the many fine pills I've been prescribed for my alleged mental ailment. But I am not a lunatic, nor am I a huckster or con artist. This is not akin to the Piltdown Man hoax, nor yet another Bigfoot sighting. It is strange to me that people who have faith in more far-fetched things, who swear to the veracity of events that happened 2000 years ago by which they gain witness not even second or third-hand, but through centuries of re-writes, translations, and indoctrination, cannot afford me a moment's suspension of disbelief. I can only assume that the process of belief for most people is adherence to majority rule, rather than a careful consideration of evidence before them. Indeed, the majority will view me as a flake: an inconsequential dissident on the fringe of reality. To accept my claims means to re-structure what you know, and for most, that is just too much to ask... And for that, I cannot blame them.

It started about 8 months ago. I received a call from a friend of mine who worked for the humane society in Medina. He said that they had taken in a goat that had attacked a pregnant woman, and they were going to terminate it that evening. He thought I'd get a kick out the wild story, especially knowing my interest in cloven-hoofed creatures. I drove down there immediately, and what I saw changed me forever. The sneering goat had been beaten up pretty badly in the tussle with the animal control officers, but even then he had a certain glow that drew me to him. As I stared into those eyes I could see a spark, a sort of glimmer of intelligence that I could not explain. I convinced my friend to allow me a few moments alone with the goat. Naturally, he took it

as a very strange, perhaps even a perverse request, but he obliged, having little concern for the condemned goat's chastity. It was not sexual motivations that induced me towards a one-on-one conference with this magnificent creature, however. Instead, we just stared at each other, contemplating each other's countenance. I paced in a circle around the beast, and his fiery eyes followed mine with an eerieadroitness. I sensed a vague intelligence behind those glossy eyes. Then it happened; he spoke. Maybe it wasn't English, or any known language at all, but I understood perfectly. Don't ask me how or why, but it was an utterance I will never forget. I swore he said, with a calmness that belied the urgency of the plea, "help me, Ben...help me." I thought I was hallucinating, that I'd finally done it, skidded through the guardrails of sanity. I was dumbfounded and speechless. I grabbed the choker on the goat's neck and dragged it to my car and sped away. What else could I have done? My friend did end up calling several times to see if I had the missing goat, as he surely knew, but I was certain that he wouldn't notify the police. Indeed, he was a good friend. The goat was mine now, and I was going to learn how it was able to speak to me. For the next several months I kept it chained in my basement, a prisoner to my scientific scrutiny. By countless hours of training myself to pick out the subtle intonations in his bleats and groans, I have been able to communicate with the goat rather effectively. My conversations have not only led me to 100% conviction that this was indeed Elvis reincarnated, but also led me towards hope in an afterlife after years of doubt and emptiness. The invaluable insights

I've gained from my several conversations with this goat are now able to be shared with the public. About a month ago, before I released him back into the wild, I convinced him to sit down and have a chat with me for the record. I told him that the whole thing would likely be discounted as a laughable hoax, and yet he was undeterred. He knew this perhaps even better than I, for I was surely not the first to speak with him since his transference into a goat body. For him, as I took it, it was indeed time to formally come out in the open with his story. While most mainstream press has refused to run this interview, I am driven to publish it anywhere that will have it. And if it only touches a few people and changes their lives, I am just proud that I was the one there to act as the intermediary to spread the good news. As you read this interview, I have bracketed the meanings of his utterances next to the best transcriptions I could manage of the sounds he produced, just to give you a feel for the conversation as it actually transpired. - Ben

BEN: So Elvis, what evil doings had you committed in the last life that led karma to remake you into an infanticidal goat creature? For what horrendous sins against humanity are you now being punished?

ELVIS: M-a-a-a-a-ah. Ma-ma-muh-ma-a-a-a-ah-ah-ahh!  
[I recorded several gospel albums, and it was me on the grassy knoll.]

BEN: I know goats will eat just about anything, even tin cans, but what's with this insane craving you seem to have for babies?

ELVIS: Mah, Ma-Maaaah. Mah, ma-a-a-ah-ah-muh-muh, Maaaaaaah! Maaaah ma muh, mama ma-a-a-a-ahh. [They are delicious once you get past the horror of it all. No different than eating veal, really. You do savor the taste of infant cow flesh, don't you?]



BEN: Do you have any young'ns of your own?

ELVIS: Mah-ah-ah-ahhhhhhh. [Yes, I am raising them to one day perform on Broadway in an all-goat rendition of King Lear, which is in my opinion, the greatest of Shakespeare's tragedies.]

BEN: How do you feel about the war on terrorism?

ELVIS: Mwah-ah-ahh! [sobbing] Mwah-ah-ahh!

BEN: What about the rumors of your involvement in the Enron scandal? Kenneth Lay allegedly gave you documents to ingest, did he not?

ELVIS: Ma-ma-a-a-ah. [No comment.]

BEN: So what was it like for you to discover Lisa Marie had married Michael Jackson?

ELVIS: Ma-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-ahh! M\*\*H, M\*\*A!!! M\$@A-MA-A-AH!!! [I was very happy for my beloved daughter once I got over the initial shock. If they had blemished my legacy with a child, however, I would have paid them a "special" visit.]

BEN: In the collective psyche, goats often represent Satan and the feral longings that still reside within the human animal, no matter how much we deny them. Do you think this iconography of the goat image relates closely to your self-image as a four-legged baby-eating goat?

ELVIS: Ma-a-a-a-h, mamamama-a-a-a-a-ah. [Of course, and I think in this incarnation I can finally purge this evil from my eternal soul... or at least have a few kicks. You see, karma is not simply about doing "good" things for fear of the "bad" things being revisited upon you, but rather about fulfilling the role you are born into and keeping order in the world. I was born a demented goat, and I have to act in accordance with that schema. We all have the same passions, same instincts and desires, but it is our role that dictates what we should or shouldn't do. Fortunately, as a goat this time around, I do not have to deny myself a single pleasure, except that of being admirable and compassionate. In fact it is my duty to nurture depravity and to maintain congruence with the popular conception of the evil goat.]

BEN: Of all creatures, why is the goat one of the most evil?

ELVIS: Ma-a-a....mahhh, ma-a-a-a-a-ah. [Goats have beards, and beards are of course evil. I was loved in one life, and now I am hated and feared.]

BEN: Is there anything you won't do as a wicked goat freak?

ELVIS: Ma-a-a-ah. Mah. Mah,mama-a-a-ah. [I won't do any reunion tours or car commercials.]

BEN: What do you have to say to your enduring fans, many of whom doubt that you have died at all?

ELVIS: Mah, mah, Ma-a-a-a-a-ah. [I am touched at their refusal to accept my passing, yet I beseech them to find conspiracy where it does in fact exist, and not in the complete falsehoods of my "fake" death. There are things more important to take note of and labor over. You should know, for instance, that aliens are controlling us. They do it through language, which is the underlying infrastructure of our thoughts. As a goat I no longer need conventional language, and have, to an extent, escaped their grasp. As humans, though, you can use drugs to help you to avoid the alien vernacular that you've come to accept as your own, and therefore break the hold these extra-terrestrial masters have over our minds. AIDS was invented by the government (under alien mandate) to destroy drug-smuggling bisexual flight attendants, and in so doing, keep you all under their oppressive thumb. I shot Kennedy because he commissioned this research. The war on drugs is a war to keep you within

a paradigm crafted for exploitation; to keep you blind to the fact that you are being steered into eternal slavery. As a goat now I understand that humans are the lowest forms of life, though I suspect "low" and "high" are relative terms depending on what your current incarnation may be. (I am much more for animal rights than I used to be. Viva Las Cabras!) These very words, like all words, are the work of aliens trying to confuse us within limited subjectivities, a virus of false selfhood. At some point in the past, I was you. We all mirror some aspect of each other... But to hell with it. Worship me if you please. I am your bestial overlord. I am the child's first dream of death. Heed me, for I am goat.

## Editorial Dysentery:

### A Column of Confession & Controversy



I really don't know where to begin. Several things have been making me uncomfortable lately. I think my sister's dog has a crush on me, for one. It's true, the way he looks at me shows more than just innocent crotch sniffing and admiration for the guy who lets him in and out of the house. He's thinkin' that I'm some sort of bipedal demigod sculpted from white marble and glazed with a shimmering layer of studliness. The way his tongue flops out the side of his panting mouth with an unfulfilled longing really tends to cause some awkward silences between us. That and

how he always looks away as if blushing when I say "good boy" or pat him on the ass. Those things point to only one thing: that dog wants me bad. And I suspect this could develop beyond a simple crush too. In fact, I think this infatuation has reached peak levels to where he might think that we are soul-mates as he careens into an unfathomable fetish that is at once troubling and dangerous, but also completely understandable considering the object of his adoration. I notice the little things, like him leaving half of his food in his bowl, then nosing it over to where I am sitting. And just the other day, and I know this sounds crazy, but I swear he winked at me. I fear this might develop into full-blown obsession, a freakish combination of *Fatal Attraction* and *Cujo*. I lie awake at night just worrying. I am not sure what to do about this. I am concerned that disclosing my suspicions could cause a rift between my sister and me, yet I think it's best to nip this thing in the bud and lay it all out on the table. It's to the point that I shudder to change my clothes in front of this lusting canine. Just yesterday I caught him sniffing and chewing on my underwear in a worrisome manner, as if my cotton briefs were the savory flesh of a mangled mammal. Even Lisa has sensed the tension between us; she won't admit it, but there's a jealousy in her that burns hotter with each passing moment like a kettle of rage thrown into the fires of passion. I dare not suggest doggy-style in the bedroom as he whimpers outside my doorway like an estranged lover wailing his sorrows to the ancient gods of forbidden desires. One thing is certain, my resolve to resist his advances shall not weaken. This is a conundrum that will plague me until resolution emancipates me from the throes of his demented inter-species longings.

Another thing that has been on my mind is Amish people. I think they should be the butts of derogatory jokes and discriminated against. I mean, they could be like an all-purpose whipping boy for every part of society, and let's face it, we all need to hate someone. This would be the safest group to hate, and it would take a lot of



pressure and tension away from the usual targeted groups, which polite society quite rightly deems it heinous to despise. Most people never even see Amish people, or do so rarely. If you go too far taunting the Amish, chances are pretty good that they won't kick your ass because of religious principles. If they are made fun of on television by comedians, they will never know because they don't watch TV. If some private golf club wants to exclude the Amish, they can go right ahead. The Amish exclude all of us from their private little inbred society too (you can't even do the secret handshake without the extra fingers). They don't want to be part of any swanky golf club anyway. Can you see Jedediah putting for birdie on the 8<sup>th</sup> hole, then hopping on his donkey to the next fairway? Not friggin' likely. I know I will do my part to hate the Amish and by default to tolerate other ethnic and racial groups. These barn-raising oddities of religious fervor will be the ones that I irrationally blame for all of my problems, for the failing economy and shriveling job market; it will be their bearded faces on my dartboard as I hurl my pointy projectiles. I will dream of their exquisite demise, and curse the sun for warming them in their all-black wardrobes. I will start a committee to keep them from using the Internet or purchasing technology stocks. I will lobby congress to establish special taxes on gasoline and long-distance calls for these wicked farmer menaces. I will tell everyone that they don't wash their hands after using the bathroom, and so not to buy their roadside pies and baked goods. And think about this: if dog-walkers have to pick up after their filthy pooches, what about those colossal mounds of excrement left behind by Amish horses to taunt us like steaming towers of ridicule on the roads and alleyways of this great nation? We need to take a serious look at this. I will single-mindedly be a thorn in the side of the Amish community, yet only a painless prick that they are hardly even aware of. That's the beauty of it. My satisfaction will come from knowing that I can say whatever I want about those crummy Amish bastards, and no one will get upset – that is except for all you lousy Amish sympathizers out there. To the actual Amish I am just a heathen puppet for the devil who is spouting inconsequential madness, but you sympathizers want to champion their cause no matter who it hurts.



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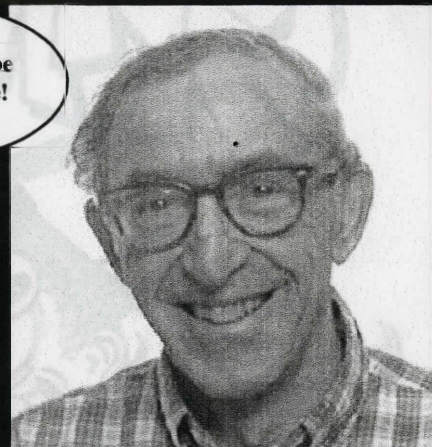
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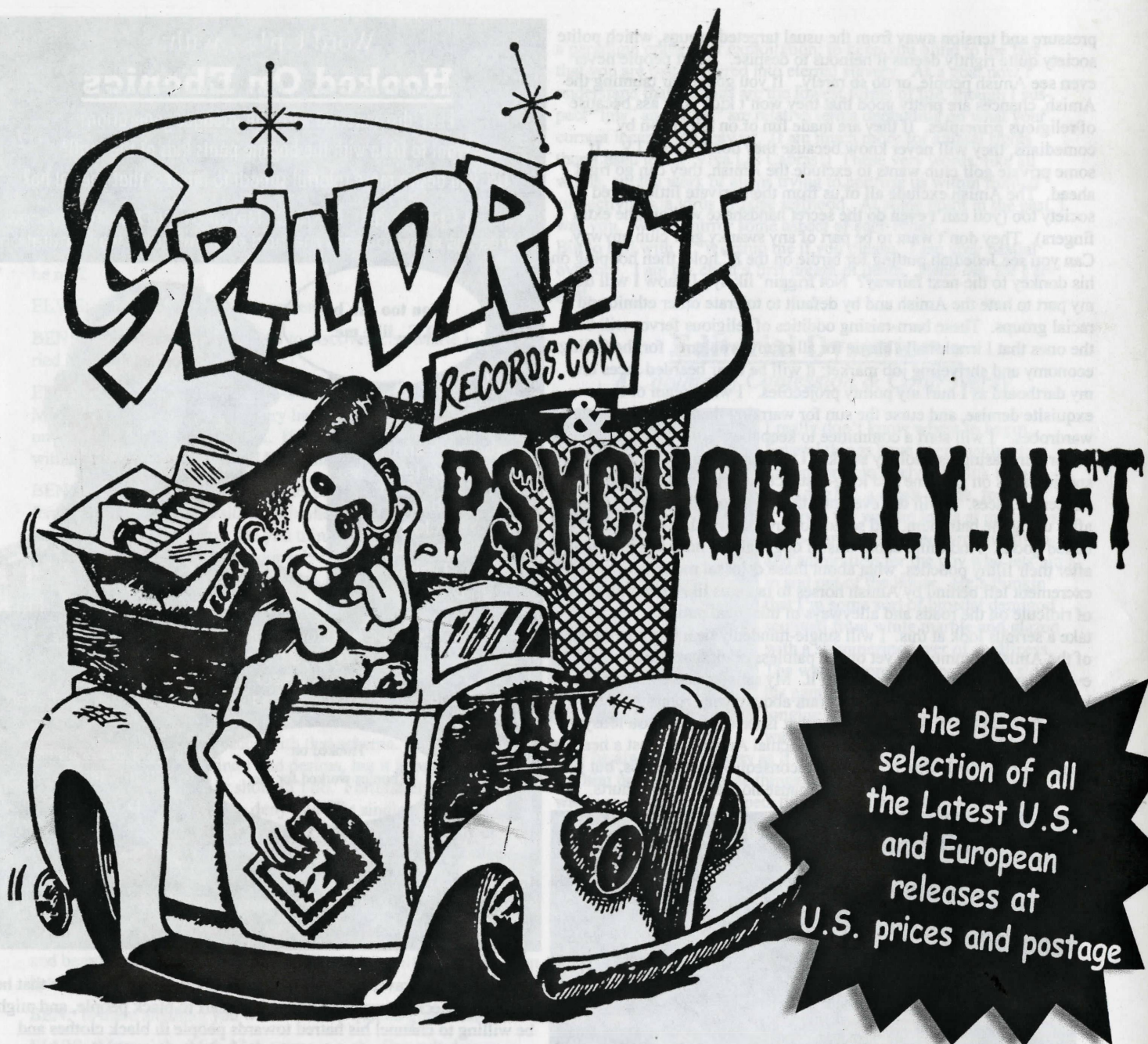


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People like the wavering KKK guy from Charleston who writes that he has always secretly wanted to open his heart to black people, and might be willing to channel his hatred towards people in black clothes and buggies instead. Or what about the Arab fundamentalist from Boston who is toying with the idea of loving Jews and Western capitalism? Will you tell him that he can't burn the Amish in effigy? Or even the drunken lout from Kansas City who is willing to learn to like the French if he can spout incoherent libel about some other social group. (Sure, it could be the Turks, but why not the Amish instead?) Unfashionable racists like these are the people my campaign will help. You Amish-loving zealots for that passe retro-bigotry will eventually succumb to my vision of a united world against the Amish. The best hatred is borne of ignorance, and who do you understand less than people who take the bus but won't drive cars, who have webbed feet but don't waddle, or grow those biker beards only to ride dark horses? Only the most evil people ever ride dark horses! So I say nurture your distrust for these butter-churning scoundrels. It's cool, daring, avante garde, and sure to be the next big thing. Remember: they are looking down their crooked noses at you, so go ahead and thumb your nose at them! - BL

**Answer to the Elvis Goat question:** The one on the right is the obvious authentic Evil Goat Elvis, due to the dark, brooding eyes that allude to a sinister past, as well as the larger pompadour that shows dominance and makes him more rockin'.





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