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ISSUE #14**

ROCK-N-ROLL PURGATORY

NASTY

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Star Devils
Koffin Kats
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**The Tremors
Kill The Hippies
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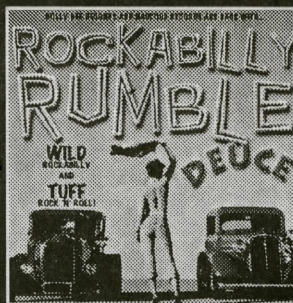
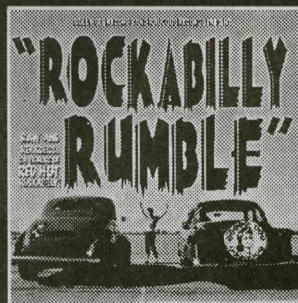


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INTERVIEWS

The Paladins.....	20
Sasquatch & The Sick-A-Billys.....	11
The Star Devils.....	18
Starlight Drifters.....	4
Kill the Hippies.....	6
Cooterfinger.....	15
Fast Mattress.....	16
Koffin Kats.....	23
The Tremors.....	15
Slim Cessna's Auto Club.....	26

Other Features...

Music Reviews.....	28
Rampant Editorialism.....	38
Ray Condo Obituary.....	19
Kustom Ride Spotlight.....	17
Show Reports.....	5

Cover Girl: Miss Watson

Contributors:

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Jill Kemper Alicia Baker
The Machetti Doogie Whittaker
Hank Ockmonic Carl Alessi

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Highlights since issue #13:

An old lady told me that I looked like the devil. Sweet! I also went to my 1st bachelor party & played paintball, after which we met up with the bachelorette party & drunk Lisa puked on the groom-to-be. I don't think when he asked her to do it that he really thought she would. I also don't think he realized she would actually put his own cigarette out on his chest when she warned him about the danger of smoking. Live & learn, my friend.

Lowlights since issue #13:

I want to advise everyone never to enter a hot dog eating contest. It hurts. Emesis is the nemesis. The abdominal force alone can strain your every sphincter... Lisa's lowlight reel would have footage of her drunkenly sleep-walking out of our apartment, down the back stairs, into the alley with the trash cans, where she finally came to, bewildered & pissing on her own leg. Bear in mind, she was completely naked aside from a little blanket that she had tied around her neck as a cape. I woke with

her tapping on the bedroom window, trying to stir me from a dead sleep because she locked herself out of the house. Good times. - BL



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An Interview with Chris Casello from the:

STARLIGHT DRIFTERS



Nashville since you've been there; what have you been doing and how are you liking it?

Chris: Lets see, I've played with Jen Jones and the Camaros, Nic Roulette, Dave Roe (Johnny Cash and Dwight) The Ex Husbands, Rosie Flores, Brazillibilly, Don Kelly, Mark and JD from the Shack Shakers, a great up-and-comer Kenneth Brian, Jimmy Lester from Los Straightjackets, even Sonny George and I are working on a possible project, some sessions. I am feeling better everyday about it.

RRP: Are you guys currently working on a new CD? How do you see the band's sound evolving from the early days up to now, and where do you see it heading? I know that what you recorded with Ronnie Weiser took on a different feel than in your other sessions, and you also seem to be heading more and more toward Western Swing and incorporating other influences.

Chris: I like jazz from the fifties and forties what can I say up to '65 America was it baby! I like hillbilly music and blues a lot, so

Rockabilly and Western Swing hell yeah! But everybody plays that stuff down here, it's intimidating. The new record will have a lot of instros from Bob Wills to Surf. The swamp movie brought out a darker side I had not explored in a while. So my plan is use a couple of guest singers from the Nashville fringes - outsiders so to speak. I sing a couple myself, but mainly a lot guitar and steel, I am playing pedal steel too now.

RRP: When I saw your band at the big Green Bay festival, you struck me as an exceptional guitarist, even in a building filled with amazing players. When and how did you start, and what has really helped you to develop as far as technique and style? Also, what are you working on now that is challenging for you?

Chris: Thanks, I have been playing so long I don't know, its really just who I am. I started at age twelve but had some lessons when I was eight, I started playing along with Rolling Stones records though my first records were Elvis. I got a guitar and an Elvis comeback special record Christmas '69.

I played in bands in High School, doing stuff on the Radio, but I was from Ann Arbor, home to The Stooges and the MCS - I knew all those guys and they all had lots of guts, you know, being from Detroit area, there were a lot of bad ass Mothers playing when I was growing up. I guess I played in so many different types of bands: garage, R&B, surf, blues, jazz, country and rockabilly, even soul...it helped me a lot. I hung around older cats and went to a lot of gigs. Ann Arbor was like a little Austin. I also taught lessons for twelve years, thousands of lessons in every

I was first introduced to the Starlight Drifters at the Green Bay Rockabilly Festival, but these cats are far from your run-of-the-mill rockabilly act. Instead they incorporate a huge range of influences from the first half of the last century, & are able to go beyond a one-dimensional genre caricature to perform with a depth, authenticity, & enthusiasm that comes from total immersion into the American musical heritage. This interview is with Chris Casello (guitar & steel). He and singer Bill Alton have been in the band since 1997, & are now joined by Mike Kissick (drums) and Mike King (upright bass). - BL

style. That helped me the most. What I am working on now is chord solos from Barney Kessel, jazzy country like Jimmy Bryant and Hank Garland and Pedal Steel.

RRP: Do you think that the nostalgic aspects of 40's and 50's culture harms people's perception of the musical genre as being relevant today? I've seen some people, even those who like the music, regard it as a sort fun novelty or fashion, while many others relate to it in a deeper way. Is there still stuff to be said and done with it that keeps the form timeless, and not merely a musical artifact of the past unrelated to modern experience?

Chris: People don't get it. "Nostalgia" is an awful way of softening the most powerful and dangerous music that ever lived. The creative explosion of mid century America will never happen again. Modern art and design, film, music, technology ...we had the bomb first! It irks me when I hear people talk who actually believe that music became all it could be with the sixties with Dylan and the Beatles. I don't get it ...don't people have ears? The greatest songs, writers, musicians, singers and achievements were already gone by then. Breakthroughs? Give me a break if I want primitive I'll listen to Joe Hill Louis or even Link Wray, if I want composers give me Gershwin or Duke or Cole Porter or Hank Williams Or Chuck...how about Willie Dixon? Rock 'N' Roll was teenage music for teenagers it was wild, it was black music, it had existed for years. Americans invented it but it scared people. Now MTV and Rap has achieved what every white conservative who crushed R&R was afraid of. Don't make me say it.

RRP: I've read that you prefer the performance aspect of being in a band to songwriting, and that you guys aren't "tortured artists trying to express yourselves all the time." How do you respond to the school of thought that says if you don't express yourself or have something important to say, then what is the point? And also, do you find that is a



RRP: I heard that you guys will have a song on a major motion picture soundtrack; how did that come about?

Chris: Our engineer is Greg Leonard up in Michigan, his brother is a Hollywood director, did *Lawnmower Man* and some other stuff. The movie is *Man-thing* a MARVEL swamp horror movie - I pitched him some creepy swamp lap steel through an old Gibson amp, and he loved it so I got in on some soundtrack sessions. I got all kinds of old weird Ju Ju gear from the fifties and sixties and forties, scary bluesy sounds. All the while we are working on the Starlight Drifters stuff and he said they needed a Sleepwalk style intro, well it so happens I already had one! And was planning to cut it. This is actually the third film we landed a tune in.

RRP: You recently moved from Ann Arbor, Michigan down to Nashville; did anyone else in the band move there as well?

Chris: So far the guys are still up North. Mike King lives in Chicago, Mike Kissick in Detroit, we still get together and play once in a while. I just wanted to keep playing and getting better. People in the south dig my music and I don't have to explain what it is. I hope to move up a notch or two, also you probably know I am the only original member of the band, to keep going I need players, serious cats. Lots of hungry musicians down here.

RRP: It seems like you've been really busy in

relatively new development in the history of music for musicians to be expected to write most of their own material, to the point that there is even a sort of snobbery against those who don't? Is it possible to be expressive and soulful while doing covers?

Chris: Every time I play I express myself. The main thing I express is joy. My philosophy is every day above ground is a gift and if I get to play music that's two gifts. That's why I can never understand why people quit or give up. This is the best job in the world... ask all those movie stars with pretend bands. I guess I said all that stuff about tortured artists, but I don't remember what I was thinking. I actually do write quite a bit, you just will never hear my crappy stuff. Why include a turd on an album when there are so many great works available? Now living in Nashville I feel like doing my originals more, because every day you hear every song covered over and over. An artist will always put their stamp on whatever they do, if they are legit. It doesn't matter who wrote it.

RRP: I know a lot of musicians who sometimes have a hard time just watching bands, not because they are elitists or feel superior, but because it makes them to want to pick up their own instrument and play. Do you ever get that feeling? Who is someone you would go out of your way to see, even if you weren't able to play the show?

Chris: My buddy Carco Clave (who's played with everyone) said he has two reactions to watching a band: "That's easy I can do that." or "That's it, I quit" (paraphrased). I appreciate his honesty but I think everybody has something to teach you even if it's something you don't ever want to do. After arriving here and seeing the best players in the world I started practicing harder, but I always practiced. I just dug in more to my own thing. There all kinds of acts that are still around that I have not seen, my objective is not to miss Hank Thompson next time or Ray Price. I missed Jerry Lee last week at the Ryman damn it. I always see Deke when he comes around. I saw Wayne Hancock in a little bar last week he's always great. I dig Southern Culture. The Detroit Garagers like The Paybacks. Opened for Wanda Jackson recently, unbelievable! I just feel scared, we are losing all the great blues and jazz guys too. I never saw Johnny Cash. I just want to meet these people or play with them. We are running out time.

RRP: I read that at one point you lived a few miles down the street from Ted Nugent; did you ever get a chance to meet him?

Chris: Ted has a compound down by Grass Lake, Michigan. I have seen him around. I saw him in Arby's eating a salad once. Also I owned one of his Super Twins 180 watts, orange tolex, 1976, too loud - a true beast. Played steel through it.

RRP: Thanks for the interview. Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

Chris: Nope, just going to hit it again this summer and fall, new disc should be out. Thanks to everyone.

www.starlightdrifters.com

LIVE REPORTS

Wanda Jackson

Beachland Tavern, Cleveland - April 26, 2004

By *Alica Baker*

The Beachland Tavern was bustling with excitement and anticipation as we drank casually and chatted among ourselves, wondering what was in store. Having never seen my heroine in concert before, I wasn't sure what to expect. I mean, she's been doing this for 50 years! Wanda Jackson was born in 1937, in Oklahoma. A guitar was given to her at the tender age of 6, as I have read. That she has never put the guitar down is no surprise to me! Wanda Jackson was touring to support her new release "Heart Trouble" (CMH Records), her first studio album in over 15 years. Among the guest appearances on this gem of an album? Elvis Costello, Rosie Flores, Dave Alvin, The Cramps, and Lee Rocker are just a few. She had the very capable Lustre Kings open up for her on this cool spring night. They were so polished, they shined. The Lustre Kings took Wanda Jackson's trademark Country, Rock, and Gospel sounds and had the packed Tavern's full attention. I was lucky enough to have been asked to dance by a friend of mine, and he spun me around the floor though hits like "I Gotta Know", and "Hot Dog! That made him mad". With a Lustre King, she sang the new Elvis Costello duet, and the guy sounded so much like Costello that if you closed your eyes, you'd have thought he was there, too. Of course, the crowd went wild when she blasted through "Fujiyama Mama", and I ran up to the front to shout along to "Riot in Cell Block #9". When she was done performing, she took to the floor and signed autographs for at least an hour afterward. The line to meet her was so long, I lost track of my many friends who had traveled to see her. Just to illustrate how loyal fans of Wanda Jackson are, twin sisters Ilona and Daisy came all the way from Ottawa, Canada...a 10 hour drive. Needless to say, it was a show well worth the time and money, and if she comes through your town, don't miss out on this rock 'n' roll legend.

Tombstone Brawlers

Benefit Show w/The Beltones
Club New York, Middletown, New York - 6/27/04

By *The Machetti*

Making the trek from Chicago to New York wasn't the easiest way to spend my weekend but it was surely worth it. After a day long assault on my eardrums of local skinhead Oi! bands, I was delightfully surprised to see a stand up bass in the pile of gear near the stage. Up to this point I had only heard about Tombstone Brawlers but had yet to hear them or pick up their album on Tombstone Records. Knowing that Chuck (ex Los Gatos Locos front man and undisputed king of American psychobilly) was fronting this act, certainly added to my anticipation for them to get on stage. Once they were ready to go, they broke into one of my favorite standards, a cover that Los Gatos had made a psychobilly anthem, "Someone's Gunna get their head kicked in tonight." I am going out on a limb here but

I enjoyed this version more than I had ever heard before. The addition of the banjo to the mix made this song and others even more amazing. Chuck's tough and dark voice is the only voice that can deliver that song. The set was a lot shorter than I

wished but due to time constraints

it's understandable. They played a mix of their own stuff, and songs I love from Los Gatos days. I'd say they played the Los Gatos songs such as "Juvenile Delinquent" better than I had ever heard them before.

Pete, their bass player, who has been playing upright only one and a half years, shows strong talent. His skill is closer to that of a 5 year veteran of doghouse slapping. If he has grown this much in a year and a half, I can't wait to see where he takes his raw talent and transforms this band into the future. I am really excited about this band. I hope to see them touring

all over the US, since they just finished a European tour. An awesome show and made the 15 hour road-trip worthwhile.

Sons and Daughters Sugar Skulls

At Doc Watson's, Philadelphia - March 26, 2004

By *Doogie Whittaker*

So, every once and a while, a show comes along that just blows you away, and ya just wanna tell everyone about it. This is one of those shows. First off, I have to say there was another band on the bill whom I don't remember the name of (sorry.) Good, but not my cup of tea. But the night really started jumping when Glasgow's Sons and Daughters hit the stage. What are they like? That's a great question. They don't fit any genre that I can think of, but they blend so many styles so well into a very original mix that I was just spellbound for their entire set. I heard Nick Cave. I heard Sonic Youth. I heard strains of bluegrass (due to the mandolin.) I heard a lot of stuff that gets me jumping. I heard American roots music interpreted by four very talented people not from America. I'll put it to ya this way. I was so impressed that I traveled to New York the following week to hear (and videotape) the last night of their tour at the Knitting Factory, arrived late and only caught five songs, and considered myself very lucky to witness them again. I will be in the front row next time they tour the country.

Next up, Philly's own Sugar Skulls. I've been a fan of these guys since the very first time Lish and I saw them play at the Pontiac Grille way back when, and they ALWAYS deliver. The double vocal attack of Red and Heather never fails to get me dancing, usually scaring the crap out of everyone up front except for my dancing partner Erika (Heather's sister.) Think X with less rockabilly, more punk, adding a wonderful sax attack. These guys have a great wall of sound thing going on, with a very accessible yet original style. Never short on energy, you can't do much better than treat yourself to an evening with these guys. Just don't be hippy dancing in front of Red, 'specially if he has an empty shot glass in his hand.

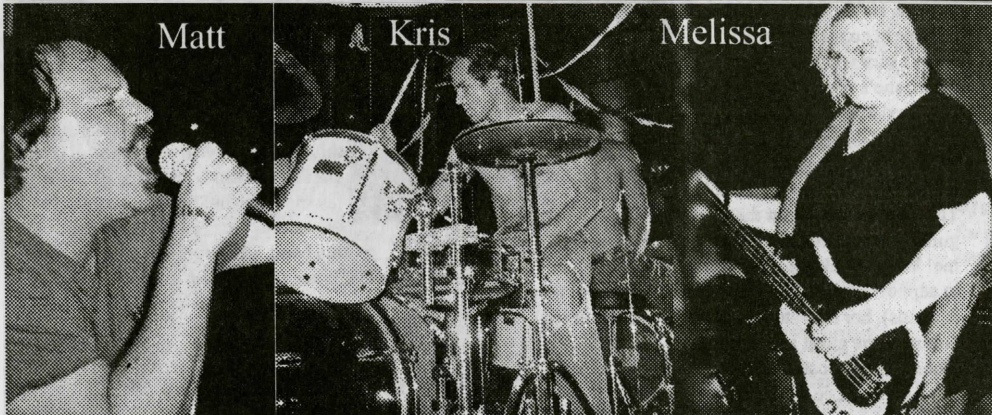
By the by, both bands have cds out that you should add to your collection. Web sites are www.sonsanddaughtersloveyou.co.uk www.sugarskulls.com



Wanda Jackson pic by Jessica LaRoach

Kill The Hippies

I have long been of the opinion that Kill the Hippies are the best punk band in Ohio. They can be fast, hard, and passionately political without being dull, pushy or cliché, while elsewhere they write simple fun songs that have the bounce, energy and attitude you get from the best Dirtnap bands. Over the last decade of being criminally under-noticed, a few discerning critics have likened their sound to that of Alice Donut, Harum Scarum, The Crucifucks, The Feederz, The Briefs, Newtown Animals, Wire, Devo, Buzzcocks, and so on. After ineffectually trying to interview them for four years, this band sheathed in mystery has finally yielded to my penetrating investigation of their inner-workings. I wanted to dissect their motives, learn their philosophies, their hopes, the root of their fears... the source of every stain on every article of clothing they own. I wanted to pry my way into their good graces, become one with their plasma, and squish through their blood-brain barriers like a lazy harlequin looking to lounge upon their learned lobes. To do this, I headed to Kent, Ohio, and presented myself at their doorstep as they awoke from a late night of hard drinking and dart throwing. After touring their vegetable gardens and picking up worm medicine at the vet's office, we were buying more beer and competing to see who could do more clap push-ups. As they spun some vinyl for me I discovered that Blue Oyster Cult didn't always suck, and that Zero-Tolerance Task Force was a damn cool band. The following interview transpired during the course of our first 5 beers. - BL



answering machine was turned up all the way, and as he left that message, his friend was being pinned to the floor by a cop's boot on his neck, and had a gun pulled on his head while they were searching his apartment. So the cops thought the term "Kill the Hippies" meant that some big shipment of some horrible drug was coming into Kent. [laughs] They interrogated him for half an hour about the meaning of Kill the Hippies.

Melissa: Actually, he didn't even know who we were at the time.

Matt: [laughing] Yeah, he didn't know who the fuck we were.

Kris: Also, about the name, it's the Midwest humor summed up in a phrase.

RRP: What do you think is unique about Midwest humor?

Kris: I don't know... it's totally offensive, but it's in a way that you can just laugh about it, you're not really being serious. The Midwest is unique in its self-loathing depressed humor.

Matt: We're closer to the ennui from which good art comes from than the producers of it in the art factories on the east or west coast, I think.

RRP: Ooo, that sounded good.

Matt: Oh yeah.

RRP: So, I read on your site that you went to anti-war rallies. Where at?

Kris: I went to D.C. The one that was right before we went into Iraq anyway. It was fucked up because the next day the Washington Post printed that estimate of the turn-out was between 25,000 and 500,000 people. What kind of fuckin' estimate is that? And they also downplayed everything.

Matt: All the mass protests like that they always make the news spin like so-and-so said this many people showed up, and other people said this many people showed up, to make it way more confusing to figure out the significance of it, I think. It is really stupid when people say that the media is liberally biased. Bullshit. It's money-biased. I didn't go to the rally in D.C., but we went to some around here. The last one was a peace vigil, but I thought that was too complacent because there's still shit going on. I thought they tried to over-do it as like for sadness for their deaths. Of course that's sad, you know. But I am very happy the last couple years that they've actually had politicized protests around here, which is cool. I talk to some people who say it's bullshit and not going to change anything, but I just feel good going and being around that many people who just wanna put it out there. You do get the freaky Christians that come down there with the "Come to the Lord" bullshit;

RRP: Where did the name for the band come from, it was a Deadbeats song, right?

Melissa: Part of it, yeah. Basically, it's all kind of ridiculous. At the time we lived on a street in Kent, a college street that was kind of hippie, really. There were always people out playing hackey sack all the typical stuff. When we first started we grabbed random people to drum for us and one of them was this hippie guy that lived next door that we just put behind the drum set.

RRP: How long ago was that when you started?

Melissa: Fall of 1993. It was at the tail end of a band that Matt was doing called Ball Peen Gidgit.

Matt: It was a pretty fun band. I listen back to some of the stuff and there were a few songs that I wish we had never done, but there are some songs that are really cool. I used to do push-ups while we played.

RRP: Oh yeah?

Matt: And clap. But now I can only do six at a time. Back then I could do about 20.

RRP: So what kind of music was that?

Matt: It was somewhere between, I don't know, early Black Flag, sometimes way too much Rollins Band, and Sonic Youth or something.

RRP: So does the name Kill the Hippies cause people to like or dislike you for the wrong reasons?

Kill the Hippies: Oh yeah! Always.

Kris: There's either some jackass who's like "Oh yeah, kill all those fuckers, fuckin' hippies!" or like everybody from the West Coast cries about it and tells us about what assholes we are, and then says fucked up shit about us.

Matt: Then they turn around and say more reactionary stuff than could ever come out of our mouths about who we must be. So it's fun, I like it.

Melissa: Eugene, Oregon would not have us. I was trying to book a show through every possible

source and most people flat-out said "no," and another dude said he liked us and wanted to book us, but asked if we'd change our name.

Kris: And every hate mail I get from the web-site is from the West Coast.

Matt: The name is supposed to carry a comment on not taking what you consider yourself so seriously, and people do [laughs].

Kris: Actually this one time I was at my girlfriend's house and one of the dudes who lived there tagged a lot of shit, he was like a spray-painter. One day the house got surrounded by like 30 Akron police that came in and questioned everybody. They were trying to give me trouble because I had a marker on the dashboard of my car, asking "what do you do with that?" It's a marker. I'm in a band and I make flyers. "What band?" Kill the Hippies. "Kill the hippies, huh? Nothing wrong with that!" No, there's everything wrong with that, that's the point. And they all just looked at me like they were gonna kill me. That's one example of misinterpretation.

Matt: My other favorite story about the name, besides having hippies threaten to beat the shit out of me and stuff....

RRP: Hippies threaten to beat the shit out of you???

Matt: Yeah, usually old like coke-head townie types, more classic rockers. My favorite story about the name, though, is when a friend of mine, Crazy Carl, was calling up one of his drug connections to pick up a little weed before he went down to the Mantis. His buddy who he got some shit off of sometimes had mentioned wanting to see our band, which Carl had told him about. So Crazy Carl called him up and got the answering machine and was like "Okay buddy, I'll see you down at the Mantis. Kill the Hippies are playing tonight."

What he didn't know was that the whole time the

they always show up at that stuff. They come out because they know there are a bunch of sinners there, because we're not all clean-cut Christians, which is the weirdest paradox I've ever seen because Jesus looked like Ted Nugent, but dirtier. RRP: So do you think the last 4 years of the Bush administration has affected your song-writing at all, like making your political side come out more?

Matt: It was kind of that way to begin with. Some songs like "Flags and Gas," yeah.

Melissa: And "Murder Babble" and...

Matt: Oh yeah, definitely.

Kris: The only real difference with the last four years, though, is that we got attacked on our own soil so there's more shit about it, but America's been at war and doing fucked up shit with different countries for decades. It's just not as known. It's not in mainstream news everyday. Matt: Before we were singing about stuff that wasn't really in the paper, and now we're singing about stuff that's in the paper. I mean on the political songs. We have other songs about rock'n'roll and being bored too.

Melissa: Yeah, I think we are keeping the same balance, just the political may be more noticeable now.

Matt: With politics you talk about what's going on in the world, and then other songs are about what kind of mood you're in besides all that. It all affects each other in some way.

RPP: Are you working on a new CD now?

Melissa: We have three songs right now that we are working on, and another new one which we've been playing already.

Kris: There's probably like 10 songs that haven't been on anything else so far.

RRP: Are you gonna be recording them here in your apartment?

Matt: I'd kinda like to. I mean, unless someone wants to front the money to really go do it right in the studio. When I am in the studio I feel rushed, and I know I'm not gonna like the mix-down. I know there are some things you can do in the studio that sound really, really crystal clear, but I never get a chance to do that because I am always watching the clock so damn much. So if a label wants to give me 2000 bucks to go record something, yeah. Otherwise I'll just do it myself. Or send me a hundred dollars... just send me money. [laughs]

RRP: Melissa, did you really follow the Grateful Dead?

Melissa: I sure as hell did. Actually what happened was I wanted to go out west, so I started driving but my car broke down, I ran out of money, got screwed over by mechanics between here and where I left my car in Carlin, Nevada, which by the way, there isn't much in Carlin, Nevada. There's a little truck stop where you can do slot machines, a trailer park, and a towing company. The towing company got my car and I headed off to California. It just so happens if you go down 80, you end up in Sacramento, where I ended up sleeping by the

river behind an AMPM store and there were lots of people running around, also camping there. I found out that the Dead shows were starting in a couple weeks, so that's what I did. I made it back out here and everywhere else. It was just for about 3 months. It was fun. Lots of different kinds of people.

RRP: How many drummers have you guys had since the beginning?

Melissa: Oh Geez. That's tough because while we were writing songs we'd had several people playing drums with us.

Matt: We'd just get drunk at night and be like "come on, please play." So we'd get to fuck around with our songs a little bit so when we finally got a drummer we'd be ready to go. Our first drummer was Dave Shall, who was the singer for Sockeye. All I really wanted was just someone who could play a straight 4/4 beat. I didn't care how slow or fast they could do it. It's weird, I talk to these other bands and they shit their pants trying to find a drummer and it's like, all you need is someone to play a steady 4/4 beat and just go from there. Write songs to what the weakest member can do, then go for it. Not to say that he was weak in any way. He actually drummed a lot more like early Pink Floyd than he let on. He could really make things sound like that old Syd Barret stuff, you know? I was always a big fan of how he drummed. People would be bitchin' about it, and I'd be like "shut up, dude." If you want to hear a good drummer, listen to Rush.

RRP: Why do all drummers like Rush? Do you like Rush?

Kris: I...

RRP: He's gonna say yes!

Kris: No. All I've really heard is what's on the radio and so I fucking hate Rush so much, but I think it's funny at the same time.

Matt: There was a band called Platinum Blonde who had a hit back in the early 90's and she sounded exactly like Geddy Lee. It was so gross. But yeah, Chris is like our 8th serious drummer if you only count the ones who stuck with us and wrote shit with us.

RRP: How'd you meet Chris?

Matt: Well, I used to hang a lot at the different tea rooms on campus, and there's different bathrooms that have glory holes... [laughs] Nah, actually, he was in an Akron band called The Viles.

RRP: Kris, didn't you move here from Hungary when you were 12 or 13?

Kris: Yeah, it was like '91.

RRP: What made you come here?



Kris: Well, you know, this was the land of opportunities. We were living in Germany for 3 or 4 years, then we moved out here. It was communist and my parents just wanted to get out of there. They won the green card lottery in Germany. I don't know if it still exists, but it did back then and we got "lucky" so we came out here.

RRP: Do you ever miss Hungary?

Kris: Yeah, I don't know if it was a good thing or bad thing for us to come out here. My parents still work just as hard; they just have a lot more materialistic shit that they can spend their money on.

RRP: So do you hate gypsies? I ask because a friend of mine is from Hungary and he hates them. He says they come and squat on people's land then kill and eat off their livestock.

Kris: Gypsies are weird. I don't know too much about them because I was a little kid, but they were definitely the minority. Blacks and whites in America are like whites and gypsies in Hungary. It's even worse there because they don't usually go to school and definitely aren't with society. It is weird too because most Hungarian folk music and a lot of the culture is gypsy culture. But they are definitely the people who on average didn't have jobs because of one thing or another and they stole.

Matt: There's a difference, though. Really when it comes down to it, stealing comes from not having money... or having too much money. Even people who consider themselves enlightened will think a black area is high crime, but they'll for some reason feel safer in a just-as-poor white neighborhood. People who don't grow up with shit grab what they can. It has nothing to do with race.

Kris: Rich people steal just as much, it's just on paper. It's more clever.

RRP: Plus gypsies are nomadic and it is hard to be nomadic in modern society. I guess I am just interested because there aren't gypsies here that I know of.

Matt: Well, once you stop being nomadic the lifestyle becomes more assimilated. But as an

ethnicity I've met people who have that in their background. No one's really travelling around as gypsies here, there's just an aesthetic of it.

RRP: You grew up on Negley, Ohio, right?

Matt: Yes sir, I did. Population: 600.

RRP: Isn't there a nudist colony there?

Matt: Actually, yeah. I've been by it before. I like to go see where the clear-cut mines are and pretend I am at the Grand Canyon and stuff. The Green side of me should be appalled by that, but fuck it, I just love looking at strip mines. There was one I was driving back to and I finally found the nudist colony. It has a BIG fence around it. It was right by this dirt road that went back the strip mine. I was like "that's the one! That's the Lifestyles Camp!"

RRP: [laughing] So, that's the one cool thing about Negley?

Matt: There was this bridge we jumped off sometimes.

RRP: You told me once that the cool punk rock kids were from Salem [Population: 17,000].

Matt: Yeah, there was one kid with this white mohawk who ended up living off the land every once in a while. He'd just go live in a tent and eat rabbits.

RRP: Wasn't there like a little commune going on with like a handful of them?

Matt: Yeah, they just loved DRI so goddamned much. [laughs] That was one of my first contacts with real punk rockers. I thought the shit was over by the time I got into it because you're kind of closed off down there [in Negley] until you start having friends with cars.

RRP: So what inspired your current handlebar mustache?

Matt: Well, I always wanted one. One of my favorite uncles when I was a kid was Uncle Georgie. He always had a new girlfriend every month, always 20 years younger than him. I guess maybe that's a little bit misogynistic, but it was cool. He was cool. He had a big convertible silver Cadillac, like an old 60's one, and he had a big handlebar mustache. His catch phrase was going "OH YEAHHH!" He'd always do that, and he raised bees.

RRP: Are you making this shit up?

Matt: No, this is all true. His apiary was right by my grandparent's house. I got stung by one of his bees before. He'd take me up to it, have me put my finger in front of it, and the bees would climb over it. I was scared shitless of the bees because I had gotten stung, but he was cool enough to take me down and show me not to be a dick around them and they're cool. The honey was second to none.

RRP: I did notice that the mustache seems to attract the ladies, like at the show last week at Grilly's.

Matt: Yeah, there was an older broad who told me she was an alcoholic. I guess she could play really good jazz drums when she was 20.

Hopefully she'll kick the sauce. She showed me a picture of her family, and they were all drinking too. One of them was her son, who I guess is playing pro football. You would've thought he'd get her better digs by now. I thought she was gonna kiss me on the cheek, but her mouth was open a little too far for it, so I turned my head quickly. I think she was a little embarrassed; she gave me a peck on the cheek. Melissa was there the whole time. Me and Melissa are like a thing. We make out. I am just glad Melissa didn't hurt her, you know? [she laughs]

RRP: Are you the violent jealous type?

Melissa: No, I wouldn't say so.

RRP: You are a vegetarian, right?

Melissa: Well, since '92, so it's been a long time. RRP: oh, so you weren't raised that way. I am actually the opposite. I was raised vegetarian and started eating meat when I was a teenager.

Matt: I do eat meat, but some people are like meat fascists. Have you ever been someplace eating something that doesn't have meat on it, and someone just starts giving you shit for it? It's like dude, I just want to have a tomato sandwich, leave me the fuck alone!

RRP: I still feel guilty every time I eat meat.

Matt: Yeah, me too. If I believed in God I'd bless it or somethin'.

RRP: Another thing, I think cows especially get slandered just because people want to eat them. They're thought of as the stupidest animals with no personality, but they are every bit as smart as a dog, if you ever took the time to interact with one [my mom has pet steers].

Matt: Melissa loves cows.

Kris: I love eating everything. Last summer when I was in Hungary we were driving in the middle of the night between two towns and we hit this big-ass rabbit, so we threw it in the trunk, since it was still in one piece, and cooked it up the next day in some stew.

RRP: Why let it go to waste?

Matt: I would totally eat that. Rabbit stew is like a delicacy, man. Hasenpfeffer. That's what hasenpfeffer is. When kings say "bring me my hasenpfeffer," that's what they want. I love that shit, man. People who eat road kill are bad-ass in my book.

RRP: We made some turtle stew last year, but it wasn't road kill.

Matt: Was it snapper? That's usually the only one big enough to eat in this area.

RRP: Yeah, it wasn't a little boxer or anything.

Matt: Or like if someone got like 50 red-eared sliders and just started slaughtering them.

[laughs] Somehow that's worse.

RRP: So why did you quit eating meat?

Melissa: I grew not eating pork products at all, and I didn't really like eating meat that much.

But the biggest reason was that my great-grandmother had a cow that I loved a lot, and this is what really got me: Every time we'd go to her house, the first thing I'd do is run back and see the cow. This was day after day after day. Then one day I went there, and the cow wasn't there anymore. Nobody told me what happened, so I just thought it was back somewhere I couldn't find it, and then it ended up being served to me later.

RRP: That is the craziest story for the fact that it is exactly the same reason that my mother stopped eating meat when she was like 10, and still hasn't eaten any to this day, and even raised my sister and me vegetarian. My sister is still vegetarian, unlike me who jumped on the meat bandwagon...

Kris: There is no "meat bandwagon!" [everyone laughs] I don't know. I grew up in a totally different environment. If you told most people in Hungary that a kid got that attached to a cow, they wouldn't understand it. I'm not making fun of you in any way, it was just that everybody had them.

RRP: But you could be attached to a dog, right? It's kind of arbitrary where you draw the line.

Kris: Well, you can, but it still wasn't that much. I mean, we didn't have puppy calendars or anything. It was totally different. People loved their animals and treated them completely good. There weren't factories of cows; everybody had their own. It was more natural and so much better. The meat tastes better over there. And it was survival too.

Matt: There wasn't a supermarket for you to go to, and if there was you wouldn't have enough money to buy Morningstar Farms, which is nonexistent there, or even pre-packaged steaks. At least you're involved with the whole process of it.

Melissa: That's what I wanted to say. If you want to eat beef and you raise your own cattle, that's fine. I have no objection to that. But driving through Texas is the saddest, most disgusting thing in the world.

Kris: One of our biggest traditions instead of Thanksgiving, is every winter we'd kill a pig and process it and everything. It takes all day starting at like 3:00 in the morning. It's always in the winter because it is cold and there are no flies. In your yard the snow turns to red, and there is blood everywhere. It's like the best thing that happens all year. All your family comes there, and everyone is completely wasted by like 5:00 in



the morning. That's how you start; you have to be drunk for it. All your relatives are there, wasted, and just having a good time. Actually my dad still does that here, at least for the last three winters.

RRP: The one thing I don't mind eating is chickens, because I've had roosters attack me.... maladjusted creatures.

Kris: When I was little I had a rooster grab me and start mauling my face. Turkeys too. Turkeys are the meanest motherfuckers. I've been attacked.

Matt: Geese are the king of the crop, though. Most of the geese I've met are vicious as hell.

Kris: We used to have over 100 geese. It's kind of shitty to keep them because you have to like force-feed them so they fatten up.

Matt: Did you have to take a funnel and force millet down their throats?

Kris: I don't remember exactly, but I didn't like it.

RRP: I don't like the Mantis being gone. What actually happened to it, and how do you think it has affected the music scene in Kent, especially yourselves?

Melissa: The Mantis was the biggest part of our life for years. Every weekend at least, sometimes a few times a week, we play there. We lived around it, either booking shows, making flyers, going to shows. That was it.

Kris: The Mantis was the scene in Kent, and now there is no scene.

Melissa: There are places to play still, but they aren't the same.

RRP: It was wilder there, more fun.

Matt: Yeah, it was amazing. It was like a youth center for 14 and up...

RRP: Who like to drink!

Matt: [laughs] It was cool. It seems like there are less bands now, but there probably are as many, but there's no central thing now. I can't keep up to date on who is doing what. It is all bar dominated now; it's not very fun. I mean, there are fun bars I like playing at, but the Mantis was just...

RRP: Everybody had a sack full of beer and was in the mood to have fun.

Matt: You could throw stuff. It would get fucked up, but it was kinda set up to where you could just brush it off and throw away anything that got broken.

Kris: There was nothing in there that could've really gotten more fucked up.

Matt: The only thing I ever got mad about was people purposely fucking with the microphones or P.A.

Melissa: And shoving crap like bottles and cans into the toilet.

RRP: Most girls I knew never used that toilet, they just went out back and squatted behind a car. And if you ever got knocked on the floor at the Mantis, when you got up you had this black grime on you.

Kris: Yeah, you could wash and wash but it never came off. I have so many shirts that have Mantis on it until this day.

Matt: There are some neat kind of progressive people who moved in there now. I guess the space is used for more community lefty purposes, and that's cool, but I really miss going ape-shit. It's weird now. It's all clean in there. It's like a stain glass studio now.

RRP: I liked going there in the winter when it was like 14 degrees out, and there was no heat in there. You'd freeze until the bands started and people started moving.

Matt: Yeah, it made you want to go ape-shit all the more. It'd be steamy in there by the end of the night just from people.

Kris: But in the summer it was miserable.

Matt: You know, we've played a lot of DIY spaces and very few got up to the point of the Mantis, Maybe the Pink House in North Carolina.

After that, everyone's got their hands tied with bureaucratic shit. They have to come up with an idea that's going to be helpful to the community, and really there is a whole sect of people that are turned off by that. I think it could almost be a service to the community to have a place that could just be malevolent. That place was malevolent, but I mean that in the best way possible. You go to some DIY places and feel that there is some sort of message that they are trying to sneak in, or something.

Kris: Well, you can't tell that to the city, that you want to provide a place for 15 year-olds that wanna get wasted and make out with girls.

RRP: But they're gonna do it anyway and this was a good environment for it. Better than going out vandalizing or driving around.

Matt: Yeah, when I was 14 I was horny, and when I wasn't horny I was breaking something.

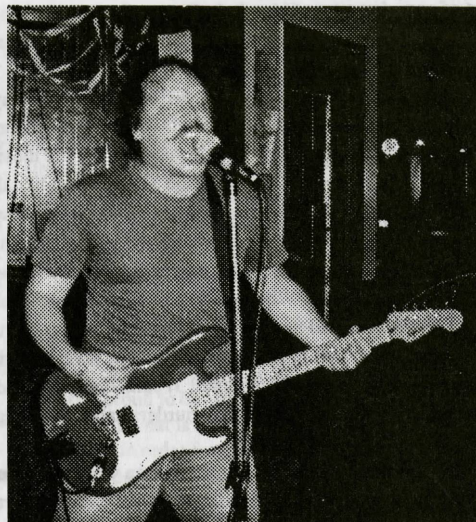
Melissa: It closed down because of what happened with Great White and the fire. The Mantis was not safe at all.

Matt: No fire marshall wanted to be responsible if it happened again. Granted the Mantis was a fire hazard, but when people think of music shows, they always think it is going to be like Peter Dinklage playing or something. They can't believe that people actually have fun at a show where 40 people show up.

Chris: Also the community and the cops got sick of it. I'm sure they used the fire thing as an excuse, but kids started hanging out outside, drinking, throwing bottles, and smoking pot. They got to the point where doing it inside wasn't good enough for them. They took it for granted and ruined it.

RRP: Yep. So you played with Guitar Wolf?

Matt: I used to be in Guitar Wolf for about 15 minutes. I went to see them up at the Euclid Tavern, which is another great place that is gone now. Anyway, I was there and really excited to see them and was jumpin' around. I had long hair at the time. Used to always wear jeans and jean vests, and I had a fluorescent T-shirt on, so I looked like the biggest choad in the world. I was



shimmyin' and shakin' while they were playin' "Kick Out The Jams" and I knew they were gonna grab somebody to play guitar. There was one kid in front of me when Seiji was pointing, so I pushed him forward, but Seiji pushed him out of the way and said [doing Seiji impersonation voice] "Nooo, you!" First of all, that guy looks skinny as a rail, but he's stronger than fuck. I'm a husky boy, and when I was walking up I was gonna reach up and grab his hand, but he just grabbed me by the collar of my vest and picked me up and held a few inches off the floor. Then he just dropped me, threw the guitar on me, and got in my ear and said "just be yourself!" Luckily I knew how to play the song, so I just had a good time. He was rollin' around and shit. It was fun. RRP: So have you ever considered covering Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young's "Four Dead In Ohio"?

Matt: That's a good question. We should do that. Maybe we'll do that around May 4th next year.

RRP: So, being from Kent, what's the story with Fuck-You Bob?

Matt: He lives right next to us. I got to know him, he's a great guy and a really talented artist. If you wanna talk philosophy and really be put to shame, talk to him. I just like being his neighbor, it's so fun, and he's getting a lot better. I'd hear him screaming, "Jesus Christ suck my dick!" for hours. It'd be the best thing in the world, but I'm glad he's not doing it as much because it gives him pain to be like that. I stick up for him a lot, really. One of my old roommates asked him if he had Tourette's. I guess he doesn't. He told my buddy, "well, when the whole world says fuck you for so long, you start yelling it back." Cool. His shit is so intellectually out there, I couldn't even explain it because I am too dumb to understand, but the man is actually a genius.

RRP: So how many movies were you in from Speed Freak Productions?

Matt: I was in *Midnight Skater* where I played a hoodlum greaser guy that hangs out with some kids and deals drugs.

RRP: How do you die?

Matt: A guy in his underwear comes up and kind of strangles me and just eviscerates me. Not a 9

lot of gore, but a lot of blood. In *Demon Summer* I play an insane townie drunk who roams in the woods. I get my throat ripped out in that one.

RRP: In their new one that they are filming now I get my arm ripped off by Dennis from *Lords of the Highway*, who has become a mutant. The house we were filming at in Youngstown is the most run down shit-hole I've ever been in. Made the Mantis seem like the Taj Mahall. None of the plumbing worked. The first day I was there, there was like 35 people for 12 hours who all had piss in the sinks and in the basement, which happened a lot because we went through several cases of beer. When we came back a couple weeks later the place smelled so bad that I almost puked walking in. Plus the walls were splattered with fake blood, and various severed body parts and beer cans were littered throughout. If someone wandered in they'd really think some kind of satanic murders happened, judging by the horrid stench and appearance.

Matt: Oh God, that's disgusting. Hey can you grab me another beer?

RRP: Didn't you have something to do with the soundtrack on *Demon Summer*, aside from the Kill the Hippies tunes?

Matt: I did the cock rock songs on it and some of the background music. I love making soundtrack style stuff. I had a side project that Kris was in called Z'creemin Hott. It was a cock rock band that we did; it was really fun. We had a satanic ritual at one of our shows, which was scary. So I took some of the ideas from that band for the soundtrack band. You know how the old 80's movies had the cheesiest rock soundtracks? I try to make music that stands up to that.

Kris: The best one for that is the credits song from *Nightmare On Elm Street*. [They sing: "It's a nightmare...It's just a dream! No, it's a nightmare!"]

Matt: Next time you watch *Nightmare on Elm Street*, make sure you stick around for the credits because one of the funniest songs in the world is right there. A friend of mine described it as music for the back of people's heads, for when you walk out of the theatre.

RRP: So Melissa, didn't you go to Kent State?

Melissa: Yes, I did. I majored in Biological Anthropology. I am three classes away from graduating. I lost my financial aid, though, but I intend to get it back soon. Not that it is really going to help much.

RRP: Did you go to school too?

Matt: I have an English degree, actually.

RRP: So do I. I double majored, English and Psychology.

Matt: Holy shit. I have English and a Writing minor, but then I stopped writing. I am trying to write a novel now. I'm trying to get back in on that shit.

RRP: What do you do, Chris?

Kris: I work for ACT (America Coming Together). It's canvassing against the Bush Party. We don't ask for money. It's just a political survey, and we'll register Democrats to vote. If they are Republicans we say "thanks" and walk away.

RRP: Do you and Matt work in the same place?

Melissa: Essentially.

RRP: You sell roofs, right? You are selling the American Dream!

Matt: Yeah, it's cool. The boss there is a pretty cool guy; he really likes to gamble. He's in his late 60's maybe: an old Lebanese guy who was in the Navy. He's just fun to talk to. He used to run jazz clubs and used to book girlie shows and stuff. He really loves Tony Bennett.

RRP: So where do you see yourselves in ten years?

Kill the Hippies in unison: Dead.

Kris: That's what I'm gonna say on my next job interview when they ask that question. Not here - Dead!

RRP: They might like that... no pension to pay out.

Matt: Yeah man, you can stay manager as long *you* like. I don't know. I want to pick up the banner of writing shit again and see if I can take it seriously.

Melissa: I don't want to be working for anyone else, but I guess I need a pretty good plan for that.

Matt: I think I'm going into entrepreneurship pretty soon. I'm selling my time to capitalists anyway, so why not try and make art or something and sell it to people. Actually, people buy way worse shit than what I can come up with. A friend of mine just moved into a place that has an electric kiln, and he's gonna let me buy it. I wanna make bongs and bowls and sell them to head shops. Screw it. I mean, I'll do some fine art, don't get me wrong, but I'm also gonna make some bongs and bowls. I wanna make a bong that's the shape of the twin towers. Ever smoke out of one of those bongs where you pull the bowl out to carb it? Well, I want to attach a small plane to that so when you put it back in, the smoke comes out the top. I want to call it the "Bin Laden." [awkward silence] Okay... that's kinda silly. [laughs]

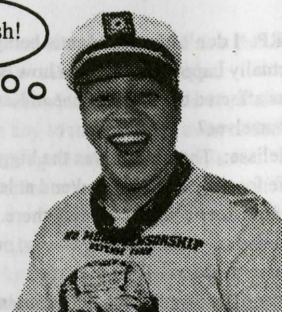
RRP: It would probably be a big seller in the Middle East.

Matt: When I think of the Middle East, I think of a rich history, really. It goes back to the Hashashins, which is where we get the word "assassin". They were followers of this guy Hassan ibn-al-Sabbah, a warlord of the time who had an army of people who would get high as fuck all the time. They would build pleasure domes, kind of, and he'd promise people that they were going to heaven for their service. To give them a taste of heaven he'd get them all up on hashish and have a bunch of hookers in a tent somewhere with a bunch of torches, and give them a taste of what it'll be like for a while. They'd get very close to heaven. I just thought he was a very cool guy.

RRP: Nothin' wrong with that.

Matt: Nope, nothin' wrong with that.

Hashish!



FACT-BEFORE 1950'S "TEEN IDOL" CROONER DON DI MUCCI BECAME A BIG DEAL— HE WAS A MEMBER OF ONE OF DA TOUGHEST STREET GANGS IN DA BRONX.



WHEN BLUES GUITER-WIZARD ELMORE JAMES DIED, NOT ONE MAGAZINE PRINTED AN OBITUARY. TODAY PROBABLY 5,000 MUSICIANS ARE MAKING DOUGH OFFA ELMORE'S "DUST MY BROOM" RIFF.



ART/TEXT BY CARL ALESSI ARTISTE GRAND

SASQUATCH AND THE SICK-A-BILLYS

There are thousands of good musicians out there, zig-zagging across the country at any given moment in their rusty vans, but few of them can match the fire that consumes Sasquatch & the Sick-A-Billies frontman, Dave Caetano. He's less worried about offending thin-skinned drones and pandering to any subculture than he is concerned with speaking his mind and issuing forth music that provokes people to develop identities apart from their TV viewing habits. His songs come from a life hard-lived as an outsider, and his personality carries with it an undeniable gravity. He gives it his all, and love him or hate him, at least he inspires something other than a gaping yawn of apathy. - BL

RRP: Why did you decide to call yourself Sasquatch?

Dave: Surprisingly, I don't get asked that too often. I usually get asked, "What's the name of your band?" and get small-minded chuckles from most folks (Fucks!) that immediately assume that because there's the phrase 'A-Billies' that it is rockabilly. Do you know what? Fuck rockabilly. Fuck the Sopranos and fuck people that think that it's funny to call me Elvis! It's all I ever hear! Just because I put a half a can of Murray's in my hair daily does not make me Rockabilly or an Elvis wanna be. NEWSFLASH, not all Italians are gangsters, rockabilly has turned into a trendy way to be different by looking like another kind of culture of sheep and Elvis is fuckin' dead. I am the real King because I actually write my own songs and know more than 3 chords. Am I getting hostile? Yes. I'm fed up with society that needs to label EVERYTHING in order to accept it. Basically my name 'Sasquatch' started as a sarcastic nickname from friends in high school that thought it was funny to call me something that is big and hairy. I've always tried to be a bit different without being desperate for attention and to get the fuck out of something as soon as it turned trendy. I later learned that God (and the Devil) work in mysterious ways. I believe that if no one ever gave me shit or came up with the nick-name 'Sasquatch', I would not be as challenged to be myself. I would have (maybe, ha-ha) turned out a bit more typical, easily influenced and boring. I accidentally found out more about the origin of 'Sasquatch' via fate-filled situations where an article or a television documentary would just pop out at me. It was as if I was being given a tribal name from the source of broken-down spirits that have always kept me safe since I was a youngster. In their own way of doing things they told me more than a thousand times that I am 'Sasquatch'! I have been sent from the sky to teach the lesson that I am discovering more important every day that I wake. I've read about your "Sasquatch Watch" and I assure you that I am only trying to sabotage the part of society that is against what this magazine stands for. I am fighting for Rock N Roll, freedom of expression and Truth. Sasquatch doesn't want to hurt anyone. He just wants what everybody else wants. To be.

RRP: You've said, "I think we need more people that are as angry as I am about the important things." What are the important things as you see

them?

Dave: I think that it's important to not follow anything except for your heart. Your heart will usually steer you down the road of righteousness. Your mind will be sidetracked by another outside source that is usually a messenger of evil. Your body is a temporary thing that gets way too much worship. I believe I am guilty of sins without end. I am always fucking up because I forget that my heart is usually correct. What I mean by the Heart is not the pulsing thing in your chest but the actual center of ones soul. Too many people get it wrong. Unfortunately most of those people are controlling us, exterminating us and making decisions for us without regarding what is more beneficial for when this world comes to a screeching halt. All the while 'They' are relying on the part of the mind in which greed lives. We are fucked right now and have been for a looong time. That's what is important to me. To replace programmed fear with productive anger. Fight the good fight. The Shadow Government is watching you (all of us) everyday in every way possible. They don't care about us. They only care about things that resemble power, wealth and admiration. They will do anything to get it and guess what? When money talks, freedom walks. Like I said, we are all doomed if we don't start fighting now. They think we're stupid lab rats and only want us to conform, consume and labor. They may be right about society being stupid lab rats. Why? How many people do you all see each day that are following the rules a little too closely. Welcome to 1984 my friends. Wake up and fight for the gift that God has given you. Your soul.

RRP: The lyrics to "Hot N' Easter" seem to be about Native American vengeance. What inspired that song, and do you have Native American blood in you at all?

Dave: It is very much about Native American and Human vengeance. Our leaders and their ancestors have been inducing different versions of the 'Trail of Tears'. Each day that goes by there is blood on someone's hands in result of someone else getting what 'They' (Shadow Government) want. All the while the hands that gave the orders stay un-scarred and clean. It's happening right this very minute in

Iraq and Afghanistan and in other places that they'll never tell us about.

I have always felt very close to the anguish of the people that have been driven out of their land in the beginning. I have Cherokee blood running through me and I feel the rape, murder and theft that has stricken everyone before me. I very much believe that my soul was there (in a different body of course) and that I fought until the end. I have too many unexplained passions within me. I actually hate being called 'American' because it reminds me of the original motives of colonization. The Pilgrims fucked over the Red Man and I'll stand by that fact forever. The fact that we have more freedom than most places is not enough reason for me to be proud to be 'American' (barf). I want to be proud of what is righteous. I will not call myself something in order for everyone to accept me. I don't belong to any club or organization. I belong to God (where/whoever he/she/it is) and myself. I am me. I am free. I will start an army that will scalp the people that have taken things that do not belong to them. Share or fuck off and earn it.

RRP: On "Seven Sound-Horns" your lyrics get to be directly political. What can you tell about that song, and what do you think about the avoidance of politics in a lot of rockabilly and roots-oriented music?

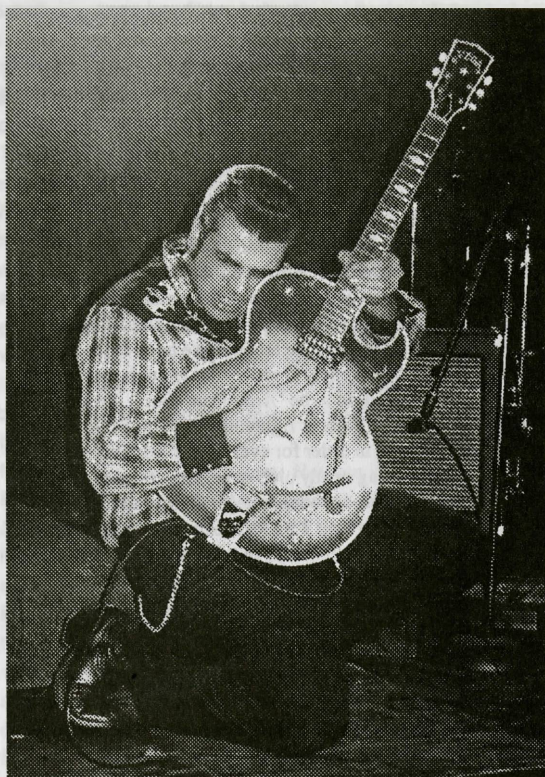
Dave: The title is a metaphor for the 'Seven Horns of Gabriel' as described in the biblical story 'Revelations'. It's my version of a warning of 'The End' and what I believe is leading up to it. I am not a follower of any certain religion or political group. I think the outcome of 'Religion' is organized belief. I will not have any part of belonging to a herd. I reference that President Bush is the Devil. Not the actual 'Devil' but at least one of his children or an individual that thrives by the same sneaky intentions. I think "the avoidance of politics in a lot of rockabilly and roots-oriented music" is because it's too deep for most folks involved with the rockabilly lifestyle and elsewhere in the world of music. Rockabilly, through its history has been very light-hearted, flirty and a bit mischievous. It's supposed to be fun or cool and politics are neither of these things. I actually now hate the word



Natalie

Dave

Johnny



Rockabilly because of what it has evolved into. It has been transformed from an outlet of rebellion into a clique of non-welcoming snobs. Boston, for example is filled with either non-welcoming garage rockers or boring wanna be greasers. Unless you play by their rules you are nothing. I fill rooms everywhere around Boston and cannot get a regular gig in Boston/Cambridge. Why? Because, unless you are signed or you're an average talented, non-threatening artist (living in the same city) you are not welcome. They are fooling themselves into being authentic. Well, the original rockabilly greasers did not have tattoos, drink 'Pabst Blue Ribbon' or act like snobs. A pompadour or a hot rod does not make a person cool. It lives inside. You have to earn cool. Rockabilly has turned pussy. Blah!!! Bring it you unoriginal bastards & bitches!

RRP: I've read that you were a member of a band called 'Altered Minds' during the late '80s. What kind of music was that, and how did you come from that to where you are at now stylistically?
Dave: Altered Minds was my first baby. It started in 1989 and ended around 1994. We had a decent cult following with an eclectic mix of fans. Hippies, punks, metal heads and classic rockers all were digging what we were putting out. I basically had the same vision as I do now except I have a bit more musical knowledge and painful miles traveled since then. I was in the middle of the 'Thrash Metal' scene when it was in it's prime. I wasn't closed to other styles of music. I was and still am always looking for that ultimate sound that has been haunting me since before I can remember. My first album ever was 'Boxcar Willie's - Greatest Hits' and my second album was 'Kiss - Destroyer'. Some of my favorite bands back then and some still are: Nuclear Assault, Misfits, Samhain, Kreator, D.R.I., Sacred Reich, Napalm Death, Morbid Angel, The Beatles, Metallica, Black Sabbath, Dead Kennedy's, Death Angel, Sick of It All, Death, Jim Croce, Crumbsuckers,

Obituary, Cro-mags, Black Flag, Circle Jerks, The Doors, Mucky Pup, S.O.D., M.O.D., Simon & Garfunkel, Slayer, Megadeth, Iron Maiden, Motley Crue (1st two albums), Wargasm, Frank Zappa... get the picture? I tried to combine every emotion of the bands that I listened to without sounding like any of them. I was really mesmerized by their individual essences. After 'Altered Minds' ended I didn't really know what to do next so I got really involved with drinking... a lot. I found 'The Blues' in more ways than one. I started to really understand my insides closer and found personal bliss while drinking bottle(s) of Mad Dog (MD-20/20) while staring at my dashboard and listening to 'Muddy Waters' cassettes. I would just sit in my van and numb myself until I came up with a solution to where I need to go next in life. I had no control over what was to happen next. It took me there whether I liked it or not. Fate brought me to meet a group of women on their bachelorette party in Providence, RI one night while hanging onto a telephone pole that was outside of a club ('Club Babyhead' R.I.P.). I made friends with one of them and she convinced me to take my talent to Texas. I did. I tried living in Dallas, Texas by

myself to find myself. I found Sin and hung out with that motherfucker that goes by the name 'Lucifer' nightly. I woke up each day just in time to go out again. I would pawn my guitars, amps, effect pedals and stereo equipment constantly in order to keep up with my nightlife. I really made a ton of friends in Dallas. Eventually everyone in Dallas that I thought believed in me totally fucked me in the ass (without lubrication or foreplay) one at a time. I was left with nothing except a job setting up stages and doing A/V work for the local stagehand union, 'Dallas Stage Producers' I.A.T.S.E. Local 127. It paid very well and you could make new drinking friends in between shifts.

I believe that what brought me from Boxcar Willie to Slayer to Muddy Waters and then back to country is the unexpected introduction to Wayne 'The Train' Hancock during my 3rd night in Texas. After that I found so many artists that I should have been listening to all along. Bob Wills, Jimmie Rodgers, Bill Monroe, Hank Sr. and Hank III are people that filled a big void in my life. I'm also grateful to hard-edged twangster revivalists like: Reverend Horton Heat, The Cramps, Nekromantix and others for showing me and the rest of the world that you can intertwine musical styles in any way that explains how you feel without having to go by the book of traditional musical rules. I hate rules! Hopefully that explains how I got to what I'm doing today and why.

RRP: Why did you hate country music before encountering Wayne Hancock?

Dave: Because, I had absolutely no clue. At the time all I knew about country was what I heard on the radio or saw on the television. It was that stereotypical "My dog's dead, my wife done left me and I'm sad and lonely." Pop country crap. What 20-something year old that was listening to metal, punk and Zappa would be able to relate to that while living in Rhode Island? During my first week in Dallas I went to a club in Deep Ellum (Tree's) on

Elm Street because the 3 people that I just met were going there to see some dude that was supposedly totally rockin'. I walked in slightly skeptical. I bought a beer (Shiner Bock) and looked up at the stage only to find myself drooling with total fulfillment. I was taken by surprise to say the least. I watched 5 songs before I realized that there wasn't a drummer in the band. It was so powerful that I found myself utterly embarrassed inside that I didn't know that this sort of music existed before. "THIS is country music!" I was instantly convinced when I saw an upright bass slapping and a weird dude yodeling that you would never see on my hometown stages performing with such power that it made any metalhead look like a real life 'Beavis or Butthead'. The preacher of my destined road of soulful knowledge that night was Wayne 'The Train' Hancock. He is still my favorite songwriter and always will be my authority to the true revival of roots music.

RRP: I've heard about your live show where you'll berate the audience, break things, make yourself puke, and sometimes set your pubic hair on fire. What is going on in your mind while doing these things, and do you feel that it has become something that people expect of you, and would get disappointed if you don't do it? Do you worry about that aspect becoming a focus that overtakes what you are doing with your music and lyrics?

Dave: I start a performance with the complete intention to stand in my spot and entertain. After the first few notes that changes. I start getting a little blurry inside and go somewhere else other than where I intended to go in the first place. I guess you could say I feel a bit of panic, confusion, pity and anger all at the same time. I wouldn't be so proud of what I do on stage if I could describe completely. It would be pre-meditated and non-authentic. Some things cannot be explained. I am here for a reason and I'm trying to do it right. Whatever that is at the time. I think that the fans expect some of the things that happen during our shows. I feel it's hard to be myself while the audience is expecting a vast array of burning pubes, vomiting and sheer rock and roll destruction. What the fuck do people want from me? Pain, humor, humility, fun, music or death? I think all of the above. I think that everyone in the room has a different boiling point and a different expectation of what would satisfy them and make them come back for more. I feel all these things in my senses while on stage that it sometimes hurts. I don't know what they want sometimes because it not universal. It's all jumbled up into one voice. I have found that there is one thing that we all want. We want something real and immortal. We all want something that will never let us down. Something we can trust that will lead us to the Saints as they go marching into this hell of a world we live in to save it. I am here to open eyes and minds in any way that I can. I hope that my shock-factor tactics and emotional release on stage doesn't camouflage what I'm really about. I am Music.

RRP: I know that Jake's Bar & Grill in Rhode Island has banned you because of the deluge of adverse responses to your recent show there. Is this the worst reaction you have gotten? What kinds of things are people saying to you and about you? Who are these pussy-ass bands that have refused to ever share the stage with you again?

Dave: I am really surprised at this most recent

reaction to a 'SASQUATCH AND THE SICK-A-BILLYS' show. I would say this is the worst reaction because it's the most absurd. I didn't stick a small animal up my ass. I didn't skin a baby and roast its corpse. I didn't touch any one physically. I said words. I burned the top patch of hair on my crotch and ended the last song with my finger going down my throat to emulate that I am sick of everything that is going on in this world right now. The majority of people that have witnessed what I do first hand are standing by me. They understand that it is a show of expression. I think that they dig the fact that I don't completely follow the rules of fragile-minded society. On the other hand, there has always been cowards throughout history that can't handle change. They can't fathom something unless it is a carbon copy of something that they have already approved. If change is coming their way it has to be very slow in progress or it is threatening to their existence. I don't get this way of living. Why don't they shut the fuck up when it comes to artistic expression and speak up when it comes to public/private suppression. The whole time that they're in an uproar about who said what about what, the Government is stripping another right away from us. First Amendment... has anyone ever heard of it?

I don't know exactly which bands refuse to share the stage with us again. I do know who I think they are. It wouldn't be fair to give names unless I was absolutely sure. A few ex-members of 'The Amazing Royal Crowns' were on the same stage that day in different bands. I know 2 out of 3 of them dig what I'm doing. The biggest pussies were the people that couldn't confront me personally but called the club the next day to express how appalled they were. The ultimate complaint came dressed as a corporate beer company threatening to pull \$15,000.00 worth of promotions away if we were to ever set foot on the stage at Jake's again. That company is..... Miller Brewing Co. Fuck them! We won. We made it to Rock N Roll Purgatory!!!

RRP: Tell me about the "Thought Police Brigade." Do you think society has become so painfully sensitive that everybody has to qualify everything they say as if they were politicians, for fear that some first-year sociology student will come along, point their bony righteous fingers in your chest, and say something like "Ah-ha! I knew you were a crypto-fascist bourgeois pig!" Or conversely, if you say something critical of the government or American values, you have to worry about some radical nationalist AM radio douche-bag calling for your head as if you are some kind of seditious traitor.

Dave: I can't agree with you more, Ben. My personal explanation of the "Thought Police Brigade" is a growing army of fascist, lip sealing, envious traitors of the truth that live in the underground while controlling the mainstream. You probably see them everyday and don't even realize it! Although I hate 'The Bush Family' that doesn't mean that they're the only enemy. They were just picked (not by the voters) as the representatives to show us what they want us to see. There are tons of like-minded people everywhere that make me sick. Go to any golf course, country club or corporate office worldwide and you will be standing face to face with the real terrorists. I don't buy what they tell me because I see right through their cold-faced lies. They want

your money, integrity and time no matter what they have to do to get it. Even if the only way for them to freeze us into a paranoid, uptight with no reason, consuming frenzy was to fly some commercial planes into some buildings. What do they care? All they had to do was pay people to kill people to scare people to finally collect their profits. War = Profit. Death = Profit. Fear = Power. I don't proclaim myself as fully educated in the study of politics or authority on conspiracy theories but... I am a master of intuition and know when something's fucked up. I am learning about more evil in the world of human's everyday. I am sick of it. I think everyone is scared to death (literally) to speak up against what is wrong because we (not me) are getting programmed everyday to only disagree with each other in our personal lives. It's another way of distracting us while they withdraw a few coins from everybody's bank account simultaneously. They know very well that either we won't realize it's happening or won't fight it IF we catch on. We (not me) are all too busy learning how to argue via 'Soap Operas' and 'Reality Shows'. No? I didn't see much protest on the obscene gas prices recently. Why? Because they have/are succeeding in enslaving us physically and mentally. Wake up, unite and fight you stupid fuckers!

RRP: I understand that you are afraid of death of tornadoes. Did you have an encounter with one? What is the root of this; can you psychoanalyze yourself? I'm asking because I actually have a similar fear of high winds that I'm trying to overcome - just the hiss of leaves on the twisted branches of trees arching in the wind makes me sweat like a pimpled and puny nerd at the Playboy mansion.

Dave: I have never seen a tornado first hand but while living in Dallas I've had a few scares and knew a few friends that lost their roofs while drinking with me cross-town on the same day a twister was in route. I have had numerous dreams with several people that I know today where a twister threatened my existence and everything that is around me. A tornado is the scariest, most unpredictable wonder of nature. There are other storm monstrosities that share these same traits but it affects me more because they thrive in one of my favorite musical states in North America, Texas! I lived in Austin and came very close to one the day before I left to come back home to Providence. I was living in Austin in 2000 and had just purchased a shiny semi-new Dodge Ram pick-up truck and was destined to take a drive to San Antonio to hang out at the Alamo and do tourist stuff by myself. I had a pocket full of hundreds and rambling on my mind. I sat watching television with total peace in my mind for once until the bottom of the screen started flashing tornado watch and then tornado warning! I was living in a 1950's motel converted into a cool apartment complex filled with musicians and Mexicans. I watched the trees outside blow around in a circular motion while shitting my pants "like a pimpled and puny nerd at the Playboy mansion". I was a bit home sick prior to that day and used it as a private decision to pack up and leave Austin the next day if I were to live through this catastrophic event (to me at the time anyway).

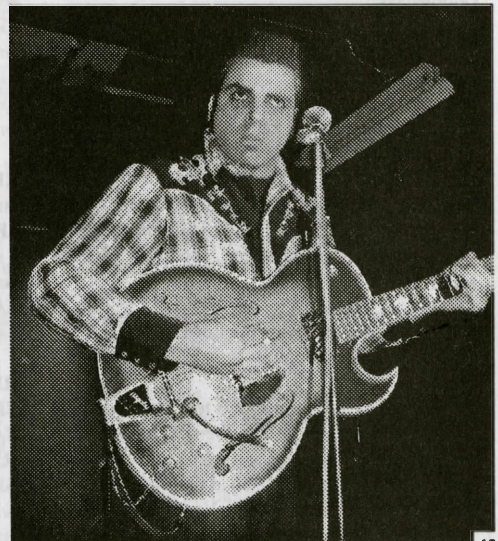
RRP: What can you tell me about your new CD?

Dave: The new CD is called "Burning Miles of Sin". It is my first release that isn't home made. It's got Johnny 'Custom' on doghouse Bass and

Mike Levesque on drums. Mike played a handful of gigs with us but wasn't a permanent member. He's recorded with tons of folks like: David Bowie, Natalie Imbruglia, Tracy Bonham and Dave Navarro. He is a hired gun that came along at the perfect moment when we were screwed. Johnny has really stuck by me for almost 2 years now. We recently added a permanent drummer, Miss Natalie, who is showing great progress for someone that just left a hardcore band to be thrown into all of this crazy shit. I really am lucky except for when it comes to money. I'm going to be adding a store to our web site so fans can buy through me direct. I'm currently in the process of getting help with distribution. So far 'Spindrift Records' has agreed to sell them in their giant catalog. That will hopefully be in effect in the next month or so. I would say people should expect to never get ripped off by anything that has my name on it. This is raw and professionally produced, mixed and mastered. We cut 10 songs in almost one take each all 'Live' in the studio, even the vocal track was not overdubbed. That's Rock and Roll! I wouldn't mind a little more time in the studio but we hardly have enough money to do what we want. I think what is on this CD is my best recording to date and everyone should own one. Why? Because I wrote these songs and I fuckin' rock! My shit tastes like chocolate. Eat it!

RRP: What is the one thing, aside from music, that keeps you from eating a gun barrel? What makes life worth it for you?

Dave: Well, you answered your own question, sir. Music is all I have as an outlet to help the world. I won't swallow a gun barrel because that would be as stupid as believing and trusting the Government. I am here to piss off the 'wrong' people until they fuck off and let us be ourselves. I will only let the sky take me away. I am still here because I know it's not too late to win the good fight and I'm not the only one that cares about the final outcome. I won't be surprised if this planet ends in the result of a nuclear holocaust, or a massive collision from an angry asteroid. All I know is that the people with the Hearts of Gold will be brought into Rock N Roll Purgatory where the beer is free, the music kicks ass AND there's no cover charge. I also enjoy quiet walks on the beach, eating red meat and getting blowjobs from my girlfriend Holly. She's from Texas. Meow!
I love you - Sasquatch



THE SCOURGE OF THE SOUTH

The Tremors

www.tremorsrockabilly.com

If rockabilly was meant to be raw, rural, and rambunctious, as I think it is, then the Tremors are surely doin' it right. Of course there will always be people who regard them as *too* rowdy, or perhaps not rowdy enough, but it helps to bear in mind that these naysayers are probably experiencing their own inner turmoil at the cellular level, wherein their mitochondrial DNA has been corrupted, causing accelerated free radical damage, and thusly they will die soon from premature old age. Sucks for them. The Tremors are: Jimmy Tremor on the guitar, Slim Perkins on the big bass, and Stretch Armstrong behind the drums. This interview was done through mental telepathy and transcribed by super-intelligent lab rats. - BL



RRP: So you guys know the Genitorturers? They have an upright bass player in the band now?

SP: I knew Jen when I lived in Florida...I bounced a couple of shows for them and Agnostic Front...My friend was a part of the stage show so I got to know her through him. I also worked with Dave Vincent, when he was doing Morbid Angel, at a record store called Aces Records, and he was dating her at the time. Evil D plays a King Doublebass.

RRP: Tell me about your experience playing with Hasil Adkins...

SP: They were awesome shows..We did 2 shows one in Winston Salem and one in Chapel Hill. The Winston show was packed and Hasil really tore the joint apart!! He has been one of our idols for a long time. Even though his tour manager tried relentlessly to let Hasil use our equipment..and if you know Hasil's reputation... you know why we said NO WAY!

RRP: How do you know the Lords of the Highway, who are actually very good friends of ours?

SP: We've played some shows together and know each other pretty good! The Tremors have played all but the first Heavy Rebel and thats where we met L.O.T.H. Oh yeah, also at the Battle of the Bands, Gray vs. Blue in New Yawk City!! Sugar is one heck of a bass player and purty ta boot! I

still cant get over how she plays her bass strung backwards!!! A true talent!!

RRP: Where exactly do you guys live, and what is it known for? What is the coolest thing about your hometown?

SP: We hail from Greensboro, except for our drummer who lives in Burlington, which is in the armpit of Greensboro... right in the middle of NC. We're not really known for anything, except the Klan vs. Commies shootout in the 70's...other than that its a pretty laid back town. More people are taking notice thanks to the last few American Idols coming from NC, but it's still just like any other lame ass southern town!!

RRP: What was one of the strangest or worst things that have ever happened to you?

SP: Being smacked in the head with a bowling ball! 5 against 1...and they still ran (When I didn't go down!!!).

SA: Having a group of Tranies trying to grab my package in Palm Springs, CA.

RRP: What do you hate?

SP: Too many questions.

SA: When my balls don't lay just right in my shorts.

RRP: How do you imagine yourselves dying?

SP: A double cheeseburger in one hand...complete with ketchup encrusted diamond horseshoe pinky ring, and the back of some girls head in the other.



SA: After a six and a half day stand-off and a shootout with the law.

JT: Of Boredom

RRP: What is the most painful thing that you ever felt?

SP: For me it would definitely be the day Johnny Cash died....I am a HUGE J.C. fan and it really hit me hard when I heard he had died.

JT: Broken heart.

SA: Gettin kicked in the groonies by an ex-psycho.

RRP: How old were you when you first got laid? And where?

SP: 16 years old...I impressed a girl by showing her how fast my tongue was....that's all it took!!...she was a slut!!

JT: What magazine is this for?

SA: I was 27 when I lost my cherry in the mile high club.

RRP: Have you ever been arrested?

SP: Which time? Do we have enough room? I am a bad boy...I have been arrested for several naughty things...shoplifting, trespassing, possession, assault w/ a deadly weapon, etc...etc..I was aggro.

JT: DWI in 1986

SA: Not once, for I, unlike SP, am really good at breaking the law, and haven't gotten caught.

RRP: Tell me about a strange or eccentric relative or friend that you have.

SP: Oh geez were do I start? All my friends are knuckleheads..I don't like people at all, so whoever I end up being buddies with its usually because everyone else hates them....I do have this one friend in particular who is the most insane, hyper, wound-up ball of radioactive snot you would ever meet...his name is Youngs (Luther Long) a.k.a. Lothar of the Hill People...he is an awesome artist and an insane genius, but he can't hold a job, girlfriend, friend, car, money, roommate...etc...but he does have extra puppies if anyone needs one.

JT: We *are* the strange and eccentric ones.

SA: Everytime I visit my dad, he interrogates me

about UFO encounters. He tracks movement at Area 51, and exchanges classified CIA documents with his buddies. After all, he did give me the middle name of "Axiom."

RRP: Ever have a paranormal encounter?

SP: I was abducted by Elvis impersonator aliens back in '92...they took me into their spacecraft, which looked a lot like the jungle room at Graceland, and implanted me with the demon seed that gave me the Rock'n'Roll boogie disease.

JT: I am an alien.

SA: I seen 'em on dem talkin' pictures one time.

RRP: Which one of you holds your alcohol the worst?

SP: Me...I don't like to drink all that much but when I do...its projectile city...watch out cause I'm spewing all over everyone.

JT: I cant hold it at all.

SA: What? free beer?

RRP: What is the best insult you can muster?

SP: Walking up to a guy and girl kissing, and asking him how your dick tastes.

RRP: What is the grossest thing you have ever witnessed or done?

SP: I projectile vomited Jack Daniels and Taco Bell all over the back of my friends head while riding in his old lady's car...he said he could feel warm tomatoes sliding down his back...and the best part was he made his girlfriend clean it the next day.

JT: Seeing Matt "The Tube" Crowley perform.

SA: I vomited all over a stripper 15 seconds after walking into Club California in Okinawa, Japan. Oh yeah, and my friend's dog Bandit ate bacon and drank milk out of my mouth while I was passed out drunk.

RRP: What would you do if elected President of the United States?

SP: Legalize drugs, all of them, tax the churches, ban corporations and pay politicians minimum wage.

SA: Uphold the legacy of Bill Clinton!

RRP: What are the best kinds of girls?

SP: The quiet kind, usually because they got their mouth full...oh and they have to have big boobies.

JT: The kinds with cunts!!!! Really someone intelligent and sincere.

SA: I love strong, independent women.

RRP: I saw on TV today that the "redneck/Memphis" look is very "in" in Hollywood, and

people are buying cowboy hats and dirty, worn-out jeans for like \$150. Does it bother you that rich people want to dress like they're poor because they think it's such a gas?

SP: I hate anybody who dresses a part.. I grew up in an era that you had to fight for what you were and get your ass kicked for it...mohawks and cowboy hats were a totally different scene 15 years ago...everything's too candy-coated and soft now...available at any mall...that's when I know punk is dead...when kids who 15 years ago wanted to kick my ass for having both ears pierced now want to be punk as fuck and get tattooed and pierced up...It's a real sad sight to see so many people totally clueless about who and what they are or like.

I work in retail and see it everyday - people can't make up their minds for themselves and are totally lost in a world of trends.

JT: Naw, it don't bother me...they can wear their new duds to a Tremors show!!

SA: Looks have always been deceiving!!!! Most people are nothing like what they look.

RRP: What do you look for in a good porno?

SP: Big tits and sex....you know...stick it in the butt...the mouth...the ear...so they can hear you cumin'? Wherever.

SA: Artistic Cinematography! I'm so tired of inferior costume design, boring dialog, and un-intriguing story lines.

Three Chords and a Grudge

An interview with Richard Oliver of

Cooterfinger

By Bob Ignizio



If you like raw, raunchy garage rock it doesn't get much rawer or raunchier than Georgia's Cooterfinger.

Cooterfinger is, for all intents and purposes, Richard Oliver. Richard also has a record label, Illbilly records. He's released two compilations of garage rock and country punk music, and of course his own projects. His latest release is the second Cooterfinger EP, 'Three Chords and a Grudge'. I recently had the chance to talk with Richard about his one man, three-chord crusade, and he was kind enough to fill me in on the details.

RRP: How did you get started playing and recording and when did Cooterfinger come into existence?

Cooterfinger: I started playing when I was thirteen, and by the time I was fifteen I was playing in places I shouldn't have been in. After too many years of that, and what seemed like an endless stream of failed bands, I decided to spend some time recording songs I wrote and let the band thing rest for a while. I still play in a couple of bands, but I've kind of given up on the ideal band situation. You know, three or four people with the same goals musically speaking. Just hasn't happened for me, but I guess my location could be my biggest holdback. Cooterfinger

came into being a little over a year ago, I believe. I was wanting to move in a more garage direction, so I created Cooterfinger. It has a half psycho-hillbilly, half James Bond feel to it, don't you think? I figured I could go in a variety of directions and the name would still fit, but what the fuck do I know.

RRP: So the name Cooterfinger...that's not some sort of cheap sexual innuendo, is it?

Cooterfinger: No! Not at all. It's actually derived from the latin phrase "CU-TA-FI-GA" which literally translates into "Crank it up asshole". Latin has always been somewhat of a hobby of mine. I find it simultaneously relaxing and stimulating. Much like a coffee colonic with a Zyprexa chaser.

RRP: You're new CD is called '3 Chords and a Grudge'. The 3 chords part is obvious, but who or what is your grudge against?

Cooterfinger: My ex-wife, every insurance salesman I've ever met, whoever wrote that "Hey Ya" song, and a few others that will have to remain nameless at the moment due to the gag order. Actually, I stole it from a Stiv Bators quote I read somewhere. It seemed to fit my present situation at the time.

RRP: Is Cooterfinger just you or is there a full band?

Cooterfinger: It's just me as far as the writing and recording end of it goes. I do have a group of different guys from other local bands that I use when I play out. I usually do the same shows as their bands. That way I can kind of count on them to be there to back me up. Musicians are not the most reliable people, so you've got to think these things out way ahead of time. I would eventually like to put together a full time band, but finding a drummer that won't try to screw your wife is pretty hard to do.

RRP: What bands/artists warped your mind during your formative years resulting in your particular approach to rock 'n' roll?

Cooterfinger: The Cramps of course, the Plasmatics, the Ramones. Before that I had the standard KISS addiction like most kids growing up in the late seventies early eighties. That was back when Creem was a decent read. That was a rock n' roll magazine, for all you younger folks out there.

RRP: What do you think are the necessary ingredients for great rock 'n' roll?

Cooterfinger: Wow! Great question. I guess I'd say the necessary ingredients for great rock 'n' roll would probably be: 1.) a shitty day job, B) a drummer that's going to try and screw your wife, 3.) a 7" record collection, D) more alcohol than your body can properly absorb and 5.) some traumatic schoolyard experience involving a bully or school janitor.

RRP: On your EP, you have achieved one of the dirtiest, raunchiest sounds I've ever wrapped my ears around. Is it just as simple as cranking the levels up as far as they can go, or is achieving that sound more complicated than that?

Cooterfinger: No, cranking the levels up as far as they go is pretty much it.

RRP: You've got your own label, Illbilly records. Do you want to continue going the self released route or would you ever want to sign with someone else?

Cooterfinger: I could say that I like the freedom of releasing my own material which would be like a homeless man saying he liked the freedom of the outdoors. It's all a matter of circumstance. Nobody is going to sign me because they won't make any money. I play to a very small fanbase, which is fine with me. If I did make any money at it I would probably feel like a sellout. Don't

get me wrong, I'd take the money and spend every dime, but I wouldn't feel good about it and I probably wouldn't respect myself in the morning.

RRP: Aside from the 'Dropped on the Head' compilations you've put out, any plans to release artists other than yourself through Illbilly Records?

Cooterfinger: Yeah, I would like to do some 7" splits of different garage and rock n' roll bands sometime in the future. Maybe when the whole money starts rolling in.

RRP: Do you prefer your style of music to stay underground, or would you like to see it get big so you can make millions of dollars, blow it all on drugs and hookers, and get your own episode of 'Behind the Music'?

Cooterfinger: Underground definitely. If I saw the local high school punks riding around in their little Fast and the Furious Hondas and Toyotas with the

Richmond Sluts or the Black Lips blasting through their subwoofers I think I'd puke or get religion. But, fortunately for me, the local Hondas and Toyotas only run on rap, so my lunch is safe for the moment. I don't think I've ever wanted to fit in with the masses. Besides, there's too much mental illness in my family for that anyway.

RRP: Anything else you want to say that I didn't ask you about?

Cooterfinger: Yeah, buy some of my shit so I can afford to record something new. You can get it at www.cdbaby.com, www.towerrecords.com or direct from the smelly source at www.geocities.com/illbillyrocks. Also, I want to say thanks for the interview. I feel all warm and fuzzy inside like Justin Timberlake. Oh, wait... it's just the Zyprexa kicking in. Well, piss off. I need a nap.

Under the Covers

An interview with Shelly & Jay of

Fast Mattress

By Bob Ignizio

A Cleveland area band that blends garage rock, metal, and punk, with clever lyrics and solid song writing? How could I not take notice? In fact, Fast Mattress (Shelly - vocals, Jay - guitar, vocals, Tina - keyboards, Davey - bass, Scott - drums) was one of the first bands ever covered on this site, way back in the summer of 2002 when they played that year's Studio-A-Rama. I wanted to interview the band back then, but the large entourage of security, managers, and assorted hangers-on the band surrounded themselves with made getting through extremely difficult. I eventually bribed a low level employee of the Fast Mattress organization who gave me an email address and told me the band might respond. Luckily, they did.

RRP: When and how did Fast Mattress come together? Have any of the members been in other notable area bands?

Shelly: We formed back in 2001 as a project band just for fun with Jay, Tina, and me, as well as Matt Charboneau of Viva Caramel and our friend Amy Wolf. Davey started playing with us soon after, and when Matt & Amy bowed out, Scott joined the ranks on drums.

Jay: I have been a playing guitar and sharing lead vocals in the local rock band The Hurricanes since 1998 and continue to do so. Scott was previously in several successful rock bands out of Dallas, including Trailer Park.

Shelly: Davey also plays in The Cleveland Steamers.

RRP: Where does the name of the band come from? Were you aware that there's a movie called 'Fast Sofa'? Could your mattress beat the sofa in a race?

Shelly: Scott came up with the name, and after a few months of constant fist-fights, Tina and I gave in. I think Jay & Davey didn't care. I wanted us to be called the STD-JS from all of our initials, but my left hook isn't as good as Scott's.



Didn't know about the movie, but I'm intrigued...

RRP: Is "Alcoholic" about anyone in particular, and if so what's the "behind the music" story on that one?

Shelly: This is a tough one to talk about in public, because it is about one of my best friends. He's gone through just about everything in the song. He knows the song's about him, but he also knows I love him no matter what.

RRP: In "Heterosexual", you rail against the typical macho mainstream male. Aren't there just as many guys in the underground that are sexist pigs?

Shelly: Heck, yeah! Nonetheless, I think the stereotypical frat boy is such a scourge not only on society, but also on fashion, that the song is really aimed at them.

RRP: On a related note to the above question, why do you think more women don't get involved in the local punk/underground rock scene? With a few exceptions, the NE Ohio music scene is pretty much one big sausage party.

Shelly: I've always found that guys are pretty competitive about music - Who knows more about music? Who has the most vinyl? I think the local rock culture is very influenced by that, and it can intimidate women. I get past it by just not playing that game. I'll be the first to admit that I don't know the most about music and that I think vinyl is annoying.

RRP: What are the musical influences that mix together to create the fabulous Fast Mattress sound? You seem to be rooted in garage rock, but there's something else going on as well which

sets you apart from all the derivative bands in that genre.

Shelly: I have no idea. I think we all have similar tastes in music - punk, garage, surf, metal - but how that all turned into Fast Mattress is beyond me. I never know how to describe our sound.

Jay: I believe our sound is rooted in the unique style of Scott's drumming. This along with that garage organ drone provides a really unique base to layer the vocals. I believe this and the willingness to try anything musically separates our sound from the traditional "garage".

RRP: What's the songwriting process like for the band? Is there one member who comes up with the majority of the tunes, or is it a collaborative effort?

Shelly: Total collaboration. On some songs one person brings a riff or a melody idea, but it's really the process of us sitting around in our practice space and letting the ideas flow. I'm often amazed at the ideas that these other yahoos come up with! I'm lucky to work with these people.

RRP: How are things coming with the effort to get a dog park in Lakewood? If my brain isn't totally failing me, I seem to remember you talking about that on your radio show. [Shelly also DJ's on 89.3 WCSB as "Skutr".]

Shelly: Thanks for asking, Bob! The dog park opened on June 27th, 2003. It's truly awesome. I call it doggie heaven. My dogs go nuts there.

RRP: Where would you like to see this Fast Mattress take you? Would you like to get a record deal, tour, etc., or do you just want to keep things on a local level?

Shelly: It's funny how my goals for this keep receding as we achieve them. At first I just

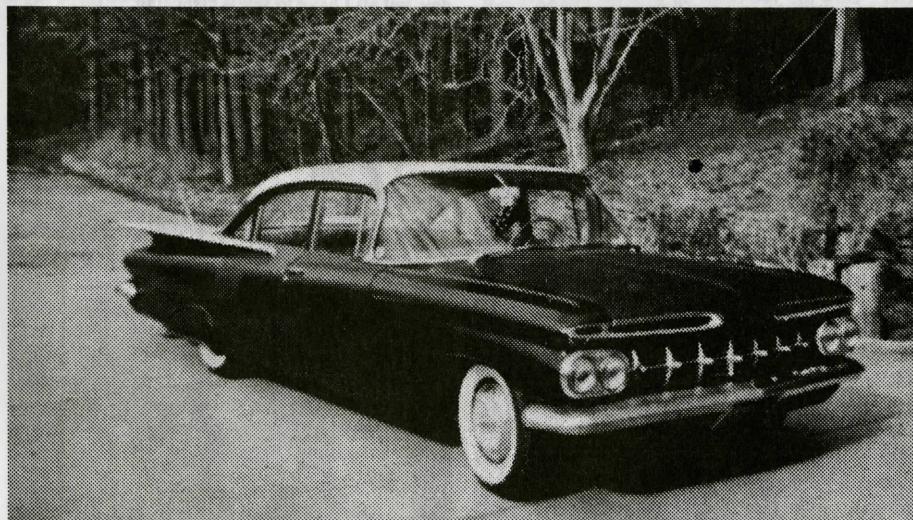
wanted to play a show. Then I just wanted to play Studio-A-Rama. Then I just wanted to record a CD so that we had a record of what we accomplished. Now I'm hoping the CD will get a distribution deal, because I'm really proud of it, and I'm happy when we get to share it with people. In my secret dreams, I want to play on 'Conan'. (Don't tell anyone!)

RRP: Anything I didn't ask you about that you want to comment on?

Shelly: Well, you didn't ask if we're a manufactured "boy band" type of thing. We're all so unusually good looking that a lot of people wonder if some record company honcho chose us to be in the band. Here and now I'd like to set the rumors to rest. It's just a coincidence that we're all so attractive.



It was a warm August 2002 night in the heart of Amish country, Wooster, Ohio, when a retiree-aged ball of frustration sat down beside me and griped, "Those damn kids and their 59's!" Huh? What kids? I've been here all day and wasn't aware the annual car show had been over run with...hooligans? Taking a hard look deep into the local park all was pitch black except for a few choice lights in the dusty ball field. A few stragglers were cruising up the black topped hill to venture toward their hotel rooms. Some of the rods had been left to save precious parking spaces for the continuation of the show tomorrow. Registration tents were closed down and organizers gone home. For the most part the grounds were now calm. Taking another look, suspiciously there seemed to be cloud of dust emanating from the ball field, and hovering. I had heard the displays of horsepower earlier down there but didn't think much of it. Ahh, now it made sense. With a gesture of his head nodding towards the cloud of dust Mr. Retiree continued, "Kid was down there was doin' donuts. If he keeps it up, I told him he's outta here. We can't have that." Can't have THAT? Why the hell not!!! That was my "Eureka" moment where it occurred to me that the aging generation of street rodders have lost the true spirit & spontaneous reckless abandonment of the hobby. Not to mention developing judgmental



Kustom Ride Spotlight



By Jill A. Kemper
poorlittlefool58@aol.com

views on the same acts they most likely pulled almost 45 years ago. The insinuations, hints and discerning looks from the older crowd had been building but now it was like a slap in the face. And by "kids" he must have been referring to everyone under 25 that doesn't spend the day vegetating in a lawn chair. Uh oh, this also must mean me. Danger!

So who was the crazy Donut King that night that nearly got expelled from the show for life? It was none other than Mansfield, Ohio resident Nate Moore and his '59 black primered-white topped, Chevy Bel Air. We can thank the horsepower dust cloud to his bias tires on black steel rims and 283 small block. Nate has a few other projects in the works like a '31 Model A Coupe and a '47 Dodge pick up but the Chevy is the one you'll see cruising around, spitting fire, or entertaining a grandstand full of cheering car show attendees. If you're from the area then you know he'll light up the night with flames or smoke out spectators with burning rubber depending on his mood. It all started two years ago when he found the Chevy for sale in a Mansfield car lot with peeling green paint. Those massive fins and tail lights reeled him right in. Long gone is the chipping green paint and the Chevy now sports a coat of BP90 black primer and a white top with a green pearl sheen. A set

of custom green flames down the side are next on the horizon. He's also lowered the car for a total of two inches in the front and three in the back. It's been nosed, trunk locked, the rear door handles are removed and so is the side chrome. The interior is freshly redone in a stock style with a two tone green color scheme. You won't find a fancy schmancy sound system, but who needs it when the AM radio "occasionally picks up a big band station". But this craft of old school hot rod building isn't just a hobby on a whim. Nate also attends a technical school in Pennsylvania to polish all aspects of his talents. This includes custom painting, welding, metal finishing and lead work to name a few. All this coming from a guy who attended his first car show at just a few weeks old.

But take note, Nate doesn't ride alone. At a time where it seems most car clubs are an endless sea of white haired Baby Boomers, a new club has hatched in north-east Ohio and their name are the Spiders. It's a club that focuses on guys who understand the true tradition and history of hot rodding; having an automotive passion, building and customizing your own ride with what ya got, respecting individuality, and most importantly not being afraid to get out there and drive 'em. These aren't the type of cars that are treated as delicate as egg shells or rubbed down with big buck products as if they have a sun allergy. Like Nate points out, "My car's a daily driver. It's going to get dirty." As to weird, embarrassing club member initiations to new members? I asked and nope, there aren't any. Ok, yet. There's even talk of a Spiders organized car show, location still undetermined. The Spiders have two basic requirements, pre-'65 vehicles only and rides must be free of billet. Let me sum it up with this statement; If you think Boyd Coddington is the King of the World or if paint chips are your worst nightmare, well just keep on walking buddy. But if you are interested in finding more out about this club, give your local, friendly Spider representative Nate Moore a call at (419) 565-2831. Because when it comes down to it the trailer queens will come and go but the true road kings are here to stay and they're packin' their talents and terrorizing donuts along for the ride.

Lance Kaufman of the

STAR DEVILS

Lance Kaufman - vocals, acoustic
David Rhodes Brown - lead guitar
Greg Schramm - upright bass

I first saw the Star Devils when they opened for Wayne Hancock, and have since determined what makes them so damned good is that elusive Ingredient X, which keeps them from becoming a sad impersonation of 50's rockers. Instead, they strike that perfect balance of not trying too hard to impress, while also not blandly going through the motions. They swagger with confidence, not arrogance, and have the chops to back it up. In short, they don't have the feel of a novelty band, and for Rockabilly to remain vital, that is the most important thing. - BL

RRP: Your site says that you are from Cincinnati, but I read somewhere else that you are from Kentucky. Where did you guys grow up, and where are you stationed now?

Lance: We say Cincinnati because nobody knows where Big Bone Lick, KY is...ha ha... Half the band is from KY. The bass player is from Florida and I'm a country boy from Idaho...yeah, Idaho.

RRP: What turned you on to this kind of music, and how would you describe your particular style?

Lance: Our style is pretty much straight up traditional Rockabilly, but you can't help being influenced by the things around you. For example our song "On the Corner" is about the whores and junkies I see out my bedroom window everyday. I grew up listening to Hank Williams and Merle Travis riding around with my Dad in his Pick-up truck...It had an 8 track tape player "The wave of the future." As an early teen I started to listen to hard rock kinda stuff: one day I heard some Carl Perkins and I said "This is it! This fucker rocks!!" After that I really strived to find out everything I could about the history of Rock'n'Roll. It's been a love affair ever since.

RRP: I see that you've opened for Molly Hatchet. How did that come about and how was it?

Lance: Wow that was crazy. A friend of a friend was setting up the show and asked if we wanted to do it...we thought it would be funny so we agreed. You can probably imagine the kind



of looks we were getting. A thousand pissed off guys with mullets ready to kick our asses. Strangely enough we managed to win some of them over in the end.

RRP: I read in a Cincinnati paper that your lead guitarist, David Rhodes Brown, is a local legend. How did he get this distinction?

Lance: Dave has been a staple on the Cincy music scene for like 30 years. Anybody who supports live music here, or who is a musician themselves, knows who he is. Dave and Greg (our drummer) have been in several different bands, most of them roots based such as blues, swing etc. They love playin' the 'billy and are really dedicated to that now. Both of them I met because they had seen the STARDEVILS playing with a different line-up and they jumped at the chance to start playing with us when the positions opened up. I started out playing drums as a kid (it's been about 20 years now) and decided a few years ago I was going to pick up the guitar. I love to jump around and put on a good show, so it's nice to not be stuck behind the drum kit. Our bass player I met at Home Depot...weird huh? He was pretty much a greenhorn and didn't really know anything about Rockabilly except for maybe Elvis. But he ended up growing to love it to and it worked out well.

RRP: How did you come up with the band's name?

Lance: We literally pulled it out of a hat. It seems like all the traditional Rockabilly bands have those "Joe Schmoe and the Somethin' Boys" kind of names. That is typically more traditional sounding, but I wanted to just use a 1 or 2 word name to incorporate the band as a whole. So I made up a bunch of stupid shit and threw them into a hat. One thing I did make sure of was that there wasn't another band with the same name... not listed anywhere that I can find. There are several other bands that I know of, that if you type in a search on the net, you get a bunch of other bands or a DJ with same name.

RRP: I know that you've played the Indy Rockabilly Rebel Weekender a couple times. How was that experience? I heard that it is one big party all night long at the hotel after the shows.

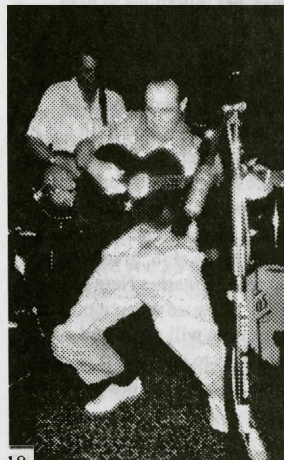
Lance: It's a lot of fun. We played there again this year for the Indy Road Rockets kick off party.

I like playing at all the weekenders but the Indy one is a little more relaxed. The hotel jams are the best part... you get to play with a lot of different people, and you never know who is going to be hangin' out and start pickin'. Like this year after the shows we all went back to the hotel and I was just hangin' around pickin' and singing songs with Deke Dickerson and some friends. The shows are great too, but the jams are my favorite. Everybody's wasted by then, but no one cares.

RRP: What is the strangest thing you could tell about your hometown, and/or something unusual that you did growing up? I grew up in Salem, Ohio, where they banned MTV for several years because of Beavis and Butthead, and once when I was teenager I got drunk on champagne, put on my friend's mom's prom dress, did a series of graceless somersaults, then puked all over the place. Somewhere there is footage of some girls stripping a vomit-drenched prom dress from my unconscious body, then tossing my booze-bloated body into a bathtub. A shining moment!

Lance: I come from a pretty fucked up place...I went down to a lake once, I was just a kid fucked up on Jack Daniels, and there were these guys catching frogs and then hitting them across the lake with a baseball bat. I think one of them is in prison now and the other is dead (surprise, surprise). I've chased many a greased pig in my day, but all I have to say is "Burling"... that's log rolling folks, yes, log rolling. It's a real sport out the Idaho way.

RRP: Do you think that roots music (rockabilly/



western swing/hillbilly) is actually more popular these days in bigger cities than rural areas and small towns? It seems to me that a lot of the younger people living in the sticks around where I grew up, who you'd think should dig this stuff, are actually more into Pantera and Metallica than anything to do with hillbilly music. Do you find that strange, that city folks feel they can relate more to it, and why do you think they do?

Lance: Yeah, I guess it's just because of the sheer volume of people and the accessibility of knowledge. I think the kids in rural and urban areas listen to what ever's on the radio...Rap, Rock, Modern Country...any ol' crap that's fed to them. I grew up in the sticks, but was always searching for something other than the crap on the radio.

RRP: The other day I saw a pick-up truck with a huge mounted confederate flag and a giant decal on the tailgate that said "show me your tits." I can't hardly think about it without shaking my head and laughing. Oh, and one time a few months back I saw a pimped out Geo Metro with fat tires, blue ground lights, and a windshield decal that read: "Ain't Skeered." Ha! What is the stupidest or oddest thing you've seen on a vehicle?

Lance: We got a lot right here in my neighborhood. There's one guy's car that is covered entirely with tin foil. He says it blocks the Aliens from monitoring his whereabouts!

RRP: If, by using some sort of psychic voodoo mind control, you could zap the talent out of somebody and keep it for yourself, who would you zap and why?

Lance: Well Evil Kneivel was my childhood hero, but I don't know if that qualifies as talent...more like lunacy. There's so many to chose from musically... I don't know... Merle Travis as a writer and picker. Charlie Feathers as a hic-upper and all around Rockabilly nut, Chester Burnett as a individualist, Jackie Wilson as a performer, and Hank Williams for being Hank Williams...I could go on for days...I guess I'm just greedy.

RRP: For a huge fee, Clonaid™ (the company founded by the Raelian cult: www.clonaid.com) claim to be able to clone rich people's beloved pets. What pet of yours would you like to have cloned, if you were rich, and why?

Lance: I think cloning is sick and wrong, but I do lots of things that are sick and wrong, so I guess it would have to be my childhood pet Petey the Poodle. He bit every friend I had growing up but loved me to death. He was totally psychotic, but makes me laugh every time I think about him.

RRP: What is a good lesson or bit of advice that people can take from the Star Devils?

Lance: "Bones heal and chicks dig scars!!"

RRP: What is the most important thing that people should know about the Star Devils?

Lance: We love what we're doing. We could be hung over, half dead, or whatever, but when it comes time to get up on that stage it all goes away. Whether we're playing to 10 people or one thousand we're gonna give it our all. Like cockroaches...Rockabilly will be around long after all of us are gone.

Ray Condo

May 16, 1950 - April 15, 2004



They say that the only thing you can count on in this life is death and taxes, and for Ray Condo who passed away this year on the IRS filing deadline, both came to collect their due. He was just shy of 54 when he was found dead in his Vancouver apartment of an apparent heart attack. By all accounts he was always on the move, preferring never to settle down and live the normal, cookie-cutter lifestyle. He was also an asthmatic insomniac who was badly underweight, and an accomplished drinker and chain smoker to boot. It is also said that he decried stardom, suspicious of its effects over authentic music, and only ever sought a bit of hard-earned recognition...as well as some beer money. He was saddened by people's indifference to their heritage, especially the weighty American contributions to music, and tried to keep that flame alive by adding his own distinct spark. Far from a just nostalgic act, when you heard and saw Ray Condo, you knew this was a guy singing it as he lived it: Reckless and soulful, with sawdust and sophistication. Whether it was hillbilly boogie, jazz, western swing, country, rhythm and blues, or rockabilly, Condo had a way of putting his own stamp on an unmistakably roots sound throughout his years of hard living.

Ray Condo's real name was Ray Tremblay, and he was born in Hull, Quebec, to a family of eight children. Later, after years of sleeping on the couches of friends, acquaintances and women, he



received the distinction of being a "one-man condo." His first record came out when he was just 16, playing with the Peasants, a British Invasion-style group. Later he performed in a Vancouver punk band, the Secret Vs, then moved to Montreal where he formed the

Hardrock Goners and had a reasonable dose of success. Condo later formed the Ricochets in 1994, with whom he recorded *Swing, Brother, Swing*, and *Door to Door Maniac*. His last album, *High and Wild*, was released in 2000, and it was during that tour that I had a chance to see him play.

It was at the old Grog Shop in Cleveland - a smaller, darker club than it is now at their new location up the street. I remember there had been a good crowd, not huge but not embarrassing either, half of whom took to crooked and rambunctious swing dancing. Unlike the dorks who take the classes and go to shows just to look cool, everyone this night was there for the music first, and therefore, few of us could really dance at all. It was one of the only times I have ever tried swing dancing in public, and I have to admit, I had a blast. The music was just so good, and everyone was getting drunk and didn't care how they appeared, which must have seemed like a dance party for pigeon-toed retards with rickets. It was a truly fun time, and a fond memory.

For the last three years since then, Condo took time away from playing music and worked for Canadian National Railways. Often he considered returning to painting, which he had originally gone to school for, but it was performing music that seemed to pull at his attention the hardest.

Far from being a hollow crooner, Condo's voice was a seasoned yowl that alludes to a life lived boldly and without safety netting. He had hillbilly (not hipster) in him, and for a man aged beyond his years, he still certainly glowed with the rascality of youth. I don't remember the specifics of our brief conversations with the man, but we all came off with the same impression: of meeting someone genuine, gracious to his fans, and cut with some of the same ragged genius that had made Hank Sr.

His friends have said that he was on a mission to keep the music alive with its original timeless integrity. He lived in his songs, and in the songs that moved him, and I am sure that he will stay with them forever.





The Paladins

There are a few guitar players who can go into extended solos and not only avoid boring me, but actually make me well up with a mixture of envy and total admiration. Dave Gonzalez is just such a guitarist, who plays as if his fingers are tapping into the collective unconscious in ways no words could. He is now again backed by veteran bassist Thomas Yearsley, who was there in the early days of this So-Cal institution more than 20 years ago. Their music probably needs little introduction, as it mixes elements of blues, rockabilly, old country, and even surf in ways that have influenced countless newer bands. Often tastefully understated on their recordings, their live shows instead adapt themselves to the feel of the room, the vibe from the audience, and the flux of their own biological drives and experiences. You'd expect a band touring steadily for so long to half-ass their shows and become arrogant and bitter. On the contrary, you'll find them to be down-to-earth, appreciative of every single fan, and obviously living for the music. - BL



RRP: Having put out roots-inspired music as the Paladins for over twenty years without any regard to commercial trends, and therefore never making the big bucks, what has kept you from either hanging it up and trying some other job with more financial stability, or alternately, trying to go for a more mainstream sound?

DG: Well, this is what I have always enjoyed, roots music. I feel very lucky because when I started playing roots music I hooked up with cats that were older than me and they hit me up with a lot of good old records. I had a lot of good influences in my family, and from old records. I never had a desire to play or write anything other than rootsy music. When we became the Paladins, I met Thomas, that was really our first band and we are still in that first band. We never had to play top 40 or sell out or anything. We just came together and we never knew we were going to stick around this long or make records or anything. We just listened to records and we wanted to be in a band that sounded like those old records instead of a modern sound. Lucky for us everything kinda came around and people got interested in rockabilly and the roots movement. And I think we were kind of a part of that, those early days in So Cal. And so to make a long answer even longer, I just never had a desire to try and sound modern. I am deeply into trying to sound and write traditionally.

TY: Rock and Roll is the voice of my generation. It defines "Us" from everything that is bullshit. I deeply resent those who use this art form to push fascist and commercial agendas. I am bugged by those who support a bill that would abolish an artist's rights to collect song royalties and then a day later use our music to promote car sales or radio "Talk Shows" and then otherwise be indifferent to the plight or struggle of the artist.

RRP: I've read that you are on the road more than 200 days a year, and have toured over a million miles. Are you still keeping that pace?

DG: Yes, we sure are. We are very busy. It surprises us that in today's economy we can still play over 200 nights a year and have a new record that came out, our newest piece, the *El Matador* record, it came out last fall. We have been busy crazy since last fall and I have been on the road all this year so far.

RRP: Do you think it takes a special kind of person to be able to be away from home so much?

DG: Yeah, you have to be half-crazy, it's really tough. And like you said in the first question, we never had any "hit records", we just made roots records and released on every few years. We just stay on the road.

TY: Believe it or not, I'm likening the road work now more than I have in a long time. Since before I had kids. They are almost grown now, but man it was painful trying to raise up those boys working at that pace. The one thing I can say though when I was home "I was home." It was kind of like having 10 two-week vacations a year. Except for one thing I would get off the road and my wife would say how about let go out to eat, and I would say how about not.

RRP: What personal sacrifices have you had to make for that lifestyle, and what makes it worthwhile?

DG: Well, when we first started out way back when we were real young and were signed record contracts and had management, we started touring and we did it and we were happy to do it. But there came a time when we wondered how long it was going to last, you know in the '90's rockabilly was kinda dying out and we weren't really a blues band and things were looking kinda dim. Then we got another record deal and we got real busy again and it hasn't let up. As far as sacrifices go, we have all had them. I mean both of our other members of the Paladins have children. Thomas and Brian both had to be off the road for a number of years to try and stay home

and tighten up with their kids. I never had children myself, but I had to make sacrifices with relationships and pretty much everything that goes along with it just to keep going and just to keep it on track. All of my time is consumed by the Paladins as far as doing business and taking care of booking and keeping everything straight and writing songs it's just a full time job. Even to be what we like to say "internationally unknown" it's a completely a full time job. We have done a lot of stuff that I am proud of and very grateful for, but at the same time I haven't ever led a regular life like most people do, where they work everyday, stay at the same house, see their loved ones all the time, take vacations... or sit around every night and watch TV. I mean, I have never done that. The Paladins have been together since '81 and I have been playing guitar since I was 13 years old, so I haven't had a day job since '82. I have been very fortunate in that I have been able to do this and be busy. I feel very lucky, but some people don't realize it is very tough to be gone all the time and to...you know, it's the path I have chosen and I'm not complaining at all. To stay out there and sell a moderate amount of records like we do. We sell enough records that we are known all over the place and we play all over the place, but we aren't stars or anything. We just try to keep roots music alive and try to put out a good record every now and then that may make a difference to a certain amount of people, and influence up and coming players of music. Keep the fire burning.

RRP: Do you think that laying off the alcohol has helped the band's longevity? Does it get hard not to become an alcoholic, being in bars and clubs every night?

TY: Are you kidding, half the time I'm just there for the booze!

DG: Yeah, it is tough being in bars every night. I'm not much of a drinker so I drink a little and then I'll go awfully without. The Paladins have been together for so long and we aren't doing it

just to party, we are out there really working hard. We have been doing it for a long time and we are older than most of the bands that are out there on the road, and when you are older you should either know better, or realize you don't recover as easy and so you have to pace yourself. Try not to succumb to all the temptations.

RRP: Your albums have continually evolved stylistically over the years as you've pulled various influences from soul, blues, rockabilly, and country. How would you describe the sound of your newest release, "El Matador?"

TY: Soundtrack to pleasure.

DG: El Matador is really a little bit of every one of the Paladins records we ever made, and even a little bit more. Because the more you play and the older you become, I mean it just seems like, I have always dug all kinds of music but now that I am older there is more that I like, and that I try to write and play like. I incorporated into the new Paladins record some jazz, incorporated some more blues, a lot of country, and we are still trying to stick with our traditionally rockabilly tunes. Somehow we need to try and tie them all together, with the Paladins playing all the instruments ourselves and writing all the songs. We wrote every song on this record, by the way. We have always made that our main focus, but we always picked out songs that other people wrote for us, or discovered tunes from old records that fit the format. Then we decided that we were going to write the whole thing and play every instrument on it. Just to keep it totally in-house, we started it out with a bunch of demos we did in the garage and we ended up going all out with some of the tunes and producing them all the way. There are a few on there that are real rough garage demos and sometimes there is a real beauty to that, not overproduced and pretty much how we came up with them on the spot and wrote them. If we decided the feel was there and even if the production wasn't the clearest and they weren't the most hi fidelity ever, but the feel was there and it's just raw Paladins.

RRP: What is the scoop on the Hacienda Brothers?

DG: The Hacienda Brothers is a country project that I have been involved with for a couple of years. Its myself and a great singer songwriter named Chris Gaffney and he is the guy we have known for a long time, we met him in the late '80's. He is a member of Dave Alvin's band, the Guilty Men and we have been bro's for a long time and we both love country music, we love soul music, we hung out a lot together. He played on a Paladins record a few years ago called "Slippin' In." He played on that record as a special guest. So we always wanted to do something together and last fall we wrote some songs together and as a matter of fact next week I'll be in Nashville with the Hacienda Brothers finishing up that record. Its kinda like stuff that I've had in my pocket, stuff that I have wanted to do for a long time but the Paladins can't necessarily do because we are a trio. We are known as a rockabilly band or a blues/rockabilly outfit, I have a lot of other stuff that I write....

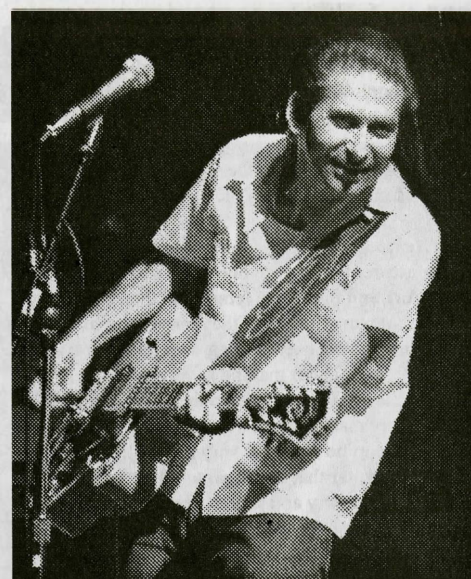
[Dave's cell phone cuts out here] Being able to write and record with cats like Chris Gaffney, who is a veteran singer, and a great singer, it opens up a lot for me to [phone cuts out again]. We have been playing quite a bit and we have a different sound than the Paladins, a '60's country soul sound. We lucked out, we made a record with a great veteran Nashville producer named Dan Penn who is a famous songwriter and producer and has written a lot of hit soul tunes. He is one of the guys who started the whole country soul genre and the early '60's. He's kind of like a legendary songwriter/producer cat who has always been one of my heroes and I got to meet him about 5 years ago and we kept in touch. When I sent him the Hacienda Brothers demo he offered to produce us, so we went ahead and did that. It should be coming out maybe next year.

RRP: You've said that the Paladins are sometimes considered too blues for the rockabilly scene, and too rockabilly for the blues crowd. What do think of the relationship between those styles, and why do you suppose people become so narrow with their tastes?

DG: I never knew why they did, but they are always trying to put us into a category and that is very hard to do with the Paladins. When we first came out and hit the rockabilly scene that's when all the kids, the so-called purists, said we were too bluesy. And I was like that's good because there needs to be more of a blues grit to the rockabilly and the guys that I looked up to, Carl Perkins and Elvis, Gene Vincent, Johnny Burnette, those cats were country cats that loved rhythm and blues and mixed all that stuff together to come up with rockabilly. Same with the way I feel about country. You know a lot of the country I hear now isn't country at all. There is a lot of blues that is missing, a lot of grit and soul that is missing in country nowadays. If you listen back to the early stuff, George Jones, Merle Haggard and all those cats, those guys were bluesy. The country cats that I dig sound blues and the blues that I dig sound country. Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy and Junior Wells, all those guys the great original blues cats had a real country feel where they were coming from. I think that's what makes American music so great, the mixture of styles. Jazz comes from blues, you know? Pretty much all I have ever dug that I have been into my whole life has been blues, from Memphis, from jazz, old country, and I continually search back through old records, studying from cats who I can learn the traditional part of songwriting and maybe approach to music back then. I don't really have too much music from later than the early '70's. I keep just looking back to the early stuff for inspiration in playing, writing, and thinking.

RRP: I read that you guys are avid collectors of records. Do you still seek out vinyl over CDs?

DG: Continually, like last night we had a record party. I bought an old record player at a garage sale a few days ago and had a few records I bought at a thrift store the other day. We just constantly collect records. For a long, long time all I had at my house was a jukebox and I was



fine with that. I just listened to those records for years, over ten years and that was fine with me.

TY: I stopped collecting records about the same time CDs came about. Not because I don't like CDs, but because my son was born in '88. You see the cost of diapers was about \$60 bucks a week. Precisely the amount I had been spending on Blues records. Thus, diapers not being musical are bluesy just the same.

DG: I never cared too much about getting CD's. I had a lot of LP's but my turntable was broken but it didn't bother me because I was always looking for 45's. I've got that sound in my head and that's what I try to do with the Paladins, keep the traditional sounds. There is so much country music that I love that the Paladins can't do, because we are a trio. Like, we don't have a steel guitar or harmony singing. But now that I have hooked up with the Hacienda Brothers I can write and produce new material that has the honky tonk jukebox sound that has always been in my head all these years. There are a lot of bands that have been coming out over the past ten years who have been trying to get back to that sound, of course there is Dwight Yoakum, the D-Trailers and a lot of underground stuff that goes way back. One of my favorite bands, when we first started out, was called Rank and File, they were on Flash records in the early '80's and they were a bunch of punk rock cats that loved honky tonk country music and mixed it all up. We played a lot of shows with them. I have just been really trying to promote that kind of music since the early '80's. There are a lot of people looking for the roots/country/americana sound and they can't find it on the radio. What they call country music today is not country music in my opinion. What we are trying to do with the Hacienda brothers is what the D-Trailers tried to do, what Junior Brown is doing, Jim Lauderdale a lot of these people are traditional. People like them and people like me, I live, eat, sleep and breathe traditional music. If we sell 100 records or 100,000 records I'm just going to try and promote, write and be a protagonist of this style and tradition of music.

RRP: I understand that there is going to be a re-issue of the guitar that you play and it will be called the "X-550 PALADIN." How did that come about? What can you tell us about the guitar and who is making it

TY: Dave has got one of these guitars. He says it's awesome. But he won't let me touch it.

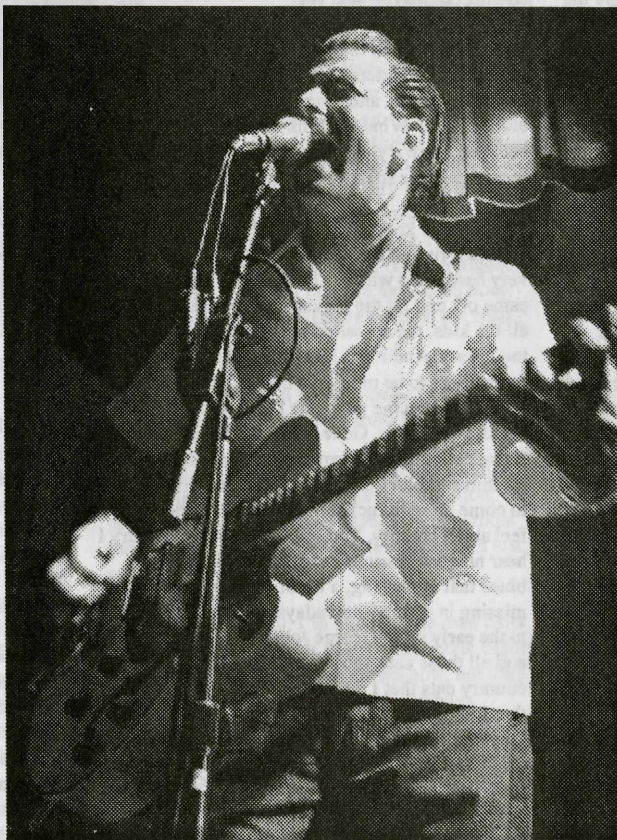
DG: Yeah! It's a Guild, a famous brand guitar manufacturer that started out in the early '50's in New York and then New Jersey and then Rhode Island, but recently I think they moved out to California. I have been talking with them for about 10 years about making some guitars that are like the ones I have been playing for all these years. They made a batch a couple years ago that looked like mine and were very nice hollow body type '50s guitar that were real good for rockabilly, country and jazz, blues and they sold quite a few of them. When they moved out to California I really got closer to the people that were actually making them and now they have the actual Paladin model guitar. It's a replica of a 1957 model that I played all these years. It's really an honor that they have done that. People all over the world for years have tried to get a guitar like mine and have tried to search out a way to get that sound that you get in the Paladins and it is really due to that Guild guitar. It's a great reproduction of my 1957 guitar, which I have worn out and retired. Now I just play the reissue and have been for over 2 years. It's unbelievable and I don't look back towards that old one at all. I can honestly say I love the new one as much or more than the old one. It's a fantastic instrument, but it's not cheap, it's right along the same price you would pay if you found a vintage one. We are quite honored, the Paladins are proud of it ...naming a guitar after the Paladins is very awesome. Like I said, we are internationally unknown from coast to coast. It's awesome to have a guitar named after us and being able to still get out there and play as much as we do, we are really lucky. And there are people like you guys who care about roots music and try to promote it and we really appreciate that.

RRP: Thanks Dave! I heard that you were sponsored by Miller at one point, are you still sponsored by them and what did they do for you?

DG: Ohh, that was fantastic man. From the late '80s all throughout the mid '90s we were with them for about 7 years. They had a big band network and promoted roots music, the people that were in charge of it were big roots, blues, rockabilly, country fans and we lucked out. They promoted us and helped with some posters and advertisements and helped us with equipment. They just helped us in general to get the word out. They were sponsoring us and getting us guitar strings, amplifiers, drums, cymbals, sticks and just about everything you need. It really helped us out a lot, and unfortunately it got difficult for

them to keep promoting us. The program got cut way back and they tried getting newer bands in there, but eventually I don't think they could do it anymore. We were there for quite a while though.

TY: OK, listen this is important. A guy named Rob Sanders from a band in New Orleans went to a big promotions agency and said "hi, I'm Rob Sanders, a drummer from New Orleans, and I've got an idea. Musicians love beer. People that love musicians love beer. Often these people can be found in places that serve beer. If we put a beer sign on the band and a band sign on the beer, it stands to reason that the people who come to enjoy music and beer will have an enhanced experience." And by all accounts, they did. Our manager at the time, Kevin Morrow, and our home club at the time, Belly Up Tavern, worked



this simple philosophy to a science. Here's how it would work, we would hear of a band out on the east coast, "Roomful of Blues" for example and we would say Paladins are comin' out east, give 'me a gig at Heart Break Hotel (a killer club in Road Island) and we'll get you into The Palomino (a killer club in LA). The beer company's promotions dept. will help with advertising along the way. You can see how the whole live music scene went through the roof, so to speak. People were dancing and singing from coast to coast. Consequently the police busted about half of the patrons as they tried to drive home, as a result of this, as you now know, Disco and Ecstasy now own the day or night, as it were. Where are they now? Kevin Morrow now is the main talent buyer for all the House of Blues clubs in the world. Rob Sanders is playing drums in New Orleans. Miller beer figured out that there way more sports bars

than live music venues. And the Paladins go to Europe where the beer arrives in tanker trucks, and the audience rides their bicycle's home in a swerving sort of manner.

RRP: I know that you are big car guys. What do you have, and what are you still looking for?

TY: Yeah I'm a car guy. My car when I was a young man it was a '58 Chevy pick-up. I sold it to Skid Roper for \$150. He paid me in quarters, still in a tip jar. My wife at the time bought diapers with that money. The diapers came in a bale, about a two and half week supply. Then a '66 triumph motorcycle. It was in the film Quadraphenia. Then a '62 Chrysler 300. Then a '50 Dodge. Now my recording studio is my hot rod. All the passion and grief I used to exercise with wrenches I now invest in maintaining musical instruments.

DG: I am always looking [for cars]. I am always on the hunt for something. I have probably had close to 50 cars over the years and all the members of the Paladins are old car buffs and mechanics. We have all had a lot of old cars and hot rods. Currently, myself my daily driver is an old Desoto and I have driven all the way from Washington to Mexico and just about anywhere in-between. I have really enjoyed that car a lot. It still has an old 8-track player in it. Our drummer has a 1951 Ford Victoria still running the Flathead motor, and goes to a lot of car shows with it. Our bass player Thomas had a 1950 Dodge for along time, he recently sold it. I've got a number of cars. I probably have about 10 cars parked in the front and back yard. I'm in the middle of restoring a 1950 GMC tour bus that I bought a couple of years ago. Just as a little project to get us a little tour bus for the Hacienda Brothers and the Paladins and myself if I just want to take off. I'm trying to slow down a little bit; you know just do some road trips by myself. I get a lot of inspiration when I am out there by myself in the Desoto, riding, listening to the 8 track tapes. I live in the SouthWest. I live in California and I drive all throughout the desert, all over the mountains in that Desoto. Its like a time machine, I get out there and can drive for days and try to get put into another space where I can write.

So I get this old tour bus and you get a real good feeling in it because it's so old, and soulful. So between that, the other cars and a couple of motorcycle projects I stay pretty busy. Its nice too because we have hot rod buddies from all over the world. We have friends in Europe that are into hot rods and old stuff so it's a pretty cool thing. It's a pretty cool scene. I'm up in the East Coast right now, near Connecticut and we put a big car show, hot rod rockabilly fest this weekend up here.

RRP: So it sounds like you work on all the cars yourself? That's awesome.

DG: Yeah, always, for years. As a little kid, I grew up with a father that was into old hot rod cars, a machine shop and an auto parts store, so I was born into it. We were always building something,

and driving something cool and having fun. That's what it's all about, having fun.

RRP: I was talking with Jason from the Amazing Crowns a few years ago, and he said the number one thing he looks for on the road is fresh fruit, which I reckon is hard to find at truck stops and fast food restaurants. What is the first thing you look for when you hit a town early with a few extra hours to spare?

TY: Porno

DG: Well, sometimes it's just a hotel to catch up on some rest. We have been at it for a long time and we are lucky we have a lot of really, really good friends all over the world. If we know we are going to be in town a little early we go to the supermarket, or a nice restaurant. Or if we go and we have a friend in that town we will call them up and have a little cookout. A lot of times people know we are coming and they'll have one for us. But it's difficult, I mean, we are on the road so much and eating at truckstops all the time isn't that healthy for you. When we do go home, man that's the first thing I do is go to the grocery store and cook up a bunch of food. It's a real pleasure to come home and cook your own food and sleep in your own bed. To us, that's a vacation. It's the opposite of what most people think of as a vacation.

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

DG: I think we have covered a whole lot and I appreciate you taking the time to give us a shout about this. Are you in Cleveland?

RRP: Yes.

DG: We have a lot of great friends in Cleveland.

RRP: We are all waiting for you to come back through.

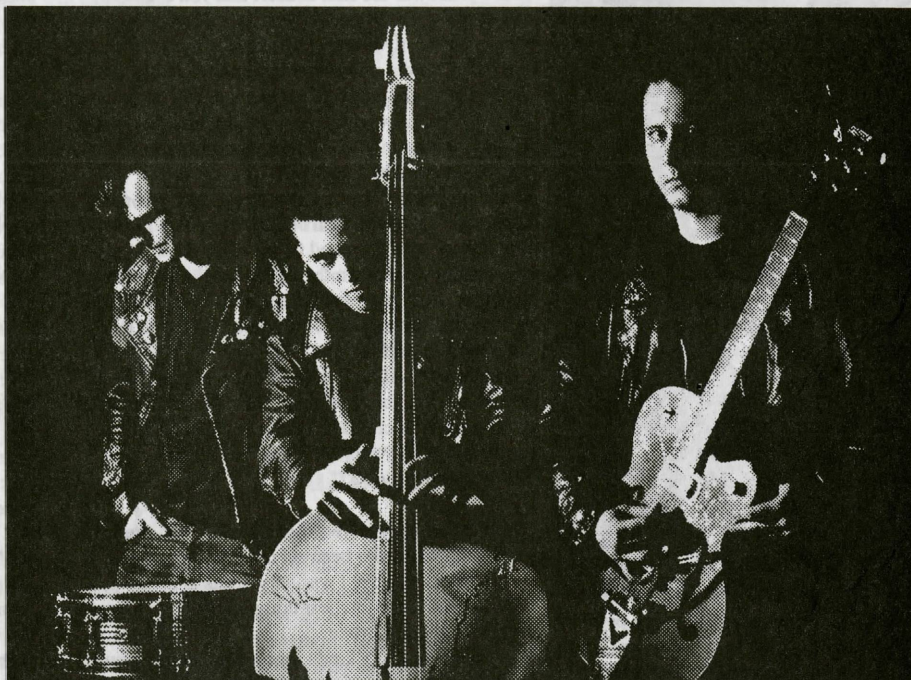
DG: Yeah, well the Hacienda Brothers are talking about playing there in October.

RRP: Yay, that would be great!

DG: You will have to stay tuned to the websites, www.thepaladins.com, which has all of our dates on it, and it's linked to www.haciendabrothers.com. I know we are going out east and we have a formal offer from Cleveland, but we have a couple other people asking for the same dates, so we are trying to figure that out right now. But we should know pretty quick and we will have it posted. Thank for your support, and to all those people that support roots music.

TY: In closing; I will say again, though we perform hundreds of shows in hundreds of towns and drive tens of thousands of miles IN THE SAME VAN, my experiences of this experience may be unique from the other guys experience. So it might serve your readers well to know Dave's or Brain's or Scot's or Jeff's take on this odyssey may not involve the equation of what the eventual cost in diapers would be.

The Koffin Kats



The Koffin Kats from Michigan play a Misfits-induced psychobilly that recently caught the attention of Hairball 8 Records in Texas. While winters in Michigan are notorious for the insane cold, these guys are capable of melting the ice off a dead homeless guy's body & making him come back to life, forever indebted to the Koffin Kats. He would follow them around as their roadie & merch guy, having found a new meaning in life: a life filled with music, women & wine. He would start up a charitable organization where blazin' bands would tour the chilly Northern states keeping the numbers of frozen homeless folks to a minimum. What a humanitarian! And he would owe it all to the Koffin Kats. Read this interview with them see for yourselves the majestic changes that can occur for humankind when the right soundtrack is chosen. -Lisa (DD = Damian Detroit, drums | VV = Vic Victor, bass/vox | TK= Tommy Koffin, guitar)

RRP: You used to be in a band called V8 Nightmare, right? Why did that end, and what changed between that band and the Koffin Kats?

VV: Well I was the double bassist and co-lead vocalist in that band... things werent moving like I wanted them to and I had to make a change... I brought in Tommy on guitar and eventually Damian fell into the mix. V8 Nightmare then became the band I wanted it to be, yet the name didn't suit us. We dont really sing about hot rods and hair grease and all that shit. So we opted for a name tattoo artist Sam Wolf came up with, The Koffin Kats. We sing about important stuff like death, drugs, ghosts, demons, and whores. I also took over as full time lead vocals and Tommy is on backups.

RRP: You signed to Hairball 8 Records recently. Are you going to be putting a brand new CD out with them, or are they going to re-issue your self-titled debut CD?

VV: Yes, we're on board with Hairball 8 now. Expect the new CD to be out near the end of the year. We plan to hit the studio up when we're off the road. Oh yeah, the first CD will continue to be pressed and released under Hairball 8 as well.

RRP: You guys are doing a big tour this summer - heading out to the northwest and all the way down into Texas. Will this be the first time you've done

such an extensive tour? What are your big hopes and fears for on the road?

VV: This will be the first time any of us have gone out for more then a few days on the road. I personally hope to get a drug addiction and I fear tour van failure in the desert. I hear if your about to die of thirst you can drink your own piss...hmm that would bite.

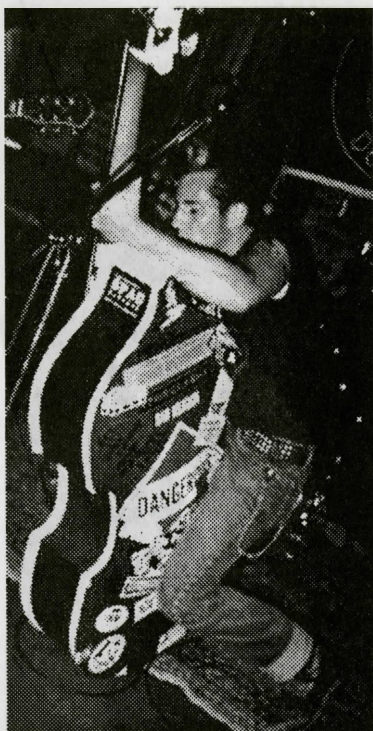
DD: Yea, I'm with Vic on the fear of the van crappin' out... Hope she holds out. I'm lookin forward to the fuckin best vacation I think I've ever had! Friends, drinkin', rockin' and lets not forget the girls!

TK: I agree with them guys on the van but also hope to blackout in every state we play, I would like to see a lot of snow in the summer time too, ha ha.

RRP: Do you consider yourselves psychobilly, and how do you feel about people who always argue about what is psychobilly and what isn't?

DD: This is a pretty touchy question... I guess if in an Indie music store we'd be in the "Psycho" catagory but we've never really considered ourselves Psychobilly in the true sense. We really dig the sounds of a lot of the bands that have been at it for years....

VV: Yeah weve been listed for shows as a psychobilly band even our posters say "Motor City Psychobilly." We all listen to it and are proud to help carry its flag, but we never want



to limit ourselves as being only a psycho band. We know we're not pure, and that's cool. Whether people say "punk with upright bass" or psycho or gothabilly or whatever... we don't care. If a song we write sounds cool to us we're gonna play it. As far as people arguing what is what, fuck it. Let folks listen to what they want to and shut up. No one will ever agree on that subject.

TK: I agree with these fuckers!

RRP: What are your interests aside from music: are you into guns, cars, amateur puppet shows... anything like that?

VV: First and foremost we all enjoy man's greatest invention... Beer! Then, of course the obvious, women. Then all kinds of other stupid shit, ya know, pullin' brodies on the neighbors lawn, shootin' tooth picks into Rockabilly's pomps, working on bikes and cars that will probably never run, oh, and pissing and puking on or in everything...there's probably more we can only take up so much page space.

RRP: What is the Detroit music scene like? What is big there? How are your shows? What are the other good bands in the area?

VV: Detroit musically to us is well... lame. Same damn fuckin' white belt afro-wearin' white boy with soul garage music that should have stayed in the early 70's. White Stripes get big.. unoriginal bands follow the footsteps hoping to grab onto the same media attention that the Stripes were bringing here for a while. It all seems to be slowly dying out now. Not sure what's next. Our shows are usually filled with the very small Detroit area greaser crowd mixed in with the good ole punkers. As far as cool bands around

here, there's tons outside of what the rest of the world is gettin' outta Detroit.... as I'm sure it is a lotta other cities.

RRP: What was the first concert that you ever saw, and how did it affect you? Mine was Eric Clapton. I remember mostly the urine-soaked stadium bathrooms and trying to piss into a twenty foot trough while flanked on both sides by drunken yuppies.

TK: My first concert was Bon Jovi. I thought that shit was cool I was only like 7 or 8, though.

VV: Mine was The Dancehall Crashers & The Reverend Horton Heat... I think I was like 15 or 16... heh, I didn't get out much before that. After I saw the Rev I knew what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. School went down the drain and playing in bands took over. Nothing else has seemed cooler then being in front of a shitload of people doing what you love and acting like a fool.

DD: Mine was AC/DC at some fuckin' huge venue... the band rocked but the venue blew. Wasn't too much later I caught Social D at a smaller club and felt the power and energy projected from the smaller stage, THAT blew me away!

RRP: In the past I have stolen pastries from the garbage that had just been set outside the doors of Dunkin' Donuts when I was very drunk and very broke. What is the lowliest thing you did when drunk and/or completely broke?

DD: Ya know, that's kinda funny you did that, cause I used to swipe bagels from behind this joint in Ann Arbor years ago! Fuckin' good times! Course I've had the pleasure of pukin' on someone else, that was fun but it didn't feel too great the next morning... Yea, my face was a bit swollen. Swipin' smokes from the store, usual type shit.

TK: I have never really been broke I've worked my ass off since I was real young, but I have stolen a lot of stupid ass shit just from being real drunk or on a little drug binge.

VV: When ever I find myself in Taco Hell I order a water (which is a free cup) then go fill it with Mountain Dew... works everytime drunk or sober.

RRP: What is the cruelest thing you have ever done to someone?

TK: Well it's not so much to one person but to a group of people. I was at a party and realized I did not really like any one there but my friends, so I pissed in a big 25 gallon bucket of jungle juice and the owner of the house's shampoo bottle. I just laughed at all those assholes drinking my piss, about 25 mins later I got arrested for destruction of property, so I had it coming.

VV: I'm only cruel to animals.

DD: When I was in high school, me and a couple of buddies thought it was real fun to dress up on Halloween, get shitfaced, and go steal candy from kids. Left a few of 'em cryin'. Yea, I was a prick.

RRP: What was the last thing you read, heard, or saw that really impressed you?

VV: Bruce Campbell manages to make Elvis a badass in Bubba Ho-Tep ... come on now JFK and Elvis vs. a damn mummy in an old folks home. Too cool.

DD: Any of my friends bands, always impressive. Also creations or kustoms or restored projects that friends have completed or are workin' on: always an inspiration.

TK: I just got done reading the Motley Crue book. It's the first book I've ever read outside of school and I fucking loved it

RRP: Ronald Reagan just died the other day. What will you be doing to honor the event?

DD: Reagan? Hell, Ray Charles just died. Musically speaking, he had more of an impact on my life than Reagan did. He was fuckin' great in the Blues Brothers! To honor Ray Charles, I think I'll don my darkest shades and go out bar hoppin'. If anyone gives me shit about "Sunglasses at Night" I'll let 'em know they should fuck off cause I'm doin' it for Ray!

TK: I'm down with that.

VV: The Gipper's been like half dead and unable to remember who the hell he was for the past few years anyway... I didn't know him, therefore I need not honor his death... it's not like he was assassinated, heh. Didn't they miss him the first time?

RRP: What was the most dangerous situation you have ever been in, or your closest brush with death?

VV: I almost got pulled into a wood chipper by a tree branch...that would have been a hell of a way to go!

DD: Had a guy pull a gun on me in Detroit, during Coleman's reign.. pretty scary.

TK: I've gotten threatened to be shot a few times, but nobody ever pulls a trigger, so nothing too scary.

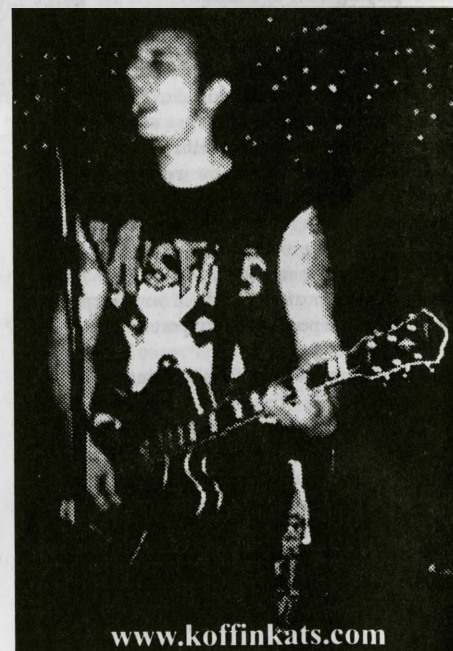
RRP: A friend of mine told me last week that he would really like a sweaty, hairy woman to piss on him. The urination part isn't that unusual, but I wasn't aware that there were men who longed for extremely hairy women. What's the strangest fetish or fantasy that you can't get off of your mind? Are you into hairy women?

DD: First hairy women, to me, equals hippie, and I fuckin' can't stand dirty smelly hippies. Fantasies? Hell, I dunno... It would be pretty cool to grab my special lady friend, cruise out to New York and have as much elevator sex as possible.

VV: I wanna get beat up by 5 naked unhairy chicks... maybe on tour?

TK: No fuckin' hairy bitches: that's sick, but I have a halloween coffin big enough for me and a lady friend to get down and dirty in.

RRP: American Indians and modern shamans believe that upon birth an animal's spirit enters into that person and becomes interwoven with their soul and guides it. What is your spirit animal, and where is it leading you?



www.koffinkats.com

VV: Probably a monkey... sometimes I get the hankering to throw turds at people which eventually will probably lead me to a lot of chicks. Chicks dig poo, I hear... Cleveland Steamer is my middle name... heh, not really.

DD: My animal spirit has to be a Tiger, full of pride. Sure I might fall into the "pussy" category but if in I get pissed, I'll tear ya to shreds, take a look at Roy... or what's left of him.

TK: I would have to go with a bear, I guess, 'cause I'm a big dumb jackass, but I'll fuck you up if you fuck with me, or so I like to believe.

RRP: How does the music of Philip Glass make you feel?

DD: Who the fuck is Philip Glass?!!?!?

TK: Have no fucking clue until I've heard him.

VV: He makes me want to bust out the old casio and go to my dark place.

RRP: If the Koffin Kats make it huge, would sorts of demands would you put in your contract that you would require before playing a show?

DD: Easy, an ice cold case of Pabst.

TK: At least one case.

DD: That's about all I could think of. Maybe some Taco Bell.

VV: People think I'm joking when I say this, but I really do want a bag of dead cats to spill out onto the stage... leave the smelly ones out... oh and bag of Wimpy burgers.

RRP: Is the cat on the back of your CD real? Is it posing? Why is it so fond of Stroh's? What brand of cigarettes does it smoke?

DD: Hell yea it's real! That pose was the way we found it ya see, it's dead! Stroh's, cause it's from Detroit and it's tryin to cling to Detroit's past. Older guys will understand.

TK: That was a Marlboro red, and when I found out the ungrateful cat wasn't going to smoke it, I kindly took it back and smoked it myself.

VV: We didn't kill it people so PETA can get off our nuts now. Can't help it if people bring us dead cats, and they are always welcome to.

RRP: Anything else to add?

DD: Rock over London, Rock on Detroit, Give that man a Blue Ribbon!

VV: If you come to a Koffin Kats show leave all yer goddamn scene drama and politics at the door... nobody wants to hear that shit. We'll work our asses off to give ya a decent show, and unlike some other bands, we know we're no bigger then our fans and we always dig talking to ya.

TK: I love you Pabst!

Man Has Sex Change... Into a Hermaphrodite!

OH- "I never could make up my mind about anything," says 32 year-old Simon McMasters (a.k.a. "Widgie"), "so I figured: why not be both?" After being refused this unprecedented operation for years, McMasters finally found a doctor who would perform it while vacationing in Buenos Aires.

"The procedure was incredibly complex," Dr. Leroy Goebels, whose medical license had been revoked in the United States for refusing to

administer CPR to a dying mime. Previously he had won a Nobel Prize in Medicine for pioneering a foreskin reattachment procedure to benefit non-hooded members of society.

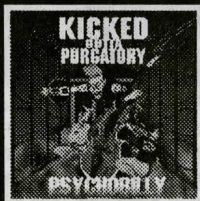
Indeed the ethics of the operation have been questioned. Delilah Berger of the Gender Identification Stabilization Movement argues that there can be no in-between genders. "If a person is both male and female, then who pays for dinner? And what is to prevent accidental in-breeding during masturbation?"

Dr. Leroy Goebels is quick to laugh off such ludicrous concerns. "Of course the secondary organ is non-functional in a reproductive capacity, and the patient is free to assume any gender role the she-he desires."

"The biggest question I get from people is whether I can reach a dual climax," reports McMasters. "Let's just say that my head has spun around more times than Linda Blair's. I've got the best of both worlds: no menstrual cramps or risk of pregnancy, and no refractory period."

Will cosmetic hermaphrodites become the new craze among the young, hip, and over-sexed? Not if Reverend Bernie Cross has anything to say about it. "If the Lord had wanted us to exist as self-satisfied beings, fully sufficient unto ourselves, He would not have let us be born." Regardless, McMasters has seemingly found happiness in his new identity as Widgie. She-he is currently dating itself, and is planning a June wedding.

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PSYCHO US-002

PAGAN DEAD
(Mors Ianva Vitae Et Vita Ianva Mortis CD)
This is the sophomore effort from Salt Lake City, UT death metal psychobilly trio PAGAN DEAD. The material covered on this CD would have many parents and Mormons running for cover. For fans of Demented Are Go! & Slayer. Superb cover artwork by Matzi @ Hellbound Studio. \$9.99.



PSYCHO US-003

KOFFIN KATS
(Self Titled CD)
Blazing a trail across 11 states this past summer, the KOFFIN KATS are quickly becoming a force to be reckoned with in the American psycho scene. This Motor City Psychobilly band's self titled 8-song EP is now available through the PSYCHOBILLY*US Label / HairBall8 Records. Rock-n-Roll Purgatory says this CD is "psychobilly brilliance". \$7.99



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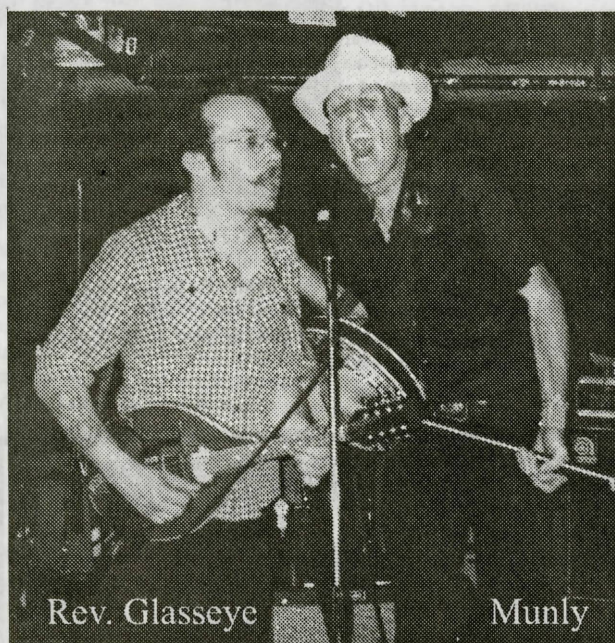
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SLIM CESSNA'S AUTO CLUB

It was a warm night in August with a cool Erie breeze when I sat down with the frontman from one of the most intriguing bands currently on the touring circuit. Slim Cessna's Auto Club play a sort of dark bluegrass/gospel that reaches for the soul the way less-inspired evangelists reach for the wallet. Whether singing about murder by shovel or delivering an odd ode to Roger Williams, founder of the Baptist Church in America, they never fail to exhibit all of the joyous dementia that enraptures the spiritually gifted among us. Rather than simply being a novelty act, their saving grace is owing at least as much to Nick Cave as to the Carter Family. Indeed the preceding concert had built to a frenetic elation as vocalists Slim and Munly proselytized and testified to the wretched bar patrons whose weakened spirits were in need of lifting, urging them to shed the shackles of sin and to tongue the other cheek. The peculiar thing is that the band's illusive irreverence comes full circle, by and by, and manifests itself as a strangely religious experience.



Rev. Glasseye

Munly

RRP: How did the name of the band come about, in particular the Auto Club part?

Slim: Honestly, I'm not even sure how to answer that because it happened so long ago, maybe twelve or thirteen years ago. I think maybe at first we weren't really serious about what we were doing, so we thought of anything. In Denver there's a lot of low-rider clubs and things like that, so you'd always see posters for like the Coyote Car Club or the Saint Mary's Auto Club, and all these different groups of people with their own car clubs, which were all low-riders in certain neighborhoods in Denver. So somehow we just called Slim Cessna's Auto Club, and I honestly don't know why we did that. I think we thought it was funny because we didn't have low-riders - we had Toyotas and Subarus.

RRP: With your stage show, have any particular preachers or evangelists inspired your performance to where you've adopted some of their mannerisms or inflections?

Slim: Performance-wise I'm not sure. I think Munly and I have just fed off of each other over the last 11 years or so, and it just keeps building. You know my father is a Baptist preacher, but he's not that kind of Evangelist Baptist preacher. He's

more of a guy that stands at a pulpit and talks about God, so it certainly has nothing to do with him. The content of songs has to do with him, but for the show business aspect, I think it is just Munly and I always trying to out-do each other and building it into what it has become.

RRP: Being raised Baptist, was it more of an aggressive or fanatical strain or...

Slim: No, it was more conservative. It wasn't like a Southern Baptist; it was more like a Suburban Baptist

RRP: So what does your family think of the band?

Slim: It is hard to say. They come to shows when we are playing in Denver, so they support me. They want me to do well, and they want the band to do well, but I don't really know. I think that they struggle with some of the content and some of the hell-raising and things like that that happen. All in all, though, I'm 38 and it's not like I'm living at home anymore. I think that we are all okay with each other, but we definitely had to come to terms with each other. I had to come to terms with them, and I think that they had to come to terms with me and the band as well.



Slim Cessna

RRP: How did the band start? Was it always you, Munly and Dwight?

Slim: Munly and Dwight weren't there in the very beginning. When we recorded our first record, which was about 11 years ago, they weren't there, but they came in soon after. Actually, the line-up that you saw tonight was the line-up that happened soon after, but then those other three guys (Danny Pants on bass, Ordy on the drums, and Rumley on the pedal steel) weren't with us for the last three years. We just got them back about a month ago.

RRP: Where were they?

Slim: It's very confusing. There were other things that were happening for them over that time, so we had these other guys that were on the East Coast and brought the band and based it there for a while, and Munly was the only guy that had to come out to the East Coast. It's very confusing because we don't live in the same place. Now that we have the Denver guys back and Munly also still stills lives in Denver, Dwight and I fly out to Denver to rehearse, to record, and to start our tours. I live in Pittsburgh and Dwight lives in Boston. Before, Munly would fly out to Boston all the time, but now things are back the way they were three years ago. I moved from Denver about 5 years ago.

Photos By Jessica LaRoach

RRP: Why did you leave Denver?

Slim: I needed to go for family reasons. I've got a wife and two kids. I've been married for 16 years, and there's more to what I do than this.

RRP: How did you get hooked up with Alternative Tentacles?

Slim: We've been on the label now for 5 years, I think. This is our third album on the label. It came about because we were friends with Jello before we were on the label. He's a Colorado guy also, that's where he grew up. He lives in San Francisco now, but any time he'd come home to see his parents he'd come out to see our shows if we were playing, and if we were in San Francisco he'd come to our shows there. We were looking for a label to put out our records, and we were just talkin' to him and it turned out that it was natural that we should be on his label because we were already friends with him.

RRP: Is that collage inside your CD something that you guys put together or something that the label did?

Slim: The label.

RRP: How do you guys jive politically?

Slim: I think that ultimately we don't want to be a political band at all. I think it comes out sometimes every once in a while, like there's certain things that happen in our songs that do lean towards that, but I don't know how it jives really. I do lean towards that side, and I understand that we've got to get our president out of office right now.

RRP: I know that you're fanatical fans are called "Cessnuts." So what is the most moving or creepy thing a fan has done or said to you?

Slim: Moving or creepy... I don't know. I think they're all lonely people [laughs]. Nah, they're not lonely. They are all really nice people. I don't know what to say.

RRP: What can you tell me about the Blackstone Valley Sinners?

Slim: That is a side project that I do sometimes. It's Judith Ann who was in the Auto Club for three years, and her husband Rich Gilbert, who plays with Frank Black and the Catholics, but he's busy and I'm busy so we don't play together very often. We put out a couple records and played a few shows, but we don't tour. It's mostly kind of a Rhode Island based local band. It's country music with a drum machine.

RRP: Speaking of that area, didn't you sell your tour ambulance to Dave from Sasquatch and the Sickabillies?

Slim: Yes I did.

RRP: I just interviewed Dave for this same issue.

Slim: That must've been intense. He's got a lot of strong ideas. I'm not like that. [laughs]

RRP: I understand that Munly has written books.

Slim: Yeah, he's written one book of stories. It is called "Ten Songs With No Music."

RRP: What kind of stuff is it?

Slim: Crazy Munly shit

RRP: What other sorts of things have influenced your song-writing?

Slim: Lyrically and style-wise, it comes from our experiences. For me it was growing up in the Baptist Church, growing in Colorado with how the landscape looks, how my friend's bands sound, everything. It's hard to pick out anything that anybody would know about. I've been playing forever. I'm 38 but I've been in bands in Colorado since I was 18, so 20 years of experience influences an awful lot for me. But we all come different directions, so our songs go places that we don't even expect to go. I grew up listening to country music and gospel music, and I also grew up listening to punk rock music: bands like X and the Gun Club were very important to me when I was a teenager. I also think of Eastern Colorado, the high plains, and that certainly influences me an awful lot, trying to put visual things into words... ideas into sounds.

A True Cessnut Testimonial *A-preachin' and A-praisin' 'bout Slim Cessna's Auto Club*

By Jessica La Roach

Gather 'round good people, and I'll tell you about Slim Cessna's Auto Club. So many people who I have preached to about this band have asked me "what do they sound like?" A fine question indeed. However, the way I respond: come see them live to find out! Allow me to start from the beginning: 'Twas a dark and snowy night way back in the winter of 2004. Most sensible people had decided to stay home that night. I have never considered myself to be sensible. So I trucked my little "P.I.T.A." (Pain In The Ass) car out to the Beachland to see and support my goods friends the Cap Gun Cowboys. I read that they were opening for some guys from Denver called "Slim Someone's Car Club" or something... I had no idea who they were. I see too damn many shows to do my research on every band playing with the ones I like! So, after a fine showing by the Cap Gun Cowboys I decided to stick around with the other 30+ brave souls who faced this weather to see this "Auto Group Club" -or whoever they hell they were... After a brief break between sets these two tall very lanky characters took to the stage with an entourage of equally unique looking folks. They started in on this hillbilly-type gospel, fire and brimstone music. "What in the hell am I witnessing?" I asked myself. It didn't take long for me to realize my chin was on the floor as I watched this band preach about the evils of Satan and the glory of the good Lord, Jesus Christ with incredible twist and punch to it. These songs reminded me of old folk tales I studied in various lit courses in college! But it was the WAY they performed these songs of soul saving and old tymie lore... This is what I (in my white head, suburban-raised mind) imagined what a real-deal gospel revival was all about! The really skinny feller (Munly) yodeled out this frenzied howl during several songs that sent chills down my spine. Slim had his hands in the air in an (not quite so evil looking) Ernest Angley manner than made me want to have my damned soul saved on the spot. The rest of the band fit the bill as well- most of them switching off between multiple instruments and adding to the entire Auto Club experience. By the end of that cold, cold night I was a convert. I believed in the providence of the Slim Cessna. I bought their CD seconds after they left the stage. The following days I went on a hunt for anything I could find about this band

on the Internet. I found they had a few other discs out and all of them are in various other bands as well: The Reverend Glass Eye and Black Valley Sinners to name a few.

Time passed (as it usually does) and I kept telling EVERYONE about this band. To my extreme excitement I saw that were touring again in late April and would be at the Beachland once again. I read that they were playing in Columbus 2 days before the Cleveland show. It took me all of about 3 seconds to decide to skip a day of work and drive that 2-hour trip down I-71 to see them. The skipping the day of work was no big deal- hell, I would do that if all I was planning on doing was trimming the cat's toenails, but I had to rely on my good old P.I.T.A. car once again. As luck would have it, the little hunk o' junk got me down there in one piece.

Slim Cessna's Auto Club played Bernie's Distillery in Columbus on April 28. I was treated to the same amazing style of live performance I had loved about this band upon my first discovery of them. Only this time I knew the words and got to be that annoying person who sings along with damn near every song!

Two days later I saw my new friends (well, I like to think of them that way) again at the Beachland. I was fortunate enough to nag (although it wasn't that difficult!) my way into introducing them to the stage that evening. This time the MUCH larger crowd than that cold-ass day way back was treated to the antics and passion of the band as they yodeled and praised their way through another wonderful set. The crowd was especially pulled in by the signature dance that Munly and Slim do before they fall to the floor on their backs to preach the good word of their heartfelt tunes. I was a sweaty mess by the end of their set and couldn't be happier about it.

I am a complete sucker for music and have many bands that fit into a place in my heart, but none fill that certain spot quite the way Slim Cessna's Auto Club does.

So, good people, do yourselves a favor and check out this band when they come to a town near you. Your soul will thank you! (And let me know if you can give me a ride—who knows how much longer the little P.I.T.A. car will be able to put up with my antics.)

CD Review

Slim Cessna's Auto Club "The Bloody Tenent, Truth & Peace"

www.alternativetentacles.com

The fourth album from Slim and company exceeds already high expectations. Exploring the dark side of Americana, they use banjos, mandolins, organ, and even yodel when the spirit moves them. What results transcends their gospel and bluegrass roots to create a singular sound that commands its own piety. "Thorny Crown" alone has a Western feel with a waltzing beat and tabernacle tremolo. Their Southern Gothic feels haunted by Old World folk, making me think they'd be great on a bill with Trailer Bride. The lyrics run the gambit from intriguing to disturbing, to outright bizarre, making me wish they had them printed inside, and their delivery is passionate, often mounting to a state of frenzy. This is a brilliant album that you won't find in any used bin, unless a complete idiot buys it. - BL

MUSIC REVIEWS

READ 'EM AND WEEP

The Young Werewolves

www.theyoungwerewolves.com

Like your rockabilly with a horror movie edge? The Young Werewolves are the band for you. Blending the feel of all the classic surf and twang I know you love with a very healthy (or unhealthy?) dose of B-horror, this three-piece from Philly takes you to the dark corners of your mind when things go bump in the night, and have a great time doing it. Think Misfits with a sense of humor. (Yes, Glen, I'm talking to you. Lighten up.) With songs like *Zombie Car Chase*, *The Night The Phantom Went Down To Graceland*, *Graveyard Of Love*, *Werewolf Fever*... well, I love every song on this disc, so all I can say is buy the damn thing and listen for yourself. Drummer Johnny Wolf, bassist Shewolf Dana K., and guitarist Wolfman Nick Falcon all share vocals, each one standing by themselves while at the same time bringing it all together to create that special Werewolf sound. Check them out, 'kay? 'Nuff said. - Doogie

7 Shot Screamers

"Keep the Flame Alive"

www.7shotscreamers.com

These carbon-based rockers crawled from the primordial ooze with one goal in mind: to be better than your current favorite band. Will they succeed, or is their evolutionary swagger doomed to failure? Actually, chances are quite good that they will occupy your CD player as if it were a Third World country, using their one-of-a-kind blend of rockabilly with subtle undertones of punk and 70's glam. It is refreshing to hear a band with an original sound that not only draws heavily from neo-rockabilly influences (Sharks, Batmobile) but also loves the Rolling Stones, Johnny Thunders, T-Rex, and so on. This CD was produced by Levi Dexter of the Rockats, and the songs are all originals except for a cover of "Born To Lose." They also don't put out shoddy lyrics about being real gone daddy-o's. Instead the songs are driven by the good-humored fatalism that should emanate from all sentient life forms with functional reasoning faculties, but which is especially strong in those whose only redemption comes from the music they love. Just like real life, sometimes you are top of the world, other times it buries you, and the songs here reflect that range... all the while rockin' like hell. If you too are waiting for the rock'n'roll messiah, the 7 Shot Screamers will take you to that promised land. - BL

The Lunatics

"Tour du Monde"

www.goofinrecords.com

This is the third album from this Finnish instrumental rock group. Their songs have plenty of surf influence, but they also have some with more of an exotic flavor, some that rock out, and several of them have funk and ska rhythms. "Ripe Oat" has a western/country feel to it, "Cramps" features saxophone, and they cover Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy." Their guitars have a clean sound in most parts, and are played exceptionally well. The production is clean too, so

if you are looking for some lo-fi, fuzzed-out surf rock, this isn't it. But it is quite good. - BL

The Jet Set

"We've Got the Dance Connection"

www.weerockrecords.com, www.uptightrecordings.com

So you wanna hear some soulful, dirty, mashed-up, rhythm bound, bluesy, psychedelic, garage dance music? This is it, buddy, & it is good. All the bands that they have been compared to are ones that I am not very familiar with aside from the Velvet Underground (Gossip, Hot Snakes, The Chesterfield Kings, Caesars, and Richard Hell and the Voidoids), so I'll just say that it isn't that boring straight 60's pop type garage, nor is it pulling Sonics levers or pressing Rolling Stones buttons. Instead, they use an organ sparingly & perfectly, a prominent snare drum, & righteous guitar licks to create something raw, different, & fun to listen to. It is so damn infectious you'll feel your nervous system jerk rhythmically when exposed to these sonic pollens. Squares don your HAZMAT suits. - BL

The Arsons

"Bridges Down"

Mad At The World, www.matwrecords.com

This is competent and musically interesting in many places, but the songs invariably lose any punch that they started out with when the guitars start to drone or chug, and the vocals really let me down with their Warped Tour cadences. It sounds like a ton of pop-punk type bands, albeit more artsy. They seem to attach themselves to the melodic hardcore scene, which to me is an oxymoron. I couldn't listen to all of it. I can tell it is good for what it is, but that doesn't mean that it is good. - BL

Gun Crazy

"Dropping Like Flies"

Mortville Records, www.MortvilleRecords.com

This CD reeks with the familiar B.O. of a 7-day bender. Playing primal, atavistic punk rock'n'roll, Gun Crazy from Texas sing stories from the other side of city life as experienced by the chemically imbalanced. They count the Dictators, Saints, Radio Birdman, New York Dolls, etc. among their influences as they churn, stomp and stagger through a keeper of a CD. - BL

Detonations

"Static Vision"

Alive Records, www.alive-totalenergy.com

Featuring members of The Drags and Sex Hunter, the Detonations create a disturbing array of psychotic convulsions that surge with an electrostatic pulse that'll make you get naked and tongue kiss a toaster. Impure music for people who prefer their garage rock to be raw and bleeding on the floor. Delivers a devastating stiletto between the fourth and fifth vertebrae, taking your wind away. I've listened to this several dozen times already. Great. Simply great. - BL

Deke Dickerson

"My Name Is Deke"

Hightone Records, www.hightone.com

The songs on this are a collection of material culled from his three Hightone Records releases, plus a live version of Mule Skinner Blues recorded in Finland in 2001. I'd say this is primarily meant as an introduction for new Deke Geeks, since old Deke

Geeks probably already have all of these albums. I would have liked a retrospective to have included some non-Hightone stuff from Untamed Youth and the Dave & Deke Combo as well some of the "3-Dimensions" material, but I'll take what I can get. Here you get some obscure covers (obviously Deked-out) and plenty of notable originals that topically range from the simple joys of eating chicken and red headed women, to suicidal heartbreak and existential despair. Musically, there is 50's rock'n'roll, rockabilly, country, hillbilly boogie, doo-wop, and a fantastic Joe Maphis instrumental. While this CD might not capture the full width and breadth of Deke's musical undertakings, it certainly showcases a notable segment of them. - BL

The Ukranians

"Istoriya: The Best of..."

www.omnium.com

With over 70 minutes of music starting off with a nice cover of The Tornadoes 1962 instrumental "Telstar," this CD keeps you interested despite being sung entirely in the Ukrainian language. This British band formed sometime in the late 80's and early 90's, and have apparently done to Ukrainian folk music what The Pogues did to Irish folk, although not quite as boisterously. Here you get the most unusual cover of "Anarchy In The U.K." you are likely to ever hear, and they also cover Lou Reed and The Smiths. Lots of mandolin and accordian keep this disc upbeat for the most part, despite some slower cuts. The vocals sometimes remind me of an 80's pop band for some reason, and some of the harmonies make me think of monks singing. I have nothing like this in my collection, and am glad to add it... a nice release that'll make you feel more worldly. - BL

Big Sandy & His Fly-Rite Boys

"Rockin' Big Sandy"

Hightone Records, www.hightone.com

Here Big Sandy offers up some of his best jumpin' western swing numbers, featuring his inimitable crooning at the helm. The songs were selected to show Big Sandy "in rockin' mode," so don't expect anything dark, deep, or heavy... just some lively fun. There are ringin' guitars a-twangin' and clangin', steel guitars a-slidin' and glidin', and even the occasional sax a-railin' and wailin' or piano a-tinkin' and clinkin'. But don't get too sucked in by the seeming innocence and bounce of the songs, for the "Red Foxx" version of "Back Door Dan" has some shockingly filthy words crossing though his velvety voice box, sharply contrasting the over-represented lyrical hokey-ness. Overall though, this is a disc of bright, cheery songs that exude enough charm and talent to forgive the one-dimensionality. - BL

The Red Shift

"I Don't Wanna Get Gassed" EP

www.theredshift.us

These Chesterfield, Michigan, miscreants play some catchy Ramones-influenced punk rock with latent rockabilly leanings creeping in at the edges of songs like "Bang & Go." Actually some of it sounds a little like the non-Irish songs of DKM when Mike McColgan sang with them, some have just a hint of early era Clash, & some sound like melodic street punk that doesn't suck. I like it; you should check it out. They say they aren't

commies, but I wouldn't hold that against them. Ha! Maybe their name comes from Einstein's discovery that gravity slows the passage of time & stretches light waves toward the red end of the spectrum (i.e. gravitational redshift). It could then refer, by metaphorical extension, to the gravitational pull of red light districts & certain pleasures of the flesh offered therein. Oh yeah. - BL

PEN15

"Lettuce, Turnip, and Pea"
www.pen15.tinnitmusic.com
Hey, these guys are from Zanesville, Ohio. I went there once to chase down a whore of a girlfriend who ran away with the carnival. Small world. I am actually really digging most of this. It has a definite early 90's garage band sound, kind of like a missing link between "alternative" and punk. Great songs like "Statistic," "Shallow," "Bar Bend Blues," and "G.O.D." come down on you like falling rocks, but songs like "Panacea" and "Lament" are more like kidney stones. Still, there is definitely way more good songs than not-so-good ones... enough to suggest that living in Zanesville might not be that bad. Trim some of the gristle from this, and you'd have a prime cut of Grade A meat. - BL

The Vivisectors

"Case History of John Doe"
www.thevivisectors.narod.ru
Lo-Fi Russian surf never sounded so good, and you get treated to a huge helping with this 26-track disc. A perfect blend of organ and guitar bring the sweet sounds of the Vivisectors. They do a cover of "The House of the Rising Sun" and all the rest are originals. I think I sprained a muscle in my midsection because I was just dancing so damn much! Some are more traditional surf sounding, some are spy-fi, some are hillbilly, some are spaghetti western, and they are all supreme. If you like surf music and do not seek out this disc, you'll regret it. Maybe not now, but soon, and for the rest of your life. -Lisa

The Spits

third S/T CD
Dirtnap Records, www.dirtnaprecs.com
The third full-length from the west coast's beloved idiot savants, the Spits, begins with a long, satanic sound-byte intro that eventually leads into "Witch Hunt," a song exemplifying all that people have come to love about the Spits: catchy, sludgy, sloppy, Ramonesy, fun, eccentric, and simple songs where you'll meet the beat and beat your meat. While not as quite good as

their previous two albums, I still like it a lot. To me they seem more punk rock than 90% of the bands that lay claim to that genre because of their disaffected weirdness and nihilistic grinding party anthem-making. Makes you wanna go get drunk and bloody, but in a happy way. - BL

The Girls

S/T
Dirtnap Records, www.dirtnaprecs.com
This is a great album. The first time I listened to it I liked it enough to put it on again. Then again and again and again, until I realized that I was hooked. I can't get these songs out of my head, and to be fair, I don't really try. I like them there. Imagine if the Cars were more of a snotty punk band, or if the Briefs nurtured their new wave leanings a lot more. My only wish is that they would have included the song lyrics. They have me singing along about strange things: truck-stop cops and monkeys that hate cleanliness, but then maybe those *are* the correct lyrics. With a band of men called the Girls singing a song called "Dope Disguised As Nuns," you never know. - BL

The Smut Peddlers

"Coming Out"
TKO Records, www.tkorecords.com
The Smut Peddlers strip away that cheery West Coast veneer to expose its seedy and desperate underside with a primal style as dirty as the back room of a porn store. The songs on here all firsthand tales about scoring drugs, getting arrested, junkie girls blowing narcs, renegade bikers shot down by the cops, Hepatitis C, and so on. All written with a clever turn of phrase and delivered with the kind of mid-tempo crunch that'll bust your spine. Just when I thought punk rock had become completely suburbanized, the Smut Peddlers injected it with a little inner-city filth. You can almost smell the spiritual pollution. - BL

The Tremors

"The Scourge of the South"
www.tremorsrockabilly.com
First off, what a cool cover on this sucker... it looks like an old comic book cover with mutated band members menacing a teenage couple in a convertible as flying saucers whizz by overhead. There's more to this than just packaging, though. This is lively rockabilly with manic oak barrel guitars janglin' and vocals that give the impression of a demented hillbilly weaned on Sun Records and getting drunk with the Cramps.

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It brings to mind backseat sex at a drive-in movie theater, pig roasts, beer bashes in abandoned houses, passing whiskey bottles around the campfire, and perverted aliens with powerful telescopic lenses aimed at our bedroom windows. Cool stuff. - BL

The Wages of Sin

"Drink and the Devil"

www.thewages.com

Fronted by Jesse of the Spectres, this band combines bluegrass with Irish folk à la the Pogues, and they do it startlingly well. I think I actually like them even better than the Spectres, who are damned fine band in their own right. Acoustic guitars and fiddles keep it rustic and immediate, and they show aptitude at both boisterous barroom rousers as well as darker, more haunting songs filled with mortal trepidation. All that from a 4-song demo. I can't wait to hear more of these guys. - BL

Nekromantix

"Dead Girls Don't Cry"

Hellcat, www.hell-cat.com

I have always been way more of a fan the Nekromantix in a live setting than on CD - for the most part anyway. In concert they have just been friggin' explosive every time I've seen them. That in mind, this CD isn't actually bad. It kicks off with break-neck speed on the opening "Backstage Pass to Hell," a song that hits as hard as anything off of "Curse of the Coffin." It is followed by "Moonchaser," a mid-tempo number with catchy guitars and the distinct vocal melodies that the Nekromantix are known for. Really, most of the songs on here are pretty memorable, even over-the-top silly ones like "Where do Monsters Go." The more I listen to this, the more I like it. Plenty of good tunes here that remain true to what they've always been about. - BL

Jeffie Genetic & His Clones

"Need A Wave"

Dirtnap Records, www.dirtnaprecs.com

The first time I listened to this I didn't get into it at all. It just needs a little more kick to it. Upon further listens, however, I am enjoying it a little more. It is a sort of an early 80's punky pop/new wave deal. They (well, he) kind of remind me of the Flys a bit. The album is fun, bouncy, and catchy, but not in a way that makes you feel cheap afterwards. When you are in the mood, this will get you there. - BL

Stage Bottles

"We Need A New Flag"

Knock Out Records, www.knock-out.de

This adamantly antifascist German Oi! punk band began in 1993, and they write some lyrics I can relate to. For instance, I too feel surrounded by the twisted malignancy of "Millions of Stupid People" who think they know what is good and right for everyone else. "Real Skinhead" is also great: "Oi! you stupid bastards just wake up and think about where your culture comes from... it's not just about having fights, dancing, and drinking, dressing up and owning many records." They also sing about "PC Idiots" that try to suppress different points of view, and they lament the way sports teams have lost any connection to the communities that they

purport to represent. The music is a good solid blue-collar punk rock with saxophone on most songs. It's not super-aggro oi-core, instead opting for more melody without being wimpy. Pretty cool. - BL

Bonecrusher

"Tomorrow Is Too Late"

Knock Out Records, www.knock-out.de

My favorite Bonecrusher release was probably the collection of their early singles, but this new stuff isn't too bad. They have a different singer from those days, but the focus and overall sound of the band remains intact for the most part. It is tough as nails mid-tempo Oi! with positive lyrics. I think there needs to be a little more tempo variation, though, maybe some faster songs and stronger hooks, because this really isn't jumping out at me enough to see it all the way through. Fair and respectable, but when it's out of sight, it's out of mind. - BL

Billy & The Bullets

S/T

www.billyandthebullets.com

This band is a rockabilly spin-off of Cleveland blues group, Blue Taxi. All these tracks were recorded live in the studio and you get a good amount of flashy fretwork from guitarist Billy Capuano. In fact, I think that is the band's strongest asset, as he is really damn good. The vocals aren't bad, but they are pretty laid back. I think the rhythms can be brought out a little more too - let the song carry itself rather than just the frills and fills. Really, this just needs some edge to it. That said, this CD is enjoyable, and as you might guess, pretty country-bluesy. The instrumentals in particular are great fun. - BL

Ben Edwards Trio

S/T EP

ben@benedwardtrio.com

This Philadelphia jazz trio features all-around fantastic musicianship and a cool idea. Of the 5 songs on here, 4 are Misfits, and one is Motorhead's "Ace of Spades," and all are done in a sort of beatnik jazz style. It's like a blending of antitheses: low-brow meets high-brow. The saxophonist in particular is talented, but like I said, the drummer and bassist don't slouch either. My only problem with the disc is that the vocals are too over-the-top cheesy, as if he's trying to sing too low for his voice like drunk Elvis or something. Without that, I'd play this at all my parties. REV. NØRB-STYLE FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Ben Edwards used to play bass in the Lords of the Highway and drums in the Balboas. - BL

"Warped Tour 2004 Compilation"

Various Artists

www.sideonedummy.com

Personally I think this tour has gone horribly wrong over the past 5 years or so. If you like the majority of the bands that are playing this year by all means pick this disc up. If you are like me and you only like a few of the bands, you'd be better off buying the individual bands' music. The few bands I did like are Flogging Molly, Throw Rag, the Casualties, and NOFX also had a pretty good song on there. But mostly this is a 2-disc set of crappy, lame power pop punk like New Found Glory and Good Charlotte. - Lisa

Dulcie Younger & The Silencers

"Kitty, Kitty... GROWL!"

Golly Gee Records, www.gollygeerecords.com

Dulcie Younger may be a new name, but her supporting musicians are not. Deke Dickerson handles the guitars in the manner for which he is widely known and admired, while Zack Shedd is the incredible upright bassist formerly of Satan's Teardrops. The style here is straight rockabilly with more purr than growl in the vocals. It is a nice listen, but I can't help wanting her to come alive a little more. Still, it is enjoyable. It just gets a little stale before you are done. - BL

Fast Mattress

S/T

www.fastmattressucks.com

Any band that has a song called "Daddy has a Mullet" instantly earns points with me. Well, this band earns points with me for other reasons as well, let me list them for you. 1) Cleveland Represent! 2) All 13 original tracks 3) sweet ass garage/keyboard infused/new wavish songs that are funny and performed well. I feel compelled to say there are two beauties in the band on vocals and keyboard. I feel compelled because there aren't enough women in music, and so when I see some girls kicking it I have to acknowledge. Good stuff. -Lisa

"Rockabilly Rumble Deuce"

Various Artists

www.gollygeerecords.com, www.raucousrecords.com

Sometimes I wish I had influence over large numbers of people, like how televangelists do. Those guys get people to give up all their money and do whatever they say...pure evil. If I had that power, however, I would use it for the good of the world. My first order of business would be that everyone in the land would buy all sorts of Golly Gee and Raucous products for themselves, their families, and also for donations to the less fortunate. As for this CD it's jammed packed with 26 songs from amazing artists who you will want to instantly support and maybe even send them money and fruit baskets. Some of my most favorite artists on here are Rockin' Ryan and the Real Goners, 69 Beavershot (fans of Brian Setzer, don't miss this), Pete Hodgson & the Fireballs (think of the Killer!), and Rip Carson. Some other top bands are Ralph Rebel, Honeydippers, Peter & the Wolves, Drugstore Cowboys, Rory Justice and the Blue J's. I command you, brothers and sisters; salvation is only a CD away. How much is your eternal soul worth? -Lisa

Avoid One Thing

"Chopstick Bridge"

www.sideonedummy.com

Fronted by Joe Gittleman, the bassist of the Mighty Mighty Bosstones, and featuring the Amy Griffin of The Raging Teens, this band is a tough one to review. I'd say it is most closely aligned with the pop punk and indie rock genres. It is nothing like what I expected the nimble-fingered guitarist of the Raging Teens to be playing. Being more subdued and emotive than most pop punk, it is also less annoying for the most part. Sometimes Gittleman has a Ness-like raspiness, other times he sings softer, and Amy also lends vocals on a couple tracks. While they do have a few catchy hooks and

some darker lyrics, overall it just comes off too sugar-coated. While I do like melody, I don't really like most of *these* melodies. Layed on way too thick. - BL

"Shite'N'Onions Vol. 1"

Various Artists

www.ShiteNOnions.com, www.Omnium.com

Here we have a compilation disc full of Irish-punk-folk infused rock. You get 22 tracks from all sorts of bands like the Mahones, Neck, the Electrics, Blood or Whiskey, Bates Motel, the Tossers, the Devil's Advocates, the Spunk Lads, Steam Pig and Croppies. While some tracks are clearly more punk influenced (Nogoodnix, Big Black Cadillac), there are plenty of old timey tunes more reminiscent of the Pogues (the Skels, Greenland Whalefishers). Not every tune on here make me want to hop up and do a jig, but there are far more that do, and that makes this comp more than okay by me. -Lisa

The Astroglides

"Channel Surfing with..."

Fast Music, www.fastmusic.co.il

Here you get very surf-influenced instrumental music by a band from Tel Aviv (Israel) who have managed to carve out a niche for themselves in a genre that is prone to redundancy. While you can find flute, xylophone, theremin, bongos and brass on here, don't go thinking they don't know how to bring it hard and heavy when needed, throwing a good deal of metal into the bargain. This 19-song disc evokes a wide array of moods and imagery while delivering unique and exciting soundscapes that run the gambit from spy- to sci-fi, nautica to

exotica. Thumbs up & a Fonzie-like "Ayyyyy". - BL

The Hawaiian Astro Boys

S/T CD

Lappersfort 12, 9060 Zelzate, Belgium,

hawaboys@hotmail.com

And I thought Belgium had good chocolate! They also have this kick-ass surf band. You get 6 original tunes and 4 covers on this disc totaling to a sum of 10, yes 10 great songs! Man, isn't surf great? You just put it on and fade away into an oblivion of water, waves, bikinis, sand, surf, sex, hotdogs, flip-flops, perversity and mayhem. This album is the culmination of all those ingredients plus reverb soaked guitar. If you are a fan of traditional surf you will love this disc as I do. Especially "Robotica" even though I can't really do the robot to it (my most favorite dance move ever), I can still twist my ass off to it, and the rest of the disc as well. Hooray! - Lisa

Famous Tea

Self-titled CD-R

www.famoustea.net

Having been out of commission for a decade, Famous Tea bring a different sound to the O.C. scene... more of sleazy drunk punk. Rocks pretty good in parts, but not making me all that excited. If it were a girl, I'd double bag it, top and bottom. -BL

"Truckin' In the Free World"

Various Artists

www.spinefarm.net/ranch

This comp is weird...it's like all cock rock with the exception of the Mutants who are an instrumental band (surf, funk, spy) from Finland that is great.

You get 3 songs from them, although I think they are all previously released. There is also an all-girl band called Thee Ultra Bimboos cover Twisted Sister and do a really good job at it (2 songs from them). These ladies aren't really doing a cock rock thing either, more of just good old rock'n'roll. There is this other band called Lemonator who are like college-coffeehaus-emotional-shit. And you know, if I heard some awesome guitar shredding like the old school cock rockers (I'm a secret fan of bad 80's metal, shhh) it might make it worthwhile... but I'm not hearing it. -Lisa

Rotten Apples

"Real-Tuff (Durable Plastic)"

Trash2001 Records, www.trash2001.de

Noted philosopher Lux Interior once proclaimed that life is short & filled with stuff. Well, you may not think that you want to fill it with rotten apples, but this band may change your mind with their Seattle brand of punk rock. These gals serve it up with a new wave-ish edge that is fierce but not enough to scare you away. They cover Tears For Fears too, & that is cool in my book. Give it a listen & you too might find these Rotten Apples to be Red Delicious. -Lisa

Youngang

"Canzoni Ribelli"

youngang@virgilio.it

Youngang is an Italian street punk band who put out this disc as a benefit for Anarchist Black Cross. It contains 6 solid covers they do of classic working-class Italian songs, followed by the same songs in their original form. While I really like this

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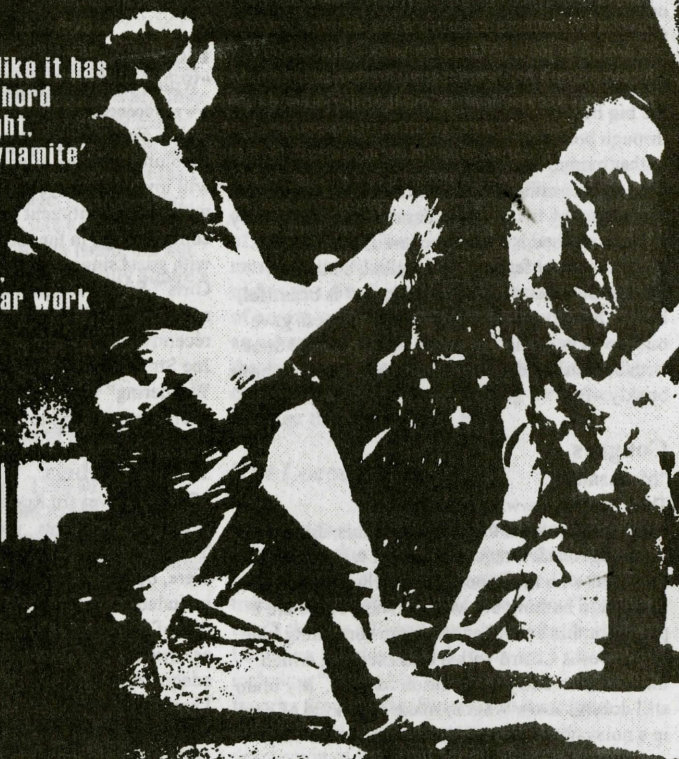
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band, I almost think some of the original versions are better. The songs are definitely lifted from scratchy old Italian folk records & are sung with gut-wrenching vocals, making them really stand out as something cool that doesn't usually land in my review pile. All versions are sung in Italian, but there is a CD-ROM track with lyrics in French & English as well. Very cool release. - BL

Ronnie Hayward

"The Lonely One In Town"

GrindTone Records, www.grindstonemagazine.com
All 17 tracks are originals, how often does that happen? Country-blues stripped down to its bare elements with just a dash of rockabilly thrown into the mix makes up this here disc. I read in the liner notes that Ronnie was always someone's bass player, but now he is singing and fronting his own band, which this disc is the fruit of said labor. It also says that Ronnie is working on his vocals, and to be honest they kind of do need some work. But he's not claiming to be the best crooner, he's just giving it an honest try and that is respectable. This is a real laid back album, simple with basic elements of good music. -Lisa

Grave Danger

"Death City"

www.satanrules.com

Sometimes something is just so damned wrong that you either get your panties in a twist, or you laugh your ass off. Such is the case with track #10 entitled "Bangin' A Mongoloid" about a high school janitor seduced by a retarded girl. That's just one of the twisted tales on Death City. Grave Danger come from Phoenix and play an edgy sort of surf rock to make the devil proud. Nimble fingers and some subtle rockabilly undertones make this band one to acquaint yourself with. - BL

Uncle Scratch's Gospel Revival

"Kickin' the Devil in the Balls"

unclescratch@hotmail.com

Cleveland's own born again bastards blurt out the brimstone blues and banter better than Buchanan brandishing a beer bong and a bible. They bring the big beat down like bricks on a baby, and blow through boredom like bullets bursting from a higher being. The band bangs through lo-fi hymns bent on becoming blessed bottle-throwing anthems bashed out by two men brilliant in their buffoonery. A brain washed is a brain bettered; blemished blood bleeds unfettered. Beezelbub's bliss is boiling Baptists. "I Banged a Sinner" is beautiful, but the blasphemy that blots out brightness gave birth to "The Ballad of Adam and Eve." Be done with baneful balderdash and dash back to the bible briskly. -BL

Cougars

"Manhandler"

Thick Records, www.thickrecords.com

I didn't know what to expect from this; apparently the Dungeons & Dragons cover art was inspired by their tour with the Supersuckers where they listened to nothing but Man-O-War. There are 8 people in this band that serves up something kind of like Jesus Lizard with a brass section, which makes for an odd juxtaposition for sure. My brain still doesn't know what to make of it: kind of cool in a noisy, grating way. Interesting at the very least. - BL

Cooterfinger

"Smells Like Rock 'N' Roll" EP & the

"Three Chords and a... Grudge!" EP

Illbilly, www.geocities.com/illbillyrocks

This is exactly what I wanted a garage band from Georgia to sound like: over-driven, lo-fi, countrified trash featuring the holy trinity of beat, riff, and attitude. If I found this digging through stacks of music at a record store I'd be boasting about my nose for quality, but since it was mailed to my doorstep I can't claim a rockhound pedigree. Nevertheless, Cooterfinger deserves to penetrate that warm crevice that is your CD player & knuckle around in there. - BL

Country Club & The Porn Horns

"The Stationwagon Revolution"

www.ccpband.com

You gotta like a band that proclaims themselves to be "station wagon enthusiasts." Wagons are so much cooler than those shitty SUVs. That said, this Brooklyn band has a real eclectic range of influences ranging from a cover of Fear, to swanky jazz, to 60's pop, and it's mish-mashed together pretty well, keeping the proceedings interesting. Bands with horn sections can get pretty dicey for me, but this comes together nicely on most songs. - BL

My New Life

"A Sad State of Affairs"

Tomato Head, PO Box 61298 Sunnyvale, CA 94088

It seems that Green Day have changed their name. I'd rather eat hair out of a bathtub drain. - BL

The Compulsions

"21 Powers Street" EP

www.thecompulsionsnyc.com

The first of four songs by this NYC rock band stops just short of 5 minutes with its space-out guitar solo. On later songs they kind of remind me of the Black Crowes, albeit better than them. Good enough stuff, but despite my being almost 30, I am still not old enough for this. - BL

Flogging Molly

"Within a Mile of Home"

www.sideonedummy.com

This 7 piece Irish/folk/punk band is one of my absolute favorites. If you are a fan of the Pogues you will love these guys as I do. All the songs are written with strong sentiment behind them and the feelings come through in the music 100%. There is a track with guest singer Lucinda Williams called "Factory Girls". Singer/songwriter Dave King also wrote two songs that each honor an idol of his whom has recently passed: "The Seven Deadly Sins" goes out to Joe Strummer and "Don't Let Me Die Still Wondering" was written about Johnny Cash. I guarantee you will love each song on here. -Lisa

12 Step Rebels

"Go Go Graveyard Rockin'"

Dead Body Wreckards, www.12steprebels.com

You know I am all about supporting the Psychos out there, but sometimes I just can't do it. The press sheet included a blurb that says "their style is very similar to that of Demented Are Go" which is a ridiculous assertion. Not even close. Musically, they are adequate, nothing special though. As for the vocals, I am actually embarrassed for the guy. Talk about whiny, near-emo vocals with out any power. Sorry guys. -Lisa

Shark Soup

S/T

www.shark-soup.com

Hey, these guys are pretty good! The press sheet says they are a mix of the Living End, Mad Sin, the Misfits and Brian Setzer. That's a pretty good description. Shark Soup sounds like punkabilly to me with their wicked bass player and raunchy guitar, and the vocals are pretty clean sounding. Overall, an enjoyable disc from a band I hope to hear more from in the future. -Lisa

Electric Frankenstein

"We Will Bury You!"

TKO Records, www.tkorecords.com

Electric Frankenstein have always been hit and miss with me, and this double CD of all covers does both simultaneously. You get a wide variety of source material: Circle Jerks, AC/DC, Supersuckers, DRI, Dead Kennedys, X, Dictators, Aerosmith, Naked Raygun, Fleetwood Mac, Dead Boys, Blue Oyster Cult, Joan Jett, etc. Their treatment of Iron Maiden is well-done, but they couldn't save Pink Floyd's "Wish You Were Here." It might actually be worse. All in all, though, a fair release. - BL

Pollo Del Mar

"The Golden State"

MuSick Recordings, www.musicrecordings.com

This is a surf album with a new-age feel, having almost a spiritual quality, like a transcendent exploration of the abyss. Beautifully captured fluidity, a swirling serenity, it's like floating in a smooth vortex of ultra-clear tones and bubbling waters. "Mare Amniotica" explores the seascape of the womb, then a version of "Hall of the Mountain King" seems to slowly rise from the depths and build towards its proper elevation. "Magyara" is their take on gypsy music played in the Hungarian minor scale, and it ends with reverby memorial to Joe Strummer on "Charlie Don't Surf." This is one to put on, kick back, and relax in tranquility. - BL

Darlington

"Euthanize Me"

www.disasterrecords.com

Coming from Dallas, Texas, I didn't expect their first song to be a huge fuck off to the Nü Republicans. They warn about getting "your pro-life gay-bashing shit out of my face," and elsewhere sing about destroying rich people's homes and burning churches. Nice! The style is a skateboarding pop-punk, which too often gets all bubblegum and wussy for my tastes. While not every song is not a gem by a longshot, I do like the angry ones quite a bit. - BL

"Grand Arena Rock 'N' Roll Party"

Various Artists

Rumble Bros. Vuohiankatu 45, 15800 Lahti, Finland
Boy, do they know how to have a good time in Finland or what? This CD is a compilation of a fest held this year with 5 bands donating 4 live tracks from their performance. According to the liner notes nearly 1000 rockers showed up to see Restless, Long Tall Texans, Francine, Whistle Bait and Flat Broke Trio. The live recordings turned out great and it sounds like this would have been an awesome show to witness. Fortunately for those of us who were absent we

can get our hands on this disc, close our eyes, and pretend we were there. -Lisa

The Deep Eynde

"Shadowland"

www.dead-beat-records.com

I know it's lame, but I wanted to like this band simply because it has an ex-member of Calavera. Unfortunately, I am just not feeling it. It comes off as Bad Religion gone Goth. Oh well. - BL

Gasoline Fight

"Useless Piece of Weaponry"

www.thickrecords.com

Five songs here of what I'd describe as heavy, noisy, progressive hardcore that, while I might not listen to it much myself, I can respect it. The grinding discomfort is visceral and at times hard to get through, but they do give you enough of a song to stay interested. Not bad. - BL

The Slatz

"Pick It Up"

Latest Flame, www.latestflame.com

Prosecution: The defense will try and convince you that their "art-punk" has appeal beyond its "quirky" wordplay and indie-rock hooks. It works for Guided By Voices and Enon, doesn't it? Perhaps, but The Slatz pang of pretentious boredom, and the assertion that they move from The Beatles to Black Flag is ludicrous at best. Defense: What's wrong with trying to write lyrics that avoid tired cliches, and trying to be creative with the delivery of songs? After all, it's not a crime to be artsy. What? You only like rockabilly and silly punk rock? You know you liked their song about the Pancreas! I saw you bobbing along to track #9! The Jury: We find The Slatz to be guilty of mediocre entertainment. Judge: The defendants are hereby sentenced to hang out in biker bars instead of coffee houses. - BL

Nine Lives

"Rocket"

www.junglerecords.fi

This is a damn fine record. I'd say they are a lush neo-rockabilly that has country leanings and that intangibly European feel. The singer has a nice voice, the guitars sound great, and the songs and melodies are put together so well they become hard not to like. This Finnish band can rock, but more often the songs are laid back with a refined elegance, which has to be done exceptionally well for me to like. Fortunately, it is. Recommended. - BL

"Dropped on the Head Vol. I & II"

Various Artists

Illbilly Records, illbilly@ellijay.com

This is a strange and bizarre mix of songs all for you and your enjoyment. Most stuff sounds garage-ish to me with some real oddball tunes thrown in like "Minimalist" by Milo, "The Girl who had no Brain" by Jonee Earthquake Band and the weirdest of all "Mesmerizing Donut Glaze" by the Screamin' Mee Mee's. This is pretty damn enjoyable. I like bands who can have fun and aren't all serious, but can still rock out. -Lisa

Greenhaven

2-song sampler

www.nomoregreen.com

Modern metal as unpleasant as pubes on soap. - BL

"Knock-Out in the 7th Round"

Various Artists

Knock-out Records, www.knock-out.de

I'm pretty sure I have each individual bands albums that are featured here on this compilation and so you know I am going to like it. There are 22 tracks including bands like the Hudson Falcons, Cock Sparrer, Oxymoron, the Vanilla Muffins and the Addicts. Fans of Oi and punk should pick this up to play at parties. -Lisa

"Sonic Warfare 1"

Various Artists

www.peaceordierecords.com

This is an unusual comp to land in my review pile. Most of it seems to be related to the metal genre, whether fast grindcore, atmospheric, thrash, or whatever. You get Blood Drive, Soul Casket, Croatan, etc. The Hypochondriacs with their punk'n'roll style would be my favorite if the vocals were a lot better. Truth be told, I really didn't like any of these bands much at all. A few of them had female singers, for what that's worth. I wish I could say something good and not be lying. - BL

"Tales from the Streets"

Various Artists

Knock-Out Records, www.knock-out.de

Starts off with a strong track by Discipline followed by Vanilla Muffins, Argy Bargy, Broilers, Emscherkurve 77, Junkhead, Attila the Stockbroker's Barnstormer, Retaliate, V8 Wankers, Lokalmatadore, and frigg'in' Tankard! Some good stuff here, but not too exciting. - BL

Concubine Forming

"The Guilt Will Kill"

Big Neck Records, www.bigneckrecords.com

This here is some pretty harsh Industrial music that hammers at you like an abusive spouse. While they use a drum machine, this ain't techno party music masquerading as Industrial. The fact that they create the bulk of their noise with instruments rather than a computer really adds to the savagery. There is an organic feel to its stilted pulse, like a punk band caught in a machine press. A tough listen, but not totally without merit. They also cover Billy Squire's "Stroke Me" song. Ha! - BL

Sledgeback

"A Scavenger For Life"

www.sledgeback.com

Sledgeback claims to be influenced by Social Distortion, Pennywise, and Therapy?. That sums them up pretty good, I reckon. They still sound pretty generic. The vocalist tries to add a bit of gravel in the pop-punk style music, but has an annoying filter on his voice that just makes it sound inappropriate. Mediocre fare at best. - BL

The Briggs

"Leaving the Ways"

www.sideonedummy.com

These guys sound like decent street punk/oi. I think the people that write these press sheets should be fired because they totally misrepresent the band.

The press kit said they sound like the Clash and Rancid and have "revved up rockabilly" on some songs. That is a total mistruth to me. The kit DID mention '70's oi and punk bands influence them. Even though the press kit sucked, the band did not. -Lisa

Go Betty Go

"Worst Enemy"

Side One Dummy, www.sideonedummy.com

Female fronted punk rock band with a pop sensibility, but still a bit of edge on some songs. Probably a bit over-produced for this kind of music. I could see it being pretty decent if you stripped off some of the polish. If it were porridge, it would be the right temperature but taste rather bland. - BL

"Welcome to Circus Punkabilly"

Various Artists

www.wolverine-records.de

Woah! A 30-track disc of bands that span the globe spreading punkabilly (and psycho) madness like Heidi Fleiss spreads syphilis. This starts off with a track by the Nekromantix and is followed by bands such as the Klingonz, Mad Sin, Cenobites, Godless Wicked Creeps, Astro Zombies, Os Catalepticos, Phantom Rockers, Koffin Kats, Hyperjax, the Wrecking Dead, Kings of Nuthin', the Hangmen and many more. A great addition to anyone's collection. -Lisa

"Streetpunk Worldwide"

Various Artists

www.rebellionrecords.nl, www.oi-punk.de,

www.streetanthemrecords.com

Features Dirty Water, Weekend Warriors, Badlands, Vogelfrei, Sperrzone, Main Street Saints, Hardsell, Joe Coffee, Gundog, Vigilantes, and more. Best tracks by: Maddog Surrender, Antagonizers, Southern Way, Squalor, and Riot Squad (now Sweet Poison). Overall, just OK. -BL

Black Lips!

"We Did Not Know the Forest Spirit Made the Flowers Grow"

Bomp! Records, www.bomp.com

Sprouting from Atlanta like noxious fungi, the Black Lips sound like the Rolling Stones being devoured by a flesh-eating bacteria. A trainwreck of screaming feedback induced by psychedelic mushrooms yeilding a lo-fi garage dementia, makes this disc fume like the syrupy lure drippings of a worn-out wood nymph with gonorrhea. Quite an unsettling ruckus to go with the carnal angst of the cerebrally damaged banging their bad thoughts onto rusty guitar strings, knowing the penis mightier than the sword. - BL

The Locomotions

S/T

Dead Beat Recs, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078
I really like this band! Raw, unpolished, unapologetic rock that's kicking my ass here. Thirteen tracks plus a hidden track (Little Eva's "Locomotion") that are all good from beginning to end. Including the hidden track, there are 5 covers including "Under My Thumb" which is my favorite Stones song. But who do these guys remind me of, so you can get an accurate description of their sound? Curses! This is the

worst part of writing a review, I can't think of who they remind me of. Okay, they sound like maybe the Stooges; you know that balls-out sound? Sorta garage, sorta punk. Just get it, you will like it. - Lisa

The Ultra 5

"Denizens of Dementia"

Green Cookie Recs., www.colorcookies.moonfruit.com
Formed in 1986 in New York, The Ultra 5 play a psychedelic garage rock that reminds me of the Velvet Underground and Iron Butterfly, but with the cultured perversion of The Cramps. Fuzzed guitars and organs used the *right* way make this band's primitive delivery sheer auditory pleasure. Sexy, creepy, & fun, these 24 tracks are a must-have. - BL

The Surfacers

Self-titled

Green Cookie Recs., www.colorcookies.moonfruit.com
Damn! This is an amazing disc of instrumental surf from Argentina. I feel like I've given too many glowing reviews to surf bands lately, but this is truly exemplary work. Something about it just sounds fresh and inspired, even though they aren't radically altering genre boundaries. The playing and production just hits me in all the right places. Don't judge this disc by its cheesy cover; this is top shelf goods. Go get yourself some. - BL

Neck

"Here's Mud In Yer Eye!"

www.ShiteNOions.com
Singer and guitarist Leeson O'Keefe's stint as a member of Shane MacGowan's Popes gives you an idea where this North London Irish band is coming from. For my money, this 6-piece ensemble is better than The Popes, with some great traditional instrumentation & arrangements resuscitating the genre with a strong breath of fervor & soul. It may be hard for jaded scenesters to accept another Irish rock band into the fold, but anyone not fully desensitized by now will readily throw their arms around Neck. The CD comes with the lyrics in the booklet & a glossary so you can reference the cultural lingo & history. High marks. - BL

Barstool Hooligans

"Cheap Shots"

www.barstoolhooligans.com
There may be a point where listening to rowdy drinking songs that mix punk, straight rock'n'roll, and traditional Irish music starts to get stale, but judging from this release, that point is so far beyond the horizon that by the time it rises into view, I'll be snoring drunk in my urine-stained underpants. This band from Erie, PA manages to roll out that familiar combination with an approach that won't give you a hangover. I'm not saying they've reinvented beer, I'm just saying that it has its own identity, and like a frothy Guinness, you'll want more than just a small taste. - BL

The Sunday Drunks

"On The Prowl"

Dead Beat, www.dead-beat-records.com
This sounds like early punk rock (lots of Stooges) mixed with a just a dash of Southern flavor (CCR), and it really works. Formed originally as a side project of members of the Mullens, thankfully the Sunday Drunks are taking the driver's seat. Damn

good rock'n'roll for porch drinkin' in clothes stained with barbecue sauce. - BL

The Stivs

"The Beat Is Loose"

www.clumsyrecords.com, www.radioeatradio.com
A band that takes its moniker from Stiv Bators can't be all bad. In fact, to these ears this comes off as pure rock'n'roll savagery: it's Dead Boys rubbed across sandpaper with some AC/DC and Motorhead sprinkled into the wound. More intense than a spastic colon and twice as dirty. I'd listen to this while jerking off into your father's morning coffee. Oh yeah, it makes you wanna do fucked up things. You'll need to shower afterwards, but then you'll be ready for another round. - BL

Piebald

"All Ears, All Eyes, All The Time"

www.sideonedummy.com
This is power-pop/indie rock that has the feel of Weezer mixed with Queen. The vocals are a hard sell, although the music arrangements are pretty neat. Actually, this band reminds me of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* for some reason. This is what crew people working in community theatres or English majors with funny haircuts might really dig. Weird & well-done, but it fails to touch my inner core and define me as a person. - BL

This Great Decay

5-song DIY EP

racecarbkws@yahoo.com
Sounds like college punk. Vocals need work. They are from Johnstown, PA. Nothing else to say. - BL

The Regulars

"Vegas"

www.rebellionrecords.nl
Here we have a rockabilly group from Holland who pay homage to great artists like Johnny Cash & the Paladins. On this disc you get 11 tracks with 5 of them being covers. They are pretty rocking & are sure to get you dancing. The vocals reminded me a lot of the Belmont Playboys. Solid stuff. -Lisa

"Dear Johnny"

Various Artists

www.hairball8.com
Here we have a 19 track disc of nothing but Cash covers in tribute to the man in black. All sorts of bands and performers came together to make this disc and a portion of the proceeds benefit Cash's favorite charity, the SOS Children's Villages. Many great artists are on here like Dale Watson, the Supersuckers, Kings of Nuthin', Flametruck Subs, The Scotchgreens, and Satan's Teardrops. A good CD with a great cause. -Lisa

Phantom 409

"King of the Gutter"

Jungle Records, www.junglerecords.fi
The first song on this amazing - a dark, echoey open road tune with seasoned but smooth vocals. The following songs are lighter in mood, still featuring strong vocals coupled with great guitar tones and knowledgeable fretwork. The song-writing doesn't lean too heavy on Rockabilly cliches, often having hints of lounge and swing, ultimately carving out their own distinct style. The band is from Finland,

which judging by the amount of music we get from there, must be one helluva rockin' place. - BL

The Marked Men

"On the Outside"

Dirtnap Records, www.dirtnaprecs.com
Featuring mostly members of the Reds, the Marked Men still keep a level of rawness in their delivery. However, they also riddle their punk rock with a good amount of oddball pop/emo hooks that can take a little getting used to. I wish more songs sounded like "Set You Right" than "Right Here With You." Mostly, though, this is a decent disc. It just takes a few listens before it attaches itself to your brain. - BL

Razorblade

"Spreading Fear"

Rebellion Records, www.rebellionrecords.nl
Oi! music ought to be basic, upbeat, and serve up a steel-toed kick to the groin. Razorblade from Holland adhere to that mantra. Bar-fighting music with deep, guttural vocals. Pretty standard fare lyrically, but at least there is a flare of antisocial anger to keep it lively. - BL

Honkeytonk Damnation

"14 Minutes of Pleasure, A Lifetime of Regret"

<http://myraex.com/~cling/honkeytonk>
When country is done right, as it rarely is these days, there's not much else that can match its universal appeal. Punks, rockabillys, rednecks and rockers all respect it implicitly. It brings to mind the American dream, as well as the walled-in prisons that it leads us to build for ourselves. Country is all about reveling in your own damnation. This 5-song homemade demo shows this Akron, Ohio, band doing just that, with topics ranging from heartache and infidelity to murder and remorse. Then it all ends with "My Big Fat Baby," which goes to show that the lyrics don't have to be heavy if your girlfriend is. - BL

The Hillbilly Moon Explosion

"Bourgeois Baby"

www.crazyloverrecords.de
I don't think words can express my perverse love for this band. They are one of my top favorites, playing a mix of swamp boogie, hillbilly country, 50's rock, & even throwing in some exotic/ethnic fretwork to seal the deal. Dual vocals shared between upright bassist Oliver & rhythm guitarist Emanuela bring the music a dirty eloquence whose dichotomy gives me a tingle in my shorts. In all honesty, I think I might just *kill* you if you told me you didn't like this group...you have been warned. If you buy one CD this winter, buy this 14-track gem. Lisa + Hillbilly Moon Explosion 4-Ever!

The Pagan Dead

"Mors Ianva Vitae Vita Ianva Mortis"

Hairball 8 Records, www.hairball8.com
Salt Lake City may well be the last place you expect to find a Death Metal influenced Psychobilly band, but then comes the Pagan Dead. You get songs about burning Christians, killing cops and "Latent Sanguinary Dementia" to accompany your passage into the fiery depths of hell. While slower than Os Catalepticos, fans of Asmodeus and similar bands will not be disappointed by this blood-curdling debut. - BL

The Southern Way

self-titled

Rebellion Records, www.rebellionrecord.nl

Hell yes! This is atom-splitting Dutch rock'n'roll that draws on influences from Oi, Speed Rock and even Rockabilly. Expert musicianship is paired with songs that positively gush with the frantic intensity of a football riot. Not a dull moment on the disc. If you don't get a jolt of energy from this furious onslaught, it's time to get the defibrulators. Clear! - BL

Bloodshot Bill

"Rockabilly Trash"

www.bloodshotbill.com

Bloodshot Bill's aptly titled CD makes this one-man band from Canada essential listening. His incredible vocals bring to mind a wild-eyed Roger Miller juiced up on moonshine, accented with Demented Are Go creepiness. The music exudes a lo-fi hillbilly vibe with a spooky backwoods element that comes off at once brooding and danceable. If you stripped the fat off most Rockabilly and left it bare-boned, unruly, and shivering, you'd get something like this. I fucking love it - highly recommended. - BL

Coffin Bangers

"Things that Go Bump in the Nightie"

www.eerierecords.com

Track listing? We don't need to stinkin' track listing! All you need to know is that this CD veiled in mystery has 11 tracks of horrorbilly mayhem that isn't stale or way overdone like so many other bands in this genre. The Coffin Bangers have a fresh, sincere and gory feel that puts them heads above the rest. I would volunteer my brains any day as a feast for these guys and you will too when you hear this album. You need this devilish disc in your possession. Possess or be possessed! And it won't be the good kind of possession when you can live in excess, screw many people, and eat pizza every day. It will be the kind of possession that causes you to get unholy diarrhea, pin worms and chronic bad breath. Save yourself! Get this CD or suffer a fate worse than death! -Lisa

Buck Jones

"Texas Rooster"

www.hogfarm.fi

Don't be fooled by the album title...these guys are not from Texas, they are from Finland. But they sure have a strong grip on Americana rock and they ain't letting go. There are 15 cuts on this disc and I must say I enjoy each one. There are a few covers like "Rockabilly Boogie" and "Long White Cadillac", but there are a shit ton of rocking originals like "Chicka-Boo Stomp" and "Let's Get Drunk Tonight". Their sound is kinda like a mix of the Cowslingers and the Blasters. Not really rockabilly, but more so a good country rock with an old school feel. -Lisa

Mannhai

"The Exploder"

www.spinefarm.fi

This Finnish band has departed a bit from their past releases, from what I've read anyway, branching away from the stoner metal into a more 80's heavy metal. Nothing as cheesy as the real bad hair bands of that era, and they do retain some

cool riffs throughout a musically accomplished album, but the vocals are miles away from my comfort zone. Decent for what it is, but it isn't beckoning me any closer. - BL

Circus Knucklebone

6-song Demo

www.circusknucklebone.com

Some peculiar music seems to emanate from Finland, but at the very least it is interesting. This stuff has a 70's kitsch feel to it, and features Stringbeans guitarist: Sam Råime. "King Kong" brings on the disco, while "Bad Super Cosmic" has a hard blues beat. "Bantam Flight" is a rocker mixed with sideshow funkiness, and even has a Spanish guitar interlude. Strange stuff that hits and misses, but I'll be waiting to hear more. - BL

Rory Justice

"The Rockabilly Kid"

Golly Gee Records, www.gollygeerecords.com

This entire CD was recorded live, and has a great vintage jukebox charm as they roll out the reverby twang with absolute conviction. Rory's vocals carry a youthful punch unmatched since Ronnie Dawson's early days. I know some reviewers get a chip on their shoulder about traditional stuff with their "nothing I haven't heard before" ivory tower attitudes, but piss on my pillow if this ain't executed perfectly. Fifteen songs here, mostly well-chosen covers and a few notable originals, all done with the kind of rustic production and blister-fingered guitar goodness that I love. If this doesn't put a fire under your feet and a smile on your face, you probably have deeper issues than any CD can resolve. I can't wait to see what comes next. - BL

Fifty Foot Combo

"The Monstrophonic Sound Live at Ernesto's" & "Ghent-BXL"

Drunkabilly, www.drunkabilly.com

Every release by Belgium's Fifty Foot Combo gets better and better, and it's not like they started off shabby either. It's just that the sound gets tighter, more refined but also more adventurous. They don't just make the standard surf album, but rather surf becomes just one aspect of a broader amalgamation of influences. Some tracks have exotic or funky beats, some are more like awesome psychedelic soundtrack pieces, and some are lounging soul-surf numbers that nestle nicely between the wilder cuts of wah-wah fuzz guitars on a manic rampage. All maintain a sort 60's/70's swanky garage vibe with organs, bongos and a buttload of class. - BL

The Horrorshow Malchicks

"We Stand For Jerks" Demo

mohicanpunch@hotmail.com

Six songs here from an up-and-coming St. Louis punk band. Fast, angry, and successfully getting the adrenal gland to spit forth its energizing goo. Some of the songs sound like they are political. Might simply be called hardcore if it came out 20 years ago. Good stuff. - BL

Broken Bottles

"Drinking In The Rain" CD single

TKO Records, www.tkorecords.com

The two songs here are both slow, kind of Social D-ish, and the vocals are terrible in a way that I can't decide if they might be so bad that they are actually cool. I've listened a few times, and I'm not able to

reach a conclusion either way. While there is something about this that I like, it is also kind of annoying. There is a video included, but it's not too exciting. - BL

RF7

"Addictions & Heartache"

Puke N Vomit Recs, PO Box 3435 Fullerton, CA 92834

God it's nice to hear somebody playing hardcore properly: with aggression, passion, balls, and brilliance. The songs here capture an urgency without lacking resorting to tuneless screaming. The vocals come from the gut, the lyrics are far from the usual generic junk, and the pace is fast despite these So Cal punks apparently going at it since 1979. If you want hardcore with staying power, get this. I only wish I'd heard of them earlier. - BL

Declaration of War

4-song live CD-R

PO Box 57314 Atlanta, GA 30343

Screaming fast political hardcore thrash punk from Atlanta. Not a great recording, & some of the in-between song chatter should've been cut out, but there is some energy here. More for flailing about than sitting & listening to. Not too good, though. - BL

The Trisonics

"All I Ever Wanna Do" EP

info@trisonics.de

This is 50's rock'n'roll and rockabilly from Hallbergmoos (wherever that is). They are competent and catchy, but in need of a spark of something to set them apart. While the singer isn't technically bad, I don't really care for his voice much. There is a 50's ballad on here too, which is okay if you like 50's ballads, I guess. There is a note on the back of the CD that says "the lyrics of song 2 are in no way meant to depict Derek's wife." That's funny. - BL

Wakin Dead

18-song Demo

wakindead@hotmail.com

This is punk rock, often savagely fast with a bit of Oi! in the vox, and featuring Eric Eulberg from Last Call Brawlers on upright bass. Unfortunately he is pretty low in the mix, but that doesn't totally spoil the recording, which explodes with urgency. The guitars have a lot of old metal influence, reminding me of the stuff I listened to growing up (Deathrow?). My only criticism is the bass needs to come up to fill out the sound, and the vocals need a bit of variation. Other than that, this is teaming with potential. - BL

Brassknuckle Boys "American Bastard" LP & Brassknuckle Boys/Deadline "Can't Be Beaten" LP

www.hauntedtownrecords.com

These re-issues on vinyl may not be more practical than the CD format, but there's no denying the superior sound. If you're like me, often you really like a band on their 7's, but when the CD comes out, it just lacks something. Well, it works the other way too. I really dug the "American Bastard" disc when it came out on CD a couple years back, so it stands to reason that it's even better now. Seasoned Midwest street punk that has a little

country in its blood. No dumbshit lyrics about owning the streets or their super-special glory boots either. This is the goods. The split with Deadline is decent too, but not nearly as crucial listening. - BL

Hateful

"Reasons to Be Hateful"

Rebellion Records, www.rebellionrecords.nl

This is Scottish Street Punk with some Ska creeping in at the edges. Throaty vocals and mid-tempo music. They aren't terrible, but they don't really stand out either. Kind of boring... choruses can drag on too long. - BL

The Weaklings

"Rock'n'Roll Owes Me"

Dead Beat, www.dead-beat-records.com

The Weaklings have such a classic rock'n'roll sound that no further genre qualification is needed. It's got the big guitars & the plodding 4/4 beat that drags you into its swirling vortex of smarm & charm. Pretty cool stuff that's hard not to like. - BL

Communist Pussies

S/T Cassette

Mondo Mutato Records, www.alphamonic.it

I am not sure what to make of this. Some live and boom-box-sounding recordings as they play trashy, sometimes Cramps-ish punk rock that at times reminds me of a lesser Hillbilly Werewolf. While there is barely competent musicianship and bad singing, they do get it done in a way that has appeal. Song titles raise a few eyebrows with a fixation on the Third Reich that almost *has* to be a joke, but then again, I regard any band who sings about that shit as a joke. - BL

Knockdown

"The Game Is Ours"

Rebellion Records, www.rebellionrecords.nl

If you liked the rock'n'roll/Oi! style of the Bruisers, you are gonna love Holland's Knockdown, who also feature the ex-guitarist from Discipline. Neils has that razor-throated growl and fast turn of phrase that Al Barr had before DKM, and the music on the whole has that same blue-collar punch. They also do a great cover of "Blitzkrieg Bop." Uncanny how much like the Bruisers they sound. I dig it. - BL

Devices In Shift

3-song sampler

www.devicesinshift.com

Based in El Paso, Texas, D.I.S. provide three songs on here that have disagreeable vocals over top artsy music. I expect someone touring the Andy Warhol museum for the 20th time might have something like this playing in their headphones. More aggressive than a lot of others in this same genre, but it leaves me cold. - BL

The Dicemen

"Boogieman"

www.dicemen.net

This second EP by the Dicemen actually comes off more Southern Rock than Psychobilly. More melodic vocals, more guitar solos, yet still a bit of harder edge at times. Doesn't knock my socks off, but it is decent. - BL

The Chicklettes

14-song Demo

www.angelfire.com/punk4/thechicklettes

Low-fi, garage/gutter punk with a dash of 50's girl group influence describes the sound of this 4-piece from Little Rock, Arkansas. This is their demo disc, which is made up of whopping 14 tracks and you also get a nifty songbook included. Songs 11, 12 and 13 are acoustic tunes while the last track is a nifty instrumental called "Casio Let Go" which I figure refers to the Casio keyboard sound it has, but isn't cheesy; it's actually well done. The whole demo is pretty good, although the sound is a bit muffled. The graphic lyrics on "Shoni's a Dyke" made me laugh. - Lisa

Sweet Poison

"Yesterday's Sweethearts"

www.streetanthemrecords.com

This band formerly known as Riot Squad, may still not be good at choosing band names, but they surely have improved musically since their debut. They kind of have a more melodic Bruisers/Social D. style with female back-up vocals. They move from dark and personal to drunk and boisterous without disrupting the thread binds the album together. With numerous good hooks that stick in my head, I'm saying it's worth looking into. - BL

The Death Riders

"No Mercy" 3-song sampler

www.thedeathriders.com

Even before I read the bio, I thought the vocals were slightly like Rob Zombie, and then discovered that his bass player is in this band. I guess I'd call this death rock. Musically not too bad, but the vocals put me off. Not my bag. - BL

Stylefire

"Obliquity" 7"

Mondo Mutato, alienb5@tin.it

I thought this was the weirdest band in the world and was worried about what to write, then I discovered that I listened to the entire first side at 45RPM instead of 33RPM. Still, they are quite unusual: a sort of trash rock redneck jam groove with crunchy vocal tantrums. As strange as that sounds, I find myself diggin' it. - BL

The Hollywoods vs. Freeway Jackals

4-song Split 7"

<http://come.to/blackjuju>

The Hollywoods play lo-fi, muddy and masterful garage surf, including a great instrumental cover of "Angel Fuck" by the Misfits. The Freeway Jackals crank out fast and furious female-fronted psychobilly with a double-barreled punk rock discharge. A mighty fine split. - BL

Marvel

"Bedlam at the Embassy" 4-song 7"

<http://come.to/blackjuju>

Very 1970's sounding songs by these comic book obsessed rockers. Think Kiss, Thin Lizzy, etc. and you'll have an idea. What you won't realize is that it's not terrible. Somehow I find myself intrigued by it. I don't know how or why, but this isn't half bad... recommended rock'n'roll. - BL

Kill The Hippies

"Jerked Off By Strangers" 5-song 7"EP

<http://www.angelfire.com/empire/kth/main.html>

Anyone within earshot over the last several years already knows that KTH are one of my favorite bands. This latest 7" hasn't done anything to change that opinion. These songs were recorded (well) in their own apartment, and further display their lyrical poignancy in crafting perfect punk rock songs. Pulling from an eclectic array of musical interests, they bring to mind everything from forgotten 70's rock to obscure 80's punk. I can only hope that one day they'll be legends and it'll all be traced back to this one pivotal review. - BL

The Locomotions

4-song "Teacher" 7"

www.bigneckrecords.com

The first song on this is a raging rocker, then they shift more towards a crude 60's soul that is still good. Side B starts with a cover of "Claudette," which I'm pretty sure is originally by Roy Orbison, although no one is credited. Still, that song and "Do It Again" round out a good stab o' vinyl. - BL

The Triggers

3-Song 7"

www.dirtnaprecs.com

I've been a fan of the Triggers since I got their full-length on Dirtnap Records last year, and this 7" isn't far from that mark. Female-fronted grimey punk rock with a sneering insolence. They seem in a bit of a darker mood here, but still good. - BL

The Ends

"New Rome" 7"

www.dirtnaprecs.com

These guys remind me a lot of The Stitches, which ain't a bad thing since I really like the Stitches. Their snotty punk rock has a slight AC/DC delivery on "New Rome," and sort of Sex Pistols sound on "Saw It Comin." Good stuff. - BL

The Sick Fits

"Mirror Creeps" 7" EP

www.bigneckrecords.com

These Canadians manage to mix the electrostatic charge of '77 punk with the push of wild-eyed garage rock'n'roll, and pull it off well enough for me suggest that you all get a copy before global warming causes the precious wax to melt. - BL

FM Knives

2-song 7"

www.dirtnaprecords.com

I'm sure these guys are more tired of being compared to the Buzzcocks than to any other late 70's early 80's punk band, but it seems pretty accurate, and they do it quite well. Not bad by any stretch, but it's not gonna make you do cartwheels either. - BL

Seeger Liberation Army

"2+2=?"

www.bigneckrecords.com

Well, butter my nipples and call me Aunt Mildred, who knew that Bob Seeger, the lamest dirtbag to ever grace a Chevy commercial, actually had an early period of good Detroit garage rock back in the 60's? Not me. Apparently, the he won't let the

original recordings come out either because he hates his old bandmates. In steps members of Bantam Rooster, New Bomb Turks, Dirtbombs, and The Come Ons to cover two of those tunes and let the repudiated era of Segerliciousness rise again. Pretty good stuff. - BL

James Richard Oliver

"Rocket to Nashville" 4-song 7"

Illbilly Records, PO Box 924 Blue Ridge, GA 30513
Very cool rural rock'n'roll with Southern drawl, dirty gritars, and a beat you can eat biscuits to. What else you wanna know? Good time music. - BL

Gutter Demons

"Human Remains" 3-song 7"

<http://fantomrecords.nl>

Solid Canadian psychobilly: heavy and competently played. The B-side has covers of Jimmie Lee Maslon and Bill Haley, which are very cool. Look into it. - BL

The Flakes

"Straight Jacket" 7" EP

<http://come.to/blackjuju>

I'm not really digging this Swedish band much at all. Strikes me as a pretty vanilla rock sound. They've been compared to Devo and the Descendents, which I don't hear, but then again, I'm no expert on those bands. - BL

Trailer Park Tornados

"Don't Mind the Maggots" 7" EP

www.bigneckrecords.com

A sonic assault by these maladjusted creeps from Buffalo, NY, this sounds raw, pissed-off, and somehow dead-on. They play a lo-fi antisocial rock'n'roll that would go well with filthy sex acts behind dumpsters or picking drunken fights with people bigger than you. Cool stuff. - BL

The Mutants

"Stampede Caravan #2/Crooner's Breakfast" 7"

<http://come.to/blackjuju>

I always think the Mutants sound better on record, and am happiest when a new 7" of their instrumental goodness comes in the mail. These two cuts sound more 60's inspired than their Cuban/mambo style, and both have the right amount of verve and vision to warrant their sonic transmission via vinyl. Nice work. - BL

V8 Wankers

"Automotive Rampage"

www.knock-out.de

These German U.S. car enthusiasts play a grease-stained rock'n'roll in the vein of Nashville Pussy, et al. Over-driven guitars and songs about "Detroit Steel" and "Boulevard Bullets." It doesn't thrill nor bother me. Pretty good for what it is. - BL

Lota Red

"The Vintage Tapes" 4-song 7"

www.sprinterrecords.com

Great Neo-Rockabilly from Berlin bursting with boundless exuberance, this slab o' wax rocks like nobody's business. Reverby vocals accompanied by full-sounding slap bass bangin', and guitars riffin' and twangin'. This passes inspection: approved for home use. - BL

Hole in the Head

"Trouble Cruiser" 4-song 7"EP

<http://holeinthehead.cjb.net>

This upbeat Finnish "garagebilly" band is pretty damn good. Jangly, distorted guitars drive the herd into open country, while the singer ropes in any stragglers. Another fine release. - BL

Charge 69

"UniverSale" LP

www.knock-out.de

This French street punk band is still kicking after 10 years, and judging from this album, it doesn't seem like they're losing any steam. Despite having no English songs, it's still enjoyable, owing to the diversity in tempos between cuts. Some are all-out whirlwinds, while others are more melodic, and still others throw in a little reggae that doesn't come off as lame or dull. An album good enough to date my sister. - BL

Blood For Blood

"Outlaw Anthems" LP

www.knock-out.de

With a lot of hardcore you get tough-guy posturing that, whether real or faked, just seems hollow and stupid - like their whole identity hinges on macho clichés, and since they can't earn real respect, they strive to be feared. I bring this up because Blood For Blood have been able to side-step this one-dimensional idiocy without sacrificing the aggression. They come off as sincere - angry about real shit; real problems. The listening experience becomes a cathartic rush as you vent along with them. It's not about looking cool or beating your chest as much as it's about getting something out and alleviating frustration. That, and they write some damn good songs that connect at a primal level to get you pumped up, so after the show you feel good enough to go to work the next day without your gun. - BL

BOOKS

The Snake Pit Book

By Ben Snakepit

Gorsky Press, PO Box 42024, Los Angeles, CA 90042
I am not a big fan of comics. I think it is an eye thing. I like to look at pictures or to read, but when confronted with both at once, my eyes spin in their sockets, assaulted with too much information. So, I was a little leary about reading a comic book where the author does a 3-panel strip for every day of his life... for over two years. I was doubly skeptical, since I am not a big fan of journals or blogs. Imagine my surprise when I found myself hooked. It was like a lightbulb went on inside, and I understood why people like this stuff. I started to feel invested in Ben's life, as if I knew the guy. I would eat bran cereal just to have an excuse to catch up with my new buddy as I kicked back in my porcelain easy chair. I'd sit there a little too long sometimes, and my legs would fall asleep, but that's the price you pay for friendship. What Ben Snakepit lacks in drawing proficiency, he makes up for with style and character, which is the essence of punk rock, come to think of it. You get to know his life: the going to work hungover, the bands he's toured with or that went nowhere, the countless other bands he goes and sees there in Austin, the girls he meets (good and very bad), and other things like his favorite films, political beliefs, and sense of humor

come through as well. The best is seeing how he depicts events. Paydays are hilarious because he is drawn as a 1970's pimp with gold teeth and fancy duds. The parties he goes too are always populated by mutant monster freaks or Dilbert dorks, and he is constantly pressed to make the drawings of dull days seem interesting. My favorite is making one 3-panel day the mirror image of the one above it. I've had days like that. Then there's trying to draw when he comes home drunk - and he drinks a lot. And smokes a lot of pot too, which makes for some interesting strips as well. Result? An enjoyable, easy read that kept me on the edge of my toilet seat. - BL

Let's Wreck: Psychobilly Flashbacks from the Eighties & Beyond

By Craig Brakenridge

www.stormscreenproductions.co.uk

It must've been nice to have grown up in the UK during the heyday of the psychobilly scene there, to see all those great bands in their prime and get caught up in the excitement of a new genre and subculture being born. Naturally, the author (Bracko) recalls (as best he can through an alcoholic haze) his experiences back then with a definite fondness and nostalgia. But it's not without its disappointments and rough spots. In fact, the prologue recounts a Meteors show where he ended up good and bloody in the back of an ambulance. Then there's the passage of time where people move in and out of the scene, his own bands come and go, and hang-outs lose the character and clientele they once had. Yet mostly it's what's in between that matters, and this book tries to focus on that. The tone of the book is like someone explaining the scene, albeit with some great Scottish Psycho slang, but I found myself wanting more depth, more anecdotes, more development of the characters, sociological analysis... something. After reading the whole book, I still feel on somewhat superficial terms with the author, and wish he'd talked more about his friends and acquaintances as well. Still, it's quite informative, and I found it interesting because I love psychobilly. Bracko seems like a good guy to have some beers with, and one hell of a great supporter of the scene. If nothing else, the book certainly reflects that. - BL

Born To Rock: Heavy Drinkers & Thinkers

by Todd Taylor

Gorsky Press, PO Box 42024, LA, CA 90042
There is a definite art to doing interviews well. Everyone's read the self-important schlock you get in city papers, or the even worse dull fanzine fare. Coming up with questions is surprisingly one of the most difficult aspects of doing a zine, so it always helps to consult the work of a veteran punk rock journalist. This book collects some standout interviews conducted over the years by Todd Taylor, founder of Razorcake Magazine. What hit me straight away is that I started to appreciate bands I'm not really fans of, and to really get to know and like bands and artists I never even heard of before. Now Dillinger Four is on my check 'em out list, I think that Fletcher from Pennywise is coming at things with the right perspective, Duane Peters' personality and wild past is far from ordinary, and Rev. Nerb is as fascinating and hilarious as ever. Also included are The Thumbs,

Toys That Kill, Smogtown, NOFX, artist Winston Smith, controversial comic book author Mike Diana, and many others. A great read for anyone interested in musicians and the punk scene, even if some of the bands aren't your cup of tea. - BL

Editorial Non-Sequiturds

You have never seen true poverty until you've set a ton of Goodwill-rejected garbage out in front of your house and people are literally singing your praises to the Lord as they cart it away to their homes, faces flushed with gratitude. You see, since the last issue of RNRP, Lisa and I (Ed. Note: we are the editors) have moved from our warm crevice in Wooster, Ohio, to the inviting bosom of greater Cleveland, and in doing so have forsaken a relatively charming community encumbered by the sort of religious fanaticism that would make Pat Buchanan proud. I now work in the secular metropolis where some marauding crackhead recently kicked out the friggin' window of my car to steal a cheap portable CD player. Give and take, I guess. The only relic I've kept from my 2.5 year stint in Wooster is the poster that I removed from a telephone pole in front of my house on the very day I moved in. It reads in thick "magic" marker (presumably a Christian sort of white magic, although it was apparently filled with ink as black as a witch's cat): "NOTICE: Holy Ghost Deliverance Tent Meeting. Bring your sick, dying, oppressed, possessed, blind, dumb, lame, crippled, hurting, heart-broken, and Let Jesus Touch You!!!" No joke. I now wish that I had gone to that and felt the warm hand of deity molest me. Who knows, if I did maybe I would have grounds for a lawsuit and win a nice chunk of heavenly real estate in the settlement. I could then have a harem of angels all chained together and pulling me on a cloud chariot through the Paradise City while everyone waved and cheered...

But back to the raging poverty of these garbage scavengers (of whom I have been one myself in the past, and so to take MY garbage is a sign of true and unequivocal destitution). Among the ranks of the less fortunate had arisen a shirtless, mulleted man that was keen on taking a large roll of tattered carpet which, just moments before, we had yanked and torn with extreme force from the floor of our living room. This was thin, cheap carpet clawed at and pissed on by cats and otherwise treated indelicately as is befitting to a household of heathens. Who'd have thought that this lowly carpet's life was not yet over, that someone out there would sense its abandonment, perhaps through a foreboding dream, and swoop in like Braveheart to rescue it? This gracious Savior de las Alfombras even thanked me with some mumbled verbiage, and offered up a sort of interpersonal knuckle-touching gesture of brotherhood, to which I responded in like fashion. The unity of mankind! Trickle down economics! Kindness blooms on even the most barren of branches... yadda, yadda...

"So what of rock'n'roll?" you might ask, "what meandering road to nowhere are we heading down here, anyways?" Well, what I am wishing to put forth is a contextualized account of the full rock'n'roll experience, replete with the digressive forays into seeming irrelevance that give it its color, its exuberance, its meaning. Of course, my task is difficult, fraught with untold hazards and complexities that I must navigate through in order

to answer the age old question: what the hell is worth mentioning?

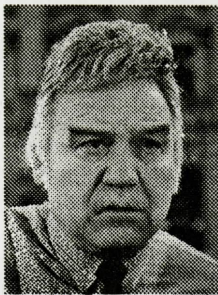
With that in mind, it might be worth noting that I not only attended the Rockabilly Freakshow in Painesville, Ohio, which took place within a segment of space-time delineated by the value "April" and was furthermore bisected by the arbitrary values of "2004" and "Nemeth's Lounge," but I also donned the persona of the "Bologna Bandit" for the occasion. It was within these parameters that I concealed my identity using a ski mask and French accent as I hurled slices of bologna into the oppressed crowd of cheering proletarians, shouting that they must: "throw down zee chains of oppression" so that they could "eat zah meats of zah bourgeoisie!" It may sound too radical, too daring, and too beautiful to be true, but I assure you, kind reader, that it really happened. Oh how the boisterous bolsheviks basked in the bologna revolution! But the redistribution of wealth and goods was not over yet. Later that night I wore the costume of a grizzled wookiee as I gave away gift-wrapped CDs and enema kits to the lucky crowd. Such selfless acts of charity excite and thrill me like a heaven-bound do-gooder in silk underwear. However, most people were quite rightly there not to witness my idiocy, but to experience the bands in hopes that such music might soothe their existential malcontent, and in doing so, possibly be worth mentioning to their friends at a later time. Indeed it was. The first band was Honkey Tonk Damnation, a new band from Akron, Ohio, (a.k.a. the "Rubber City," although the usage of condoms within this municipality remains well within the national average), and although I was in the kitchen for most of the night selling merch while Lisa hosted the show, I can safely assure you that they were both competent and enjoyable. After them was Cleveland's Bearers of the Good News, Uncle Scratch's Gospel Revival, who bolster their sermons with a stripped-down trash rock. As a witty two-piece outfit, the drummer played an odd assemblage of feed bins and crates while the guitarist's vocals were distorted, presumably by a meddlesome little demon trying to obscure the message to the crowd of sinners. Get behind me Satan, and don't try no funny stuff either! Next was The Wailin' Eloyrs from Athens, Ohio, (a city often referred to in the ancient writings of Hillbillycus). They too have a roots country sound, although a little more subdued and with nasal vocals to accompany the rural twang. They delivered a nice set with just steel and no lead guitar, but were later joined for a few songs by Dennis from the Lords of the Highway, who filled the guitar vacancy before closing out the night with his own band. The Lords rocked like a rock star's tour van after an all-ages show. Later about half the bar went back to Dennis' house and drank until daylight, upon which time even the harsh brilliance of the sun's radioactive glare could not deter the hardcore drinkers among us. This time, unlike last year, nobody peed themselves on Dennis' couch. You gotta admire that kind of restraint.

What next? Th' Legendary Shack Shakers were next, playing a show in the aforementioned Rubber City. They

put on a damn good show at the Lime Spider, although the sound was a little too distorted from sheer volume. There's just something about this band that comes across with the immediacy of a stone hurled at the forehead. Not quite as good as the last (and only other) time I saw them, (maybe the absence of Joe Buck is to blame), but they still made my cremaster muscle recoil in delight. Opening for them was the Lords of the Highway, who despite my watching them 100 times, are still usually a good show. On this night, such an observation doubled in its veracity. I think that I may have enjoyed them more than Th' Shack Shakers. It probably owes to the fact that the three of them have great band chemistry, and always seem to be genuinely having a great time up there. Also, their songs are distinct from each other, rather than all sounding like slight variations of the previous one. Before them were the Kung Fu Dykes. I actually thought I walked into the bar on the wrong night when I came in and saw them playing. They had on Gwar-like costumes reminiscent of Shredder from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, they had black lights on their glowing clothes, and they used a rather splendid strobe effect for when the drum machine did a fill. Their music was sort of industrial, with female vocals that had funny lyrics from what I could pick out. I liked them for a couple songs as a novelty, but they played too many of them, all with the same beat, and not much going on musically at all. The only other thing worth mentioning about this night is that I saved our lives on the way there by grabbing the steering wheel at the very last second when my friend wasn't paying attention and almost wrecked into a parked car at 45 m.p.h. That and the porn store next to the Lime Spider has a magazine called "Big Black Butt." That's tight!

And then some time went by wherein I saw the Coffin Bangers at Cedar's Pub in Youngstown, Ohio, the city where crooked congressmen Jim Traficant once worked before being shipped away to prison and thereby parted from the dead possum he had lovingly kept draped over top his head for 30 years. Some people still actually miss that corrupt, mob-connected weasel (the man, not his hair). Beam me up indeed. I think illegal dyes from his rodent pelt toupee saturated his brain and turned him evil. Anyway, there is no way in hell I will ever be able to recall the name of the opening band on this night where attendance was pretty scant. I remember that they played some Paladins songs, or at least some songs that the Paladins cover. They were okay, but





nothing to write home about (home for me being only 20 minutes away in wholesome Salem, Ohio, where my dad lives and where the high school football team is called the Quakers {you really gotta fear a team with a name like that... they sit quietly on the sidelines eating

oatmeal and waiting for the Inner Light to move them to action, then watch out! They'll whoop your butt before you can scream "William Penn was a pacifist teetotaler!"}). I only mention the first band to make the point that I am generally not too impressed with Stevie Ray Vaughn style blues rock mixed with surf and rockabilly, unless you can do it so well that I piss my pants and go blind in the brilliance of your joyous rockitude. However, I am sure nobody out there is doing anything with the intent of impressing me... and I am fine with that. Nevertheless, occasionally people DO impress me. For instance, the Coffin Bangers impressed me with a tight and aggressive show played for the small crowd of people who were man (or in fact, woman) enough to take it. In addition, they had asked me to work their fog machine in this little bar, which duty I readily accepted, and periodically flooded them with a fog so thick that nobody could see them at all. I did this to test their skills at playing under adverse conditions. What if they ever get a gig in London after midnight? Or maybe I did it because I can no longer annoy people with my cigarette smoke (I quit years ago), and sometimes miss the pleasure of being a bastard. I would like to apologize to Dustin, their drummer, in particular, who unfortunately had the fog machine aimed towards his face. Regardless, their aptitude at playing in this experimental situation was amazing, thusly impressing me with their consummate horror punk-ness, while nearly every other band in that genre falls short of the mark – fog or no fog.

Speaking of things lurking through the fog, remember when you were a kid walking alone through dark places like the woods or your basement, feeling afraid that some sort of hideous monster would jump out and kill you? The trick to beating that feeling is to imagine *yourself* as being that creepy monster lurking through the dark, stalking helpless victims. This role reversal won't assure your safety if, in fact, there really is a monster, or psychotic killer, or wild hungry animal, but it will help you at least to be at ease before you are attacked and devoured. That seems worth mentioning.

On the subject of horror, I also want to know why there hasn't been a movie (to my knowledge anyway) that has fully explored the impact of the AIDS virus on vampire society. The way I figure it, their immortality is gained from a hyper-effective auto-immune system that can heal anything from cancer to bullet holes (and yet is woefully deficient against wooden stakes). But what if a virus prevents the vampire's super-special T-cells from identifying antigens attacking the body? Surely they would die like anyone else, leading to a panic in the blood-sucking community. Ultimately, I imagine that the cautious vampires would start working at clinics like Planned

Parenthood so they could see the results of their victims' bloodwork before feasting upon their throbbing necks. This would lead to a corresponding panic among women who see a correlation between medical visits and deaths by horrific carnivore attacks, so they avoid clinics, birth rates go up significantly, the vampires have to move into the obstetrics field, and so on... Eventually vampires would be eating healthy babies as soon as they came out of the womb, thereby saving humanity from over-population and self-destruction.

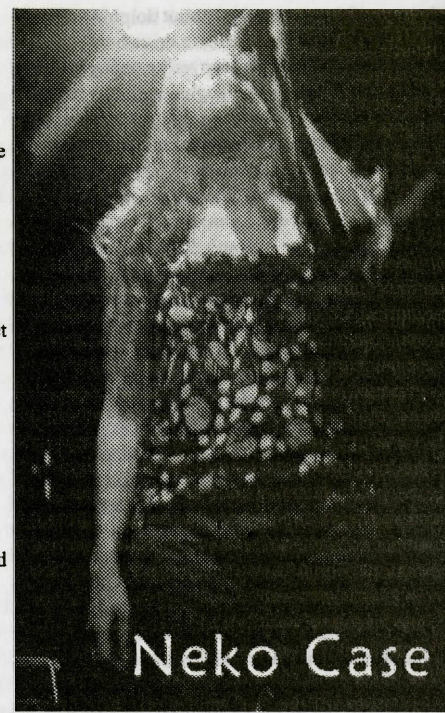
Pro-lifers will not be happy.

On the other hand, they would have nothing to be upset about at The Shakedown show at the Beachland Tavern in Cleveland, unless they fear the symbolic abortion inherent to a music genre that strips children from their mothers, and leads the brainwashed youths down a pathway to destruction. That's right: unless they fear the rock'n'roll. On this night the musical menace began with the rising local punk rockers, The Standing 69s, who incidentally are named for an act that I have never been inspired to try (what if I dropped her? Ouch!), nor do I feel athletic enough to carry it through, unless the woman were strong enough hold *me* upside down. Despite the discomfort invoked by such a name, the band was pretty enjoyable. Not "please blow my head off, I've seen the best band ever" level of enjoyment. More like "damn, this band somewhat soothes the stinging bite of loneliness and rejection, so that tonight I might not pull that trigger and end this absurd comedy that is my life" kind of enjoyment. I have no idea why I've twice mentioned the willful termination of my own existence. Perhaps it is because I fear a dystopic future where science has extended our lives indefinitely - to the point where we are able to live until the very day when the universe has expanded to its limits and all energy is swaddled in dark matter; when everything sinks into a vacuous pit of nothingness unknowable to even God. That would suck. Kill yourself now, just to be safe.

So anyway, after the Standing 69s was The Shakedown from the Baltimore/D.C. area who played a kind of fast, riff heavy, dual guitar garage rock'n'roll that was quite commendable, and dare I say: combustible, aside from one corny song towards the end. After them was the International Playboys. They played the same sort music, but it was less effective in my opinion. I got bored and started to daydream about the bacterial bite of the Komodo Dragon. Did you know that they bite their prey then follow them around for up to a month, waiting for the poor suckers to die of the infections they got from this giant lizard's incredibly disgusting mouth rife with toxic filth? Amazing! I once dated a girl with breath like that. When she hollered my name during sex, our cat would vomit in the next room. The scent was reminiscent of an exotic fungus growing beneath a bag lady's toenails. I still think of her whenever the cat pukes...

Wouldn't it be weird to discover that you aren't actually skinny, that really you are a hypochondriac who thinks that you have anorexia? Makes you wonder...

I also saw Neko Case last month: that is definitely worth mentioning, if ever anything was. This was at a venue in Pittsburgh called The World, which I thought would be large, but was in fact a small World after all (hahahaha! I make a funny, no?). The opening band was called Mendoza Line. Their first song was slow and trippy, a lot like Mazzy Star, and not bad since I do like Mazzy Star. Then the guy sang, and he reminded me of Dylan a little bit. Not so good, although I have nothing for or against Bob Dylan. The rest of the set was okay for what it was, some kind of



neo-folk indie rock. The girl was cute. I watched her. My mind wandered... Ever notice how wishing someone to "have a nice day" is considered more genuine and less of a kiss-off than the greater magnitude wish to "have a nice life"? And what's with all these yuppie condos being named for features that are notably absent in the landscape? Hell, there is one in a flat cornfield outside Wooster called the Scottish Highlands. What'll those jerks think of next?

And then Neko came on stage. She started with "Favorite," a song that had predictably become Lisa's favorite. What an imagination that woman has! Heh heh. Anyway, I am not sure what forces of nature and nurture conspired to create the phenomenon that is Neko Case, but she is to singing what Edison was to inventing, what Wagner was to painfully long operas, what Gary Glitter was to being creepy. First of all, she has an all-powerful voice that reverses your cranial flow and melts all other thoughts from your mind. A voice that invokes the primitive urge in all men to protect and worship the female... that incites an Amazonian admiration among women that borders gloriously on lesbianism... a voice that can only be regarded with indifference if you are soulless slab of genetic failure. There is that. Then she also has the ability to write amazing lyrics to raise the ire of jealous literary hacks throughout the World (meaning myself and any other worthless writers in this oddly named bar). And then, to top it off, in concert she comes off with stunning wit to match her jaded sense of humor. She even joked about feeding babies to tigers. You hear that?! Innocent newborns in the gaping mouths of ferocious beasts! A woman after my own heart! If *she* were a tiger, I would wear a diaper... MAOW! (Damn, that even weirded *me* out). Back to the story: On this night she was backed by The Sadies from Canada, who did a beautiful job (and have some great albums of their own).

After one of them remarked about dolphins raping people, then started squeaking to drive home the image, Neko had trouble recovering enough to sing the next song. When she laughs she looks bashful and holds her hand over her mouth... Anyway, she did new material, a good dose of the old (although I wouldn't have minded hearing "Things That Scare Me," which is my "Favorite"), and some great covers by Loretta Lynn, Nick Lowe, and the absolute best choice of Hank Sr. tunes: "Alone and Forsaken." I love Neko. Lisa loves her too - even more than I do. She & our friend Alicia drove to Toronto to see Neko play a few months ago. I am beginning to suspect something beyond the usual artist/stalker relationship. If Neko steals my girlfriend, I'll have to start sending obsessive fan letters to Melissa Swingle and Terry Gross in hopes that one of them might nab me.

You know, I have never seen Terry Gross, and therefore my desire for her is of a higher grade (unless you can objectify a voice). I even wrote a rap song about her (please request lyrics through e-mail), and prefer her spectrographic contours to that lesser Nina Totenberg lady any day of the week. As for women with more conservative chromosomes, I have actually *seen* Ann Coulter, and would go with her out of an antagonist magnetism... it just seems *so* dirty. But back to Gross... I picture her as the sort of cute mousy nerd girl who subordinates her ample physical beauty to the divine glow of her cerebral aura. Man, I love the nerd girls (or "gnerdls" as I call 'em), which is interesting because studies show that male IQs drop when tested in the presence of attractive women. I am not making that up either. So the greater a woman's intellectual allure, the more blood will be drawn towards my center of gravity, leaving me susceptible to bouts of bumbling stupidity. It is a paradox worthy of its own Star Trek episode.

In fact, if you will permit to extend this digression... I should like to convince gnerdls everywhere that I am the Nordic God of Penile Delight, the proverbial Wizard of Squeal, and will bring thunder down upon those thinkers' thighs like Prometheus lighting the first fires of femininity. And I have a plan to do this: voodoo dolls. I will make the dolls cunningly crafted to the likeness of my desired gnerdl, nest them inside my pants for a period less than or equal to the duration of a Rhesus monkey's gestation period. Once I remove the doll from within my steamy trousers, its fleshy counterpart (to which it is a mere doppelganger) will feel lost and insecure and instantly want back into the safe confines of my boxers. Ingenious? Oh yeah. Cunning and shrewd - sharper than the jagged edges of a Kentucky girl's broken teeth. With my "smarty-pants" stuffed with voodoo dolls, I will become adored and revered by cortically-gifted girls everywhere! With a Wall Street witchcraft I'll incorporate the wise woman's will with my own. I'll manufacture consent so I can Chomsky upon her manufacturing base, then ravage her reproductive economy as if she were a 3rd world country. Maybe with two dolls I could taste the satin flesh of female as it slips wetly against female in a dance of algorithmic friction that hovers happily above my wagging tongue, then I'll don the latex armor, clutch tightly the coital cutlass, and lay siege to the gates of the dark castle that lies within the fertile valley of Box Canyon.

40 Oh Yes!!!

All right. I'm somewhat done... Nevertheless, such things *would* make my man nipples explode with delight, which it seems to be their only conceivable function: instruments of pleasure and adornment. You know, people often ridicule the pointlessness of the male nipple, but I contend that it is just as responsive as a female's in regard to pinches, fondles, and the odd tongue lashing, which in-and-of itself should make it useful enough for even the most pedantic utilitarian. And what about the females who never have kids... I submit to you: what is the grand function of THEIR nipples? Sure, the female nipple is mighty and dwarfs the less substantial male nipple, or as I like to call it: the "mipple." Imagine for a second, though, just one lousy second, the world without mipples. It'd be a cold, eerie place for sure. The male chest would become the featureless chassis previously only known to exist on mannequins and Calista Flockhart. Women alone, then, would have to bear the brunt of all the childhood titty-twisters perpetrated on schoolyards worldwide. Later they would hold ice to their bruised bosom and curse the day that they ever ridiculed the male nipple! And what of men who arrive at the middle-age spread with sagging hairy breasts - how much more unsightly would they be if there was no nipple to break up the curvy folds of floppy milkless meat? Then you must also consider fathers everywhere, who may not admit it, but *all* have cruelly tried to see if their babies would fall for the false promise of the male nipple. This is as close as they will ever get to experiencing motherhood and bonding with their child in a pure and wholesome way. So clearly, the male nipple is not merely an object for scorn and ridicule, but deserves a more respected role in the pantheon of biology.

And while I am digressing.... someone offered me a salad with my beer the other day. Imagine that: beer & salad - now there's a meal fraught with irony at every level, for when you consider it, salad is healthy and causes only a gradual rise in your glycemic index, while beer is filled with maltose and empty calories that spike your blood sugar. Therefore, any attempt to eat healthy by consuming salad is somewhat undermined by the simultaneous ingestion of beer. However, salad could be considered a healthy companion to beer if compared to more popular choices, such as buffalo wings. But in general, a beer drinker will not crave leafy vegetables... such things are for the wine drinker perhaps, but not the time honored beer drinker with his enlarged liver and crude mannerisms. In fact, go to any 24-hour diner after the bars close and see if ANYONE is eating a salad. Salad is to beer drinking what the Klu Klux Klan is to Nobel Prize winning: completely and utterly incompatible. By the way, have you ever noticed that the Snow Troopers on the frozen planet Hoth in the film *The Empire Strikes Back* are sort of like militarized future versions of the Klu Klux Klan? Meanwhile, the Klan in our galaxy is more

closely associated with warmer climates... which is an unfair stereotype, by the way, because many fine and upstanding Klan members are actively receiving welfare and unwittingly praying to a Black Jesus in this very state of Ohio, much the way the snowy version of them on Hoth were indentured to Darth Vader, a man dressed in all black wielding a bigger light saber than Obi-Wan Kenobi, and who is voiced by James Earl Jones



(not to be confused with James Earl Ray). Conspiracy!? Is George Lucas then intimating that since Darth Vader is basically a good man/Christ figure under the spell of an evil old white man... a bureaucrat with empire-building in mind... that God is the archetype of an evil father figure who can shoot lightning bolts from his fingers? What kind of crap is that, Mr. Lucas?! Are you undermining the wholesome values that this country was founded upon with your slanderous commie films?!! My veins pulse with a phony indignation, you steaming mount of wookie vomit!.

Perhaps I have strayed too far from things worth mentioning... but the motion picture talk does segue nicely into a movie premiere I attended a couple weeks ago. No A-list celebrities came out for it, although one guy looked like Tim Roth (you know who you are, buddy). The movie was *Demon Summer*, a low-budget B-movie made by friends, acquaintances, and strangers in Kent, Ohio, where I went to college and where 4 students were murdered 34 years ago by the National Guard (not all of whom were protesters, by the way). At this particular screening, in fact, a band *from* Kent was playing and they were called, with all intended irony, Kill The Hippies. Far from being some bonehead band singing about killing peaceniks (although the current form of stoner, 420, squinty-eyed, dumb-ass, soon-to-flunk-out-of-college, dude-where's-my-car, socially irrelevant hippie-types do annoy me more than ass pimples), the band actually has really well-written lyrics rife with both political astuteness and acrimonious humor. They sound like 80's punk rock, connoting maybe the Crucifucks while they mix up tempos, switch vocalists, and generally create that elusive balance of cynical irreverence and tempered idealism. They also have some 80's punk/wave sort of bounce too, with touches of straight rock'n'roll, and usually plenty of sarcasm. I am a big fan. So big, in fact, that I would probably help them move furniture if they asked, but not big enough that I would wax their bikini lines.

After them was the movie, *Demon Summer*. It bridged the gap between horror flick and thriller in a fun, campy sort of way. When it was over, the Lords of the Highway played. Their drummer, Pete Yorko, is officially now the weirdest damn drummer I have ever seen (and that's saying something because everyone knows that drummers are an odd sort to begin with...

some say their souls are made of sawdust). I give Pete this title not because of his many enigmatic facial expressions, nor because he climbed to the top of a speaker stack, pulled his pants down to his ankles, smacked the cymbals while flopping awkwardly to the floor where just laid for a while, motionless, seemingly in need of a MedAlert bracelet at the end of the set. No, why I say this is because he licks his sticks, drum heads and cymbals while playing, and will walk around his drum kit during songs so he can fellate the back side of the cymbal stands. Disturbing? You bet. Entertaining? Certainly. I am definitely one to respect achievements in the field of strangeness. Yorko, my hat's off to you.

And then it came to pass. A period of clarity: the dawn of enlightenment. I could see over the horizon of consciousness into vast fields of knowledge, and my mind was sharp like a sickle. A voice called to me from far beyond, in pastures of green. "Ben," it said unto me, "we are the Lord's cattle, you are but one of His sheep. We are the Chosen Herd. You will be left to wander through the rings of Hell on Judgement Day. We shall inherit the Earth!" It rang true; clicked into place like the ammo clip of an AK-47. I got to thinking how great it would be to walk among the cattle as one of them. Imagine standing all day in fields of your favorite food... friggin' grass. It'd be like standing naked on a 90-acre pizza... just chewing and munching all day long, enjoying the fresh air while filling up not one, not two, but FIVE stomachs. Joy! Rapture! The world is your all-you-can-eat buffet, and it's FREE! The cows don't have to work. They don't have to hunt. They don't pay for a damn thing. They just eat and eat and eat as if they were God's chosen beasts, set to

graze in the Garden of Eden. And maybe they are, and we are just the wretched woolly-eyed wanderers who, through jealousy seek to capture, raise, murder and devour these sacred cattle. Sheep in wolves' clothing, are we. And rightly so... we used to be God's favorites after all, until those methane-farting beef bums came along. Sure, they never ate of the forbidden fruit, they didn't take the apple - but that's because they are weak and scared, and aspire to nothing more than eating and shitting amongst the weeds. Humble? Sure. Meek? No doubt. Shall they inherit the Earth? Not as long as I have anything to say about it! This sheep will be fleeced no longer; the wool is shed from these mine eyes. Arise, my brothers and sisters, a holy war is about to be waged. A war of docility and uselessness in which we must reclaim our title as genuinely sheepish creatures, uninfluenced by greed and power. We'll see who is the preferred stock now: sheep (and by metaphorical extension: mankind) or the cattle. Take to the fields, gentle warriors, and await further orders.

Or not. In fact, I am feeling as bold right now as to assert that Deke Dickerson playing the Beachland at the end of April defined what makes us different from the nameless hordes of inarticulate cattle, namely: that we have the ability to process and enjoy rock'n'roll. Such music has absolutely no discernible effect on cows. In fact, some have suggested that rock'n'roll is what has led us astray from the holy herd in the first place. It was the serpent with the apple, the goat with the garters, the damsel with braids of gold. But in truth, rock'n'roll is akin to the garden itself, the green blissfulness upon which Adam and Eve grazed, and the apple represents repression, the repudiation of those grassy, earthy pleasures given to us by the Lord, and

which had spread far and wide across creation.

The apple was ambition; the desire to forsake the basic indulgences and go somewhere else, a place where there might be something even better. The highway became the apple of our eyes. Rock'n'roll, when done right, on the other hand, is the desire to be nowhere else but right where you are, amidst the weeds as a merry fornicator drenched in thick, happy sweat. So, when this band called Slim Cessna's Auto Club took to the stage in what would seem a pantomime of backwoods southern gospel tradition, they were *truly* doing to the Lord's work.

Their organist had a handlebar mustache, so immediately I both respected and distrusted him. Slim himself took on the aura of a snake-oil salesman standing four cubits tall and flourishing a shiny gold tooth, while Munly seemed to evince a Mephistophelean mesmerism, as though he might have collected a suitcase full of souls. They ranted, they raved, and most importantly, they saved. A band of contradictions, they proclaimed the light of Jesus, but were seemingly mired in the darkness of sin. I understand that this is what it means to live in Denver. One of these proselytizing musicians, Dwight Pentecost, had the hands-down coolest instrument I have ever witnessed with my mortal eyes. It was a double-necked guitar upholstered with red velvet and featuring a huge hologram of Jesus that, when looked at from different angles, turned to Mary. That alone was worth the price of admission. There is nothing as dazzling as that in the Rock'N'Roll Hall of Fame, I can assure you that. All in all, I enjoyed Slim Cessna's Auto Club as one might savor the last swig of Bushmills before receiving death by firing squad: a very satisfying warm-up for the volley of hits to come.

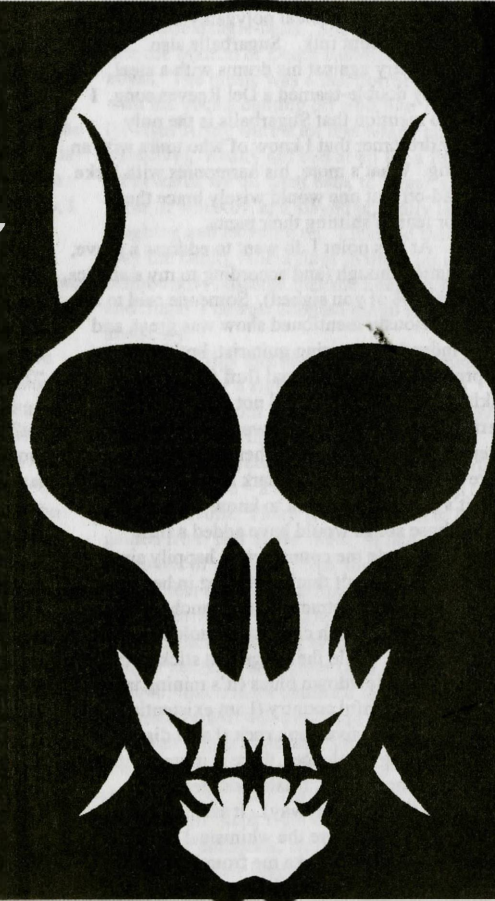
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And what was to come, you ask? Why it was something more American than a free election paired with cheeseburgers and topless dancers. It was, in fact, the aforementioned Deke Dickerson playing his rockabilly, surf, and western swing as though the trinity of Red, White and Blue could be transubstantiated into Drums, Guitar and Upright Bass, and instead of fluttering on a pole it could rock and roll. Indeed, to witness someone not enjoying this show would have been a rarer sighting than spotting a fat vegan at McDonalds.

"What made the show such a joy that even you, tired and non-drunk, would watch it like it were a bunch Telemundo girls baking your birthday cake in their birthday suits?" asks a gentleman in the back. "Well sir," replies Professor Purgatory, "I love Joe Maphis." The audience murmurs, dissatisfied with the answer, as well they should be. Certainly Deke Dickerson's guitar technique is not limited to Joe Maphis' "fingers on fire" style one bit, yet he is one of the only people out there who is doing it at all... and doing it stunningly effectively. Actually, Deke brings an arsenal of fretboard philosophies that run the gambit from jazz to honky tonk. What's more, he makes it seem like the simplest, most natural thing in the world, and actually has a fun doing it. This was proven most strikingly by his dead-on impression of Louie Armstrong singing and re-interpreting the "Stray Cat Strut," and by an incredible mexi-surf medley that made me kidneys tremble. At one point in the show Deke took over bass, Jimmy (the bassist) took over the drums, and Sugarballs (the Saul Rosenberg of Rockabilly) switched to guitar. I've seen bands do this before, but these guys were better on each other's instruments than most people are on their primary ones, each jamming out solos and having a great time. Then they switched again, each trying their hands at a *third* musical implement, engaging in a sort of musical polygamy that reddened the faces of us decent folk. Sugarballs also committed adultery against his drums with a steel guitar as they double-teamed a Del Reeves song. I should also mention that Sugarballs is the only rockabilly drummer that I know of who tours with an actual gong. What's more, his harmonies with Deke are so dead-on that one would wisely brace their bowels for fear of shitting their pants.

At this point I do want to address a grave, serious matter, though (and according to my statistics, only about 58% of you sighed). Someone said to me that the previously mentioned show was great, and Deke is indeed an amazing guitarist, but the songs were pretty much insubstantial fluff (lyrically speaking). Granted, Deke did not play his darker material on this night, (where were such hits as "Where Am I Goin'?" and "Where to Aim," which [where concepts of deep and dark are concerned] are where it's at when you want to know where it is?) Perhaps those songs would have added a little balance (and made me commiserate happily since I love them), but I don't think weighing in heavy on the cheerful stuff really detracts all that much (unless you loathe frivolity – in such case your whole life must be utterly painful). While the songs that stick with me most are usually lowdown blues (it's raining in my brain, man), mournful country (I am existentially challenged), or derisive punk rock (I will disarm you with my sneering insolence), there is more to life than just distress, uncertainty, frustration, fear and loneliness (I think so, anyway). It seems almost as laughably naive to ignore the whimsical fun moods that keep bipolar people like me from killing themselves (much to the chagrin of my

acquaintances), as it is to brood in darkness. So stick that in your butt cheeks and clench, wretched harbingers of gloom (yeah!)

Speaking of wretchedness¹, this might be worth mentioning. On the way to see Deke, we stopped at Taco Bell to punish our bowels with their cuisine, when behind us in line there arose such a clatter, I spun from my row to see what was the matter. There was a demented old man puking on the floor, pants around his ankles, dropping needles and more. I figured he was on drugs and the manager had spoken: "sir pull up your pants!" "But my belt, it is broken!" Then on the scene police and medics arrived, but we never found out if that man stayed alive. True story. Life in these United States.

...And now for something completely different: someone told me last week that artist/activist Diego Rivera was a cannibal. I looked it up on-line and it would seem that such an outlandish statement reeks of veracity. While 18 years old and studying anatomy, he obtained fresh cadavers from the city morgue, and reportedly felt physically healthier from adding this new meat to his diet. Furthermore, it is said that he favored the legs, breasts, and brains of women. Just when I thought I couldn't like the guy any more.

Speaking of Socialism, the Briefs have a song that mingles McCarthyism with "Suspicious Minds" to achieve optimized punk rock for the slightly-used millennium. They played that song² last. I love the Briefs so much that I would let them spit tobacco juice into my couch cushions any time, but not enough that I would bail them out of jail for mopey³. They bashed out such greatness that it bruised my intellect and made... think... unclear... Mama, you've been baaaaad... Rocky Roooad...

Before the Briefs were the Real McKenzies. They take a Scottish shctick to their punk rock, all wearing kilts. They weren't bad... upbeat with some good melodies... but I think they'd have been better if they didn't have two guitarists using full-on distortion. It made it hard to hear any subtle nuance to the songs, which had all started to merge together in my mind. Bear in your mind, though, gentle reader, that this was the first time I ever heard them. Maybe if I had known their songs previously, it would've been better, and I would have blown my nose on anyone who disagreed. I did like their bagpipe player, who incidentally warmed up by playing AC/DC's "Thunderstruck." Awesome.

Did I mention that I like the Briefs a lot? If they came to my house with muddy shoes, I wouldn't make them take them off, but I wouldn't let them pee on my toilet seat either. They sing a song about killing Bob Seger. They should win a Grammy. During their set, people at the Beachland Tavern could not sit still. While it may have seemed that I too was dancing like a ruffian, really I was just under the psychotic delusion that monkey-bats were attacking me. I have similar hallucinations every time I see the Briefs, and yet the FDA has done nothing to regulate them. Music is the opium of the asses...

The More You Know: Everyone on the lawn care industry is a stoner. There are no exceptions, God bless 'em.

You know what? I don't mean to screw with you linear thinkers out there, but I skipped a show in

Akron I went to at the Voodoo on May 2nd. The Hudson Falcons came through to kick off their first tour in a couple years. The line-up has changed, but their luck hasn't. Due to vehicle problems they arrived at the last second, and then locked their merch, equipment, and keys inside their bus. Rough start for sure. First Offense from Akron opened the show and impressed me with how far along they've come since beginning as young spikey-haired kids playing at the Mantis in Kent. Then a band called Two-Bit Hoods played (maybe from West Virginia?), who weren't bad either. They played a street punk with some countrified trimmings. Of the two singers, I liked the scratchier voiced one better. They sang Johnny Cash's "I Got Stripes," which Satan's Teardrops also cover. You should check out Satan's Teardrops. I have absolutely no vested interest in you doing so. Lastly, the Hudson Falcons played with Mark backed by all new faces. I don't think the chemistry was as good as when Uncle Chris, Ben (not Uncle Ben), and Craighton were handling the back beat. Still, it was a fun time and they played all the songs we requested such as "Revolution" and "Bad Ass Bitch." Mark and Kerri are great people. Word to your mother.

Hey junior space cadets, if you ever find yourself in Cleveland on a Wednesday night (or more accurately, in Lakewood near Detroit and 117th) you might want to head to the Hi Fi. Here they have created something called Heavy Metal Karaoke. Is it painful, you ask? No more so than watching your aunt do unnatural things to a pineapple. There you will find a live band featuring bar owner Billy Morris (formerly of Warrant) backing up anybody who wants to sing 80's metal. While you won't hear anyone doing Death's "Zombie Ritual" (our cover girl can nail that song if they ever did) you will hear (as I have) your friends sing Mötley Crüe and Skid Row tunes. It makes you feel all dirty inside, like the first time your babysitter made you shave her legs.

Yep. And while I have no vocal talent, apart from a voice that frightens lactating goat mamas with its robust trans-species sexuality, I am contemplating doing John Cage's 4'33" next week⁴.

The More You Know: Frank Zappa once said, "most rock journalism is people who can't write interviewing people who can't talk for people who can't read." That hurts⁵.

I think to succeed in rock journalism you have to be mean-spirited. So many people tell me that they LOVE it when I rip on bands. I should do that more often⁶. In fact, to really seal my success I am gonna do it right now: Kiss sucks. I hate Kiss. They are the worst band of all time⁷. I mean, what's with that "Rock And Roll All Night" song? It goes on forever repeating itself, which might have been somewhat okay if it had been at all worth hearing the first 100 times⁸. And then they dress like flamboyant mimes⁹. It is just too bad that they don't act like mimes and shut the fuck up. Ever see Gene Simmons on a talk show... what a cocky little capitalist. Kiss condoms? Sure, I'll put one on and you can Kiss it, bitch! Those guys are about as rock'n'roll as a game of golf⁰.

More to come in the way of hatred for mainstream bands that don't care at all what I think of them because they have more money than hair follicles, and hire little foreign boys to massage their hamstrings. Those pricks!

For now, let me tell you about a place that reeks of the unspeakably vile contents of an elderly pig farmer's colostomy bag; that pongs with the whiff of a thousands farts collected inside a Spanish sailor's soiled underpants. A stench so awful it could only please the most unflaggingly determined shit-eating dogs. Nope, I am not speaking of the sticky aroma wafting through my apartment after an egg, coffee and bran flake breakfast. Nor am I about to address the scent of the oval office after a White House barbecue in which the president thought it would be impolite to leave uneaten any can of baked beans specially manufactured with his family name on the label¹¹. What I *am* going to talk about is my recent trip to the Cleveland Zoo.

It was a sunny day, the kind that makes your melancholy moles beam with merry melanomas. On the way there we saw a couple pedestrian pedestrians (genus: homo sapiens¹²) toss their empty soda cans over the 25th St. Bridge, which actually goes over top the zoo, and actually has a chain link fence that they had to hurl their garbage over. This was no average litterbug after all! I felt flushed with anger. The urge came upon me to Trotsky over to them and repeatedly stick an ice pick into their necks, then launch their punctured and gurgling carcasses over the bridge for some lucky carnivore below. But alas, I had no ice pick, and traffic was busy. One day, though, I will unleash a glorious torrent of violence upon some such littering shitbag, and thereby avenge both the Crying Indian and Woodsy the Owl (R.I.P.).

So, I don't know if you realize this or not, but zoos are full of animals either pacing impatiently and half-crazed like expectant fathers in the waiting room, or just gloomily sitting there in a tiny cage and staring outwards all depressed like... well... like expectant fathers. I tried to comfort an orangutan who was in just such a position. For a moment I saw hope and recognition in his eyes, as if to say "finally you've come, my Savior, to lead me to freedom in the Promised Land where the trees grow tall and mighty." He quickly realized that I was just another gawking moron, perhaps a little more empathetic than most, but not of any particular use to his spiritual well-being. Trust a stinkin' orangutan to make you feel utterly worthless.

I did notice, however, that the adolescent orangutan in that same cage seemed in rather high spirits, regardless of my presence. Earlier there had been a baby warhog too, and it seemed happy enough to ignore me. In fact, I think the only animal who really took an exception to my gaze was the hippo, who stared at me like I had been elbow deep in his mother, then opened his enormous mouth wide and snapped it shut against the water. He did not scare me, no way! For I benefited from an unspoken and somewhat embarrassing camaraderie with the legions of glass-tapping fat asses who had also paid \$9 for the privilege of witnessing mankind's triumph and domination over the beasts of nature. How superior we felt while watching lions, tigers, and bears stew in their cells, incarcerated for not realizing our supremacy¹³. "And God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28). You are nothing but an idle curiosity for our children, you

filthy zoo-dwellers. We pay to laugh at you dumb beasts!

Speaking of replenishing the earth, I discovered that the rainforest is being destroyed at a rate of 100 acres per minute. Can it be true? I thought that Sting was taking care of that? If only the animals had computers, lasers, or i-pods to sell maybe they could keep their homes. And you know who is really taking over, don't you? The fucking cows!! We clear cut the forests for lumber, then raise hordes of beef cattle for McDonald's, et al... Inadvertently paving the way for those meek bastards to inherit the earth! You'll never find a Holstein munching its way through the jungle. The jungle is too rough for these weak cattle types. Save the rainforests, if not for any logical or ethical reason, do it just to stick it to the cows!

Another disturbing thing I saw at the zoo was polar bears fighting. You see those Coke commercials and think that they are as gentle as lesbian lovers, but I tell you buddy: they aren't. "Nature, red in tooth and claw"¹⁴ indeed. At least their meat isn't meek and seeking martyrdom in the mouths of the masses¹⁵.

I just realized that in this issue there will be no writing from Lisa Marie (co-founder, girlfriend, and all around busy lady), so I feel duty bound to include nuggets of her wit. For instance, a while ago she had suggested to me in a moment of capriciousness that a movie called "The Passion of the Heist" about the Jews stealing Jesus' underwear should be made. I think it should be directed by David Mamet and star Charlton Heston. Cornelius can play Judas.

For my part, I propose that there should be another film version of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (Julie Taymor's version, while a superior rip-off of Derek Jarman's anachronistically stylized *Edward II*, is not definitive). This cinematic masterpiece can be called "Titus Androgynous" and star David Bowie as Tamora, queen of the Goths, and Annie Lennox as the lead. Just a thought. It might do well in the foreign markets. I hear the transgendered thing is hot right now in Afghanistan since the liberation.

Speaking of foreigners, as I rarely do, I read in the news the other day that Australia is giving tax break incentives for couples to have babies in an attempt to increase the population and improve the economy. As long as it's good for the economy, what the hell? I personally won't be happy until there is one human for every square foot of the earth... so many of us that there is no way to mistake who the real miracle of evolution is. It is US, man(kind). We are tough, and we are everywhere you want to be... the Mastercard Race. Now if only we could build underwater ocean colonies. Those fish have had it too good for too long, swimming around like they own the place. We crawled out of the oceans millions of years ago, went on to bigger and better things, but we never said we wouldn't one day go back and give the boot to those gill-breathing squatters. But then where would we dump our garbage? I guess there is always New Jersey. Or maybe we can send it to Alaska after we mine there... a sort of Eskimo kiss-off. If there is one thing more important to the human species than survival, it is vanity¹⁶. We just gotta prove that we're better than everything else. That is what will kill us. Well, that and time-travelling dinosaurs from the ancient past (you didn't believe that asteroid story did you?)

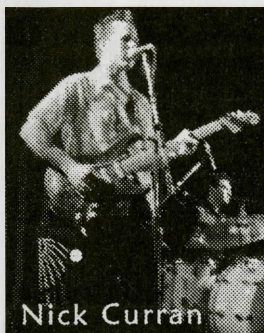
The More You Know: Yesterday I dipped myself in crude oil in hopes of attracting Republican hussies and suicidal ocean birds. The plan backfired. Instead, Iraqi insurgents chased me around trying to set fire to me, and the suicidal ocean birds just flew to the Congo and proclaimed themselves Belgian conquerors.

If that last bit made you moan then you've provided a nice segue to my next topic: The Moaners. The Moaners are a two-piece band featuring Melissa Swingle from Trailer Bride and another fine specimen of femininity named Laura King on drums (her musical origins are unknown to me). They played their southern rock'n'roll at the Beachland on June 22nd, and it was good. There was some of the eerie resonance of Trailer Bride, but aside from the atypical chords and slower beats of a few songs, they kept to a strong rock format. Laura is a great drummer who plays powerfully and with the calculating poise of a NASA scientist. Melissa played the guitar and sang with the dripping southern drawl that she's known for. She did a lot of slide work too, and often accompanied herself of harmonica. Overall good stuff.

Opening was Sugar and Pete from Lords of the Highway debuting two different side projects: The ShriLL and The Crawdads. The Crawdads went first, with Pete on acoustic guitar and Sugar on upright bass. They each took turns singing honky tonk covers of Hank Sr. and a bunch of Wayne Hancock. Afterwards they went on as The ShriLL, with Pete singing exclusively and adding distortion to his acoustic guitar, and Sugar stepping over to the cocktail drums. She rocked them like nobody's business, clad in a sort of black 1930's dress and a wide-brimmed hat with little dangle-balls. She appeared creepy, like the Matron of Death summoned up from the abyss. The music was a fast horror-punk, I'd say, with the vocals coming off a bit like Tiger Army (if Tiger Army were a lot less whiny and sensitive). Really not bad at all for a first show. Afterwards we all went back to Sugar's, did shots of whiskey, and stayed up really late, laughing and carrying on. I learned that I cannot play the banjo, Alicia likes to dress up in a Hamburglar costume that she keeps in her car, and Sugar's newest adopted dingo is psychotic and scary.

This talk about fear and learning reminds me of a sign that hangs on Rt. 30 heading East from Wooster to Canton. It says simply: "Fear is the Beginning of Wisdom." Brilliant! That reduces (western) faith down to its very essence - a system of belief based on Fear, not Truth. There is NO wisdom to be gained from fear alone. Fear, in fact, is the antithesis of wisdom. That should be obvious. People fear a life not perfumed with the promise of an afterlife, so they download Dogma 3.0 and use it as their operating system, always desperate in their attempts to believe (and make others believe) that it is the ultimate in theological technology, and will make life easier for all involved. They maintain that all other piety programs have corrupt files and are actually coded for evil. Take that you lousy Hindus! We'll eat the meek right out of your sacred cattle!

Samurais, on the other hand, do not fear death. They meditate on it constantly to try and embrace it. They will sometimes commit



Nick Curran

Suicide bombers can learn a lot from the Samurai. Die for yourself, not for Allah. All the really cool zealots are doing it.

The More You Know: If I ever convert to Mormon orthodoxy and get two wives, I would keep them in different houses. That way their menstrual cycles don't get synched up. Then there would be no reprise from the Orgy of Ben!

Next up, I went and saw Cave Catt Sammy play the Beachland with the Wailin' Eloyes. We missed half the Eloyes set because we had been shooting a movie about alcoholic street gangs of mutant murderers. The Lords of the Highway will be in that movie. I will be in it too, unless I end up on the cutting room floor. It will be both bloody *and* funny, unlike when I started menstruating. Anyway, we got there in time for about 5 songs of real hillbilly honky tonk, featuring a new guy on the steel guitar (new in the sense that he was new to the band, not to the world, for in fact he was much older than the other two members. [Does wisdom come with age? I doubt it. With age comes uncertainty. People who think they know it all are the most afraid to learn something.]). At any rate, the Wailin' Eloyes were followed by Cave Catt Sammy, who also had a new guy with the band. This time, instead of the impressive guitar stylings of Steve Scott, they featured Dave Biller. I am not sure if this is a permanent substitution or what, but if you are gonna have someone step in for Steve Scott, you can do no better than Dave Biller, who has played with Dale Watson, Wayne Hancock, Asylum Street Spankers, Deke Dickerson, the Horton Brothers, and did an exceptional album with steel guitarist Jeremy Wakefield. So it was a surprise and a pleasure to see him here, decoding wondrous riffs with nimble fingers alongside one of the best bass-thumpin' vocalists in the business. Like most bands lumped into the rockabilly category, Cave Catt Sammy has a wider variety of influences ranging from old country to the blues and jazz. In concert, they are some of the very best roots rock performers around, letting their enthusiasm for the music spill out into the crowd like

an old man's weak bladder spills forth unto an adult diaper. They couldn't hold it back, even if they wanted to.

Sorry for that metaphor using excrement (or "excremetaphor," if you will). I have soiled this text many times with my filthy mind. I should be spanked.

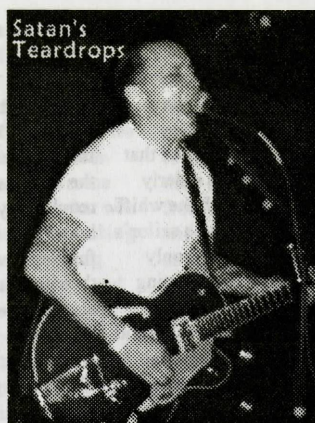
Instead I received a nice hug from someone I had just met last week who was a pretty girl that played drums. It was a nice hug that brought to mind all the noteworthy achievements of civilization. Yep, my mind just went completely blank. But it was a blissful sort of blankness; much the way I hope death feels when its warm, black arms of oblivion envelop me for the Eternal Snuggle.

The More You Know: The most important thing you can do for somebody is to be mean to them, for once they start thinkin' life's a happy-go-lucky circle jerk they'll get too attached to it. People like to cling to things (it is a leftover genetic trait from our days of clinging to branches); they'll cling to lovers, to possessions, to dumb ideas, and ultimately, to corporeal existence.

In my lifetime I have observed many things. I have seen a grown man take a dump on GG Allin's grave. I have witnessed a man dressed up as Zorro teabag another man. I have watched circus cats balance on tight ropes, and I have seen Split Lip Rayfield share a bill with Nick Curran on July 1st at the Beachland. Split Lip Rayfield play break-neck bluegrass featuring acoustic guitar, banjo, mandolin, and tank fiddle. The tank fiddle is a Ford gas tank affixed with a bass neck and strung with a weed-whacker cord. It sounds pretty friggin' bad-ass too. They hail from Kansas and are out seeking favors from the wizard. What kind of favors I am not sure, but I do know that they require no further instrumental proficiency, and their 3 to 4-part harmonies are amazing. Perhaps they will ask the wizard for some pot. I should also mention that Split Lip Rayfield sells "make-your-own" punk patches, which are cross-stitching kits. That'll separate the fans from the fanatics. Before them was Nick Curran and the Nitelives, who play 40's-50's style swingin' blues, but have little trouble throwing in a touch of 60's garage, such as the odd Sonics cover. Last time I saw them they had a different line-up (aside from the drummer). Here they were stripped down to a three-piece, having gotten rid of their incredible sax player. Still, the

nimble fingered six-string savant didn't appear lacking as he floated through a mixed set of originals and covers, all done with a voice that is apparently 40 years older than his body. Before them was Cleveland's Lords of the Highway. I may have mentioned them before. Prior to them was Cap Gun Cowboys, also from Cleveland. We missed part of their set. They play country, and are getting better each time I see them.

The next day was rough. I was heavy with hangover. I don't



Satan's Teardrops

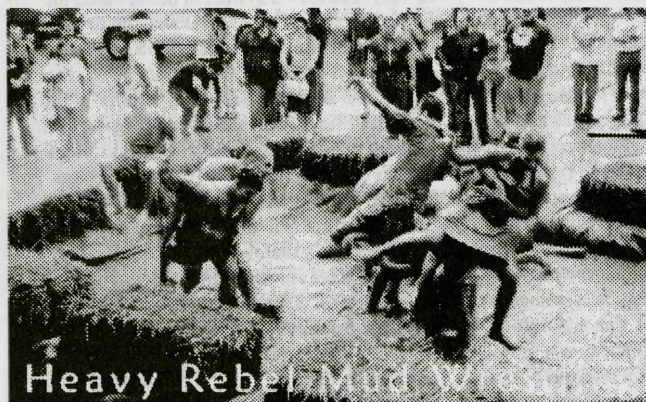
know what I ate when I came home drunk, but it wanted back out. Before I could recover properly we were on our way to the Heavy Rebel Weekender in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Having gotten a late start because my friends had to work, we missed most of the bands on Friday. The one band I did see which was really damn good was Jimmy & The Teasers. Primitive, liberating rock'n'roll that could bring about riots at the Cleveland Zoo, which could in turn

inspire the nation's captive animals to bite the hands that feed them. Revolution! The streets will run red with the blood of the zookeepers! Bring me the head of Jack Hannah!

The next day we ate breakfast with the Wailin' Eloyes at a place called Jimmy the Greek's Kitchen. It was cheap and satisfying just like the ladies down on Lorain Avenue. Then we watched the mud-wrestling free-for-all take place in the rain while the Blind Pharaohs played. Soon thereafter I was watching Ready Teddy and the T-Bucket Terrors. They used to sound more rockabilly, but with the new line-up it came off a bit heavier. Damn good show. After them I entered into some weird rift in the space-time continuum and fucking missed the Mofos, who I really wanted to see. Cruel fate, why dost thou mock me? Then the Lords of the Highway played, and their set was going over like a fat man at a cannibal convention, so after several songs I bounced downstairs to catch all of Satan's Teardrops. I never saw them live aside from a couple hazily recollected songs at last year's Heavy Rebel. What was the result? Well, you know how a good song can give you goose bumps. This band made it feel like those goose bumps were gonna burst and drown the room in sticky red plasma. This was rock'n'roll to make the devil blush. They take rockabilly, psychobilly, surf and honky tonk and blend them to make the perfect cocktail. Better than blowjobs on a Sunday afternoon.

Then there was apparently a wedding upstairs. Marriage is for fools, but I wish them the best. Don't know who they were. I hate most weddings. At least there were huge piles of wedding doughnuts for me hours later to cram into my fists and eat in a drunken fury. Arghhhh! So I stood up there for a while, ingesting whiskey and beer, and talking to my friend Derek, the bad-ass artist (two terms rarely seen together) who makes the amazing busts of Howlvis, Smellvis, Hellvis, etc.

(www.elvisdisease.com). Then I meandered downstairs and discovered a band playing upbeat old-fashioned country with a bubble machine and a deer head. The singer had a great voice, and the band was tighter than a virgin bride. They were called 4 On The Floor. Particularly memorable was the re-working of Buck Owens' "Act Naturally" made into "Fuck Naturally" about becoming a porn star. These guys were probably my best discovery of the weekend. Their show cut through the alcoholic ether to stand out in my memory like a skinhead at the Lilith Fair. After them was another



Heavy Rebel Mud Wrestling

highlight for the weekend, but one I already knew was gonna be great: The Straight 8s. They rocked it better than a crackhead. If there is a better stripped-down and ready rockabilly three-piece out there, I'll shave my pubes and jump into a vat of rubbing alcohol. It was so good I didn't mind missing the wet wife-beater contest upstairs, during which Lisa Marie apparently jumped onstage and mooned everyone. Better to happen then, than at the wedding, I reckon, although if I ever get married I hope someone cares enough to moon me during the ceremony. And then I hit another blank spot in the fabric of reality. People tell me that Artimus Pyledriver was damn good. I don't know because my ghost apparently left my body for a spell. I kind of remember seeing Speed Crazy and a bit of Psychocharger, who had tons of technical problems. They had a baby pool filled with beer, eggs, and seasonings, and another filled with flour, and they were beer-battering themselves. No, this wasn't a drunken hallucination. It really happened; I got independent verification. I also remember seeing a little bit of a rockabilly band called the Flamin' Locos, who I think were from Australia, but I am probably wrong.

By the end of the night I was losing my battle with gravity and cursing my own bipedalism. I had been practicing my on-cue vomiting for the next day because my friend Lacey had demanded that I puke on the Candy Snatchers. It didn't work, although I took my index finger and tickled my uvula like it was a clitoris. I guess I am made of tougher stuff, although I did puke a few weeks ago from a hot dog eating contest, but that is another story. Anyway, the Candy Snatchers didn't play the next day anyway, so I was off the hook. Still, I am left to wonder what they sound like and whether they'd receive my barf with a two-handed showing of the rock'n'roll devil horns, or if they'd receive my upchuck with the kind of dismay most readily expressed with fists.

So, I am ready to go to the hotel and sleep until the Second Coming, but I couldn't find Lisa. No one had seen her since she was helping out with the haunted house that was on the upper level of the venue (which was the old courthouse building). I looked for her up there, but had staggered in the wrong way and ended up hiding in pitch dark rooms trying not to be discovered. I don't know why. Finally, we all gave up and headed back to the car. There she was, passed out in the passenger seat with a glowing puddle of iridescent vomit on the street next to her. It wouldn't be Heavy Rebel if no one got sick, and she had succeeded admirably where I had failed. Heavy Rebel is like boot camp for alcoholism. Sugar probably graduated with the highest honors, though. She not only puked from the window of a moving van, but we had found her passed out on a curb downtown earlier, and also saw her dirty dance up on the Hillbilly Werewolf before diving off the stage. She also lost her glasses and had previously cracked the air conditioner in our hotel room with her head as she somersaulted from bed to bed. She should win a badge or somethin'.

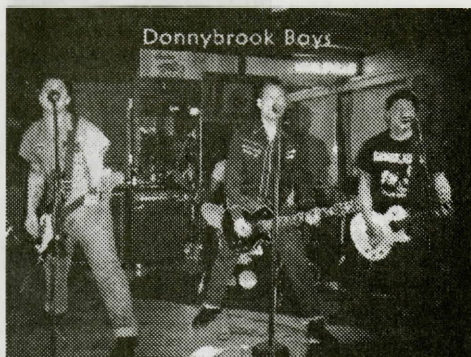
Day three of the festival was by far the most drunken. Only those with endurance and soul can make it. They are the elite forces, undaunted by the need for nutrition or normalcy. They thrive on decadence, feed on the dying embers of decency. You can spot them throughout the venue. They are the ones who walk in shadows of shame, not remembering what they did or said the previous night, but once they get a few more drinks in them, they return to their bold and boisterous selves. On

this day, I saw Nekkid, Flathead Mike's new band, and I have to say, I didn't care for it much at all. I had loved him with the Mercurys every year until now. It was depressing. By the way, I should note that I am leaving out a ton of bands that either I didn't see, saw but didn't know their names, or saw and can't remember what they sounded like. Take your pick. A lot of the hard rock type bands were the ones leaving me a little flaccid. I checked out Angry Johnny and the Killbillies, though, and was pretty impressed. They had an almost folk-type sound with a mandolin player who would later win the Crossroads guitar contest. He sometimes kicked in distortion and it would sound pretty much like a guitar. They covered the Cure, who I don't like, but they did a good job of it. Solid stuff. Then we went and watched the demented psychobilly of the Devil Spades from New York. They had a new vocalist who added a little more of an Oi! feeling to the band. The bass player took over vocals on some songs and sang a bit better I think. The real gold there is Bobcat, whose guitar work is very unusual. He plays odd chords and things that might not even be chords, but he makes them sound very cool. Next, I bounced up the aforementioned Crossroads contest. Since Phil from Rocket 350 didn't make the final cut, I cheered for the mandolin player. I know that pissed off some guitar players. Ha ha! The guy he was up against just wanted it too bad, whereas the mandolin player (named Goatis... I'd root for him just for that!) even clapped for his opponent's fancy-pantsing. Afterwards I caught the Moaners downstairs for the last few songs of their set. They were somehow better here than when I saw them a few weeks ago - slide guitar and drum fury. I was excited. I may have wet myself a bit. The Shakedown followed them and similarly blistered the skin on my face with their rip-roaring brilliance. They kicked ass so hard that I crapped out one of their toes a week later. However, I am still not sure if it was *their* toe that circled my toilet, or that of a crazy one-man band guy from Montreal named Bloodshot Bill. So much ass-kickin' goin' round, it is hard to tell. Bloodshot Bill rocked it so good, I thought my head would fall off. Then came the Blind Pharaohs, who were a solid band in their own right, but were also joined onstage by Frank from the Frantic Flattops for a couple songs, which was cool to see. And then it happened; the Pits played their last show. By this time people were reduced to the mental level of pill-popping monkeys, and it showed. Girls danced with each other on stage while being pelted in their heads with beer cans, and in turn, whipping them back at the crowd. It was war. At any given moment there had to be 50 cans in the air, and everyone was soaked. It felt like being inside a snow globe as it was being shaken. People were jumping on each other and dancing like freaks. I kept running up behind people and lifting them in the air and head-butting a guy in a motorcycle helmet. Garbage cans started flying. I fell on the soggy floor many times and pretended I was a dog and bit people's legs. It was weird. The Pits will do that to you. Then Hillbilly Werewolf went on and it was more of the same: a total rejection of civilization and the boredom it breeds. A rock'n'roll frenzy that would leave us all boozed, bruised, and abused. A damn good time. To cap it off Dusty from the Pits dove through the drum set, had someone else land on top of him, and seemingly broke his leg. How does that please you, O' Mighty Lord of Rock!?

But the night was not over yet. Upstairs Rocket 350 was playing and causing a chaos of their own sonic alchemy. Nobody felt obliged to be couch and watch with a placid, ponderous gaze. Instead people were dancing clumsily on and off the stage. There was a David Allan Coe sing-along, a bunch of great new songs, some trusty old ones, and then the set ended too soon. We somehow made it back to the hotel, had a garbage fight between room 223 and room 233, then went down for a couple hours of shuteye. The next morning we snuck into Room 233, hovered over them until they stirred, then blasted them with pillows for ten minutes. The poor suckers never knew what hit 'em.

The ride home was long and bright, as the sun seemingly mocked us with its disapproving gaze, knowing exactly what debauchery had occurred while it was away staring at the other side of the world. We discussed how commercials geared towards children try to instill greedy consumerist values. Let go of my Eggo! Silly Rabbit, Trix are for kids! Get your own bag! Who ate my Corn Pops? There is no sharing, no higher purpose than getting some lousy junk food all to yourself. No wonder so many people grow up to be fat-ass self-centered wastes of sperm. There are few exceptions, though. Oreo commercials seem to center on sharing the most unhealthy food ever created with your kids, thereby creating a happy cycle of obesity and family bonding over trademarked cookies that leave black grit in your teeth. I think they want those people to die early in order to save social security for the health nuts. I wouldn't be surprised if the habit-forming cream in the middle renders Oreo addicts weak and subservient. Eventually only former hippies will reach retirement age, eating tofu burgers and listening to new age music. The cows may inherit the earth, but the hippies will inherit Medicare.

Speaking of hippies, Kill the Hippies played another show on July 15th at Grilly's in Cleveland. Grilly's is a small old man bar that reportedly has never had a live band before. It was actually a damn good night wherein so much drinking occurred that I puked throughout most of the next day. The Shril opened, this time with Jimbo on bass, although not the Jimbo on bass from the Reverend Horton Heat. How many Jimbos play bass, you might ask. Oh, there are plenty, I might answer. Sugar (a.k.a. Shrilla) still cracks me up, playing cocktail drums like a punk rock voodoo priestess. Her faces and stance are great, plus she's actually really good. Pete blew about an 8-inch stream of snot from his nostril and embarrassed his girlfriend. I thought it was magnificent. Not as disturbing as his shrieks, though; which, without a microphone, could still be heard over the growling feedback of the guitars. His voice is good enough to make girls swoon, but not so good that you want to break his nose. After them, it was Shark Pants, who actually were the impetus for this last minute show to come together. Shark Pants are a three-piece punk band on tour from Tucson, who feature members of Swing Ding Amigos and the Blacks. Isaac sings, plays guitar, and has the worst tattoo of the bunch. Vanessa plays bass and just got a cool new job. Dick is the low-riding drummer who once was a porn star. Together they combine for eccentric auditory mayhem that made even the junkie whores



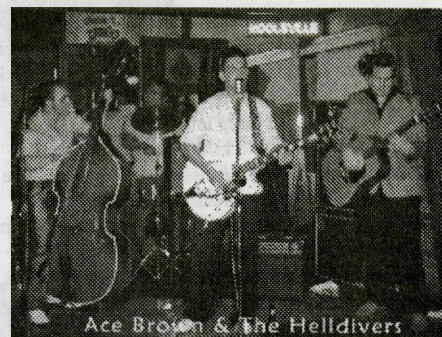
outside perk up and say, "Deeeee-aaaaammn!" If you could gauge their rockiness by the outward expansion of my liver, I'd say they exhibited stage 4 cirrhosis about to go supernova. This, of course, alarmed me because Kill The Hippies were next. Would my liver simply burst, leaving me to die on the floor of Grilly's like the hateful bar dreg that I've become? Luckily, I toughed it out, only to nearly die the next day from the residual after-effects of stage 4 rock-n-roll. Kill The Hippies kicked my ass. I'd bob right, and catch a devastating hook, go left and get a penetrating jab. I'd go inside and they'd catch me with a pummeling uppercut. Getting hit from all angles with punk rock genius, I just had to admit their supremacy over the Ohio punk scene. If you don't believe me, you're an idiot, and should find a village somewhere that appreciates you.

The More You Know: People who wear visors (especially backwards, crooked, or upside down) subconsciously want you to stick claw hammers into their heads and beat their skulls wafer thin.

Speaking of brains, I have started to really think out my anti-intellectualist philosophy. I decided that it is a good idea to fervently believe in any idea that you can easily explain after 8 beers. If someone questions you on it, just call them brainwashed liberals and pray that God passes (holy) water over their heads. Thinking in the past has led to socialism, the teaching of evolution, and atomic weaponry. Who knows what the intellectual elite will think of next? Besides, when has thinking ever made anybody happy? Stupid people are cheerful, carefree and confident. That's why smart people do drugs and drink so much: they are jealous of the happy-go-lucky dumbshits. Smart people think it is romantic to die by choking on your own vomit while drunk and high on barbituates. Stupid people think it is romantic to die for some bullshit ideal.



Speaking of ideal, the pairing of the 7 Shot Screammers with the Coffin Bangers was the best match since Plato and Socrates entered into a tag-team philosophical fray with Nietzsche and Schopenhauer for a mental paradigm cage match chock full of cerebral action and sizzling axioms. The Coffin Bangers began the night with the dynamic drive of a hundred deranged doctrines distilled into one decisively diabolical dogma. We concert-goers danced like demented druids in the twisted glow of enmity and corruption as our souls evaporated into the forest canopy and the earth was flooded with the sanguine secretions of the Infernal Goatmaster. Wait a second... that's what happened on my camping trip with Mistress Misanthrope and Count Lucius von Doom on our four-day apocalyptic getaway tour of Lower Hades (you haven't lived until you've seen the blue and purple foliage of the hanging trees). Anyway, after the Bangers came the Screammers, so there was a lot of bengin' and screamin' goin' on, which sounds uncannily like my bedroom (when I am alone there, of course). The 7 Shot Screammers left us more electrified than Ted Bundy in his last-stop seizure chair, and more excited than Roberto Benigni in a German whorehouse. They delivered their rowdy rockabilly ruckus in glammed-out glory and made drunken kidneys leak their pent up fluids, as though a crowd of high-strung Chihuahuas were simultaneously greeting their masters with a welcoming commotion. Afterwards a bunch of us replenished our empty bladders with alcoholic compensation and relinquished our empty minds to diastolic conversation. The next night we went to Columbus, since both bands were playing again at a Drifters Car Club show at the Voodoo Lounge. This would prove to be the last Coffin Bangers show, and not a bad one despite the fact that they never stopped drinking since the previous night: not even to sleep. The better-rested Screammers of course went over like a box of Twinkies at Overeaters Anonymous. We arrived in time to see the last few songs of Blatant Finger, which sounded good, and I also caught Ace Brown and the Helldivers, who made a complete turnaround from the sloppy show I saw of theirs a year ago. They now play rockabilly with a level of competence and authenticity that should land them a prestigious post in traditional circles. Unfortunately I missed a couple bands that I wished to see at this show, namely The Stardevils and The Donnybrook Boys. Lisa has informed me that both were indeed excellent. The Stardevils I've seen before and knew they'd be great. The Donnybrook Boys are a Columbus band who reportedly sound influenced by GCS and Cocksparrer, and did it quite well. The reason I missed these bands is because Lacey, Johnny and I jetted over to Skully's on High Street to catch a rare New Bomb Turks show. When we got there the Spitz were playing, and I was bummed out to have missed all but three of their songs. They were featured on our 2nd Rocked-N-Loaded compilation, and on this night they were exemplifying all that I like about punk rock, namely the delightfully crude irreverence of antisocial wiseasses. When the New Bomb Turks came on I wasn't sure what to expect, since I had never seen them before. The club was packed solid with lovers of frantic garage punk debauchery, and I don't think anyone was disappointed. Their singer is the sort of high strung impudent frontman that I love: insulting the crowd, pulling their faces to his crotch by their hair, stealing hats and cigarettes, picking



his nose, jumping on people's heads, and just generally being an ADD bastard. The songs came in rapid-fire succession, only slowing at one point so the crowd could be urged to crouch down to the floor in reverence, then they all leapt into the air at once like spring-loaded pistons as the song fired back up. In short: a damn good show.

And this is a long damn column, so I am going to quickly fit in the remaining info. I saw the Derailers at the Beachland Ballroom and thought they were just okay. I didn't watch them too closely since I was selling merch in the hallway. They seemed largely influenced by Buck Owens, which was cool, and they were extremely competent, but I just didn't get much of a charge out of watching them for some reason. I also caught the Legendary Hucklebucks at the Grog Shop, which snapped me out of my somnambulist state and awakened my appetite for destruction, which later culminated in me accidentally breaking out the front tooth of my friend Jessica's mouth during the Lords of the Highway's set. I mean, the cans were flying all over, and she poked over Sugar's shoulder at the exactly wrong time, like a prairie dog popping up just in time to receive a face full of buckshot. Sorry Jessica! Anyway, the Hucklebucks bring a brawling boisterousness to the table, bolstered by rollicking riffs and an animated vocalist. Falling somewhere between rockabilly and AC/DC, this night they played a jaw-busting new instrumental that also alluded to some metal background (*Bonded by Blood*, my brothers!). Before them was a Brand New band from Medina called the Slack-Jawed Yokels, who have a tight Reverend Horton Heat/Nashville Pussy-inspired style, and are certainly on the rise in these parts. Once they get comfortable on-stage, I expect great things. Later, when the Lords of the Highway went on, they played some new songs that will give you multiple orgasms on their new album due out in late 2004 available through RRP.

I also caught Slim Cessna again at the Beachland. This time The Spinns from North Carolina opened up and promptly held me by the ears until I conceded that they play the sort of 60's garage rock'n'roll that does *not* suck. I actually thought they were quite effective at wow-ing my weary brains. Perhaps it is because they didn't have an organ, and seemed to have old Rolling Stones influence. Regardless, they were top shelf like the hooch you keep locked away from prying houseguests. After them was New Planet Trampoline, who reportedly were gonna sound like early Pink Floyd, but actually sounded like overly saccharine nerve-graters who forced me outside in order to avoid the stench of their malodorous musical miasma. After them, of course things went back to a state of non-

stinkiness, perhaps even claiming a divine fragrance as Slim Cessna took the stage. Suffice it to say, they made my sober mind feel drunk with the glory and the light of their passion and frenzy. I interviewed Slim this night, so read that too you slackers.

Now that I live in the big city I can do things I never could do before. I can bench press 250 pounds, speak the ancient language of the Sumerians, and read the minds of turtles (did you know that beneath that hard exterior they are really just sentimental ole softies?). I can also go shows on work nights. This latter ability came in handy when Kings of Nuthin' came through on a Tuesday night to the Pirate's Cove. Why they played there, I am not sure. The sound was very poor, but they still muscled through their set minus a sax player, who either wandered off from a campground in Southern Ohio in a bewildered state of drunkenness the previous night, or left tour a few days early to register for classes. They had a new bass player with some big shoes to fill, but he seemed more than up to it, smacking the doghouse in ways that made the little girls blush. Still, I miss the showmanship Spike had. Also brand spankin' new was Trafton from Satan's Teardrops on guitar, who had only a week to learn the songs before leaving on tour. Of course, with this larger band his fingers were more restrained, but it was still a great move putting him in the line-up. All in all, it was a good show, but understandably not the best I've seen of K.O.N., and they didn't set anything on fire this time.

Then on September 16th, back in my element at the Beachland, we again caught Deke Dickerson. In fact, we caught him the parking lot, naked in his van changing his clothes. Those pictures will be Photo-Shopped and put up on SixStringBeefcakes.com later this month (check the Jigglin' Gigolos section). The show that ensued afterwards was so good that I began to doubt all those things I learned about Deke in his E! Behind the Scenes Hollywood Documentary. That pure and virtuous voice could not have once cursed at Fred Rogers during a drunken dispute over a "quarter bag" of the marijuana. Those large and agile hands had a gentleness about them that belied the assertion that they had once beat Tawny Kitaen during their racy 4-month affair. In fact, the only truth I could ascertain from the whole program was that Deke's music looms large in the minds of the tasteful and dignified under-classes, which is likely why they stumped in Ohio so soon after their last stop. You see, Sugarballs is actively campaigning for the presidency, and Ohio is an important swing state. Just recently Cleveland was voted the poorest large city in the nation, so the SB2004 ticket tried to appeal to our poverty-stricken constituency. To accomplish this, songs were biologically altered with his agenda implanted deep within. "Big Balls" by AC/DC took on new meaning, while elsewhere he perpetrated Sir Mixalot with an unmitigated temerity.

Speaking of temerity, the Dead Boys played a tribute to Stiv Bators at the Beachland Ballroom on September 18th with several opening bands paying homage as well. First was the Rainy Day Saints, who honestly didn't do much at all for me, then came Cobra Verde who were a bit better, but not melting my frozen heart either. The Witchhunters played next and were pretty decent, featuring members of the Pagans. After them came The Sign Offs, who actually surprised me, sounding more like an 80's heavy metal band a la Ratt than anything punk rock. They had some good energy, but I wouldn't call myself a fan. For my money the Dead Boys mopped them all up, and I'm not saying that because it is expected of me. In fact, with so many old punk bands in need of musical viagra, I half expected them to be nothing more than a Sunday drive down memory lane. Thank God I was wrong. Cheetah Chrome took on the vocal duties with a great raspy growl while Stiv's jacket hung upon a mic stand center stage. The crowd was a mixture of everything from

weathered 70's punk riff-raff to their pimple-faced teenage torchbearers, and to say that they were excited would be an understatement judging by the bodies in the air. The band did everything right, not fine-tuning the old songs or softening the blow at all, which after a quarter century is quite a feat. Perhaps it is owing to the fact that they haven't gotten back together to write more songs and flog a dead horse (at least to my knowledge), but rather just did this as a one-off deal to raise a ruckus in honor of a fallen friend. Whatever the reason, those classic tunes couldn't have sounded better.

To contradict the atmosphere of that night, a few days later we saw Junior Brown in the same place. Here the floor was filled with seated patrons instead of surging bodies, but the overall enthusiasm was undiminished. Opening the show was the Whiskeyhounds from Kent, who had a sort of alt. country/rock sound augmented by fiddle, mandolin, and altogether tight musicianship. Their cover of "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag" showed some vocal dynamism as well. Following them Junior proceeded to shock and awe with his rustic baritone and fleet-fingered wizardry. He plays a double neck, with the lower protrusion being a steel guitar, the strings of which he bends with his fretting fingers rather than with levers or a pedal. The set builds from truck-drivin' tunes, to blues, to surf rock, and even finally to Hendrix – all the while showcasing a virtuosity on the strings that'll make your eyes go cross and your brain recoil with a jiggling tremor of awe. Imagine a Jell-O mould atop of a washing machine during the spin cycle, and that will be your brain. It is amazing that I did not leave the place permanently retarded, forever to roam the streets of Cleveland leaving a trail of drool cascading from the corners of my vacant grin. My pockets would be full of shattered dreams, broken promises, and the sacred feces the red mud bat that wards off malevolent spirits as I sleep under the watch of the moon spirits.

Then on the 24th we saw Lords of the Highway again because if you see them over 100 times you get a free foot massage, and Lord knows my feet are aching for the therapeutic touch of capable musicians. Opening was the Alligators, who we only caught a few songs of. The music was really good: a cranked up surf rock, but the vocals could use a bit of work. Next up was the Whiskey Daredevils premier performance. They are borne from the ashes of the Cowslingers, and are within a stone's throw stylistically, perhaps a more garagy Americana. They covered "Lynch the Landlord" by Dead Kennedys and "Mr. Brownstone" by GNR, which was good times. Greg is still a fast-witted frontman, and it seems the overall sound is a little muddier, which is a good thing.

The next night we came back to the Beachland to see Dead Moon, who play something akin to a proto-punk garage rock, but come from the angle of having

lived it, and having continued to live it since it first reared its ugly head. The vocals are shared by the female bassist and male guitarist, who both are in their mid-fifties and have been playing music for decades. What smacks you straight away is the raw but enduringly catchy songwriting: incorporating melody without sounding saccharine and using refrains that don't go stale after two cycles. Perhaps even more impressive was the passion they transmitted to audience. There is still more than a flicker of life left in these scruffy rockers as they approach Medicare eligibility. What I loved about Dead Moon can be directly contrasted with their opener, however. Thee Shams from Cincinnati played a 60's rock with some slight Southern and psychedelic undertones, but they failed to hook me in any way, shape, or form. Musically uninteresting and not fun on a superficial level either. I was just bored. Local openers, The New Lou Reeds, were better. They played a solid, garagy nerd-rock with some of Credence's cadences in the guitar, and a bit of Neil Young in the vocals. Occasionally they meandered, though, making me think that some of the songs, like most French girls, could use a trim.

So now I leave you to stew in your own juices and mortgage your soul for falsehoods and filth until the slumlord down below makes an lowball offer on your depreciating spirit. Personally, my soul is filled with my life's savings, and with its increasing market value, in just two more years it will be out of the Devil's price range.

Endnotes

- 1 At this point I am quitting parentheticals in favor of footnotes. You are welcome.
- 2 "(I Think) My Baby Is a Communist"
- 3 Indecent exposure in the presence of a blind person of the same sex.
- 4 If you found that funny, you are a nerd. Why are you listening to John Cage??
- 5 Truth hurts. Words

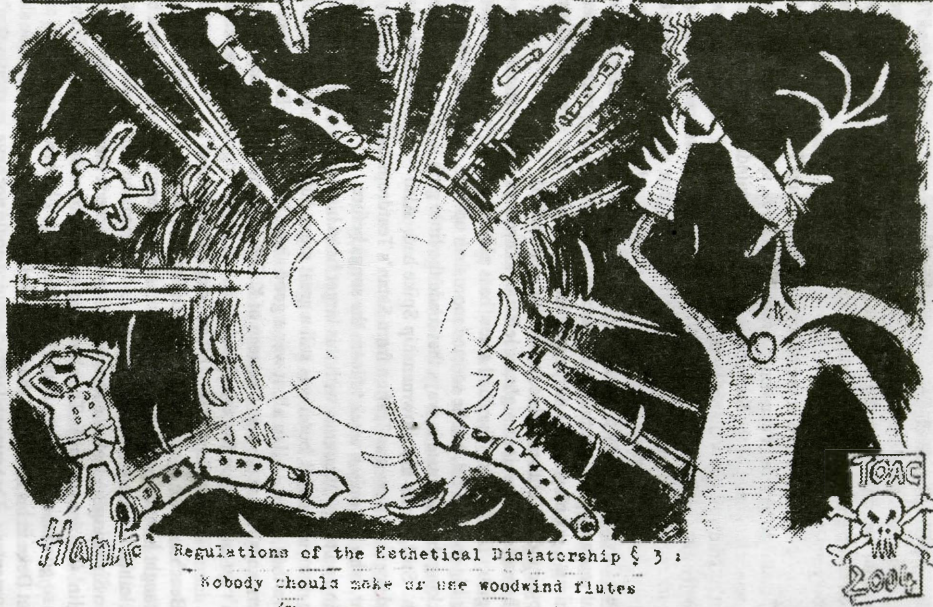
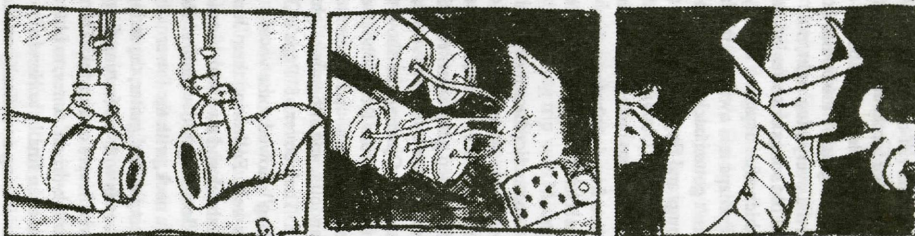
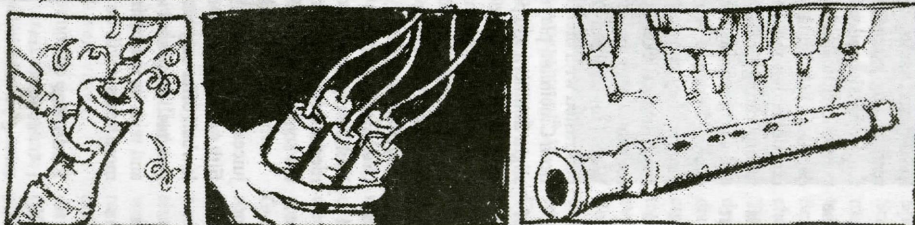
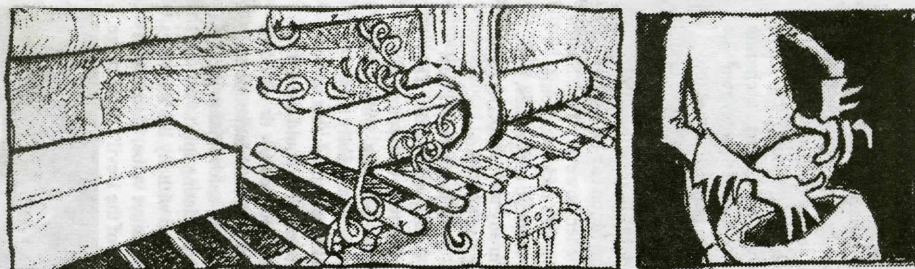
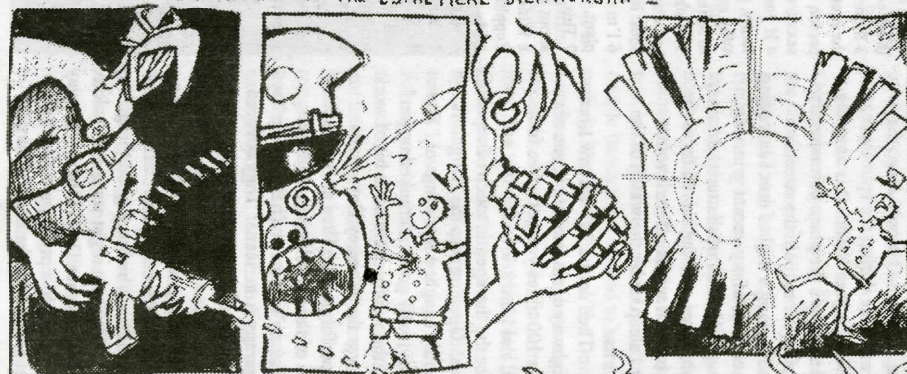
- are weapons; they cripple the spirit and dehydrate the soul. Inside me is a shriveled old man with colon polyps.
- 6 I'm not afraid to make enemies. I'll poop on a potted plant, fucker! I just don't care.
- 7 This may be somewhat of an overstatement if I thought about it more, but not by much.
- 8 Which reminds me, will people ever get sick of Led Zeppelin? I don't have a *Whole Lotta Love* left for 'em.
- 9 My apologies to any mimes who resent being compared to Kiss. I know that was a low blow to you & your craft.
- 10 You too Alice Cooper!
- 11 Someone recently suggested to me that the president was not stupid, but only faking it so that he would appeal to the average citizen: concealing his true evil under a deceptive cloak of idiocy. I find this hard to believe. He has the eyes of a gentle man-child and swaggers like a cockiness of a circus midget foolishly on his way to the tiger cage with a tube of K-Y.
- 12 Sorry for the parenthetical, but man, I needed that. I knew I shouldn't have quit cold turkey.
- 13 I felt the gorilla's stare to be particularly condemning.
- 14 Tennyson
- 15 Holy Cows think that us eating them is barbaric and makes them into martyrs. They also believe that Mad Cow disease will infect humans as a punishment for their sins.
- 16 Don't believe me? Go to the beach or a tanning salon. The fear of unflattering pastiness outweighs the fear of skin cancer. Long live the pasties! - BL





PSYCHO ROOSTER sets it straight

GUARDIAN OF THE ESTHETICAL DICTATORSHIP



Hank

Regulations of the Esthetical Dictatorship § 3 :

Nobody should make or use woodwind flutes

(Exception : Lalo Schifrin)

