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# **ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND**

Vol. 10 - #1 - Issue 55 - December 2013 / January 2014

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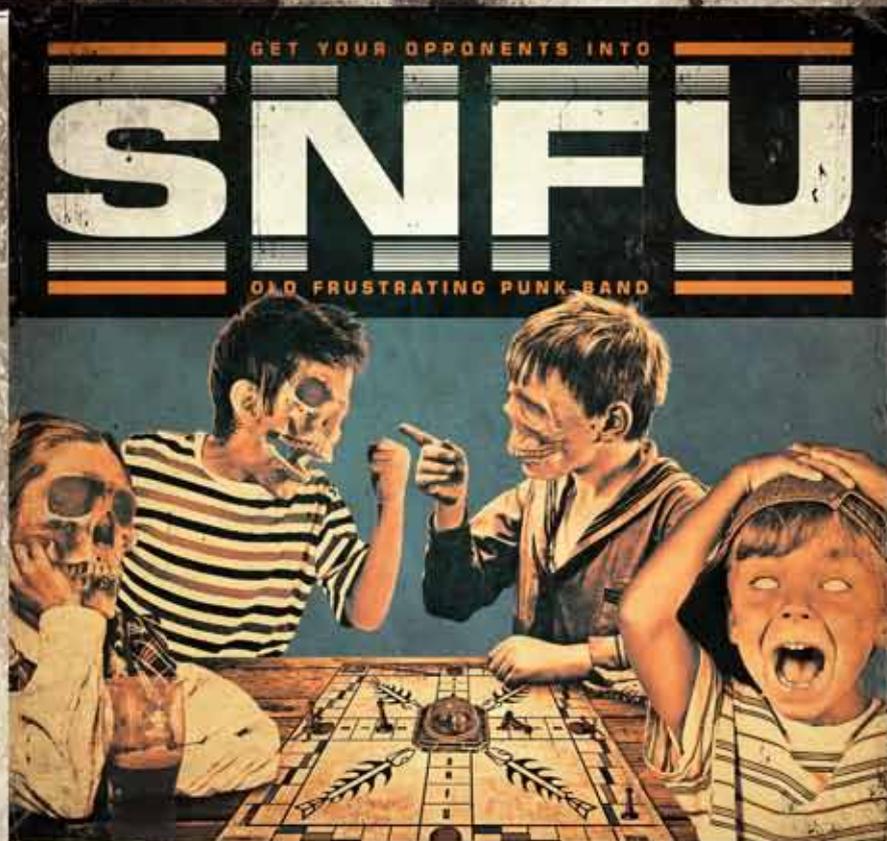
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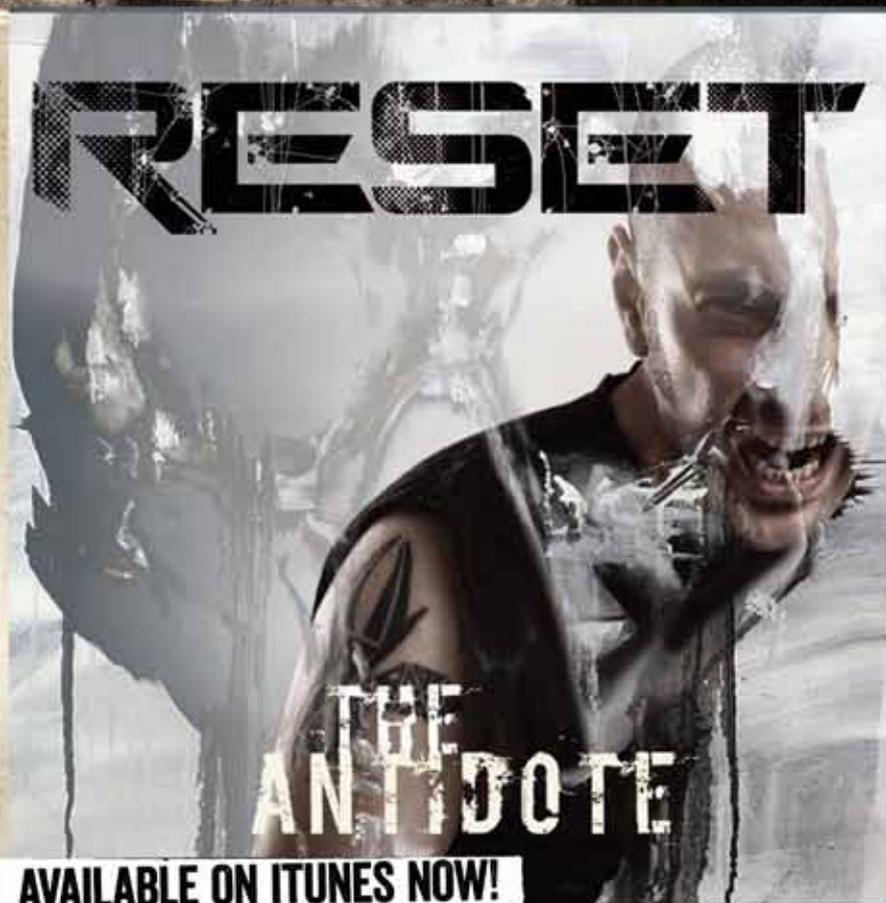
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Published by Ira Hunter

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## Two Years and Counting

Interview by Alex Snow

Here's a local Victoria band, in which three of the members (funny enough) live together in

my old house. I got to sit with them in my old living room, to talk about roasting babies, crazy shows with sweaty ceilings and verbal hashtags. Rambunctious and driven, these guys know how to play a show and party even harder afterwards.

**Absolute Underground: So, first I've gotta ask, why 'Two Years and Counting?'**

TYAC: Uh... there are two reasons. One: the band was formed in 2010, and we were all watching a bunch of apocalyptic movies at that point. Two Years and Counting...formed in 2010...impending doom. The real reason though, was it took all of us like two years to meet and get an actual band started. It started as kind of a joke, like: 'Two years and still trying.'

**AU: Well, this sounds better than the latter. How would you describe your sound to somebody unfamiliar with your music?**

TYAC: We really play what we want to hear. Progressive, melodic, hardcore...it's really a mixture of things. Everybody in this band has

different influences and we try and combine them all the best we can.

Josh [Christensen - Drums] is into everything being really half-time, low and dirty. Julien [Ryhorchuk - Bass/Vocals] ...similar, but with a lot more bass and electronic effects. Chase [Fraser] is more into like, noise. Ambience. Stoner shit. And then there's Clay [Clayton Rourke - Vocalist] who's into breakdowns and like, breaking sticks.

**AU: So it is just you five in the band then. You've recently added Chase to the band - what happened to Adam?**

TYAC: Adam was just really his own person. A lot more metal...proper metal than any of us are. He had a previous band; he's in Acolytes ov Impurity. They're melodic black metal, which is more of what he wanted to do. So when that took off it was just kinda like, 'Alright. Adios.' It was kind of a shitty situation, right before the CD release. Actually, that show was Chase's trial run. We threw him on stage after half-assedly learning three songs, and it went really well. Adam had wonderful hair, though, which is worth mentioning. Chase fits us a lot better in terms of personality, so it really worked out.

**AU: Do you guys have any recording in progress?**

TYAC: We released an album called *The Time has Come* in February, and we've just started writing new material. Hopefully if things go our way, we'll be releasing an EP maybe by the springtime.

**AU: Well I guess it's fortunate that some of you guys live together. How do you all kick it after a show?**

TYAC: Haha. Normally we don't remember. There's usually beer and shots involved before the show. Beer and shots involved during the show. Beer and shots after the show...then there's whiskey.

## VICTORIA'S LOCALS ONLY



Well, Jack is usually present for all of it.

**AU: What's the craziest show you've played thus far?**

TYAC: Nanaimo: we played with Ninjaspy. We were 50 people over capacity and turned 40 away at the door. There were broken noses, broken fingers, and the ceiling was literally dripping sweat. DRIPPING SWEAT. It was awesome.

**AU: Who's the biggest, or best, band you've played with?**

TYAC: There are tons. Fall in Archaea is notable. Take the Earth Beneath Us a couple times... How Those Die, from Toronto. Those guys are rad.

**AU: Any last words?**

TYAC: Drink whiskey. Also, we're all out of beer. Are we gonna party? But for real. Final last words? Go to a local show. Hashtag support your scene. Hashtag fuckdrunksluts.

**More information at:**

<https://www.facebook.com/twoyearsandcountingmusic>

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## Tyrants Blood

Interview by Willow Gamberg

**Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most famous for?**

Marco Banco: Famous!? Hell no, I suppose for playing guitar for metal bands in Vancouver since the dawn of time.

**AU: You guys just released *Into the Kingdom of Graves* this July, your first release since 2009's *Crushing Onward Into Oblivion*. What can you tell us about it? Has your style evolved at all since your last release?**

MB: Style's evolved greatly, as it should - but naturally, not forced. Since the group's inception,

maintained that we would do our best to be progressive in our approach, to keep it interesting, really. So when it came to writing for the new album, we did just

that. However, I will say that we did dissect the pieces more so than before, really tore some stuff down and built it back up a bit more custom, until we felt it to be what we wanted.

**AU: What shows/tours do you have coming up that you're particularly excited for?**

MB: Looking forward to Scandinavia/Europe next year. That will be excellent, I'm sure.

**AU: What's the craziest thing that's ever happened at a Tyrants Blood show?**

MB: I think the show in Germany being stopped by ANTIFA (Anti-Facism Group) was just so out of hand. That, for me, was just as ridiculous and confusing as anything I've ever had to deal

then taken on by BlackLands Club to perform at 4 a.m. regardless, to a sold-out house with Vassafor, was just spectacular. What a great, unforgettable night that was.

**AU: What is your philosophy when it comes to death metal?**

MB: Well I follow the style I grew up on in this form. So when I think of death metal, I hear Possessed's *Seven Churches*, Morbid Angel's *Altars of Madness*, Incantation's *Onward to Golgotha*, Sarcophago's *I.N.R.I.*, *Unquestionable Presence*, Deicide's *Legion*, Suffocation's *Effigy of the Forgotten*, Autopsy, Atheist, Cynic, etc. This is sound and complexity in its original, most fascinating stage, when every group brought its own face and style to the genre. So my philosophy is to remain within the most extreme form, while staying authentic to myself.

**AU: You guys are releasing *Into the Kingdom of Graves* on vinyl this November, through Tridroid Records, is that right? Vinyl releases seem to be getting more common among the prog bands, but less so for heavier acts... What do you think the vinyl medium brings to the music/fans?**

MB: Yes, Tridroid records released the album on vinyl November 15th, that's right. Vinyl is very popular in metal these days. I think it always has been, because artwork plays such a major role in the overall packaging of metal music.

Metal is very much based in merchandising and collecting. Especially within the underground scene, it is the more sought-after medium, with the classic albums especially. I think heavy music, death metal, black, speed, punk rock and hardcore, as well as the old record collecting days of the 60s, 70s and 80s, really is the binding for the whole industry as far as the cream of the merchandising pie goes. Everyone seeks out that vinyl gem version of their fave album, no matter

# VANCOUVER VENGEANCE



©CharleneTupper

how many CD, mp3 or iTunes versions they already have.

Anyway, most of the extreme styles of music are written in album form, not as singles, radio hits and such. For the listener, it's a whole experience that vinyl brings that CDs, iTunes and mp3 downloads can't fulfill quite as well.

**AU: Any plans for future releases/tours?**

MB: Yes, as I mentioned, we are getting our European/Scandinavian campaign together in support of this album. In the meantime, we are putting the finishing touches on an EP we have written that will accompany a live album we are releasing from a show in Warsaw, Poland, from the *Crushing Onward Into Oblivion* European tour.

**AU: Anything else your Canadian fans should know? Final words?**

MB: For sure, thanks for taking the time and interest in us. To all the deathbangers, firebreathers, black metal skinheads, witches and destroyers, all power to the underground!

**More information at:**

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## Throne of Vengeance

Interview by Allison Drinnan

If you're looking for heavy rock 'n roll, you need not look any further than Calgary. Over the last few years, there has been a resurgence of classic early rock mixed with catchy heavy metal riffs. People are looking to rock out and have a good time in Cow-Town, and no one provides a better soundtrack than Throne of Vengeance.

being seven

songs of kick-you-in-the-face heavy rock 'n roll. It was a 'soft' release in Calgary and we plan to do a full release in mid-February. We recorded it here in Calgary with Ian Dillon (Electric Revival) at Electric Park studio and had it mixed and produced by our friend Paul Sabu, who recorded our last record, *Flesh Engine*. The new record, named *Live Evil* (as in, "live your life"), is a collection of songs

The band, featuring lead guitarist and vocalist Tommy Shakes, guitarist Brady Side, bassist Riley Cobb and drummer Trevor Cobb, started out in 2008. Since then they have released an EP, *Toxic Black Cloud*, a full-length called *Flesh Engine* and have completed two Canadian tours.

Throne of Vengeance just did a 'soft' release of their latest offering, a seven-song EP called *Live Evil*. We caught up with Trevor Cobb via email, to talk about the EP and all things heavy metal, before the official release in February.

**Absolute Underground: Tell me about your next release, I believe it is your second full-length?**

Trevor Cobb: It's more of an EP,



based on the last two years of our lives. It contains some particularly heavy topics for us, including a song about our close friend going to jail for something as innocent as a victimless crime ('Hands Tied'); another is about how your actions and thoughts impact not only your day-to-day life, but those around you ('Impact'), and 'Terminal Velocity' is based on human evolution and how we have hit a point now where we are heading straight to our demise at a uncontrolled rate of descent.

**AU: How do you think your sound has evolved since your first full-length and why did you choose to work with Paul Sabu again? I read he has worked with Prince - so awesome!**

TC: Yes. He has worked with a number of great artists including Alice Cooper, WASP, David Bowie, and of course, Prince! We chose to go with Paul again because of his high production standards and the years of experience he brings to the table. Give the album one listen and you'll see what I mean.

Where *Flesh Engine* was more of a thrashy, riff-oriented album based on government and ruling class having their hands in your business, *Live Evil* is a palindrome for life: there is good, and there is evil. I think the message we are trying to get across is that you should be your own person and live life how you see fit. Since having Brady in the band, we have had more flow with our tunes; the songs are a complete unit rather than a bunch of cool parts thrown together. We've all evolved and you can hear that in the vocal melodies and deliverance of the lyrics.

**AU: I've noticed that there has been a revival of 'heavy rock 'n roll' or rock-based metal in Calgary (ie: Daywalker, Chron Groblin, Doberman)... Why do you think that is? It seemed like it was missing for a while.**

TC: Absolutely! I think that's because of one simple reason... rock 'n roll will never die! People will always grow and move on to different styles of music, but at the core is the classics that you grew up listening to and you'll always hold a place for that sound, i.e. Sabbath, Thin Lizzy, Maiden,

# CALGARY CARNAGE

Priest, and Megadeth.

As far as the revival of Calgary's scene goes, when you see a band who is passionate and very talented rock the stage on any given night of the week, it's easy to become inspired and find the need to create! We've been playing with these bands for years now and to see the scene grow in the way it has is truly heart-warming. Calgary's scene is on the rise in a major way, and I expect the world will see Calgary as something much more than a flooded Stampede ground in the near future.

**AU: How do you think Calgary has influenced your sound?**

TC: There is so much diversity to Calgary's physical and cultural landscape that it gives you endless points of inspiration. On any given day we can hit the trails on our dirt bikes or hit the hills for a day of boarding. Walk by the river to chill out or hit downtown for an awesome metal show. You're a product of your environment, that's why TOV is unique in our genre.

**AU: What is in the future for TOV?**

TC: TOV will be doing some interesting events in the new year, including a formal all-acoustic gig in Calgary, recorded live; an official release of *Live Evil*, with a coast-to-coast-tour in the spring; and lots of videos... We like to compile our lives into music videos to give people a taste of who we are as people as well as musicians.

There is nothing more gratifying than seeing something that you're a part of grow and flourish, so if you are an independent music supporter, go out there, buy the albums, and follow the bands you love. Who knows, maybe someday you will be able to say.. I was a part of that!

**PHOTO CREDIT: Paige Woodbury**

More information at: <http://www.throneofvengeance.com/>

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**WED.4 GAMES NIGHT & DJ TREX**

**THUR.5 DIGITAL WINTER AND DETACHED OBJECTIVES**

**FRI.6 CHRIS NAISH / IVORY SMOKE & DEVAH QUARTET (ONT.)**

**SAT.7 HIRAM KING & EXIT STRATEGY**

**SUN.8 BEER, BACON & BOOBS A BURLESQUE BRUNCH 1PM**

**SUN.8 REBIRTH EVENTS PRESENTS**

**MON.9 OPEN COMMUNITY JAM**

**WED.11 GAMES NIGHT & DJ TREX**

**FRI.13 ILLUMINATED MINERVA PAINTED GLASS & BELL TOWER**

**SAT.14 TWISTED CHRISTMAS DOMESTIC BEAR & FUNKENSHEIST**

**TUES.17 KINK & DRINK**

**WED.18 GAMES NIGHT & DJ TREX**

**THUR.19 THE JIMMY PAC KEITH MORRISON BAND**

**FRI.20 REBIRTH EVENTS PRESENTS**

**SAT.21 NEW WORLD SAINTS**

**MON.23 OPEN COMMUNITY JAM**

**FRI.27 CLASS ACTION W/GUESTS**

**SUN.29 REBIRTH EVENTS PRESENTS... ALL AGES**

**TUES. DEC. 31 - NEW YEARS EVE-BEST PRE PARTY EVER. NOON-8PM**

### JANUARY

**TUES.7 KINK & DRINK**

**WED.8 GAMES NIGHT & DJ TREX**

**THUR.9 BEER CORE THURSDAY'S**

**FRI.10 MOOSIFIX AGONY SPAWN BLACKEST SIN**

**SAT.11 GALES OF AVALON OCCULUS / FRIGHTENSTIEN**

**SUN.12 BEER, BACON & BOOBS A BURLESQUE BRUNCH 1PM**

**MON.13 OPEN COMMUNITY JAM**

**WED.15 GAMES NIGHT & DJ TREX**

**FRI.17 ZIPGUN WISDOM W/GUESTS**

**SAT.18 RHINESTONE AFFAIR W/THE SUPPLIERS**

**TUES.21 KINK & DRINK**

**WED.22 GAMES NIGHT & DJ TREX**

**THUR.23 BEER CORE THURSDAY'S**

**FRI.25 PUTTIN ON THE FOIL W/GUESTS**

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## Terrifying Teddy Bears

An interview with Quiet Room Bears creator Lee Howard

By Lacey Paige

Teddy bears have been a dearly cherished symbol of childhood innocence since the early part of the 20th century. Toy makers originally aspired to create them with as much resemblance to real bear cubs as possible, and it goes without saying that these plushy playthings have evolved significantly with the changing times. Winnie the Pooh, Paddington Bear, Teddy Ruxpin—most of us will remember these beloved fur balls from the prime of our youth. But the warm and fuzzy feelings that those guys brought to our childhoods has long since expired, and there's a new line of not-so-cuddly, warped and unwelcoming teddy bears up for grabs in the seedy underbelly of the custom toy market.

These terrifying teddies are known as The Quiet Room Bears. Intentionally unprofessionally crafted, with as much blood, insanity and fear that creator Lee Howard could stitch into them, they are a one-of-a-kind brand that is building a solid fan base within the horror community. With Christmas being just around the corner, and kids going bat-shit crazy over the newest and coolest toys, Absolute Underground wanted to learn more about the most balls-out, terror-inspiring, gnarliest toy that is currently available, so we chatted with artist Lee Howard about the birth and evolution of his Quiet Room Bears.

**Absolute Underground: How did the birth of the Quiet Room Bears come about?**

Lee Howard: The Quiet Room Bears started about 12 years ago when my brother and his wife were having a themed Halloween party, which was 'Rosemary's Baby Shower'. They had this little demon baby doll in a crib and the contest they were running was that whoever brought the best gift for the baby, won. I figured that every baby needs a teddy bear, so the Son of Satan needs a

teddy bear that looks like the most hideous thing ever. They didn't end up doing the contest, but I brought it anyway and the reaction was super awesome, so I thought, 'Maybe I'll try and make more!'

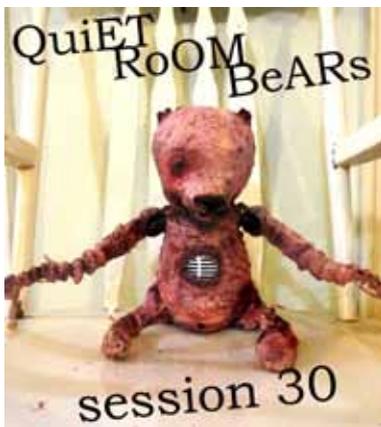
**AU: What inspired the name 'Quiet Room Bears' and the underlying essence of these macabre creations?**



LH: The 'Quiet Room' comes from A Nightmare on Elm Street 3—in the institution, it's the room where the kids get put when they flip out too much. The film Session 9 was also a huge influence in creating the back-story. The Bears don't have names per se, but session numbers as they're all one-of-a-kind creations, and it ties into the back story of the inmates who get placed for sessions in the Quiet Room, where the Bears get made. I just wanted to create something that looked like some bat-shit crazy inmate somewhere just stitched

this thing together with string, glue and maybe some of his own body parts and fluids. I didn't want to make something that was just 'gross', but something that was actually kind of disturbing to look at. The Bears are not characters, but more like vessels of madness. Think of the puzzle box from Hellraiser—something people just seem to want and need, only NOTHING good will come of getting it.

**AU: Obviously horror has had a significant influence over the kind of art you create. Tell me a bit about your relationship with the genre and how you've come to be so connected to it.**



LH: When I was really little, I was super afraid of horror movies, but one day when I was 10 years old, my older brother Bill—who is also a huge horror fan—put in A Nightmare on Elm Street 2, and I was all ready to be too afraid to watch it, but

it just flipped a switch in me. From that day forward I was a horror junkie; I just couldn't get enough.

**AU: Horror seems to have made its way to the forefront of pop culture in recent years. What do you think draws people to the genre and keeps them so committed?**

LH: I think it all comes down to fear. It's the one thing everyone can relate to, no matter who you are. And I think everyone does have that little dark side to them (some have it more than others, of course), and I think even if people don't love horror, there is a part of them that is fascinated and curious about it. And hell, it's fun to be scared!

**AU: Describe the process of creating a Quiet Room Bear.**

LH: Some of them I will pre-plan or draw out little designs, but for a lot of them what I will do is lay out all the bits and pieces I use then just look at them, then look at the bear, and in my mind I kind of start seeing the Bear transforming and rotting, and then I know what I need to do to create it—what I need to remove and what I need to jam in there, and what to stitch onto it.

**AU: It's interesting to think of children's toys as these very macabre and sinister things. How do you feel about stripping children's toys of the innocent connotations that accompany them, and turning them into these objects that represent death, torture and depravity? Is this something that you strive for on a conscious level?**

LH: It's funny you say that, actually. Recently I was looking through a stack of art I made when I was in school and I found a couple pages of drawings and doodles of cartoon characters like The Simpsons or Garfield or whatever, but they were all bloodied up—missing limbs and just downright gore-soaked. And I remembered a classmate seeing them and saying, 'Why do you draw stuff like that?' and I said, 'I don't know... There is just something cool about seeing something kind of innocent or funny like a cartoon, but mixed with blood and gore.' And when I remembered this I thought, holy crap, this was kind of the genesis of the Quiet Room Bears! I have always been mixing childhood items and horror! I think anytime you combine two worlds together it will always be unsettling and odd, and that's the fun of it.

**AU: What is your buyer-base like?**

LH: I am so lucky to have built a worldwide fan base! I have fans/Bear owners here in Canada, the USA, the UK, Germany, Australia and New Zealand. And I do have a lot of repeat customers too, which is awesome. The Quiet Room Bears are like Lays' chips: betcha can't have just one! I am also super, super lucky to have made Bears for

## ABSOLUTE HORROR



some awesome celebrities like Mark Patton from Elm Street 2; Leslie Deane from Freddy's Dead, and the kick-ass bands Scary Cherry & the Bang Bangs; the writers/directors of American Mary, the Soska sisters; director of Session 9 and The Machinist, Brad Anderson; and earlier this year I got to make a Bear for Marilyn Manson!

**AU: Tell me about your involvement in the Toronto After Dark Film Festival. You created a Quiet Room Bear specifically for the fest. How did that opportunity come about?**



LH: It was actually when I met the Soska sisters that I met a dude named Adam Lopez who runs the Toronto After Dark Film Festival. He saw the Bears I made for the Soscas and flipped out over them, saying that he had always been looking for a sort of mascot, and wondered if I would be interested in doing a partnership with them. So I jumped at the chance—I made an exclusive one-off Bear for them, and they did a give-away for it. I'm hoping this will be the beginning of

a horribly beautiful friendship between the TAD and the QRBS!

**AU: Is there anything else you would like to share with Absolute Underground?**

LH: I'm starting a second line of horror plush toys called The Playful Dead, which will be all recognizable characters, all gored up, made more evil or zombified. I am just getting it all started. I have some awesome stuff already in the works for that, and all of them will be up for sale either on eBay, or on the etsy page where the Quiet Room Bears and some of my art prints are available for purchase. Also, lots more in the way of paintings coming, too! Basically a butt-load of fantastically amazing and likely very bloody art! And lastly, a big thank you to all the fans that have stuck with me and supported me throughout my artistic journey and thanks to all the new fans for finding me and diggin' my work, and I promise to keep making some kick ass stuff!! Thanks!

Check out the Quiet Room Bears and more of Lee Howard's artwork at [www.etsy.com/shop/quietroombears](http://www.etsy.com/shop/quietroombears).

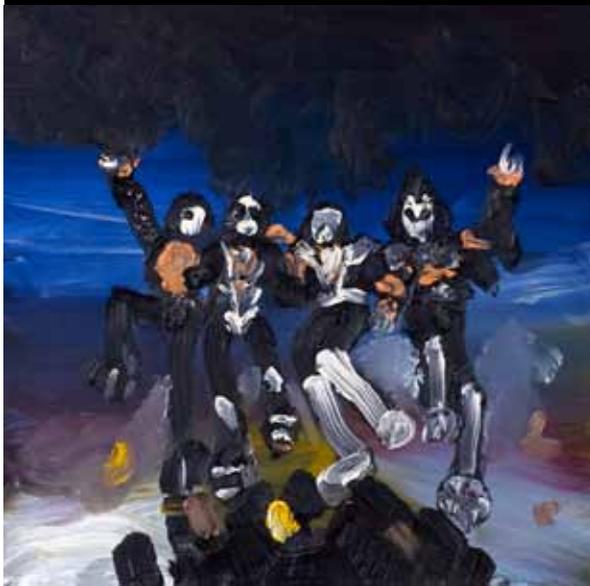
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# ARTIST PROFILE



## Chad Patterson

**Absolute Underground: Who are you, and what are you most infamous for?**

Chad Patterson: I'm Chad Patterson. Coincidences.

**AU: How long have you been an artist?**

CP: Forever.

**AU: How would you describe the art you create?**

CP: I paint album covers, some abstraction, but mostly I paint thick oil paintings of album covers. I

paint representations of album covers while listening to the album. Sometimes the painting is done first, sometimes the album is done first, but when the album is done, the painting is done, that's the rule. I've got a couple of different series I've



done or am working on, in "Photo Album Cover", I picked an album for each year of my life. I did a 60s series for a



60s-inspired show, and I also do requests. I just finished a Radiohead cover for a girl I know, and a Maiden cover for a tattoo shop owner in Atlanta. The request thing is cool cause it turns me on to music I might overlook otherwise. Like Radiohead, not my favourite, but pretty fun to get intimate with for an hour. I also work as



a graphic/web designer. Is that art? I'd say yes, some would say no. Fuck them anyway.

**AU: What styles of art are you still planning to explore?**

CP: I've always wanted to be a graphic designer, and I finally fulfilled that dream a couple years ago when the University of Lethbridge hired me to be there graphic/web designer. The pace is super hectic so I don't get do a lot of illustration, but I do a ton of Photoshop, layout of artist-supplied material and photography. I love my job.

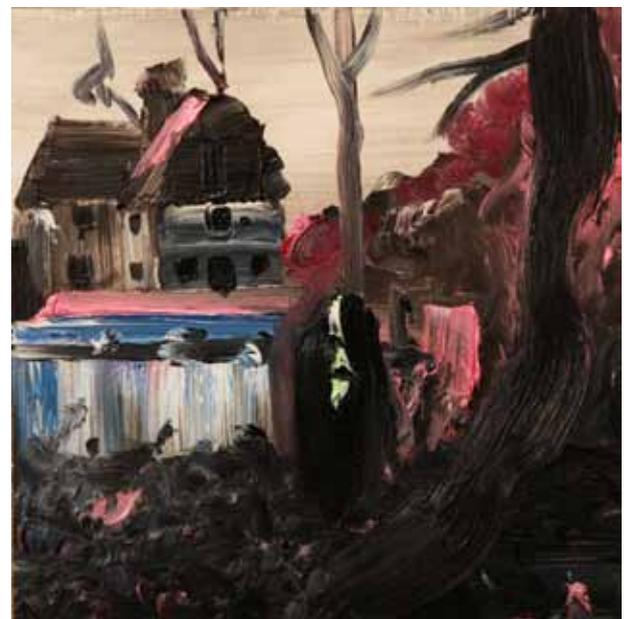
**AU: Do you find there is a strong art scene in your town? Who are some peers who inspire you?**

CP: Very strong. A new Community Arts Centre went up in Lethbridge this year. That's positive. Lots of local galleries and art collectives. High art, low art. Bad art, good art. I don't feel like anyone is ever super critical, just supportive of creativity. Everyone supports each other. It's a very "us against the world" mentality. "Let's support each other cause no one else will." Not many make a living off it, it's blue-collar stuff. Ya know, day jobs and shit. Make shit on the weekend in between beers. All ages and all walks are making things in Lethbridge. A small but great scene. Everything interweaves, the local music and art scene, anyone cool is welcome. There really isn't any sorta "locals only" thing going on either, which is cool. At least that I know of. I'm old, I don't have to put up with assholes anymore. I do what I like and hang out with the like-minded.

Inspirational peers: David Hoffos, Len Komanac, Jason Trotter, Arianna Richardson, Leila Armstrong.

**AU: What sort of music do you listen to when you do your art?**

CP: Anything and everything. Whatever has riffs. The album cover thing dictates what I listen to. But even if I'm not



painting an album cover, music MUST be on. People that live in worlds with no music weird me out, like washing dishes, working in an office, vacuuming, drawing, reading whatever, music's gotta be on. The hum of my brain working drives me insane. Or are my ears ringing? Hmmmmm.

**AU: Future plans?**

CP: Keep on rockin' in the free

world.

Chad's paintings are on request for \$125 each

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## Cody Walsh

Interview by Alex Snow

**AU: Over time, have you noticed anything change in regards to your personal style and technique?**

CW: Absolutely. The more I learn, the less I know, it seems. I try to learn as much as I can from everyone I work with, because you can learn things from anybody, really. I guess that's a part of it though. I'm lucky to have worked in a few different places because there's such knowledge in every new place.

**AU: How many places have you worked in?**

CW: Not including guest spots and stuff... four.

**AU: All in Victoria?**

CW: No, I did an apprenticeship at Black Rose in Courtenay. I was lucky enough to work at Jamer's shop, too. Working with Jamer was one of the biggest learning experiences of my life. Still to this day, I think about everything that he taught me. That guy was my biggest inspiration; he was a wealth of information. I was just so stoked to get to hang with him. [He's] so dedicated; it was remarkable.

**AU: Do you remember the first tattoo you ever did on someone?**

CW: Absolutely. It was on me. It was a traditional dagger I had drawn at the time after about a year and a half of sloggin' away in a shop. Building needles and doing all that apprenticeship stuff that now I'm grateful I did because I know how to build needles- but at the time I was just chompin' at the bit to get tattooing. So I drew this dagger... it's hilarious.



**AU: So doing the shitty stuff really benefitted you in the long run, then?**

CW: Oh, everything did. Just the fact of being there and showing dedication, cleaning, setting everyone's stations up. At the time, I didn't understand it much, but I really do now. Learning all of that stuff before ever picking up a needle was definitely beneficial.

**AU: Is there anything you'd ever refuse to tattoo onto somebody?**

CW: Racist and sexist shit. I'd never do anything like that. I'm a pretty staunch anti-bigot. That's never happened, mind you. That's the only stuff I'd probably straight-out refuse, everything else...I'll figure it out.

**AU: Anything you're hella proud of?**

CW: All my work. I try my best at everything I do, but a lot of tattooers can probably relate that we're our own biggest critics. I'm so critical, within a day I see every flaw... that's just tattooing though, I guess. Same as graffiti or anything else. I do my best on everything but I'm still super critical. That's what makes you want to be better, right? If we- being artists of all kinds- didn't have that critical self-view, we'd probably end up being pretty stagnant.

**AU: Last words?**

CW: Just props to all the local tattooers that are fuckin' awesome. There're many of 'em out there. And to everyone who I've ever worked with and learned something from- I'm super grateful.

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## Lita Ford

Interview by Ira Hunter

**Absolute Underground:** Hi Lita! How are you? Where are you today?

Lita Ford: It's a beautiful sunny day here in Los Angeles, California, and I just did the local radio show here, The Morning Show.

**AU:** Tell us about your new album, *The Bitch Is Back*.

LF: It's a live album, we recorded it last year after the Def Leppard/Poison tour... it's one show, and it was recorded in Los Angeles at the Canyon Club. You've gotta listen to it! It's really cool, it's like you're there when you listen to it, it's like getting into a good book or something, you feel like you're there. It's definitely a live show, you know it's not a studio album or anything that's pieced together, it's just like being at a concert.

**AU:** Did anything crazy happen that night that made it special?

LF: Not really. It was just a high-stress night because it's our hometown, so it's always high-stress when you play your hometown, you know. You've got everybody's parents, everybody's sisters and brothers and relatives... God. It's a handful.

**AU:** What was the scene like back when you were first hanging out in LA, when you were sixteen years old and being recruited into the Runaways?

LF: What was the scene like... Very rock 'n roll, and not so many buildings. Now it's overrun with buildings and people and it's so crowded. I have to live about an hour outside of Hollywood because it's so crowded.

**AU:** So it was a little more intimate back in the day?

LF: Yeah. It was a lot of rock stars walking around, but there still are today, it's just so many people.

**AU:** Were you friends with all the other members of the Runaways before the band started or is that something that was pieced together?

LF: I'd never met them before The Runaways. The Runaways were put together by Kim Fowley, he found each of us girls though word-of-mouth, and then he had us come in and audition for The Runaways and we either made it or we didn't. It wasn't anything to do with who you knew or, "Oh, she's my friend," nothing like that.

**AU:** So what was it like, being that young and all of a sudden, I'm assuming you're touring, we're you still going to school?

LF: I finished and graduated high school, my father went and picked up my diploma because I had to leave and go on tour with The Ramones.

**AU:** Is that sort of what split The Runaways up, that a couple of the members wanted to go in a punk direction and you wanted to stick with the rock side?

LF: That's the simplest way to put it, yeah. It wasn't just one thing that broke the Runaways up, it was an accumulation of a lot of things, but the easiest and simplest way to put it is that we all wanted to go in different musical directions. We're nothing alike, you know.

**AU:** So touring with The Ramones and others, you were being influenced by different things that were sprouting up, I'm assuming, and that's why people got pulled in different directions?

LF: That was the punk era. It was just an era in time, in the music industry. The punk era was short-lived but it was badass... fuckin' probably one of the most badass eras in time, ever. Other than heavy metal, I think the punk era was just as badass. We got the Sex Pistols, Blondie... people are slicing themselves up with razorblades, people are spitting on you, they went through the spitting phase, the whole audience would just spit on you... and that meant they liked you!

**AU:** So you chose the more hard-rock, leading into metal... What was that decision based on, did you see more of a longevity to it?

LF: No, it was just what I wanted to play, it was just what I was into. I was still very young when The Runaways broke up, I had my whole life ahead of me. I had time to do these things, and I had gone through school the hard way.

**AU:** What are some of your most cherished moments of your career?

LF: God, I don't know. Playing on stage with Jon Bon Jovi, Elton John, Brian May and Rick Allen at Wembley in London.

**AU:** What was your take on the movie they just recently made about The Runaways?

LF: I haven't seen it.

**AU:** Did they ask you for any input about the character?

LF: Yeah, they asked. I don't really know too much about the movie, it wasn't my movie, I really had nothing to do with it.

**AU:** I really loved that movie *Highway to Hell* you were in. It's got a small cult following.

LF: Yeah it's weird, it pops up at all the horror conventions. I love these horror conventions, they're fun. I'm gonna do one next month.

**AU:** What do you have planned for the near future?

LF: Well I have a Christmas single coming out. Did you know that? It's a song I wrote, it's not a cover tune, it's not Jingle Bells or anything like that. It's a rockin' Christmas song, and I sing it with Cherie Currie from The Runaways.

**AU:** I know Cherie is doing a duet with Danzig on his covers album, what other people have you worked?

LF: I worked with Ozzy on "Close My Eyes Forever". It was a Top-10 hit in the United States, and it was his first Top-10 hit single, which was really bizarre, with him being in Black Sabbath. It's one of the bigger rock ballads out there today.

**AU:** Do you think you'll be bringing your show up to Canada here?

LF: Yeah, I think in 2014 we should be coming through Canada. We're not doing any touring until 2014, I'm working on a book for Harper Collins and I think we'll take the rest of the year to go through this book and put it together and finish it and get it out. So I think the holidays are the perfect time to do that. I'm gonna plow through and finish this book.

**AU:** Any final words for Canadian fans?

LF: I hope to see you in 2014, and I hope you enjoy *The Bitch Is Back*, "Living Like a Runaway", and the Christmas single with Cherie and I singing as a duet.

Happy Holidays!

More information at <https://www.facebook.com/litaofficial>

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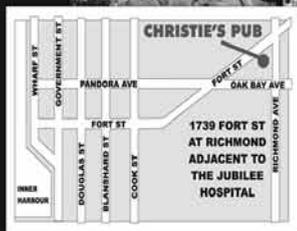
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## FIGHT TO SWILL

Interview with Jimmy Punktured, guitarist/  
vocalist of Fight to Swill

By Lacey Paige

**Absolute Underground: How did you guys meet and come together to form Fight to Swill?**

Jimmy Punktured: Colby and I ended up moving into a house with a bunch of other punks, and there was a bunch of hippies living down stairs. Rodney and Colby met at a Death Sentence show on another occasion. We all started jamming together in the living room of the punk house, all while pissing the hippies off down stairs. We just started writing songs and formed the project that ended up being Fight to Swill!

**AU: Did you have an idea of the sound and style you wanted to achieve right from the beginning or did it sort of evolve as you got together and jammed more?**

JP: We had the idea that we wanted to be a punk band. However, just like most bands, it's a

collaboration of the diversified interests we all have individually, but the common ground was punk. Because I was learning to sing and play guitar instead of bass, it did progress and get better as we went along, but we still sound the same as we did from the start.

**AU: You guys seem to be at the forefront of the Edmonton punk scene right now—playing shows almost**

**every weekend and sometimes playing several shows over the course of two or three days. How do you guys stay motivated?**

JP: We get our motivation from our desire to keep the original punk sound alive. Also, we love performing our songs live because it is such a much more intimate, in-your-face punk rock experience. We have played a number of benefit shows for a bunch of great causes. We also feel that's a great way to get our music out to the fans! As far as keeping up in the music scene, well it's hard to find time to play this much while keeping full-time jobs.

**AU: What do you guys aim to bring to the local punk scene that you feel it's lacking?**

JP: To be honest, we try and stick to the older, more basic punk rock sound, which there is not enough of anymore in our opinion. Everything is over-played and over-produced, which makes us stand out as a band. We have been told that our sound is "refreshing" on a number of occasions, which we feel is a good sign. We also try our best

to incorporate comical stage antiques on stage, which people seem to enjoy it. Punk rock is way too tame these days. We feel it lacks chaos and excitement. We need to bring all of this back into the shows again!

**AU: You've played several crossover shows in the recent past. Describe the experience of playing a show that features bands from opposite ends of the punk/metal spectrum.**

JP: The difference in complexities is quite apparent when it comes to the configuration of punk and metal. So it's really great when you can watch these metal bands play these elaborate pieces of music. Then they come up to us afterwards and say how they love how we make simple chord progressions sound catchy, energetic and memorable. I suppose that's part of the difference between the two genres. Punk is more simple and basic, yet catchy, and metal is astoundingly complex. So it's a great turn out if you can bring punk and metal fans to the same show.

**AU: Do you guys currently have any plans to put out an album?**

JP: We have been talking with Haunted Records and planning to get into their studio. We are planning to record and produce a 7" EP and get it out to as many people as possible. We have had quite a few questions and requests for an album, but we have mainly been focusing on building a fan base.

**AU: Is there anything else you'd like to share with Absolute Underground?**

JP: We want to raise a beer to all the people that have helped us along the way by giving us places to stay, feeding us, or anything else that has helped. And also all the bands that we have played with and all the venues we have played at. Special thanks to: Rod and Jodi at DV8 for having us place so many times; Scott

## SHR-EDMONTON

and Mitch at The Studio for giving us a jam space when we got kicked out of ours; The Golvers for going on tour with us; our roadie Tommy Tustain for helping us along the way; and Adumb, Nadja and Steele for their relentless support.

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# FLASH OUT

changes, eh?

AL: I started the band late 2007, early 2008. There's been lots of member changes, with Ripley being our third-and-final vocalist, Joe being the fourth bassist,

and Cory being the fourth drummer. There's been highs and lows with Flash Out, as in not being a band for almost a year and a half, 'till Ripley and I were jamming with the boys in Besieged. They liked the riffs and played with us from 2009 - late 2010. Then I asked Cory [Thomas] to play one show with us (FoulCopsell), and a month later he asks if we want to open for Napalm Death and Massgrave, and has been behind the kit ever since. We've played tons of shows, written/recorded new material and opened for other sick bands, like Doom and Despise You.

**AU: Ah good, some name drops. Who are the main influences?**

AL: Bastard, of course. Discharge, Napalm Death, Disrupt, Doom, Extreme Noise Terror, State of Fear, Heresy.

**AU: How do you see yourself falling into genre(s)?**

AL: That's for you to decide.

**AU: Along with member changes, how has the sound changed / progressed?**

AL: Early sound was more hardcore. New sound is more riffy and brutal. We started out to be a Japanese-styled hardcore band and were heavily stoked on Death Side and Bastard at the time. Over the years, the riffing got more influenced by heavier shit like Disrupt, Terrorizer and Napalm Death.

**AU: Do you write more in the winter like most Winnipeg metal bands?**

AL: Winter is a good time to write. But basically whenever a riff comes up, I record it and slowly piece them together, until I feel a full song has been created. Then Ripley writes lyrics to the

riff structure and I mouth out beats as Cory slays them immediately. Joe's got riffs up his sleeve that I've taken the time to learn for the next release.

**AU: Word in the hood is you guys just recorded a full-length?**

AL: All our friends in the scene are very supportive and there are lots of great shows going on all the time with great bands filling the bills.

**AU: How was touring this year? Plans for 2014?**

AL: Once we find a supporting label for our first

## Flash Out

Interview by Charley Justice

### 'Loud and Heavy IS a Genre'

Dirty, Filthy, Disgusting – indeed, some of the best of descriptions when it comes to metal. But far too often, these descriptions are accompanied by the terms sloppy and loose; tight and dirty is a rare combination. Now, that said, introducing Winnipeg's Flash Out! These guys definitely DO NOT confuse the two. With Winnipeg metal-drummer-superhero Cory Thomas behind the kit, Flash Out are tighter than emo pants. Finding that elusive space inclusive of both massive-dirt and sick-tight is a difficult job, but one that Flash Out have apparently achieved with a monstrous success. Flash Out have been terrorizing Winnipeg stages for years now, and main-man Anders Land has been carrying the baggage all the way. With the debut full length, *Terminated Efficiency*, about to drop, we cornered Anders for a long overdue interrogation...

**Absolute Underground: Hey Anders! So who are you and what do you do?**

Anders Land: I play guitar in Flash Out, also in Putrescence, and drums in BEAST and Solanum.

**AU: Flash Out... where have I heard that before?**

AL: It's a song from the Japanese hardcore band, Bastard. I was stoked on the lyrics, "...many people have died", so to start a band called Flash Out made sense.

**AU: Flash Out in five words, go:**

AL: Harsh. Fast. Loud. Groovy. High.

**AU: Flash Out's been through some lineup**



AL: Yes, we sure did. It's our first fifteen-track, full-length LP, titled *Terminated Efficiency*. We recorded with the wonderful Dino D'Ottavio at Steam Roller Records. He recorded our split with Plague back in the winter of 2010. It is complete, and sounding just the way we want it to. Just how it should. Heavy, loud, and fast.

**AU: Any exciting label news brewing?**

AL: Yes, currently getting in touch with labels.

**AU: How's Winnipeg been for Flash Out?**

LP, we plan to do a tour for the release. We've been laying low since Arsonfest; it is our plan to write and record new material this winter for a 2014 split with Begrime Exemious.

**More information at**

<http://flash-out.bandcamp.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Flash-Out/>

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## TOXIC HOLOCAUST

### Interview with Joel Grind

By Chad Persley

**AU:** So I got a pre-release copy of your new album and I've been listening to it the last couple months- it's pretty rippin'... one of my favorite albums of the year, and you've been getting a lot of good reviews with it. You went back to the old logo, was there anything behind that? Lots of internet fanboys were whining and complaining because you changed it on the last album?

**JG:** No, I don't put much weight into any of that kind of shit, I mean it's kinda ridiculous that they made that much of a deal about it, it's such a minor thing. But no, it wasn't to please any of those internet idiots, that's for sure. What it all boiled down to, the last record, (Conjure & Command), I thought the old logo didn't look right with that artwork, the artwork was too primitive-looking, I didn't think it worked. So that was the whole reason behind it, and there was a big backlash about it, which I thought was so stupid. The new artwork I think fits the with old logo.

**AU:** Andrei Bouzikov, the cover artist of Chemistry of Consciousness totally rips... have you worked with him before?

**JG:** I have worked with Andrei before but it was for that split with Municipal Waste.

**AU:** Did you have a concept for him, or did he

just go and throw you some ideas?

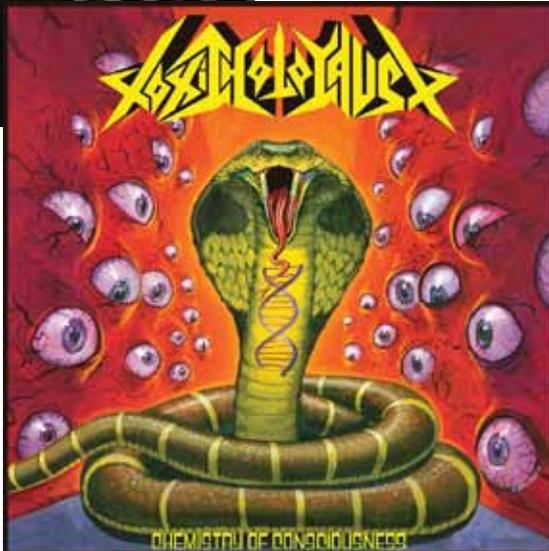
**JG:** No I had a bunch of ideas, and he actually went off on it and I think it turned out great man, it turned out pretty much exactly what I was looking for, so he did great.

**AU:** Did you write everything on this album?



or who knows what.

**AU:** Do you have any videos planned to go



**JG:** It's kind of just that's the way it's always been, I kinda have the vision for the band, so you know I just write everything and the band brings their own elements to it, they bring their feel and stuff like that to it.

**AU:** How long did this album take you to write this one?

**JG:** I would say probably six months because we took about a year and a half off and I was writing pretty proficiently in that time between that whole break, but the thing was, I wrote something like 30 songs or something for this record, so I just picked the ones that actually fit together the best and I got a bunch of songs, still. Maybe they'll make it on to the next record

along with this? Anything filmed yet?

**JG:** Yeah, we did a video, it came out right before the record came out, it was called "Acid Fuzz," and it's all animated video, it's really sick. It's the most intense video I've done though man, it's pretty fucked up. You should check it out.

**AU:** Who came up with the concept on "Acid Fuzz"?

**JG:** That was me, but again the guy kinda came up with some crazy shit that I didn't even think of, like there's some wild shit in there man, you have to watch it a few times, 'cause there are a lot of little details in there that are kind of crazy.

**AU:** Do you have anything else planned for videos on this release?

**JG:** Depends on our budget, it's like budgets are so small now, it's hard to squeeze out enough to do multiple videos, but who knows?

**AU:** Your song 'Bitch' made an appearance on the Sons of Anarchy TV episode, how did that come about? I saw on your website, it said you'd read the script before they used the song and that's how you approved it?

**JG:** Well, it was one of those things where whoever does the music for the show for some reason knew

were you bouncing back and forth between LA and Portland?

**JG:** Yeah I wrote the whole record in LA while I was living there, and I recorded all my parts in LA, too. And then when I moved back to Portland, that's when I recorded our bass player, Phil's parts, and then the drums were recorded in Connecticut, so we recorded all over.

**AU:** So are you guys taking a break then until Christmas, and then you're gonna hit the road in the new year?

**JG:** Yeah, we're taking all of December off, I've got a bunch of stuff going on, I work at a studio in Portland and I've got a bunch of stuff going on there with recording bands and things like that, and then in mid-January is where we go back out and do the west coast with Exhumed, and it's gonna be awesome, I'm looking forward to that one.

**AU:** And when you're in LA you're working in a studio as well?

**JG:** I was trying to, I was having kind of a tough time finding work down there. I was trying to do that, but I actually was working at a record label, Century Media for a little bit while I was down there, and that didn't work out. But after that I was trying to do some studio work, it's tough business down there, that's why I came back up here.

**AU:** Engineering work for others must help you out when you do your own production, is that how you see that work?

**JG:** Yeah, I've been into that kind of stuff since I've been a teenager, but I did it more like a personal thing. Like a lot of my records now are done by me, but yeah it was just something that I was really into, and I decided to go more full-on with it.

about us and they contacted Relapse because they thought our music would be perfect for this one scene, and then they sent me over the script for the scene and I was like, "Yeah, this would be awesome, sounds like it's perfect." And then when I saw it, I was like Wow, this fits so well, so it came about just totally by fluke.

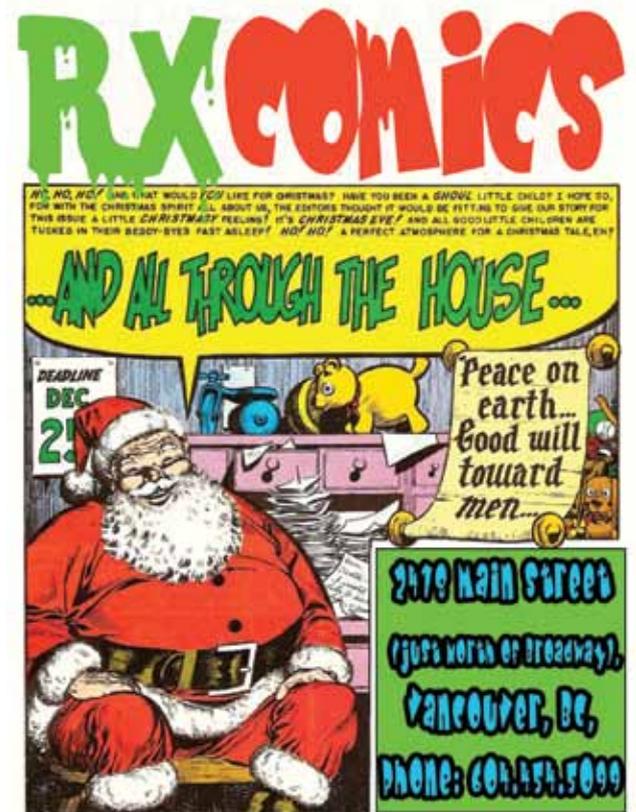
**AU:** Are you a fan of the show?

**JG:** You know it's funny, I am, I'm actually pretty hooked on the show because it's kinda one of those guilty pleasure things where I didn't want to really get into it, but then I started watching it... it's one of those shows you can't stop.

**AU:** Yeah, biker soap opera for dudes, right. Maybe you could get an appearance on the show, you could be like from the Portland chapter stepping in...

**JG:** That'd be amazing, it would be so funny.

**AU:** Did you write the album while you were living in LA, or



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it's not metal. They had to talk shit about how evil this whole thing was, it was like we were the Antichrist because we didn't try to fit it, and it really offended a lot of people, especially the punk rockers. It was amazing, they talk about being individuals, doing your own thing, except that's doing your own thing as long as that's what they wanted you to do, exactly the way they said. The lost potential of punk rock is that basically, the Sex Pistols were saying, "Hey, it doesn't matter how you look, you can have fucked-up clothes, it's not a costume, it's not this or that. Do what you want to do, do what you like, and don't worry about if anyone likes it." I think a lot of people never got that message, they completely lost it. And if they did [get it], punk rock would be a completely different thing.

**AU: The name Suicidal Tendencies, how did you come up with that?**

MM: When we started Suicidal was pro-skateboarder. We used to have a thing it was

like, it's like Suicidal! You know if you're kinda scared to do something like, push yourself, don't let fear get in your way, so suicidal was always like a positive kind of a chant. My

dad said you know, there's a lot of people, they're living in their houses and they're just sitting by the TV, medically they're alive but they're not living, and there's a lot of people that are absolutely out of their minds just doing stupid stuff. So that's how we look at it, Suicidal's a fine line between doing something that's positive and doing something that's stupid, we try to put it on the positive side.

**AU: With your brother, Jim Muir, being part of the original Dogtown Skate Crew, was it skate-punk you were trying to create?**

MM: No because when the Dogtown Z-boy thing happened, it was a little bit before punk rock started to come in, and it was controversial, but mostly in those days it was basically the same thing that they did, looking back without realizing it, they came in and they dressed differently, they didn't really follow the norms of what skateboarding was at the time. That's what we wanted to do with Suicidal, that's what we still want to do.

**AU: So you guys were around Venice Beach and it seemed to have a handful of bands on the Suicidal Record Label.**

MM: Basically at the time, we had already put out our first record and we were touring and everywhere you go, people go, "Oh, you've gotta listen to this band," and there was another couple bands where we're from that I thought were much better so we put out Hello From Venice with bands on it like No Mercy which was Mike Clark's band, who later got into Suicidal Tendencies for 27 years, and there's Excel on it with Adam who ended up in Infectious Grooves. We were basically wanting to give other people

the opportunity to be heard.

**AU: Back in the day was there a big divide between the punkers and the metalheads? And how did Suicidal Tendencies fit in?**

MM: Oh we didn't fit in anywhere, there was a big divide between Suicidal and punk rock and this and that, actually the first people that got into the band was the skaters, they were kinda the bridge, some skaters were into metal, some were into punk, so they didn't have a problem; if you skated, it was cool. Then you got Slayer's Tom Araya in the Institutionalized Video, you got some of the metal people who were more open-minded getting into it. So you saw more Suicidal stuff at metal shows, or at the thrash or speed metal ones at the time. With punk too, there was sort of a division you know a lot of people said if you're Suicidal you can't be punk rock and vice versa. All the Fanzines 30 years ago said the record was terrible, they said we were the punk rock Antichrist, and now it's a punk rock classic, so who knows.

**AU: Well let's talk about the new album that you guys just put out. Why did you call it 13?**

MM: Well 13 has always been my favourite number and it's been 13 years since we did a record, there's 13 songs on it, it's the 13th record that we've done.

**AU: Can you tell us about some of the new songs?**

I think for us, we record an album kind of like a rollercoaster, you know? Like a good rollercoaster doesn't just go up and down there's some turns and surprises and hooks and even when you're going up, going slow, you know something's about to happen, and for us what we think is really important is to never do a record that we think people will like at the time. My dad says the guaranteed way to be miserable is to make everybody like you. The Barometer that we use is if we go back in a time machine and play this record when I was sixteen, I'd be going, "Fuck, yeah!" So it's a record that I really like, and I think it's gonna stand the test of time. In 20 years from now it'll be the same thing as our other records that people have said sucked at the time, and then later on they talk about how great it is and everybody loved it.

**AU: What do you think about the resurgence of old-school-sounding thrash bands?**

MM: Without talking about specific bands, I've seen a few people talk about it, they go, "Oh, you wanna do a record that sounds like it came out in 1983?" And I said, "I did in 1983." or they

say you wanna do a record that sounds like it came out in '88? And I said, "I did in 1988".

**AU: What can people expect from the live show?**

MM: I think one of the things about the live show, that's the one place where there is a certain standard. We're not here to be nostalgic, we're here to remind people why they do love Suicidal. After the show, no matter what anyone says, I'm absolutely soaking with sweat and people are going, "Dude, I can't believe you can do that!" We're going out there and we're going 100 miles an hour.

**AU: How did you get all the original members back together in your other band Infectious Grooves?**

MM: I think the origin of that is Suicidal played the Orion festival, the Metallica festival, a few years ago and I talked with Robert and he said, "Hey, it'd be cool to do a couple Infectious songs when Suicidal does it's set", and I was like "Yeah, cool". So Robert came out and played bass, and we played, originally one song and then it became two and then three and five or six. So I guess from that, we were talking about doing a full Infectious thing and I guess the Whiskey A Go Go in L.A. is doing it's 50th Anniversary celebration with a month of shows and they asked if we would do the last night.

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

# SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

**Absolute Underground: We're doing a The Year of Thrash issue, so we had to get the fathers of crossover thrash Suicidal Tendencies in the mag.**

Mike Muir: Cool.

**AU: Are you guys looking forward to coming to Canada?**

MM: We're just doing the one Vancouver show. I look forward to it once we're in the country; getting into the country is never fun. They like to make it a little harder on us.

**AU: What do you remember about forming the band originally?**

MM: There's really no brief history, I think maybe the difference between now and then is people, when they start a band, they have a name, they have a Facebook page, they have their photos, they just don't have any music. When we started, we didn't start to be a band, just someone was going to get evicted so he had to get rid of the drums and I said "Oh, you can put them at our place". So there was big pile of drums, someone walks by they just have to hit them, you know? Then someone has a guitar so at first you it was like someone playing soccer at the park, they don't think they're gonna be in the world cup they're just having fun. you know? So for us it wasn't like, "Oh we wanna do a band," and all that stuff, and I think that's probably the reason why I'm still here today.

**AU: So you guys definitely set the pace for some of the thrash bands that came later... because there wasn't really any crossover bands around in 1981?**

MM: No there wasn't, when our first record came out all the punk magazines said it sucked, it's not punk. And all the metal magazines said it sucks,



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## IRON REAGAN

Interview by Chadsolute

**Absolute Underground:** What can you tell us about the band name and how did a former US president become your band mascot?

Tony Foresta: I don't know if it's because I was a kid in the 80s or just the music that influences me, but it always seemed like Reagan was always the punk/heavy metal antichrist. His image is so iconic and brings such a feeling of hate and resentment to so many people, I think the name was kind of perfect for this band. Iron Reagan seems like he would be the ultimate supervillain. A name that almost strikes fear, yet puts a smile on your face at the same time because of the overall ridiculousness of it.

**AU:** For anyone that has seen you live, you guys aren't as serious on stage as some of the content is on the album *Worse than Dead*. Is that intentional, with the song titles and dark crusty imagery?

TF: I guess it just depends on when you see us. We were having a really good time on that last tour, haha. I also think that just because your song lyrics are serious, it doesn't mean you have to mask your feelings and act like you're miserable when you play live. I hate most bands that are preachy between songs. It puts off an "I'm better than you" vibe and I hate that.

**AU:** With your song titles and the Reagan connection, you guys come off as very political, yet it's not like you are on a soapbox spreading your agenda. If you could solve any recent political or social crisis what would it be?

TF: I wouldn't say we come off as VERY political, haha. I think I would try to fix the overpopulation problem. Preferably on Wall Street, that would be a good place to start working on that problem.

**AU:** What would Reagan do to fix Obamacare?

TF: Who knows. Maybe he would move all of us to Canada so we can have your health care.

**AU:** Your band started out as a half Darkest Hour / half Municipal Waste hybrid. Tell us how the band morphed into this lineup? Tell us about the new additions and what they bring to the group.

TF: Paul left the band earlier this year. When he was in the band, he wasn't able to play out of town often, so we had our friend Mark Bronzino (of ANS, Kicking Spit fame) filling in on bass. After a short tour we kind of figured out that it wasn't really fair for Mark to just come in every once in a while and play when we felt like it, so we added him on second guitar (he's a much better guitarist than bass player) after Paul left we just kept Mark on guitar and added a local ripper named Rob Skotis on bass. I never really wanted the band to have a "half Waste, half Darkest Hour" tag. I mean we were all in those bands, but we were also in a shitload of other bands and I don't really see any Darkest Hour comparisons in our music style whatsoever.

**AU:** The content has a more serious tone than some of the fun and games and straight-up party atmosphere of Municipal Waste. The songs are a bit shorter and heavier than the Waste, but with Tony's voice and Phil on guitar, it still leaves a bit of a Waste taste in the mouth. What types of things does this band allow you guys to do that you can't with MW?

TF: We are always going to get compared to the Waste, as long as I'm singing in the band, it's just gonna always happen. I'm cool with it. I think once this new lineup gets a recording released under our belts it's really going to show a difference with both bands. The two-guitar attack along with the speed of Ryan's drumming allows us to get a little weird and more aggressive sounding. Also, having five separate writers throwing stuff in there really makes a difference.

**AU:** You have been on the road since October, supporting GWAR, and are still on the road the end of December promoting your album. Will you still be touring at furious pace moving forward?

TF: We actually did a tour in July and September too, haha. We've been going for it. We really believe in this record, and it seems like a lot of people are digging it as well. It just recently got into Decibel Magazine's Top 40 Albums of the Year, as well as a ton of other killer reviews. It's weird, because I never really pay attention to that stuff but the response has been so overwhelmingly positive, it's hard not to. We leave Monday to head out West to start a full U.S. tour with a ton of killer shows with bands like Exhumed, Power Trip, Mammothgrinder and Windhand. After that we have The A389 Bash with Infest and Haymaker in Baltimore, but then after that I think we are just gonna chill and finish up writing.

**AU:** Tell us about your upcoming split EP with Exhumed.

TF: It's finished! We should be getting our copies at our show with them in Oakland. I'm stoked. Those are the last songs we did with Paul (a.k.a Dr. Guitar on Bass). But don't fear. He's gonna help us write some shit on our new album. We're all still tight.

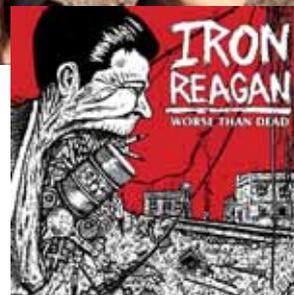
**AU:** Will this project take up most of your time when you are not working on MW? Also, what can we expect in the future from Iron Reagan?

TF: Yeah. I love to stay busy. I just can't sit around on my ass. I gotta keep being creative or I'll lose it. Reagan is about halfway done writing a new album with this line-up. We're also talking about an EP and another split or two in the works. But right now we're just mainly concentrated on getting this next tour done and finishing up a new album by early next year.

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More information at [www.facebook.com/pages/IRON-REAGAN/](http://www.facebook.com/pages/IRON-REAGAN/)



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# SHRED SESSION



## Ollie Pirquet

Interview by Matt Gordon

**Absolute Underground:** How many years have you been skating?

Ollie Pirquet: 17

**AU:** What's the best thing about skating now?

OP: Best thing about skating now is that, I think for the most part, I've stopped caring about the spectacle of it, so there is a lot of freedom to enjoy skating and to really squeeze the goodness/juicy vibes out of every move, no matter how simple... actually, the simpler, the better.

**AU:** What are your favourite places to skate?

OP: UVic, 'cause I'm a student there, and it's the perfect playground for procrastination... lots of fun spots. Gordon Head, 'cause it's the home of the joyful skaters, and Vic West, because everyone there rips and it's inspiring to see all that skill

ripping around. Oh yeah, can't forget Lang Park, googly moogly! And Metchosin cow patties, cant forget those.

**AU:** What's a fun trick to do?

OP: Fun trick to do is this thing a guy at Vic West showed me: it was a tail drag nose grab three-sixty, spinning on the tail and then you get to ride away with the knar symbol on your fingers, impressing all the ladies!

**AU:** How was skating in Japan? What else were you up to there?

OP: I went to Japan on co-op to do some research in nano-tech for eight months, about three years ago. The skating was phenomenal, the spots were like something out of a skater's wet dream (me from Victoria, of course = little to no spots) and because the friends I made there (props to Kazu, Yuji, and Lorhin!) were so enthusiastic, I ended up skating most afternoons and pretty much every weekend. Not to mention, I had enthusiasm of my own just being in such a curious place. I definitely had a lot of fun; I explored pretty much everything I could when I was there, and took so many photos I ended up putting them in an art show for my friends before I left for home.

**AU:** UBC just got a new skatepark and it's too smooth for me. I started skating rough rural ground and I usually prefer it. Do you



**prefer smooth ground or rough ground?**

OP: That is such a silly question, of course I like combined ground to satisfy my need for variety in life. A smooth bit here and rough patch there... gives us something to make cool moves around. And it's all about cool moves!

**AU:** What are you studying now?

OP: I'm doing my Masters of Applied Science in mechanical engineering. Mostly renewable energy stuff.

**AU:** Renewable energy, that's awesome. Any solutions you're working on?

OP: Well, not too much in the way of over-arching solutions. The irony is that we have a lot of solutions to the energy needs of people, except that populations consume far beyond their needs. So it's not an energy crisis really, it's a supply and demand issue, which takes it out of the realm of human rights and more into the realm of economics. Of course, a lot of the ways we transform and supply energy has environmental impact, which needs to be addressed, but as far as I'm concerned the biggest push ought to be education, in that power in consumable form is a luxury, when its use goes beyond one's basic needs. Our attitude towards power at the moment is more like city water than champagne (disclaimer: I think water should be respected too, but it's the contrast I'm trying to highlight). It would help if we thought about it like champagne, or some equally expensive and sought-after drink. My own research is on vibration-based energy harvesting to supply power for off-grid applications. The concept I'm going for is robust, simple and low maintenance. It's very interesting to me but I'm still in the early stages of my work, so I'll let you know where it all goes in the future! Props to Michael J. Fox. He doesn't get enough, I think.

**AU:** Is it true that when we flush fresh water



**into the city sewer it goes out to the ocean, never to be fresh water again?**

OP: That's not true at all!... Although our fresh water does get flushed with our poo pieces to the ocean, and that's fun to think about! The water in the ocean is evaporating all the time, so at some point the water molecules that graced your dirty bowl will show up once again somewhere void of the pesky sodium and chlorine ions harshing up their gig. Props to Pauly Shore! Grin-ders!!

**AU:** Sponsors?

Ollie: No sponsors, all out of that at the moment. Skating for fun these days.



Photos by TJ Watt  
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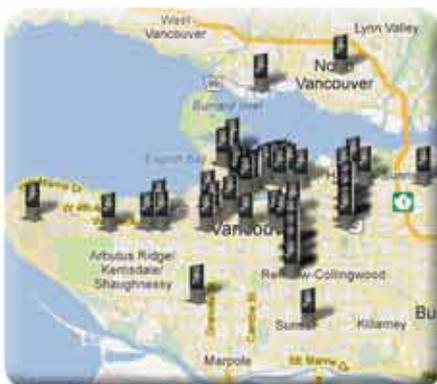
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## Insurrection

Interview by Erik Lindholm

Formed in 2003 in Gatineau, Québec, Insurrection writes songs in both French and English, and has performed with Quebec giants like Cryptopsy, Ghoulnautics and Neuraxis. Absolute Underground's Erik Lindholm catches up with vocalist Stef Jomphe regarding their new album and inspirations.

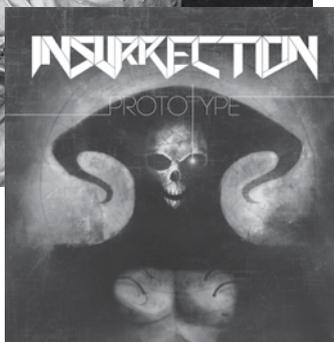
**Absolute Underground: Bonjour! What's happening with the band and where are you currently?**

Stef Jomphe: Hey Absolute Erik! What's happening right now is, as some might have heard, we're releasing our third album! We're

working on getting together as many shows as we can to release and promote that album with the fans and the not-fans-who-might-become-fans-maybe!

**AU: You've completed the new record, Prototype, with a creative and humorous appeal on social media networks for crowd-sourced funding. Can you share with us your experience with this approach?**

SJ: Well, our experience was very positive, I'd say! We had set ourselves a realistic goal with some degree of expectations, and we got a whole lot more than we expected. I don't know if you've ever created complete mayhem at the post office, but we did once we started shipping out the CDs to funders. We're really happy with the final result



in Hull-Gatineau (the Quebec-side of Ottawa). The best thing as a band to be based here was that we were at the right place at the right time: there was a vacuum here when we started, and we quickly established ourselves as one of the main bands in the region!

**AU: Who do you want to tour with next? And what is ahead for the band in the next six months?**

of the album!

**AU: Let's get the story out there. What got you started playing heavy music? Who are your most inspirational bands?**

SJ: That's a tough question since none of the boys really listen to the same stuff. We can all appreciate some of each other's favourite bands, but we're all shooting in different directions, which is probably the reason for Insurrection's sound: None of us are strict death metal dudes.

**AU: The band is based in Montreal, QC. What for you is the best part of being based there, as a rock band? What do you enjoy about the city?**

SJ: Well, we're actually two hours west-ish of Montreal

SJ: Who do we want to tour with? Good question, I'd have to say any band with a decent following who'll have us with them. Nice people is a good plus too! We'll most likely be pushing the album for the next six months or so, trying to get people's attention since we're still a rather small act.

**AU: What is the overall theme for this record?**

SJ: I wouldn't say there's a main theme for the album, but musically, I'd say we tried new ways to work all together, trying new things while keeping the same sound and feel. Lyrically, people who were aware of Quebec news in the past few years probably heard of the state of political things, and this transpires a lot in some of the more socially-inclined songs. We do like the occasional sci-fi thing here and there!

**AU: What is the experience of writing and singing extreme music in both English and French, while living in Quebec? What responses have you had from metal heads in Belgium, France and other French-speaking areas of the world about your music?**

SJ: Actually, we haven't had much of a reaction from Belgium and France just yet, but who knows, maybe we'll gather a bit more attention with this release. Writing in French just seems natural, as well as English, so it's not that big a deal for us. We've never had complaints from anyone, and people across the river in Ontario do memorize French song titles as well as the English ones!

**AU: Last words to Canadian metal heads reading this while having a strong whiskey.**

SJ: Careful, don't spill your drink! And don't drive after reading!

More information at [www.insurrectionmetal.com](http://www.insurrectionmetal.com)

Press Photo: (L-R) Philippe Moreau Latreille (Drums), Vincent Laprade Séguin (Guitar), Stef Jomphe (Vocals), Francis Girard (Bass), Martin Samson (Guitar)

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## Wacken Metal Battle Canada

By Willow Gamberg

Absolute Underground catches up with JJ Tartaglia, organizer of the Canadian edition of the Wacken Metal Battle, to see what all the fuss is about.

**Absolute Underground: For those of us Canadians that are totally unfamiliar with it, can you give us a bit of history on the Wacken Metal Battle in general? When did it start, where, how does it work?**

JJ Tartaglia: Metal Battle is basically the biggest heavy metal competition on the planet. The winning band is flown to Germany to perform at Wacken Open Air, the world's largest metal festival. Winners are decided by a judging panel, so there's no fan voting. Countries from all across the globe participate, and each country sends one finalist to Wacken. At Wacken, one international winner is crowned. The competition has existed since 2003, but has really developed during the past few years, Canada joined in 2013.

**AU: So this is the second year that Canada will be taking part- what's special about this?**

JT: It's a great thing for Canada's metal scene; bands get motivated, people come out to shows. Competition breeds success. We have a lot of great bands here that deserve international recognition. We've proven that with Crimson Shadows [Toronto] who won at Wacken last year.

**AU: Wacken Open Air is known for its international attendance- How many countries in all participate in the Wacken Metal Battle?**

JT: Last year there were 28 countries. I believe there will be 30 this time around.

**AU: The website mentions that the battle may be moving west this year, as last year it seemed only to be held in Toronto and Montreal... what can you tell us about this?**

JT: Having the competition run across Canada has been the vision from the start. It's been tough because our country is so huge. There are a lot of challenges that come with that, but we're working through them. I'm happy to say that the expansion to the West is confirmed now, so there will be 5 cities in total: Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

**AU: What's the craziest thing you saw last year at the Wacken Metal Battle Canada?**

JT: The size of the crowd during Rammstein. Just incredible.

**AU: Applications open Dec. 5th, while the battle itself will be held in the early summer- What is your advice to the Metal Battle hopefuls?**

JT: Take the time to fill out the application properly. Every bit of info counts in the selection process.

**AU: Any special guest judges this year we should be looking out for?**

JT: We're gonna aim for one or two 'celebrity' metal judges. Hopefully Sam Dunn will be in there if schedules don't conflict.

**AU: Do you have a favourite Canadian metal band? Any bands you really want to see enter the competition?**

JT: Baptized in Blood are one of my faves. For Metal Battle, I like to be surprised.

**AU: What is special about this competition? What sets it apart from all other battles?**

JT: The prize can't be matched. To play Wacken is the shot of a lifetime, not to mention the record deal with Nuclear Blast if you manage to win in Germany. This competition is about honour, glory, and the love of heavy metal. It isn't just another Supernova scam disguised under a new moniker. I can see it from the bands' perspective, which is important. Ticket sales don't guarantee anything. The best band wins, plain and simple.

**AU: What are your hopes for this event in the future? More applications, more venues...?**

JT: Absolutely. The goal is to have it grow bigger each year; there are still some major cities I would like to add. Ottawa and Halifax are probably next.

**AU: What else do Canadian metal fans need to know about this event? Where can we keep up-to-date on the proceedings?**

JT: Fans can help support their favorite bands by just going to the shows and rocking out. Crowd interaction is one of the judging components, so every little bit helps. The best place to go for news is the Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/MetalBattleCanada](http://www.facebook.com/MetalBattleCanada)), because it will be updated more frequently with show dates, which bands are moving on, etc. The official website, [www.metalbattle.ca](http://www.metalbattle.ca), will focus on more of the major announcements.

**AU: Anything else to add?**

JT: Support your local metal scene, bring friends to the shows, and have a good time. Horns up!

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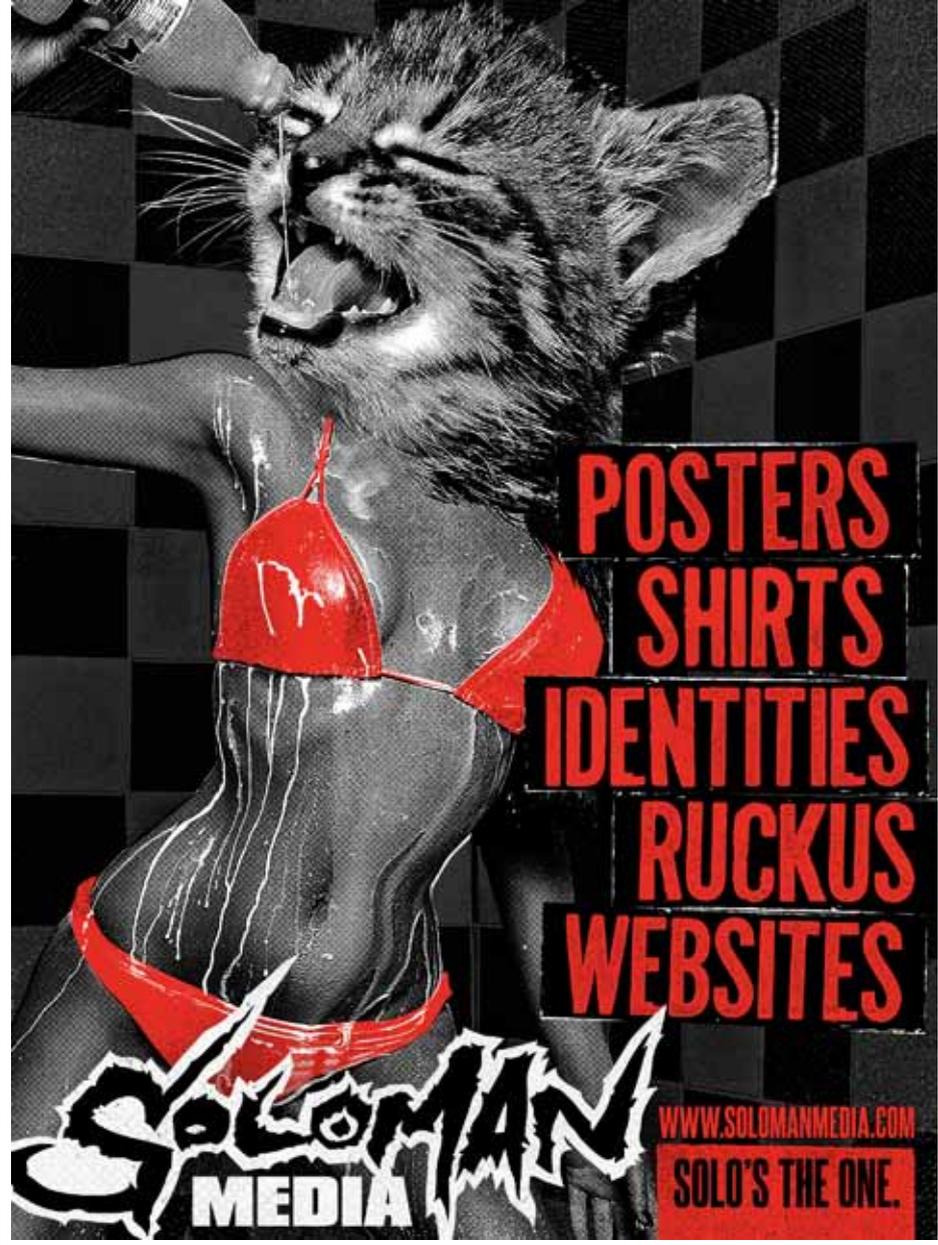
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# Absolute Underground's Best of 2013



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** My name's Marco, I'm probably best known for playing guitar in Witches Hammer, Blasphemy and Tyrants Blood

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Auroch

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Centurian's *Contra Rationem*

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Transplants- *In A Warzone*

**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** Bl'ast- *Blood*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Lil Wayne- *I am Not a Human Being*

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Black Sabbath

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** *World War Z*- Best, *A Good Day to Die Hard*- Worst

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** Sinned

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Senate reform

**2014..what is your prediction?** Massive dread.



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Cody No Teeth. I write for Absolute Underground and I'm also a film programmer for the Calgary Underground Film Fest (CUFF).

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** MESSIAHLATOR! I know they're from Edmonton but I saw them play in Brooklyn and they are fucking amazing! Check 'em out!

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Limbs Bin's *Summertime Blues* EP

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** BA Johnston: *Mission Accomplished*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** I can't chose between Miley or Katy?

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Limbs Bin or Morning Glory, both in Brooklyn, NYC!

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** I'll give my top 3 films of 2013: 1. *Only God Forgives*, 2. *Broken*, 3. *Return to Nuke Em High Vol 1*. Worst film by far was *Pacific Rim*.

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** Max Gerchikov- Black Bird Electric Tattoos

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** *Pacific Rim!*

**2014..what is your prediction?** I'm excited for next year's CUFF line-up! I can't wait to go back to NYC and hang out with my brother and his wife. And my wife and I can go check out New York Comic Con again! Oh, and I'm pretty sure *Return to Nuke Em High Vol. 2* should be out by then!



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Inga Holmgeirsson and I'm known for covering Wacken

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Van Canto

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Amon Amarth - *Deceiver Of The Gods*

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Bad Religion - *True North*

**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** Hatebreed - *The Divinity Of Purpose*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** There is no shitty one...

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Rammstein at Wacken Open Air

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** *Imaginaerum* by Nightwish

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** In Legend

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** I really sat eight hours in front of the first-aid-tent at Wacken...

**2014..what is your prediction?** Not getting sick at Wacken...for the first time



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Willow Gamberg, I'm the music editor for Absolute Underground

**Favourite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Impossible to choose. Top picks include Astrakhan, Wisser Fool, Ancients, Black Wizard, Entity (Nanaimo).

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Ancients- *Heart of Oak* / Scale the Summit- *The Migration* / Carcass- *Surgical Steel*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Anything released by Kanye West. Or Miley Cyrus. Or Justin Beaver.

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Scale the Summit/Ancients at Tom Lee in Vancouver

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** Best- *Cloud Atlas* (released late in 2012, though). Worst- The new *Wolverine*... what the fuck, people? That wasn't even anything. At all.

**Best Local Artist(s) deserving of more recognition:** Allison Lilly and Dena Lazarenko

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Rob Ford... still in office...

**2014... What is your prediction?** Rob Ford... still in office...



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Drew Copland, I play guitar in Death Toll Rising and Villainizer. I'm also known for my boyish looks.

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** From the past - Red Tide (RIP), from the present - The Noumenon

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** I don't think many would top Carcass - *Surgical Steel*

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Between the Buried Me. I had barely paid attention to them before, and they blew my mind. New fan, right here.

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** Best - *Pacific Rim/Oblivion/Riddick* (three-way tie). Worst of what I've seen - *After Earth/Dark Skies*

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** One of my favorite local photographers, Kefkism Design. Classy work with awesome bands and hot girls.

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Whatever the fuck is happening

in the USA.

**2014..what is your prediction?** I predict I will win and be the champion of my fantasy hockey league. No one will care about movies because we have to wait until 2015 for *Star Wars Episode VII*, *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, and *Superman vs Batman*. Edmonton will become recognized as a metal hotspot. And something something something world politics.



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Renaud Baril - I play guitar in Montreal heavy metal band Trainwreck Architect.

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** The Presstones- amazing punk band from Montreal with a lot of energy on stage!

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Huntress - *Starbound Beast*

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** AFI - *Burials*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Queensryche (with Geoff Tate) - *Frequency Unknown*

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Danzig @ Heavy MTL

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** Best: *Django Unchained* / Worst: *The Hangover Part 3*

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** Fried Pope - Those guys have an interesting theatrical concept in their songwriting and stage performance, and their music is suprisingly well-done!

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Montebello's

Petite-Nation Rockfest

**2014..what is your prediction?** Judas Priest or Iron Maiden headlining the Heavy MTL as both bands will have an album released in 2014. It will be a very exciting year for heavy metal and I'm excited to hear those artists' new albums (Blind Guardian, Iced Earth, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden)



**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Jon Asher (Asher Media Relations), best known for being the PR guy. Getting bands heard and read about in the press for albums and tours.

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Trainwreck Architect.

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** ...And So I Watch You From Afar (all releases since 2009) ASG - *Blood Drive* Metallica - *Through The Never* Ghost B.C. - *Infestissumam* Twelve Foot Ninja - *Silent Machine* End is Green - *The Painstrem* The Ocean - *Pelagial* Protest The Hero - *Volition*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** A shitty album is not even worth mentioning but Korn was a disappointment.

**Best Live Show of the Year:** The Mad Violinist and The Symphony Crack Orchestra

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** *Django Unchained* (Best) - *J. Edgar* (Worst)

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**Best Local Artist deserving of more****recognition:** Derelict**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Getting stranded after Noctis because a band that will go unnamed had to have their wives on the shuttle bus back to the hotel and forced me off the bus.**2014..what is your prediction?** A whole new beginning, changes to come on multiple platforms...just pay attention to things you don't usually do and you'll see.**Who are you and what are you best known for:**Anita Fixx, known for writing the best interviews ever in all the known universe! Also a filmmaker and visual artist! Check out my blog: <http://localeopardlady.wordpress.com/>**Favorite Local Band that everyone should****know about:** I admit I haven't been to many Toronto shows, but I did see School Damage and enjoyed that show, for sure.**Best Psychobilly Album of the Year:** Koffin Kats- *Born of the Motor*.**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Proxy- *Demo Tape*. Catchy as hell punk rawk!**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** Ruleta Rusa's *Aqui No Es*.**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Miley Cyrus and whatever the hell her shitty album is called.**Best Live Show of the Year:** Varning in Montreal, featuring Ruleta Rusa.**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year****(any genre):** I know for sure that *Breaking Bad* was one of best TV shows ever made. I have heard good things about *Wadjda*.

Worst Movie is that Sci-Fi tripe that Will Smith and his son made, and that I hope no one went to see.

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Rob Ford, need I say more? Or should this be "Fuck Up of the Year"? Our dear leader has done it all this year, smoked crack in a cellphone video, denied it, drove drunk, swore, pissed in public, bought drugs, denied it, finally admitted to smoking crack, claims he did not sexually harass a staffer because he "has enough to eat at home", was filmed making death threats, apologized a lot, was barred from the Santa Clause parade due to above fuck-ups.**2014..what is your prediction?** Ford will be kicked out somehow? But I know that may be a pipe dream... Get it?

I hope to make some damn feature films next year! Brace yourselves for the Loca Leopard Lady Productions! Merry Fucking X-mas and a sorta Happy New Year to you all!

**Who are you and what are you best known for:**

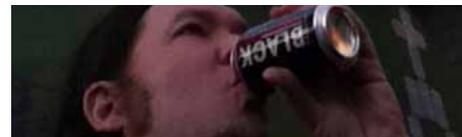
Michael Luis, best known for drumming, writing, and making mediocre films.

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should****know about:** Let's give my boys in Scimitar some love. They've come a long way since the pirate days.**Best Metal Album of the Year:** The Ocean's *Pelagial*. I wanted to give it to Deafheaven or Dillinger Escape Plan, but this progressive group from Germany blew me away.**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Streetlight Manifesto - *The Hands That Thieve*.**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** KEN Mode - *Entrench*. Maybe more metal than hardcore, but oh well.**Best Live Show of the Year:** Descendents, The Ocean, FIDLAR, Cloud Nothings, Mad Caddies, Trash Talk, Alt-J, Lee Perry, Wavves, and Streetlight Manifesto were all highlights.**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** I liked *Bad Grandpa*. There's just something about an old man with his saggy

genitals caught in a vending machine.

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** Boots of Mischief/Downtown Mischief. Props to the Jungle Shack crew.**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Rob Ford and his little crack-smokin' fiasco.**2014... what is your prediction?** Danzig gets fatter, Ginn gets weirder, and Rollins gets sterner. The sun will rise as the moon sets and Mastodon will make a cool sixth record. Predictions are... like... a total future trip, man.**Who are you and what are you best known for:**

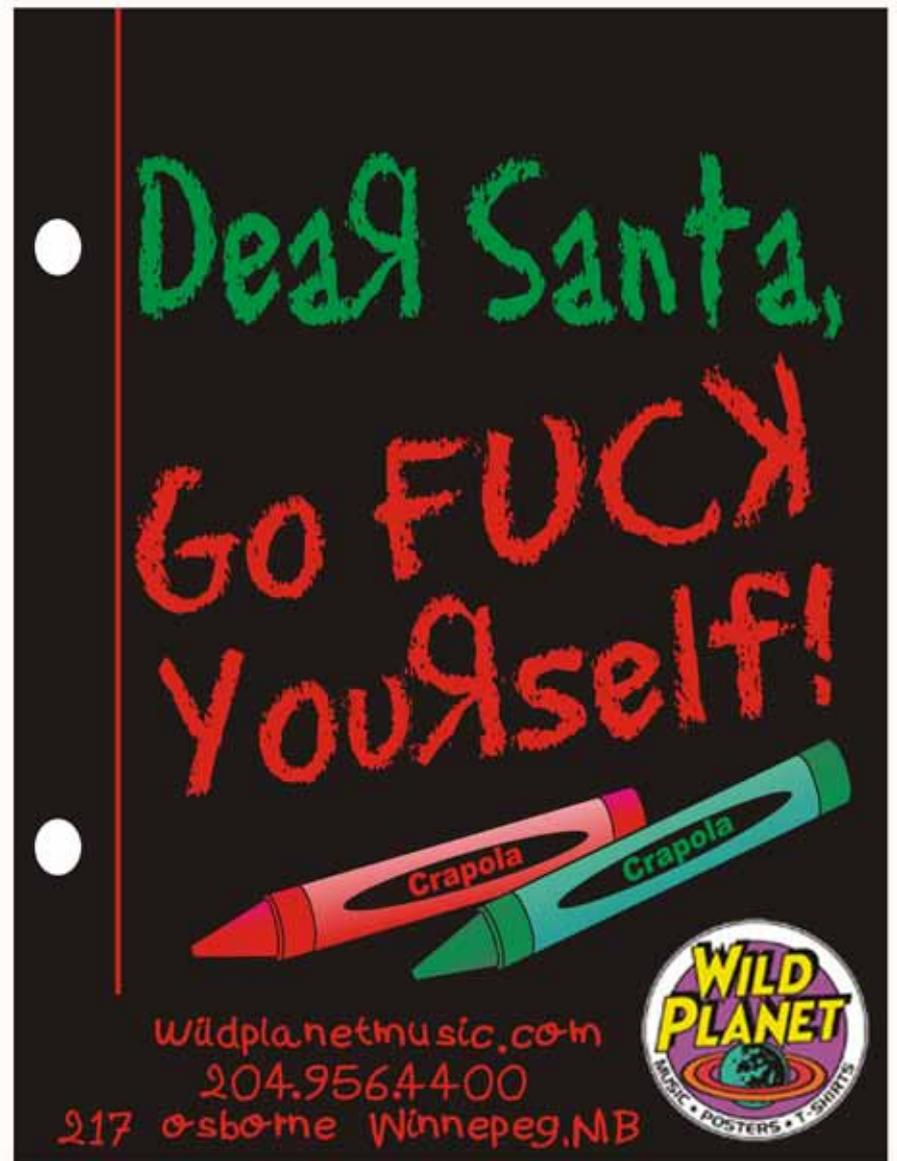
Charley Justice. Canada's only Metal Anarchist (or so it seems sadly...). I also run War on Music and shred and compose in Evil Survives...

**Favorite local band that everyone should know about:** Dissolution**Best trad metal album of the year:** Satan- *Life Sentence***Best death metal album of the year:** Entrails- *Raging Death* / Gorguts- *Colored Sands***Best black metal album of the year:** Ruins Of Beverast- *Blood Vaults***Best Vinyl Reissue of the year:** Jag Panzer- *Ample Destruction***Best Live Show of the year:** Gorguts at Noctis (or probably Satan at Wings of Metal...which I missed)**Best New Artist deserving of more recognition** Funeral Circle**Clusterfuck Of The Year:** People in Winnipeg.**2014...what is your prediction?** A generally lame year. 2013 was so intense, the laws of dynamics indicate slow activity in 2014.**Who are you and what are you best known for:**

I am Michael Carnage and I am a G-list celebrity and a semipro shit-talker

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should****know about:** I'm gonna go with Torrefy because I don't think everyone knows about them yet**Best Metal Album of the Year:** *Surgical Steel* by Carcass**Best Punk Album of the Year:** There's a lot, but if Alcoholic White Trash put one out this year, I'll go with that one**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** That one by that blonde girl that thinks she's black... the one with the dance beats on it.**Best Live Show of the Year:** Noctis666 was pretty solid, but I'm saying At The Gates at the Rickshaw in Vancouver... lots of close seconds, though.**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** I don't watch movies, I only watch documentaries about weed and war**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** The crazy guy that does the chalk drawing on Government St.**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Probably that time I fell down the stairs after Ivan from Men Without Hats bought me too many shots... also, I think I tried to do the safety dance in front of him.**2014..what is your prediction?** The radio will continue to suck, my hair will get longer, Rob Ford will develop a weight-loss program and write a book about how many calories are in pussy and crack.**Who are you and what are you best known for:**

Mr. Plow, singing obnoxious songs and annoying people

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should****know about:** The Smothers Fuckers from Portland, Oregon**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Gwar- *Battle Maximus***Best Punk Album of the Year:** Pottymouth- *From the Pink to the Stink***Best Hardcore Punk Folk Album of the Year:** Dirty Kid Discount: *A Life Amongst the Ruins***Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** One Direction**Best Live Show of the Year:** The Mentors/ Pottymouth at the Red Room in Portland Oregon**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** *Retard-o-tron Vol.3***Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** The Smothers Fuckers, 'cuz I'm biased**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Too many to choose from this year.**2014..what is your prediction?** Year of the Baby Plow!!**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Matt Gordon, skateboarder, stand-up comedian, and host of the Matt Gordon Show.**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Fall of Cain, and The Deep Sea Gypsies.**Best Metal Album of the Year:** They make albums out of metal now?**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Is Rancid still making albums? Them for sure.**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** R.A. The Rugged Man: *Legends Never Die***Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Kanye West**Best Live Show of the Year:** "The Matt Gordon

Show" (Stand-up comedy)

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** Best: *The Hangover 3* Worst: *Hunger Games***Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** All of them.**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Rob Ford & Pipelines**2014..what is your prediction?** Rob Ford for PM... not like we get to vote for our PM anyhow.**Who are you and what are you best known****for:** I am Allison Drinnan and I am a writer/ photographer for Absolute Underground and the Calgary Journal. I am also a journalism student who is graduating soon and needs a job. Spread the word.**Favorite Local Band that everyone should****know about:** I say this every year, but there are way too many to list all of them. I am so proud of all of the amazing acts I see coming out of my city in every genre! Yeah C-town!**Best Albums (in no particular order):** Nine Inch Nails - *Hesitation Marks*, Deafheaven - *Sunbather*, Dillinger Escape Plan - *One of Us Is a Killer*, Kvelertak - *Meir*, Burning Ghats - *Something Other Than Yourself*, ANION - *Without Solace*, Doberman - *Doberman*, Chron Goblin - *Life for the Living*, All Pigs Must Die - *Nothing Violates This Nature*  
**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Justin Timberlake - *The 20/20 Experience*.**Best Live Shows of the Year (in no particular order):** Nine Inch Nails (Calgary), Noctis (Calgary), Burgerfest 2013 (Vancouver), Kvelertak/Burning Ghats (Vancouver)**Best Local Artist deserving of more****recognition:** Ryan Dyer - my favourite writer! Move back to Canada! Dan Tatterton (Vancouver), Nathan Navetto (Calgary)**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Rihanna showing

continued from previous page

up three hours late for her show in Calgary and making me drink eight Saddledome beers waiting – resulting in a drunken, tear-filled singalong to “Only Girl in the World.”

**2014..what is your prediction?** I'll pay to see Rihanna again because I'm an idiot, but I'll only have to drink five



Saddledome beers until she shows up.

**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Dan Potter, I do some album reviews and write like an enraged Viking would yell at you after he/she just conquered your puny village.

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Harvest The Infection

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Church of Misery: *Thy Kingdom Scum*

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** I do believe punk spent the year sleeping off 2012

**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** Toxic Holocaust: *The Chemistry of Consciousness*

**Shittiest Album of the Year (any genre):** Twerking's Greatest Hits

**Best Live Show of the Year:** High on Fire/Windhand

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** Best: *Dark Skies* Worst: *The Lone Ranger*

**Best Local Artist deserving of more**

**recognition:** Alison Lilly

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** KatyCats vs. Little Monsters

**2014..what is your prediction?** Rob



Ford tries Heroin and starts speaking the truth!

**Who are you and what are you best known for:** I'm Dawn Daniels! Assistant Editor at Absolute Underground. Best known for my Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde double-life of teaching kindergarten by day and slinging tall cans at Republik by night

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** The Hockey Fight! (Calgary)

**Best Metal Album of the Year:** Red Fang- *Whales and Leeches*

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Bronx -IV

**Best Hardcore Album of the Year:** No hardcore in these headphones... just Bad Religion's Christmas album on repeat!

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Trigger Effect playing the best-ever house parties after being flooded out of Sled Island

**Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** *A Good Day to Die Hard*

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** Dylan Birkholm at Eternal Image Tattoo

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** Canyon Party fines and court dates thanks to the Canmore No Fun Police

**2014..what is your prediction?**



Apocalypse Meow!

**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Lacey Paige, best known for my deep infatuation with all things horror

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** With Malice Best Metal Album of the Year: Carcass – *Surgical Steel*

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Queens of the Stone Age at Shaw

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** Best – *Frankenstein's Army*, Worst – *Proxy*

**Best Local Artist deserving of more recognition:** Lee Palichuk of Corrupted Canvas/Ghouls & Goblins (Calgary)

**Clusterfuck of the Year:** The closing of The Videodrome

**2014: What is your prediction?** More



shows, bigger and better fan expos and some great new horror movies

**Who are you and what are you best known for:** Erik Lindholm from AU. Listening, then writing.

**Favorite Local Band that everyone should know about:** Mitochondrion (Vancouver).

**Best Metal Album of the Year:**

Black Sabbath-13, Ulcerate- *Vermis*, Cathedral- *The Last Spire* (“Tower of Silence” such a great video!), Alice In Chains- *Devil Put Dinosaurs Here*, Windhand- *Soma*

**Best Punk Album of the Year:** Iggy and The Stooges- *Ready to Die*

**Best Live Show of the Year:** Black Sabbath in Vancouver.

**Best Movie of the Year/Worst Movie of the Year (any genre):** *Only God*

*Forgives* was memorable.

**Clusterfuck(s) of the Year:** Sloppy US government shutdown / Tudor House burning down / Leafs and Bruins game seven... hahaha!

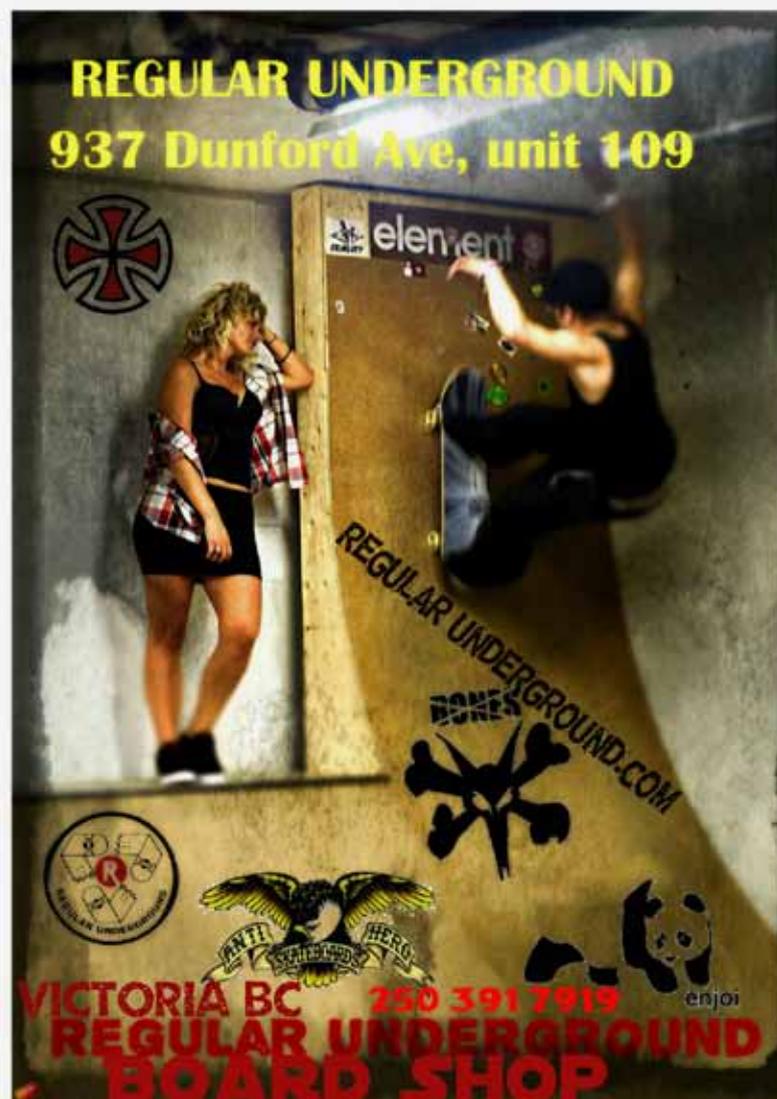
**2014..what is your prediction?** It's gonna be strange. Keep your chin up and prepare.



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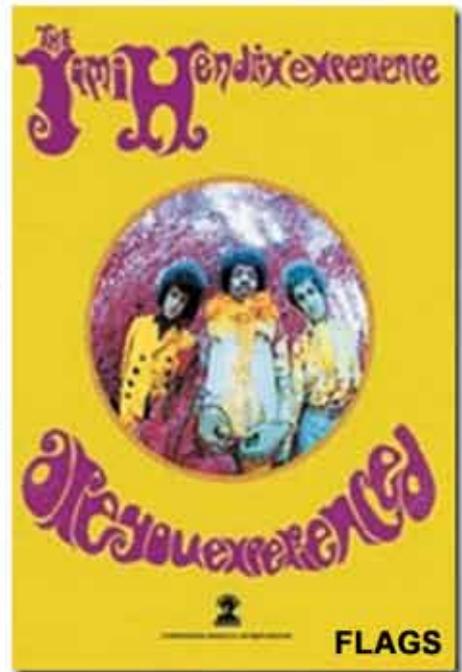


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# Sleez In The City

## To Three or Not to Three, That is My Question

For the past year and a half, I have dished out (my own brand of) opinionated advice in the form of this column. For my last editorial of 2013, however, I've decided to switch things up and instead turn to YOU, my wise and loyal readers, for guidance regarding my own relationship. So, here goes...

On Dec 10th 2013, my boyfriend and I will have been together for seven years. It's by far the longest, strongest relationship either of us has ever had. While we remain infatuated, content and completely committed to each other, I am beginning to see subtle signs (in both of us) of the approaching onset of the notorious "seven-year itch". At the beginning, I can honestly say that I only had eyes for him - no one else even registered on my libido scale. However, as the years pass and our once-fresh-and-new romance transitions into the stages of stability and familiarity, I find myself once again noticing the attractive people around me.

We're physically intimate together less often than we once were, and we're not nearly as sexually consumed by one another as we used to be. I



have very specific memories of us making out in crowded supermarket check-out lines, unable to keep our hands off one another for even a short time (yes, we were that couple that makes you roll your eyes or throw up in your mouth just a little because the sweetness of it sickens you). The fact that we now have a "usual" grocery trip is a perfect example of how routine our relationship has become. We're complacently comfortable, which is nice but can also be a little mundane.

One of the main reasons we've managed to make it work so well for so long is that we have excellent communication. When we first started dating, I made him agree to two things: 1. No games (I know what I want and I go after it- it's that's simple. I may not get it 100% of the time but I don't waste my energy on anything less) and 2. Honesty always- especially when it hurts (there's very few things I hate more than lies). So, when I noticed our lust and spontaneity was beginning

to plateau, the first thing I did was confront the issue head-on by initiating an open and direct conversation with him. Just as I expected, I wasn't the only one who felt our sex-life had become a bit too habitual. We discussed what we thought was working, what could be improved, and we shared ideas on how to spice things up.

Like a typical man, one of his ideas was to have a threesome with myself and another woman. Now... before the feminists reading this get all up in arms, this isn't a new concept to me. I'm

an open bisexual who's had threesomes in the past but hasn't been with another woman since before my current relationship began. So the idea does have a certain appeal to me. The difference, however, between now and then, is that I've never allowed myself to be as emotionally vulnerable as I presently find myself. This is the first time I actually want to spend the rest of my existence with someone and that changes things.

As confident, open-minded and free-spirited as I like to think I am, I wonder what the repercussions of this might be. Will I be overcome with possessive jealousy and become either angry during the encounter or resentful after? Will my agreement to this be misconstrued as a license for him to cheat? Will it feed his fantasy of being with other women to the point that he'll no longer be satisfied with me alone? Can I handle this emotionally? Would doing this ruin what we've worked so hard to achieve over the past seven years? Or would it bring us even closer together? For the first time in my life, I'm considering the consequences and that feeling of insecurity makes me uneasy.

Then again, I wouldn't be the only one taking a risk. He's in this relationship too. He truly loves me and after living together this long, I have serious doubts about his ability to aptly function without me (just as I have become reliant on him). We're partners in everything. I know his main objective is keeping me happy and that living out a sexual fantasy comes secondary to that. After all, if this were to change things and I reacted in an unexpected negative way (self-control has never been my strong suit), he would be the one having to suffer right along with me; and trust me, I would make him suffer.

There's also the fact that I love women and he knows it. Our monogamy has kept me from being close to anyone else for seven years. Would a fresh bisexual encounter awaken something

within me that can only be satisfied by a woman? If he's willing to take a gamble by inviting a third person into bed, shouldn't I at least give his proposition some serious consideration?

After sharing my concerns with him, we discussed it further and agreed to the following ground rules:

- It would be up to me if and when a ménage would happen and with whom it would include (if anyone at all).

- I would make the rules, set clear boundaries and he would then follow my lead.

So, my sexually-experienced readers, here I am, considering agreeing to a threesome and asking for your advice. Does this scenario sound familiar to you? Have you put an established, secure relationship on the line for a joint experience that's risqué and exciting? And if so, how did it turn out? Tell me what you think.

Write to me at [cjsleez@hotmail.com](mailto:cjsleez@hotmail.com) and give it to me straight, or crooked, whatever...but give it to me. The best three responses will each receive a prize pack, including a copy of my book, *Poor Little Bitch Girl*, a copy of my most recent CD, *Valley of the Shadow* and some CJ Sleez stickers and postcards (if your e-mail is chosen I'll write you back for your mailing address). Thanks in advance for sharing- Happy Holidays and have a fantastic New Year!

For more info on CJ, check out her band site at [www.CJSLEEZ.com](http://www.CJSLEEZ.com)



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## Absolute Live Reviews

### Line Traps

#### The Tubuloids

#### Talks Cheap Record Store

#### Victoria, BC

Aug 16th, 2013

I really had no idea how the people were going to fit into this tiny record store to see live bands. The street outside looked like a place you just didn't want to be. The scene was drinkin' and smokin' people riding skateboards and weird old men in patch-covered clown vests. I am a surfer and a fan of surf music, so I tied my LuLulemon hoodie up tight and braved the bad environment to see this new surf band called The Tubuloids.

Someone came out on the street and said the first band was starting and the crowd jammed into the upper loft of the store to watch a band called the Line Traps. I found a spot beside a speaker and was excited to see the band had two female members and one male member. I always like to see women in rock. This band started out with a ton of technical difficulties and I almost left. Then I realized I couldn't leave because there was no way out, the crowd that followed me blocked the exit. Shit, this really wasn't good, and I got the feeling this wasn't going to be like the Jack Johnson surf music show I'm so accustomed to. The buzz of guitar started, the purple-haired drummer began chopping away and this noise called the Line Traps began. I really wanted out and the rude singer put his back to the audience and started yelling out his songs.

They played and the crowd pulsed back and forth to the punk music. I had no idea what to think and then the bass players amplifier started to smoke with a horrible smell of burning wires... I realized the Line Traps had just lured the crowd into a Death Trap! As quickly as it started, it was over and the sweaty crowd spilled out into the street, thank God, for some much-needed air.

I was feeling done but for some reason I felt compelled to return and see The Tubuloids. The surf tone was right as the guitar player started his riff. Yeah man.... "WIPE OUT" Blow up palm trees and pink flamingos skirted the band, I was ready for some Beach Boys! Then I realized I had just put myself into the same dangerous situation. Yes the Tubuloids had a surf/rock-a-billy sound but it was played fast. I was quite amazed at the drummer, whose beats reminded me of Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction* meets Motorhead. One question that entered my mind as this band went off was why the old clown vested men in the crowd were fighting each other? The dance floor became a slippery mess of wine and beer and the dancers jiggled and chicken-danced until they fell into a pile. The Tubuloids and the people that dance to them.... Wow. The spectacle was unbelievable and if the police had showed up there would have been trouble. Trauma is one emotion I felt, and the next day I did an extra hour of yoga.

Peace and Love,  
-Mary Surf-Sista

### Fucked Up

#### Tony Molina

#### Friendly Ghost

#### Lucky Bar, Victoria

Oct. 12, 2013

In the world of hardcore punk, no band seems to polarize the fans like Toronto's Fucked Up. Some see them as experimental revolutionaries taking hardcore to new heights, while others see overrated poseurs

creating watered-down punk for hipsters. However, no matter what the opinion, music fans all seem to agree on one thing: Fucked Up puts on one hell of a live show.

The show was opened by a BC band, Friendly Ghost, who I missed. However, the start time was listed incorrectly, so I didn't feel like an asshole about it. Second up was Tony Molina from California, who gave a clinic in repetitive song-writing. Seemingly every song started with an upbeat indie-punk verse, transitioned to a jangly chorus, then finished with a half-time neo-classical breakdown that sounded like Wavves covering

Fang Island. Despite gratingly loud guitars and cookie-cutter song shtick, the set was quite enjoyable overall.

Fucked Up finally took the stage, and as per their reputation, the energy shot high. It only took two songs for frontman Damian "Pink Eyes" Abraham to rip his shirt off and hop into the crowd. Abraham (who recently lost a lot of weight) unleashed his trademark growls and barks while the three-pronged guitar attack behind him created pummeling sound walls.

The group played cuts off their three LPs, with standouts including "Queen of Hearts," "Black Albino Bones," and "Son the Father." They also played

"Year of the Dragon," the latest installment of their *Zodiac* series of vinyl singles, which feature long-form compositions. "Dragon" clocked in at around 14 minutes, moving from pretty post-rock to sludgy hardcore, and everything in between.

Call it punk, experimental rock, hell, call it artcore. No matter how you label them, Fucked Up transcends what is typically found in the hardcore scene. Their show at Lucky reaffirmed what I already knew: the Ontario five-piece is truly original and a Canadian treasure.

-By Michael Luis



## Absolute Film

### Loony In The Woods

#### Troma Films

*Loony in the Woods* is the latest VHS release from Troma Entertainment. So far Troma has put out *The Toxic Avenger Big Box*, followed by *Father's Day* and, most recently, *Class of Nuke Em High*. *Loony* is the fourth VHS release from the independent company and the first film to come out solely in tape form in 15 years. I grabbed a copy from Troma at the New York Comic Con and eagerly waited to put the tape in my VCR at home. I was not disappointed! This movie, which was made in 2006, looks like it was filmed in the mid 80s and then lost for 25 years before Troma found it. It has that "shot-on-video" feel that some other classic low-budget films like *Video Violence* or *Cannibal Campout* share. And the aged look of the movie really amps up the old-school feeling while you're watching it. The story isn't anything new, and the budget feels really low, but if you are a fan of these micro-budget, shot-on-video films, you should be in for a treat. We are introduced to our main characters right before they leave on a weekend camping trip getaway. The six unsuspecting campers fall into the trap of a local crazy, ski-mask-wearing farmer who begins to terrorize and kill off the gang, one by one. The group is made up of some strange individuals, most of whom you don't really care for, making it easy for the viewer to cheer for the killer instead of the victims. There are some extremely over-the-top moments, for example: the main character breaks the fourth wall and talks directly to the camera, or while he's watching his brother die, he enjoys a nice warm cup of tea. These moments add to the cheese factor, making the film even more enjoyable to watch. The best part of *Loony in the Woods*, and one of the things I miss most about VHS tapes, are the trailers before the feature. Troma placed three trailers at the beginning of the tape, so as soon as you push play you get to see some of the other VHS releases to recently come out from the company. I always loved this parts of VHS tapes! You'd go rent a copy of some new horror film and get

to see some random trailer for a film you might never have heard of. Or you would get a home video trailer that was cut exclusively for the VHS market. I like that Troma is putting some films out on tapes and making them feel like they came out decades ago. If you're a tapehead and love watching or collecting VHS, then you should really try and check *Loony* out! But even if you just like horror films, you could dust off the old VCR, grab some popcorn and make a night of it. I can't wait to see what Troma has in store for us next!

-By Cody Cook

### All the Boys Love Mandy Lane 2013, DEDfest Review

Every case of fame is built on a foundation of controversy or drama, no matter what the context may be or to what degree. The same rules apply to movies, often paving the pathway for a cult fan base to follow on.

*All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* is no exception, although whether it deserves the reputation that it has garnered is really a matter of personal taste, as is evident in the extreme differences of opinion expressed in the plethora of reviews that are floating around out there on the inter-web. Basically, the movie became somewhat of an indie horror legend after being shelved for so long as a result of distribution complications that arose when Senator Entertainment went bankrupt shortly after purchasing rights to the movie from The Weinstein Company. Prior to that, the movie had a solid festival run from 2006 - 2007, having played at some of the most prestigious film festivals in the world, such as: South by Southwest, Sitges, TIFF and London FrightFest. Subsequently, the movie was granted a limited theatrical release in the United Kingdom in February of 2008; it was also released on region 2 DVD and Blu Ray at that time.

Up until this year, *Mandy Lane* has pretty well been under the radar. That all changed on March 8th, when The Weinstein Company made an official announcement that they had reacquired the rights to an official

U.S. theatrical release. Additionally, in September the movie was made available on video on demand.

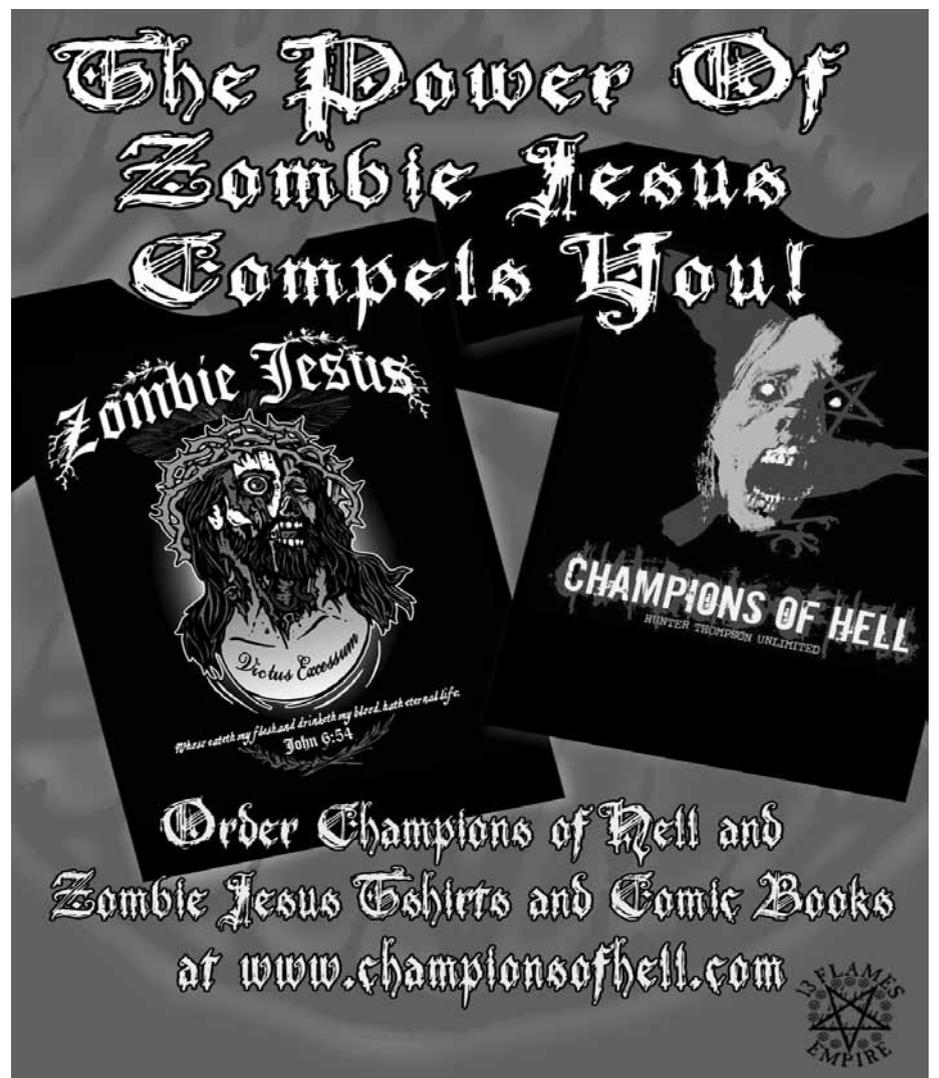
The anticipation built up around this movie within the horror community is of no surprise considering how much has been left to the imagination in the years that we kept hearing and reading about it, yet had no clue when we'd actually be seeing it. So when the organizers of DEDfest announced the festival's 2013 line-up, and *All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* was on it, many of us went ape-shit. I was one of those people. But not only because I'm a sucker for highly talked about genre fare that holds no promise of ever being seen by the masses—and thus possesses a great air of mystique—but also because I'm always curious to see modern entries to the slasher subgenre. And truth be told, I greatly admire the lovely and versatile Amber Heard (particularly for her performances in *The Informers* and *Drive Angry*).

*All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* follows Heard as the title character as she embarks on a journey to become one with the cool kids several months after a tragic accident befalls one of them at a house party. In the wake of that particular event, Mandy ditches her best friend, Emmett (Michael Welch), evidently because of his direct involvement in the accident. The stoner of the group, Red, invites Mandy to a gathering at his father's acreage for a weekend. Interestingly, the motives of Red and his friends are unclear; are they trying to lure Mandy to the acreage to do something horribly embarrassing to her, or are they actually just straight-up hell-bent on initiating her into the group? At times it seems as though it could go either way. What follows is your standard slasher soiree—teens wandering off into the night to get busy and getting picked off one by one, electricity failure, red herrings tossed in for good measure. For the most part, *Mandy Lane* is as entertaining and stereotypical as any other contemporary addition to the subgenre, but the underlying social significance that distinguishes it from most slasher fare isn't revealed until the tail end of the climax.

For me, *All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* elicited an array of mixed feelings—some sour and some pleasant. Some critics have praised the cinematography for its grainy, grindhouse-like aesthetic that mirrors early 70s horror films such as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *The Last House on the Left*. Personally, I couldn't disagree more. I honestly do not know how

anyone could even compare the shoddy visual aspect of the film to the groundbreaking works of Tobe Hooper and Wes Craven. The first half of *Mandy Lane* looks like a poorly shot pop music video from the 90s—think the visual equivalent of a teen mix-tape—and the music fits the imagery perfectly. Around the mid-way mark, things start to steer

away from the teen drama vignette and into darker, more serious territory. Tension is successfully built up and things start to get a bit more interesting in the way of annoying naive teenagers getting what's coming to them in the form of some good old-fashioned bloodshed. Thankfully the story becomes engaging enough to detract from some of the



# Absolute Holiday Horror-

## Special X-Mas Feature

By Lacey Paige

Don't let the holiday cheer and obligation to give back to your fellow man bog you down this Christmas season. Be sure to take the time to treat yourself and indirectly satisfy that rising urge to strangle the asshole in front of you in line at Best Buy with a string of Christmas lights. Take a break from your traditional *Home Alone* marathon to experience some Christmas fear. Absolute Underground has compiled this list of the 10 best holiday horror movies that will satisfy your craving for the red stuff this holiday season.

### Black Christmas (1974)

The late Bob Clark's seminal POV slasher flick is quintessential horror viewing for the holiday season. Clark managed to make one of the most terror-inducing slasher movies even before Michael Myers escaped from Smith's Grove Sanitarium, before Jason Voorhees surfaced from the depths of Crystal Lake, and prior to the prevalence of the copious gore that saturated the horror genre in the 80s. Utilizing much more sophisticated scare strategies—such as atmosphere, tension and the uncanny verbalizations of an unidentifiable prank-caller—Clark created one of the most influential horror films of all time. So turn the Christmas lights out, snuggle up with a glass of rum and eggnog, and be sure to turn your phone off for this one. Billy is coming home for the holidays.



### Silent Night, Deadly Night (1984)

Christmas is such a terrible time of the year for a young boy to see his parents get murdered; as one could imagine, such dire events breed awful consequences. Some people just don't like Christmas, and for each year that they have to put up with the jingle bells, the mistletoe, and the flashing green and reds light, they delve a little further off the proverbial tobogganing hill, deeper into the mindset of a deranged Santa suit-wearing psychopath. Such is the story of little orphan Billy: a young man who by the age of 18 has a vocabulary that consists primarily of two words: PUNISH and NAUGHTY. He may not have a sack full of awesome gifts, but he does have some pretty creative kills up his sleeves. This Santa impersonator will be decorating his Christmas tree with bloody red entrails and human extremities!



### Silent Night (2012)

Few holiday horror movies from outside of the 80s have managed to capture the sheer horror, mean-spiritedness and over-the-top gruesome imagery that should never realistically be associated with



the Christmas season. And even less common is the onscreen display of brutality inflicted upon children. What more could a horror fan possibly ask for on their Christmas wish list? *Silent Night's* psycho Santa is a slash above the rest; his naughty list doesn't discriminate against any age, race or sex. I suppose that 'no-mercy-for-sinners' should be a strict standard of Christmas, seeing as how it's a religious holiday and all. It's a damn good thing Santa's got enough torture tools in his sack to make everyone pay for their sins because after all, "It ain't all candy canes and pretty lights".

### SINT (AKA Saint Nick, 2010)

Some really grotesque, over-the-top kills, stunning cinematography and an interesting reimagining of a not-so-jolly ol' St. Nick are the features that make this Dutch entry in the holiday horror catalogue stand out. Traditional Dutch folklore tells the tale of an evil bishop named Niklas who wreaked havoc upon small-town Netherlands with his gang of miscreants and was subsequently murdered by vengeful townsfolk on the fifth of December, 1492, for their gruesome deeds. Every 25 years, when a full moon would rise on that exact date—which also happens to be the town's annual celebration of Sinterklaas, the Dutch version of Santa Clause—the ghosts of Niklas and his minions would return to spill the blood of the innocent in retaliation for their death.



### Santa's Slay (2005)

Imagine a perfect world where former WWF wrestler Bill Goldberg was actually born to the Virgin Mary by the power of Satan, and every December 25th was celebrated (or shunned) as the annual Day of Slaying. But then, one day in 1005 AD, Santa lost a game of curling to an angel, who in turn made Santa vow to deliver presents around the world for the next 1000 years. A thousand years passes and Santa Claus is back to his naughty old ways—cruising around small town Hellberta in his souped-up hell-deer sleigh, slaying the townsfolk by the dozen. The only gift that Santa will be delivering this time around is the gift of a grisly, premature death. Strippers beware!



### Jack Frost (1997)

A paddy wagon hauling notorious serial killer Jack Frost to the execution chamber collides with a truck containing genetic substances just days before Christmas. Frost is killed in the gruesome collision but his evil genes are absorbed in the snow. A little boy happily builds a snowman, unaware of the fact that the snow contains the soul of a murderous madman. Jack Frost is back to spread Christmas fear all throughout the quaint town of Snowmonton. Heads are lopped off with sleds, axes are eaten for dinner, pretty girls are sexed-up by evil ice kings, and an ordinary Christmas tree is transformed into an unsightly display of death. You can blame science and a



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writer with a bad bout of brain-freeze for this climatic abomination. Frosty better watch his frozen ass.

### Don't Open till Christmas (1984)

For most people, the holidays are a time of giving, a time of loving and spreading Christmas cheer, but there's that small percentage of mental ward escapees who loathe all of it—the consumerism, the gluttony, the decorations and the excessive advertising of it all. For some people who have a few screws loose in their head (and maybe a peculiar case of PTSD), the site of a drunken, perverted dude in a Santa suit is enough for them to try rid to the world of such Santa-spoiling spectacles in some pretty gruesome ways. Or perhaps a killer clad in a translucent mask is really just out to put an end to all of the apparent carnal connotations of Santa Clause garb.



### Christmas Evil (1980)

Some people take the season of giving much too seriously. Harry Stadling is one of those people. After experiencing the ultimate childhood trauma of witnessing his mom getting fresh with a guy in a Santa suit, Harry makes a blood pact with himself—via smashed snow-globe—to become a sort of holiday omnipresence; to spy on every little boy and girl with the intent of creating the most precise 'Naughty & Nice' list that even the real Santa himself couldn't top. A toymaker by day, Harry sets out to transform average toys into eyeball-skewering, skull-splitting weapons of vengeance that he uses against other adults who just don't believe in the true spirit of Christmas.



### Rare Exports (2010)

Imagine if Santa Clause wasn't just some fat, jolly guy clad in a red and white suit that handed out awesome gifts to girls and boys all over the world. What if he was actually this sort of mysterious

mythological entity that was buried deep under the frozen terrain of Finland, destined to someday be excavated by a group of Finnish reindeer herders and continue on his ancient legacy of punishing all that have been naughty? And what if he had an army of primitive Santa look-a-likes that could be reformed into a militia of mall Santas? These extreme variances in standard Christmas ideologies would do exactly what *Rare Exports* has done for the gamut of holiday genre cinema: add a little extra to the not-so ordinary.



### Elves (1989)

It goes without saying that Mr. Clause gets all the limelight during the Christmas season. People often forget to give praise to the little guys—to consider the ones that toil away in the toy factory 364 days a year, and really hold the holidays together: I'm talking about the elves. But they aren't as cute and innocent as pop-culture often depicts. Perhaps they're really operating on their own agenda, which happens to include a diabolical Neo-Nazi scheme to impregnate the last remaining pure-blooded Aryan virgin in the world—a teenaged girl name Kristen who likes to spend her holidays partaking in anti-Christmas pagan rituals with her slutty friends. Perhaps the elves will succeed, perhaps they won't. But one thing is for sure: they finally found their way into the spotlight.



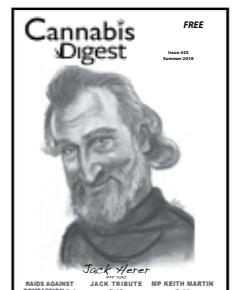
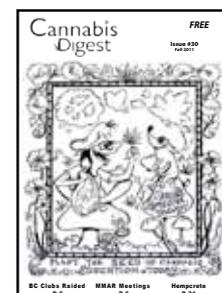
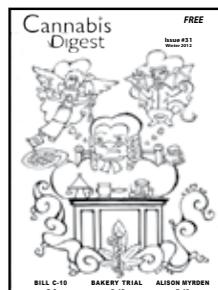
Additional holiday horror viewing: *Gremlins* (1984); *Silent Night, Bloody Night* (1972); *Silent Night, Deadly Night 2* (1987); *Silent Night, Deadly Night 3: Better Watch Out!* (1989); *Initiation: Silent Night, Deadly Night 4* (1990); *Silent Night, Deadly Night 5: The Toy Maker* (1991); *Jack Frost 2: Return of the Killer Mutant Snowman* (2000); *New Year's Evil* (1980); *The Children* (2008); *To All a Good Night* (1980); *Santa Claws* (1996); *Black Christmas* (2006)

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# Absolute Album Reviews

## Death Toll Rising- Infection Legacy Self-Released

The title track that opens this record immediately says, "We mean business!" This band deserves all the acclaim they are getting right now as part of the new breed of death metal bands like Cattle Decapitation and Revocation. They're the real thing with horns in the air, signalling that an alpha male revolt is now in progress.

You can't fuck with this air-tight drumming or the no-holds-barred guitar showdowns. Deep guttural larynx wobbles mean, "you ain't gonna prevail", cause you know where it concerns heavy metal, these guys refuse to say "when". The whiplash fury of "Scorched Earth Policy" takes the darkest shit this world has to offer and turns it into a wicked head-banging anthem. It's got all the extremism of deathcore but without the wussy simplification.

DTR make sure to have all their chips aligned, which leads to one of the most solid and undeniably infectious groupings of songs I have heard from any death metal band in 2013. This record has really got one hell of a deadly strain of Ebola virus to dish out... Consider me infected!

-By Dan Potter

## Scale the Summit- The Migration Prosthetic Records

Carefully hidden behind Scale the Summit's blizzard of rhythmic and harmonic complexity is their unquestionable allegiance towards a sense of tunefulness that is sadly missing from many tech-headed instrumentalists. But don't get me wrong, if you think the guys in Meshuggah are overly busy, just give "The Dark Horse" a listen and you will be quickly floored by the 'we will out-do you' philosophy when it comes to technique.

Throughout the melancholic and brainy journey, concepts relating to nature keep emerging. Clean, icy tones are like arctic vistas, while fluttering djent riffs are like a newborn wildebeest's first few steps. It is immediately clear that this is prog-metal for the I-MAX Theater, and I think it would make for a ripping Koyaanisqatsi soundtrack geared towards metalheads.

I remember back when this band first started out, I thought, "They're just a bunch of kids who think they have good technique and have nothing to say." Clearly, the lads are growing up and a new forcefulness has emerged in them; now they're sounding more and more like Ph.D. candidates in heavy metal.

-By Dan Potter

## Toxic Holocaust- Chemistry of Consciousness Relapse Records

This album will get you high on reality. At about the halfway mark, you'll begin to realize that consciousness, when left un-inebriated, can be quite a trip in and of itself. The topics covered in this album read like a mental patient's diagnosis chart; the hypocrisy of war, mind control, the decline of society, international conspiracies and

obsession with death, death, death!

After several classic "evil" releases, it sounds as though a new "more serious" phase in Toxic Holocaust's career has begun to take root. Although the ferocious pace hasn't let up one bit, this time around the songwriting shows extra depth. There are some gnarly AC/DC solos, and even some nods to classic Priest and Sabbath alongside the darker strains of modern metal that these guys obviously have found a way to perfect.

There are some who have said this band is a comic book creation and wouldn't last very long. Well at this point, I think those characters have been hopelessly annihilated! When Joel Grind screams, "I serve death!"; you can't help but ask yourself, how much more eternal could one get than to accept employment as the grim reaper's trusty sidekick?! Each member certainly knows what they're capable of; like any true author of horror, they have the ability to transport you out of your comfort zone and make you like it. That one-two thrash metal punch to the gut becomes more and more pleasurable until you feel like you're in the ring just laying into your worst fucking nightmare!

-By Dan Potter

## The Coffin Kats- Born of the Motor Sailor's Grave Records

Here it is! The latest album from Detroit's Coffin Kats, and what can I say? It fucking kicks so much ass, it's insane! Which is how it should be for a psychobilly band! The rhythm section is incredibly and absolutely solid, the guitar riffs are catchy as all hell and have the right amount of metal influence, and the over-the-top dramatic style of singing all of it creates the dark and twisted environment in which these songs live. It has to be mentioned, Vic's voice is pitch-perfect for this creepy style of music, it's a dark opera of real-life horror. *Born of the Motor* will definitely take you on a fucking ride, starting from the first note of "All of Me is Gone". "Lighting has struck once again". Holy shit, no kidding! I can't help but play air drums and sing along to this baby! And I am by no means ashamed to admit it! This is what I wish every single album I listened to made me do. Why can't they all be this good? And so on it goes with the next song, "Under a Blue Sky". "Giving Blood" is damn creepy in the best of ways and it's impossible to not tap your toes, at least. Same with "Devil Tales", and you've got to love the guitar on this one! So many awesome songs, including "The Team", which starts as a 50s-style ballad and soon intertwines with Coffin Kats' brand of epic punkabilly. It's done so seamlessly and works so damn well. "Twist Apart" is so catchy and you can feel the music circling around you. The ground spins as the singing and music do. It just moves and feels so damn alive for a song about death. "Round and round you wanna go". "Goodbye Blues" starts slow but ends with a bang! And yes, once again, the drums provide a solid heartbeat. The guitar riffs have a nice hint of metal, but not too much. Really words do it no justice, you have to take a listen to this work yourself.

It's good to the last note, ending with "Gone To See The World" which is a sweet Hawaiian-influenced ode to the open road,

to seeing the world. Something this hard working band has experience in to be sure. I must add that I think it's brilliant that they explore the horror of real life and inject that aspect into most of their songs. It would be incredible with there were more bands like this one. I can only hope the Coffin Kats will be here with us to blow our minds for a while longer.

-Anita Fixx

## The Creepshow- Life After Death Stomp Records

I really wanted to like this one as it's been a while since I listened to any albums by this band. I thought that the break might give me a pleasant surprise this time around. The main problem is the new singer, who lacks any emotion and makes it hard to get into the songs. Some of the lyrics are certainly angry, for example, "We'd only heard of such betrayal through rumours before. Kept feeding the fire and finally we've had enough." Why can't she sound like she's actually had enough? If the singing and the production was a bit more raw and less produced, it would really benefit this type of music. It's called psychobilly for a reason. A few songs do work, like "Devil's Son", and the keyboard is an interesting touch on some songs like "Failing Grade". "Last Call" is a ska-inspired song with male vocals, which offers a nice change near the end of the album. The guitar, keyboard and rhythm really come together and work in the last song, "Life After Death". But to be honest, there needs to be more life in here than death. This will certainly appeal to their old fans but they may have trouble winning over new ones. –

-Anita Fixx

## Entrails – Raging Death Metal Blade Records

Entrails is a Swedish band that technically started in 1990, but broke up for years and didn't even release anything until 2010. Since then, they've put out a bunch of albums and now have new releases on Metal Blade. Seriously, these guys have put out six albums in four years. I think they're happy to be recording again. I think it's two old guys and a bunch of new members, but they're sticking to it like it's still 1990.

The first track is pretty solid and sounds like early Cemetery or maybe something that would be on the first two albums by Dismember. After that, it switches up a bit and starts to get a real death 'n roll sound to it. I kind of like this, but a lot of people won't. "Carved to the Bone" and "Bloodhammer" could be straight-up rock songs with a different vocal style and maybe a little tweak to the drums. It's really easy to listen to and it has a nice groove to it. By the time you get to track six, "Descend to the Beyond", you're back into thrashy old death again. Great riff throughout the song and a catchy chorus, even if that's weird to say about death metal.



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And the next two tracks keep to that, featuring solid riffs and really short solos, and keeping a good pace. Track nine, "Defleshed", picks it up a bit and gives you a good two-minute blast and then it ends with "The Cemetery Horrors". It's a pretty good way to end it. The first three-quarters of the song are loud and fast and then it devolves into horror movie soundtrack, with synth organ getting slower and slower until it fades out.

In the end I liked this album, it's solid in every way. It seems there's a lot of bands like this putting out new material but still making it sound like the old stuff. I personally am happy that is happening. Not all death metal needs to be super technical to be good. If you can agree with that, then you should probably check out some of this album and make your own opinion. I am by no means any sort of music expert, but I'll listen to this one again.

-By Michael F. Carnage

## Hail of Bullets- The Rommel Chronicles Metal Blade Records

Hail of Bullets is a Dutch band that's only been around for a few years but has a few ex-members of Asphyx, so that counts for something. They like to do the war theme with albums, with the last one being about the rise and fall of World War II Japan. Instead of picking a country this time, they picked a person. They're putting out a new release about a German field marshal and tank commander named Erwin Rommel. If you know anything about war history, it makes for a good story and it's done with the influence of old *Obituary* and a little *Autopsy*.

The first track made the logical start at Rommel's birth and early years, included joining the military. "Pour le Merite" was the medal he was awarded during WWI in France. Track three, "DG-7", is a great song on a musical level, slowing down for the second half, which gives it an epic feeling that suits the subject matter well. The next two tracks are much faster paced, to coincide with the frenetic pace of Rommel's style of tank warfare in France. Relentless charging riffs making you think of Panzer divisions roaring across battlefields. "The Desert Fox" is about Rommel's transfer to lead the attack in North Africa where he received this nickname from the British press. I like the way the pace of the songs change to suit the subject matter in each song. It shows the pile of research the band must have put into writing this. This continues for the rest of the album, through the move out of Africa in an attempt to hold the last fronts against the Allies. All Axis military pulling back into Germany as they were slowly defeated on each of their fronts. The last song, "Death of a Field Marshal", is kind of a slow and somber song. It deals with Rommel's forced suicide after his plot to assassinate Hitler was uncovered. It was the end of the man and the end of this story and a perfect ending to this album.

I'm a little biased on this because I'm an avid reader of WWII history and this album told a great story. I usually listen to metal when I read history so this kind of fits. The changing pace and well-written music pull you into the subject matter. I suggest playing the whole album while reading the Wikipedia page on Erwin Rommel, just to get the full effect of it. But then again, if you don't like history and think everyone involved in the World Wars was evil, then you won't be into this one at all.

-By Michael F. Carnage

## Broken Hope- Omen of Disease Century Media Records

Broken Hope is an American death/gore metal band that has been around forever as far as the genre goes. If you listened to mid-paced death with really low vocals in the 90s, then you're probably familiar with this band. They'd been broken up for more than ten years before they went on tour last summer. With only one original member, guitarist Jeremy Wagner, they've put together a new album. If you like Gorgasm, that's a bonus because they share a vocalist now. I think this album is already out, so it should be easy to find.

After a slightly annoying intro, they get into the music and it's a pure 1990s death metal flashback...well late 90s. And in all the best ways. Low, guttural vocals and snare-heavy, fast drumming mixed with riff-solo-riff. By song three, "Ghastly", I'm having memories of listening to death metal when I was a kid and remembering why I got into this genre in the first place. "Rendered into Lard" is everything old school death should be, all about with the bonus of cannibalism. The rest of the album is where I would start using words like "classic", "wicked" and "brutal" to describe how good I think the songs are. They're mostly mid-tempo, three-minute blasts of brutality. It's exactly how I like my old school non-tech death, and I know I'm starting to sound a little like a fanboy here. The last four songs all had me wanting to jump around with a smile like I was a kid again. And then they end it with a redux of "Incinerated".

It's pretty obvious I really liked this album and will continue listening to it. If you are into an older style of brutal death that has no core in it, or if you think a lot of death has gone way too tech lately, this is something to check out. The last third of the album has some wicked riffing that anyone should love. Check it out and make up your own mind.

-By Michael F. Carnage

## HERETICS IN THE IAB- Suture Sacrifice Records

This album kicks off with a White Zombie vs. KMFDM-influenced track full of crunchy metal and discarded techno-babble. I could place the wicked goth vocals somewhere in the year 2054, where the singer's day job is leader of a water cartel in one of the last remaining human settlements on a desert-covered Earth. It sounds post-apocalyptic, if you didn't catch my drift.

Because of all the lyrical venom being intravenously administered via the ears, it is easy for one to forget how listenable this disc is. I'd fit it into the soft-industrial category, where the grooves are 4/4, dance-floor-ready. There are also moments of tranquility brought on by piano-acced dementia, as the rasp of a faulty replicant's voice crackles on about all the things that you thought only you had buried in the inner recesses of your mind.

"Some People" is a great militant weirdo anthem that reminds me of Marilyn Manson at his most alienating peak, with the nihilistic refrain, "...you should dislike me". This particular combination of tight metal guitar riffs, mean, sharp-toothed beats and sick heart monitor-pulsing synths are definitely a win as each one of these eight tracks has something worth climbing out of your coffin for.

-By Dan Potter

# Absolute Comix



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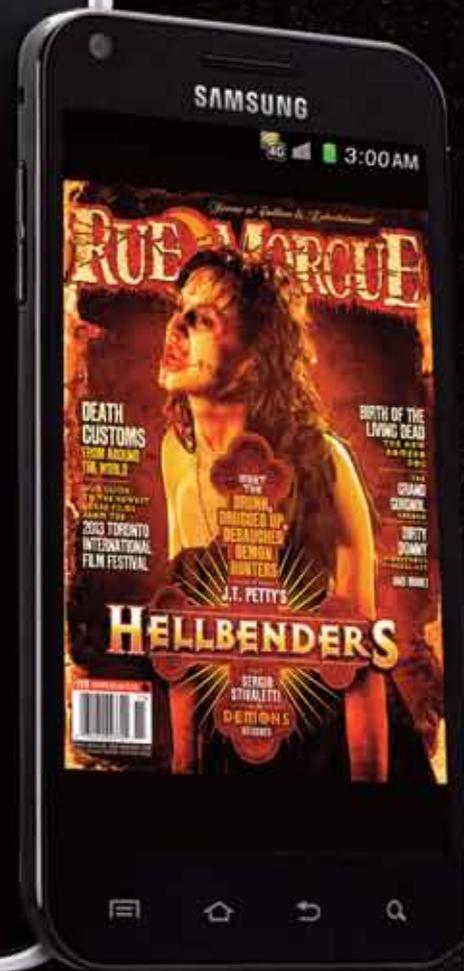


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