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ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

Vol. 7 - #5 - Issue 41 - August/September 2011



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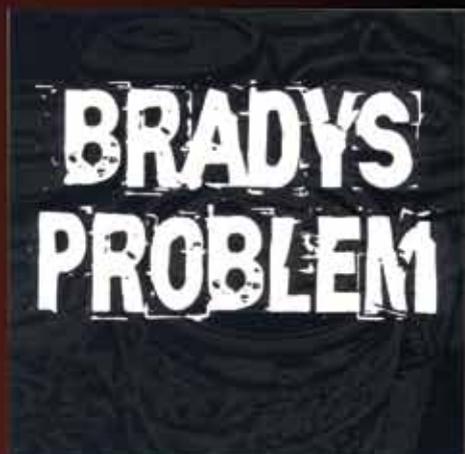
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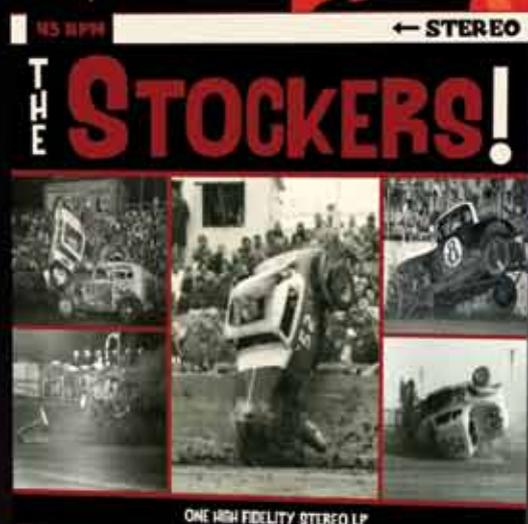
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ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

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VICTORIAS LOCALS ONLY

CLASS OF 1984

By Ira Hunter

AU: Describe your band to someone who has never heard or seen you live

Jake - Fast, melodic skate punk - easy listening.

AU: Who's in the band? What other bands have the members been in?

Jake - I sing and write the lyrics, Jono writes songs, plays guitar and argues with me, Mike plays bass, writes songs and does backups and Devon, the wildcat, plays drums.

Jono- Breach, Excessives, Gung Ho's, Capital City Stalkers, Left Pocket Dead., Angry Snowmans and Kenny G-Had.

AU: What's the meaning behind the band's name?

Jake - Well our name is a reference to the awesome cult classic movie Class of 1984, starring Tim Van Patton and Michael J. Fox. It was shot in 1982 and is supposed to be a 'real' look at how the school system in the US was falling apart and the youth of the not so distant future were going to completely out-of-control, hyper violent sadists hell-bent on destruction. In the movie a group of new-wave neo-Nazi punks run the Chicago High-school and basically fuck everyone up while occasionally going to gigs. It's shot in Toronto and the Canadian punk band Teenage Head performs. It's like the Breakfast Club on meth. The movie is fucking insane and a must-own for anyone into the whole exploitation genre.

AU: What do you like best about the Victoria music scene?

Jake - I guess that so many bands that come out of this city are original sounding and have real appreciation of the history of punk and hard-core. Kind of like the skaters that come out of Victown, they know the old-school shit and can skate every kind of terrain.

AU: What are the

biggest influences on your sound?

Jake - Our influences are all over the place. Jono loves Van Halen and so do I but we both grew up really digging everything from California punk to New York hardcore. Devon is a huge metalhead and loves really crazy fast shit. Mike is a big fan of Epitaph and Fat

Records bands but also loves heavier straight-edge stuff too. From Slayer to Social Distortion and everything in between.

AU: Are you working on releasing a new album?

Jake: We are working on an album right now. It's got 9 originals and 3 covers on it and it's gonna be called "Ramputation" Hayden from Mind Yourself Music is producing again and we're almost done. Release should be by the early fall.

AU: Does the band get many groupies looking for meaningless sex after the shows?

Jake - Groupies? damn, I wish! It's kind of hard to have groupies when we've known our female fans as close friends for more than 15 years. Victoria's scene is too small for real groupies. Maybe if we go on the road we'll meet some younger ladies who dig the music and want to hang-out but half the band is married and has kids. Me and Devon

are single but I'm not holding my breath.

Jono- I got so much tail in the 90's and early 2000's, I can barely pee outta this thing anymore.

AU: Is it best to get drunk, high, or stoned before taking in a Class Of 1984 show?

Jake - with half the band clean and sober I'll just say... do what you want before the show, just be with-it enough to actually enjoy the set. Maybe hit a yoga class before you see us. Get in the zone.

Jonojak- Drink lotsa beer and bring your skate into the pit!

AU: Future touring plans?

Jake - Touring is tough with so many responsibilities here at home. Kids, Wives and Jobs are a major priority for us but we'd like to go out on short 1 week trips to the mainland and the US soon. We're hoping to play a few cities in BC in September. We'll see what happens.

Jono- soon as Devon gets his pardon, we be going state side, Seattle, San Fran and L.A

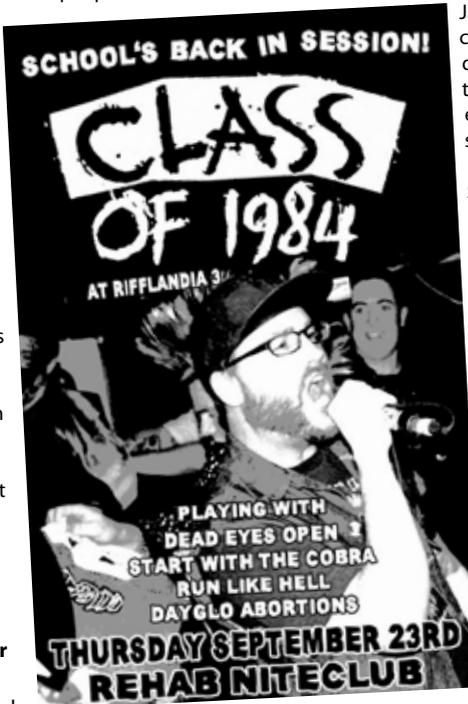
AU: Final words for fans?

Jake - Final words...stay rad.

Jono- It's fun to have fun.

AU: Website?

Jake - Website is new and Mike has done a great job getting it together. www.class-of-1984.com



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By Mr. Plow

Better than sliced bread – Inbred Hillbilly Hardcore

AU: Who are you???

Golers: Uh..were The Golers..... I don't see how we could be mistaken for Menudo or somethin.....

AU: Explain the music of The Golers in one sentence to possible new fans

G: Cross over, old school thrash, evil metal punk - in no way shape or form are we or can we be associated with mall core.

AU: Are you a bunch of incestuous inbreeders like the



ancestors in your Goler clan???

G: In the musical sense.... we are totally inbred borderline retarded.....

AU: Are you ever questioned about your ancestors' past?

G: Not really. There are a few that do the digging into the history, and have an "educated opinion" so to speak, on the matter... but most people have no idea.... they just get caught up in the energy of the live show.. and they seem happy with that.

AU: You play thrash metal or metal thrash?

G: Neither... hillbilly hardcore...

AU: you went on tour with Zuckuss through Western Canada; what should people know about this tour?

G: We got in a head on collision in Edmonton... the tour bus was written off... that sucked balls. It was 3:00 am and we were heading to a buddies house, when WHAM.... hit by a guy going the wrong way down a one way. Nobody was killed, the bus was a mess, and buddy's van was crushed like a pop can... there is a lot to be said about air bags.... but the bus had a driver side air bag.... everyone lives to rock another day. Thanks to Mortilary and The Dirtbags, they lent us a van so we could finish the tour. All in all we only missed two dates on

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

the tour. The day after the accident, and the last date on the tour... it was just to far out of the way... we were all kind of freaked out by the accident. We were all on fire. It was like we had a new lease and perspective on music and playing, and we're attacking the stage full force.

AU: How many CD releases do you have now?? Are you still on Unrest Records?

G: We have three CDs, two of them are available on vinyl...



there is South Mountain Style, 2nd Generation, and Backwoods Messages. South Mountain and 2nd Gen are available on vinyl.. we are working on a new release and hope to have it out by spring.. then tour it.

AU: Shamelessly promote whatever you want here:

G: Join the inbred militia. Look us up on facebook, myspace, reverb nation, and cbc radio3.... there's tunes and videos.. and stuff... the usual web crap.. more to come on

the web stuff as we gets all edumacated on dis interweb thingy....

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Thurs-11 - FRACTAL COLLECTIVE PRESENTS -
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Fri-12 - Dahlmers Realm & Streets of Pestilence
Sat-13 - PHANTOM LIMB CD Release
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Sat-20 - Celestial Machine, Autaric,
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Thurs-25 - Delmoz & Dodging Daylight
Fri-26 - Gales of Avalon, Dire Omen,
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CALGARY CARNAGE



By Allison Drinnan

When something falls apart you have to start over. When times are tough you re-group and re-build. When you want to express yourself creatively and develop a name for yourself, you have to start from the ground up. What an appropriate name for Calgary's own hardcore quartet Ground Up. With DIY enthusiasm and a new album on the horizon, Absolute Underground caught up with the boys via e-mail to find out just what has been put together thus far.

AU: Tell me a bit about how Ground Up got started and the history of the band.

GU: Ground Up started about 6 years ago and has had this line up for the past 3 years. Guys in the band are: Micah - Guitar, Mark - Guitar, Jake - bass and Kevin - drums.

AU: Any crazy tour stories/show stories?

GU: Most of the shows are pretty crazed, especially after wards when the party starts!

AU: Tell me about choosing your name Ground Up.

GU: The name definitely has skateboard references, but after settling on this lineup the direction of the band was completely rebuilt from the ground up but that is more a coincidence than anything.

suit the tastes of a label it usually ends up killing the spontaneity and personal creativity that got the band to that point in the first place. Not all labels obviously, but it puts more pressure on everyone in general and takes away the pure fun aspects.

AU: What do you think about the state of punk rock?

GU: No problem with it. We never agreed with that "punk is dead" mentality because if bands are out there doing it themselves, putting on shows and establishing ties with bands from other cities



AU: I've read on your face book page under your bio info "Personal issues (drugs) now conquered, Ground Up continue to show up all that had written them off in the past." Tell me a little about that statement. How have you guys grown as a band?

GU: We like to, you know, party? Things could get a little outta hand and it took a while to for all of us to realize that we could actually grow as a band if we kept the lid on things a little bit. We're no angels, but we are definitely more focused on recording and have finally got an 8 song disc out with a 2nd disc in the works for September.

AU: How would you describe your sound? I've read punk, skate punk, DIY hardcore...

GU: I would definitely say we are electric rock & roll music. More directly, FAST electric rock & roll music. I wouldn't argue with any of the above styles that you mentioned.

AU: What exactly does DIY mean to Ground Up? Do you believe it goes hand in hand with punk?

GU: It means exactly what the initials stand for: Nobody else is going to do it for you! I would agree with you that yes, that DIY mentality is specific to punk rock, because as we've seen in the past when a band starts to change themselves to

then punk rock is still truly alive.

AU: Tell me about the Calgary punk scene and your place in it? It seems to me like it's a very tight group.

GU: There is a lot of enthusiasm in Calgary for bands and shows. Turnouts for shows are good, there are a growing number of venues and you see a lot of shows that have varied bills with a mix of metal and punk bands. It's tight in the sense that everyone works together well but its not exclusive. New bands always get a chance to get on shows and no one is left out.

AU: What is the writing process like for the band?

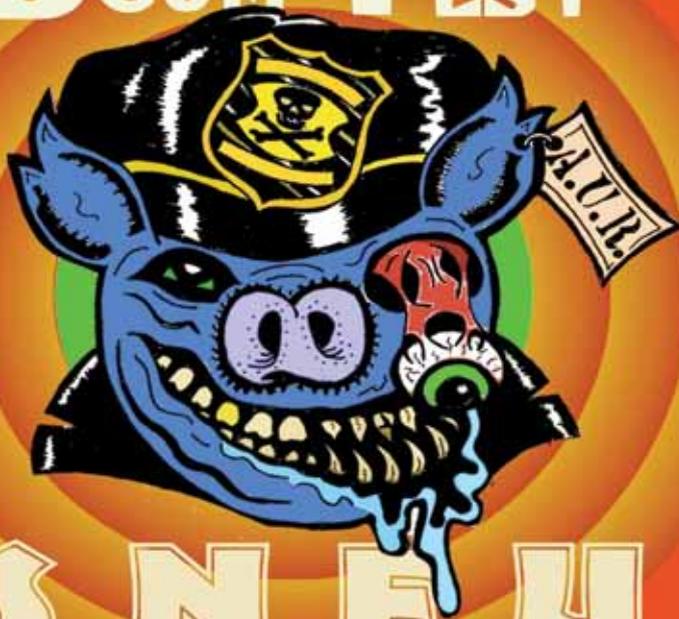
GU: Our band is unique in that we will write parts for each other: In that one guitarist will figure out a lead for the other guitarist and vice versa. It makes you more versatile as a band because really you end up knowing how to play both parts. We all can sing the songs and change it up. So everyone is involved in working on new material.

AU: Tell me about a Ground Up live show

GU: Its a live, loud, fast, heavy, bodies flying, broken glass smashing, beer spilling good time that should be seen by all!

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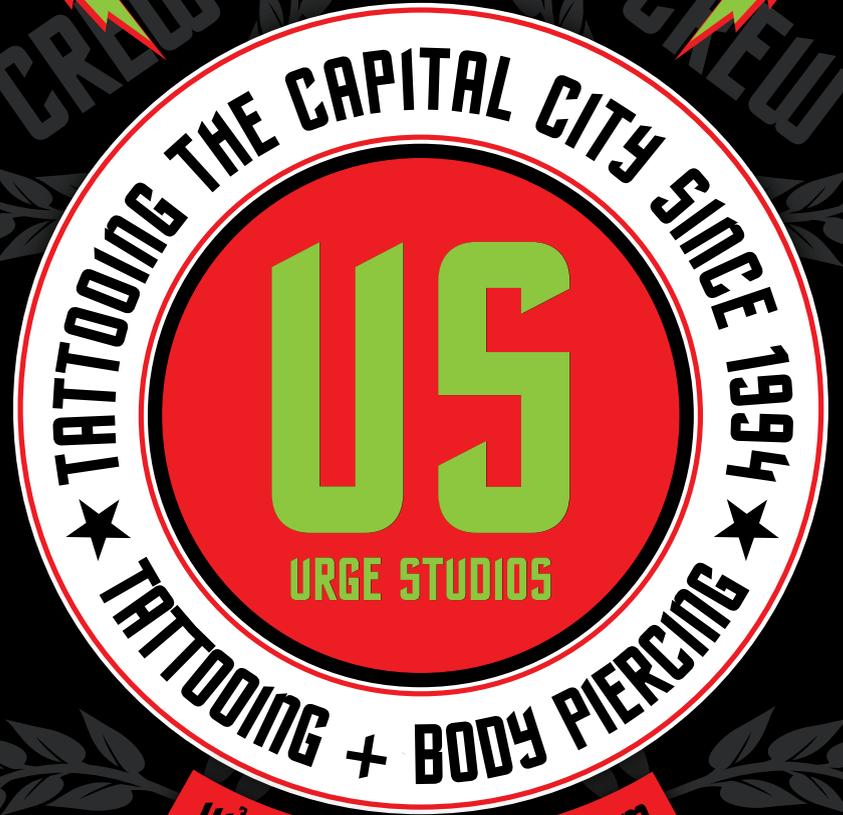


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17-18-19 JUNE 2011 | CLISSON-FRANCE

By Frank Wijers

Having never been to Hellfest before, I didn't really know what to expect. All I knew is that it's one of the fastest growing festivals in Europe. They seem to be able to get all the great names the other festivals in Europe get, so I was excited to go there. After driving for about a day, I arrived in Clisson. I had some small problems with the organization to get my photo pass, but everything was sorted out soon. Tired from the whole day of traveling, I went to bed as soon as I found a spot for my tent. The next morning, I tried to go to the festival. But where other festivals let the press in at any time, the French were very strict. It was 9:53AM, but I wasn't allowed to get in before 10AM. Seven minutes later, I was granted access. After looking around for a bit on the festival ground to get orientated, I went to see the opening band. It was Klone, who are based not so far from Clisson. It was a decent band, but didn't

impress me much. After about 20 minutes, I decided to check out the backstage area. Again, the French are strict here. It was about 10:50AM when I got to the entrance, but they didn't allow me in until 11AM. 10 minutes later when I got in, I found the area was a nice bar, with a big backyard, filled with hammocks, beanbags, a press area for interviews and a wifi bus.

I went back to the festival area to see the Architects.

The Britts put up a decent set, but metalcore isn't really my favorite genre. I went to the Rock Hard tent next to see Dodheimsgard. Some cool black metal with corpse paint, fire and all you would expect from such a band.

On the main stages they were followed by The Answer, Dagoba, Alter Bridge and The Cult. This last band have achieved a status, similar to their name. Ironic was it when they came on stage with the song "Here Comes the Rain" and at that very moment it started raining.

After getting some dinner and the set of Karma to Burn in the Terrorizer tent, I went back to the main stage. Heavy metal legends Down were playing next. They haven't released an album in a few years, but they still have lots of followers. Meshuggah had a great set, but only got 45 minutes before making way for another icon, Iggy Pop. He performed all the songs you expect ("Search and Destroy", "I Wanna Be Your Dog" and ending with "No Fun"). Last band on main stage 1 was Rob Zombie, who pulled out all his tricks like always. Last two bands on main stage 2 were Morbid Angel, that disappointed me a bit this evening, and In Flames. This last band were playing very good, but the stage show was nearly non-existing (especially after Rob Zombie just before them).

Day 2 started with a bit better weather, but still no sunshine. I decided to focus on main stage 1 today since there were so many great bands performing there. Very early came the first signs that it was going to be a good day. The Swedish girls of Crucified Barbara were a good sight for the eyes this early. After catching some of "Whiplash", the bigger names were about to play. Angel Witch, Hammerfall, UFO and Thin Lizzy packed the day with great music.

The biggest change in the day was up next. Apocalyptica play covers of metal songs on the cello. Of course they played a lot of songs by Metallica, but also songs like "The Hall of the Mountain King". They had to make room for Zakk Wylde and his Black Label Society. Zakk is an awesome guitar player, but at about 2/3 of the set he started a guitar solo which lasted for about 10 minutes. This got me going to the bar.

The Scorpions closed main stage 1 for

the day. Playing a lot of hits (except their most known song "Wind of Change"), they pleased most of the crowd. After catching the first half of the Scorpions, I went to the Rock Hard tent to catch Bolt Thrower. It seemed like everybody that didn't want to see the Scorpions were packed in this tent. It was so crowded that I went back to see the end of the Scorpions

and the last band on main stage 2, Coroner. This band reunited after a lot of years, but weren't well known by the mainly younger crowd. This caused a lot of the field to wander off. Halfway through the set I made it one last time back to the tent. Closing there was Tryptikon. The revived Celtic Frost played mainly the old songs. Only 3 songs weren't covers, but either from their debut album (Eparistera Daimones) or EP (Shatter).

Day 3 was the best if you looked at the sky. The sun came out and there was no more rain. The first band I went to see were French Zuul FX. I really liked their thrash metal so I stayed to watch most of the set. On the other stage, Turisas played next. With their red painted bodies they made a weird appearance, but though it was early, a lot of fans were packed in front of the stage. Some also with face paint on. Next up was Firewind, the Greek power metal band of guitar player Gus G performed a great set, but it seemed Gu was holding back a little, since he also had to play with Ozzy later that day. Duff McKagan was back with his new band, and much to my relief, he played a lot less Guns and Roses covers than last time. They recently released a new album called "The Taking" and were supporting this album.

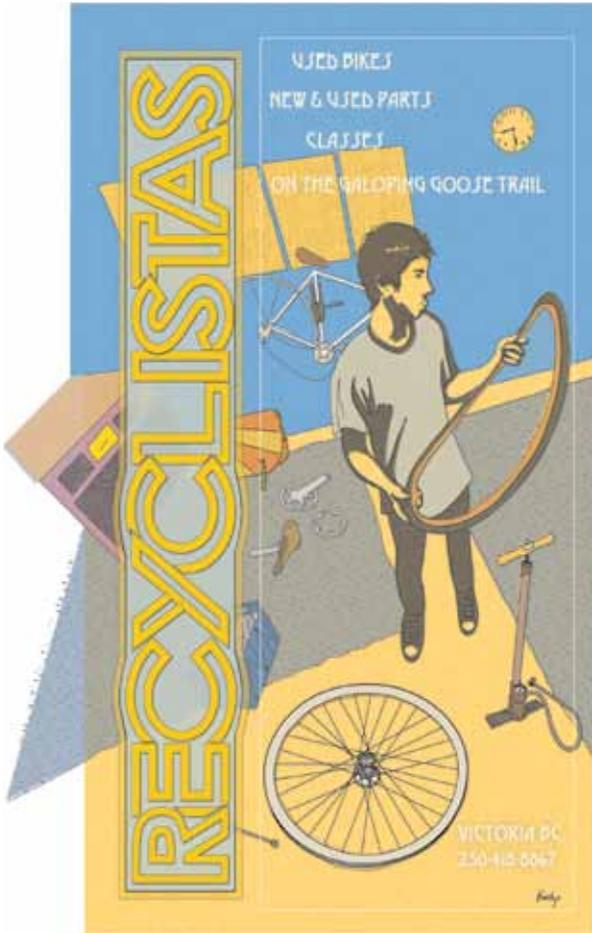
Anathema played on the other stage, but although the music was good, it wasn't the right time or place for the band. They rely on doomy atmospheres, so 6PM outside in a burning sun isn't the best place. Mr. Big played the main stage, and though most of the crowd only know one song, "To Be With You", they have loads of other great songs. Technically, all members are great and the set was a joy to watch. Doro showed France that she's still the mother of metal, followed by the "grandfather" of metal in the form of Judas Priest. The final tour of these English rockers is one to remember; hanging backdrops every song, Rob having a great voice (I've heard him much worse) and riding on stage with a Harley motorcycle. Therion played next. The Swedes



have a unique style of music, mixing metal and opera. Together with 4 vocalists (2 male, 2 female) and a theatrical stage show, there was plenty to watch. They ended the set with an ABBA cover, "Summer Night City", which was actually a great choice, given the time and weather.

Ozzy Osbourne had the spot to close the festival on main stage 1. He did everything you expect of him. Spraying with foam guns over the photographers and audience, throwing buckets of water, but better yet, performing all his hits. One wonders though how long he can keep this up. When he took his microphone off the stand, he could only take two steps before he had to go back and put the mic back on the stand. But he made it through the 90 minutes without any problems. Ending the encore with "Mama, I'm Coming Home" and the most classic of classic songs "Paranoid".

The festival was closed by 3 bands at the same time, so I had to make a choice. I decided to catch a bit of Opeth on the main stage, and then head over to the Terrorizer tent to see Kyuss. This unfortunately meant I had to miss Cradle of Filth. When I was driving home the next day, I was reflecting on the festival. 4 stages, 118 bands. There were so many styles of music there that there was something for everybody. Definitely a recommendation for everyone wanting to visit a cool festival.





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Interview with Kerry King

By Reverend Death

Photo by Brydon Parker

AU: Hey Kerry, how's it going this morning? I'll try not to keep you too long, this Reverend Death from Absolute Underground Magazine.

KK: Uh, good, it's not morning here.

AU: Where about are you right now?

KK: Holland.

AU: Holland eh, what Cafes' are you hitting up?

KK: I don't smoke

AU: You'll probably get room baked in BC. Can we get an update on Jeff's condition?

KK: I don't have one.

AU: You don't have one?

KK: I'm kind of out of touch over here...

AU: Last you heard though, was he getting better, on the mend?

KK: Supposedly yeah, umm, his arm was really screwed up, it just takes awhile to get to you know, being normal again.

AU: So yeah, we'll go through all the injuries first I guess? So how is Tom's back doing?

KK: Good, he doesn't headbang anymore, but yeah, moving along fine.

AU: Yeah I saw Slayer at Ozzfest in

Vancouver a bunch of years ago... and I couldn't figure out what was up, then about a year later the back/neck problems started to surface and that kinda explained it. I couldn't figure out why Tom wasn't going nuts. So Gary Holt is pulling double duty on this tour playing for both Slayer and Exodus, does he bring a different energy to the stage for you guys?

KK: Well he...(phone drops off) I'm not on my phone; I put it on hold by accident. HAHA

AU: What is your first memory of Gary Holt?

KK: I've known Gary probably since '83-'84, watching Exodus and hanging out and well I wasn't partying in '84 but everyone else was. HAHA

AU: Is there any truth to the rumor that he suggested that you guys get rid of the make-up back in the beginning?

KK: Could be, I just don't remember that, how exactly that went down but it was after visiting the Bay area when we switched.

AU: So the rumor of the documentary with Sam Dunn? Is there any truth to that?

KK: Uh, if it is you have more info than I do, I don't know.

AU: Yeah, Sam's from here in Vic, did you know that we are the Satanist capital of Canada here in Victoria?

We'll have to get you down here to the cemetery here it's kind of a staple tour here. What's your favorite horror pic?

KK: Um, depends, you know because it changes all the time, it's not like a have a photographic memory where I can sit there and go, Oh it's this one! Usually I say Seven because it's safe to say that one but I've seen Insidious recently and thought that one is pretty cool for a PG-13 movie.

AU: You still making all your gauntlets and stuff?

KK: Well, I've got a bunch I made, but I haven't made any for awhile.

AU: You got any ink in the works right now? Any new stuff coming out or being drawn?

KK: Eh, not really, I Haven't had the bug in awhile you know, and I haven't had a bunch of friends stay the night, you know, that's usually how we end up getting inked, I have one of my tattoo guys come into town, and he'll stay over, and we'll just work on shit. I got nothing planned.

AU: What's turned your head musically lately?

KK: Not a fucking thing. I wish there was but if there's something cool out there, I haven't found it.

AU: Yeah, its slim pickings, mostly European stuff is what I'm listening to right now.

KK: Yeah, but there nothing really new, you know the last movement that I

could tell you was any good was from Scandinavia and that was

Children of Bodom, Arch Enemy, In Flames, and The Haunted. There hasn't been anything strong like that since.

AU: You toured with Rob Zombie before, what was the draw to do it again?

KK: Uh, I don't know, it's cool to go out with multiple headliners, because then you split costs with people and not knowing what the economy, what kind of exact numbers you're going to get, it's a lot harder to figure that out. It used to be you'd cover more ground that way. And Slayer and Manson was a slam dunk, Slayer and Zombie is a slam dunk in your face you know because he's definitely got a bigger catalogue than Manson does.

AU: Whose kitten is drinking the blood in Blood Line?

KK: Couldn't tell ya.

AU: Somebody just brought a kitten to the Slayer shoot?

KK: I honestly don't know, I don't even think I was there for that part. (chuckles)

AU: The Big 4 Tour how was that for ya? Everything go great?

KK: We just got done doing them a few days ago. We did the last French one over the weekend it was fun, it's always fun playing with those guys.

AU: You got a favorite show outta the whole tour? Something that really stands out?

KK: From the Big 4? Probably the original ones in Bulgaria and Poland

AU: What keeps you relaxed on the road?



KK: I don't know, I don't really get to high strung or anything.

AU: Are you're still breeding carpet pythons?

KK: Yup.

AU: Can any snake lover buy them

KK: In the US yeah, in Canada I'd need to get an export permit so it's kinda a pain in the ass.

AU: You guys are label free now, you've completed your contract with Sony, are you all free to do things on your own next time around?

KK: Yeah, absolutely, you know the record world changes like every few weeks so it's hard to estimate how the next one will come out. If all the offers are equal, I see no reason to change where we are but if something makes a lot more sense to do it a different way we'll have to check that out.

AU: For your guys' writing style, you've evolved through the years, in the beginning it was more of a 'everybody writes' and now you're all living all over the place and spread out, who's doing most of the writing now? Is it still everybody brings whatever they got to the table and ya pick through it?

KK: Yeah sometimes, that's pretty much how it's always been but we don't collaborate as much as we used to because Jeff is the closest one to me and he's an hour away and Tom's in Texas so I never see him unless we're on tour but pretty much the same.

AU: What songs did you choose for Undisputed Attitude?

KK: Most of them, hahaha



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06 MARIA IN THE SHOWER INFUNKSTIGATION FREE NUDE CELEBS	18 SPASTIC PANTHERS NERVOUS WRECK HEAVY PEDAL	27 RUSS RANKIN MIKE MCLEOD & GUESTS
10 CANDELORA IF WE ARE MACHINES ELECTRIC MONK	19 SUPER MASSIVE BLACK HOLES DATURA WORMBOX TRUCK	28 ASSEMBLAGE MELT
11 SHANE PHILIPS	20 DOUBLE FUZZ IN MEDIAS RES THE MOUNTAINEER FREE NUDE CELEBS	31 TOXIC HOLOCAUST HOLY GRAIL WEAPON NINJASPY TREEBURNING
12 DUBFX FLOWER FAIRY CADE HIDDEN ELEMENTZ EPIC PROPORTIONS CUBED	23 ROCKY MOUNTAIN REBEL MUSIC	
	25 SEVENTH RAIN & GUESTS	

SEPTEMBER

01 LONDON CALLING BRITPOP - SHOEGAZE - MANCHESTER - INDIE - NEW WAVE	10 HANG THE DJ RETRO - NEW WAVE - ALT - INDUSTRIAL - INDIE	20 KARL WOLFE
02 OGUL ATAKI	14 GRAVE	22 LONDON CALLING BRITPOP - SHOEGAZE - MANCHESTER - INDIE - NEW WAVE
03 THE PRESS GANG CD RELEASE BETTER OFF DEAD & GUESTS	15 TRANSIT	24 SLICK IDIOT PROMONEUM JESTERS
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The Dirtbags

By Rod Rooker

The Dirtbags have been tearing up Edmonton for quite some time, and folks in the Edmonton punk / thrash scene really love 'em - their live shows are off the hook! The last few times I have seen them have been great, and I figured it was about time I interviewed them for Absolute Underground - "The Meanest" Zine in the Scene!!"

AU: When did the Dirtbags start up, and what the scene in Edmonton like at the time?

DB: Our first jam was boxing day 2000. Only one of us really knew how to play anything, so it was pretty rough sounding. The scene at the time was a lot different than it is now. Divided. Lots of mini groups within itself. You know, pogo punks, crusty kids, emo dorks.....

AU: Who does the majority of the songwriting, and what kinda stuff do you guys write songs about?

DB: Now days we generally all write whatever part of the song we play. Someone will show up to jam with a cool riff and we'll all fill in the rest. I write most of, but not all the lyrics. We tend to write a lot of songs about the ugly truth (who's in control, empty life). We also like to use personal experience and a bit of humor to get the point across.

AU: What recordings have you guys done so far and where would our readers be able to track them down?

DB: To date we've only recorded two full lengths (I know, fucking lazy right?) due to a combination of hectic schedules, side projects and a long list of excuses and bullshit that I'm sure no one gives a gosh darn about. We are, however, hoping to fix all that in the near future. We've just released our second full length and have made plans to do a split with Fuquored.

AU: A lot of great venues for punk and thrash have come and gone over the years, what were some of The Dirtbags favorite places to play since you got together?



DB: If I had to pick the few that really stood out from the rest it would have to be The Shark Tank (they always treated us very well) and the The Pawnshop back when it was called Stars. Not that Stars treated us all that great or anything. Just a lot of fond memories playing there. Like when Colby shit in a pint glass and left it for the next coke snortin drunks to find it in the stall.

AU: Have you been able to do a lot of touring with the band?

DB: See question 3. Excuses, bullshit.....

AU: Could you name off a few of your biggest influences, and have you had a chance to play with any of these bands when they were passing through town?

DB: Fuck yeah. We've actually been really fortunate in that sense. Opening for bands like the Varukers, the Accused, D.O.A., SNFU, Dayglo and Defiance. SNFU is always a big one for us, we love that shit.

AU: What's the Dirtbag's favorite stuff to drink?

DB: The piss of a virgin.

AU: Cody - you also set up shows here in town, do you find it's easier to book your own shows for the band, or would you say that the local promoters have kept you guys busy enough to keep the Dirtbags rolling.

DB: Hang on, I'll go get him. Cody here, I never

usually have problems booking shows, they kinda just come our way.

AU: Has the direction of your music changed since the beginning, or would you say you guys have stuck with the original idea of the band?

DB: Definitely. But that's bound to happen over ten years. Especially with line up changes and

shit. We're not as serious as we had originally set out to be. I try to make a point of writing about things that are a little closer to home, things people can relate to directly.

AU: I believe The Dirtbags have had a few "Last

SHR-EDMONTON

Shows" over the years (not sure but if ya have..) what keeps you guys coming back?

DB: I don't know that we've ever decided to officially end it although our future has looked pretty grim at times. There have been periods of, let's say, indifference caused by side projects, drugs, personal shit and work. But, like herpes and other puss filled open sores, we'll never truly be finished.

AU: Who would you say are some of the local bands you guys have had the most fun with here in Edmonton?

DB: Our close friends Messiahlator, Batleth, Tarantuja etc.

AU: If you had to tell somebody who hadn't heard The Dirtbags before what to expect... what would you tell them?

DB: Bring a condom and a mop.

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"Guitar Solo – Take 1"

Interview with Greg Rekus

By Charley Justice.

Putting down your electric guitar can be a difficult thing. Leaving the band behind and hitting the road solo – even tougher. But sometimes it just makes sense. So much sense, that the past several years have seen a series of punk singer / songwriters taking the plunge and heading a direction that 10-15 years ago may have seemed fucking nuts. Solo acoustic. That's right. And it's no longer even that nutbar – since a few anarcho punks (always the revolutionaries) of the early 2000's cast away their excess technological baggage and started belting out unplugged epics about love and rebellion, punk and acoustic have nestled together into a seemingly functional long term (open) relationship. Greg Rekus – coming hot off the heels of years of non stop touring with breakspeed punk outfit High Five Drive - has recently joined the party. Absolute Underground caught the man himself at a rare spare second for a sweaty streetside Q & A outside the undisputed grungiest venue in Canada...



Absolute Underground: You have a reputation in Winnipeg as the hardest working guy in punk.

GR: That's Crazy! Appreciate the props... don't know if I'm the hardest working though, lots of people work hard...can't say I'm the only one. When you've been doin' it this long, loving it and enjoying it you just keep doing it.

AU: Your about to drop your debut solo full length - tell me about it.

GR: John (Paul Peters) was great to work with. Tracked in 5 days. It's 10 songs I'm pretty excited about. It's called 'The Dude Abides'.

AU: Timing seems right. A smattering of punk frontiers have gone solo lately...

GR: Yea, it wasn't really planned that way. I wanted to do something a little different, just really wanted to do more touring, and wanted to tour on my own schedule.

AU: What's with the stomp box (Greg Rekus plays every show on a short wooden platform). It's almost like your drum set or something?

GR: Well, with the stomp box - saw this band Hoots and Hellmouth who use one - and got this idea to write some songs around one of these. And when I first decided to go solo, I still wanted something high energy - still wanted to finish a set sweaty as hell, you know get that same feeling as with HFD.

AU: How is touring solo?

GR: Great! I do miss the band... Girlfriend Lindsay has been coming with and doing merch. It's more freedom, less conflict. More driving, but I guess that's the worst of it.

AU: What kind of bands do you get booked with? Still mostly punk bands?

GR: Bit of everything. I definitely do best when playing with punk bands.

AU: Do you still punk up there all by yourself with an acoustic guitar?

GR: Yea, as punk as I ever felt. The heart of the matter is that I am being honest to who I am - I don't compromise that to do the solo thing.

AU: Who influenced the songs on this latest record? Anyone?

GR: Hmm...Chuck Ragan? The Loved Ones? PJ Bonn - did a few shows with him and was inspired to do a solo act...

AU: What does the Greg Rekus future hold?

WRETCHED WINNIPEG

GR: Spend lots of time on the road. Plan on touring Canada / US this fall for the new record. Spring will be Canada / US / Europe.

AU: Any plans to crank it up (go electric) again in the future?

GR: Never say never, but I'm pretty into what I'm doing right now.

AU: Final words of wisdom from – and you truly are - the hardest working guy in Winnipeg punk?

GR: When HFD stopped playing, I was worried I wasn't going to get to do a lot of music, but doing the solo thing has been the opposite. So a big shout to all my friends around Canada who are still supporting what I'm doing, without that help I couldn't be touring and doing what I want to do with music right now. Any friend of mine that reads this, this is me thanking you, so thanks!

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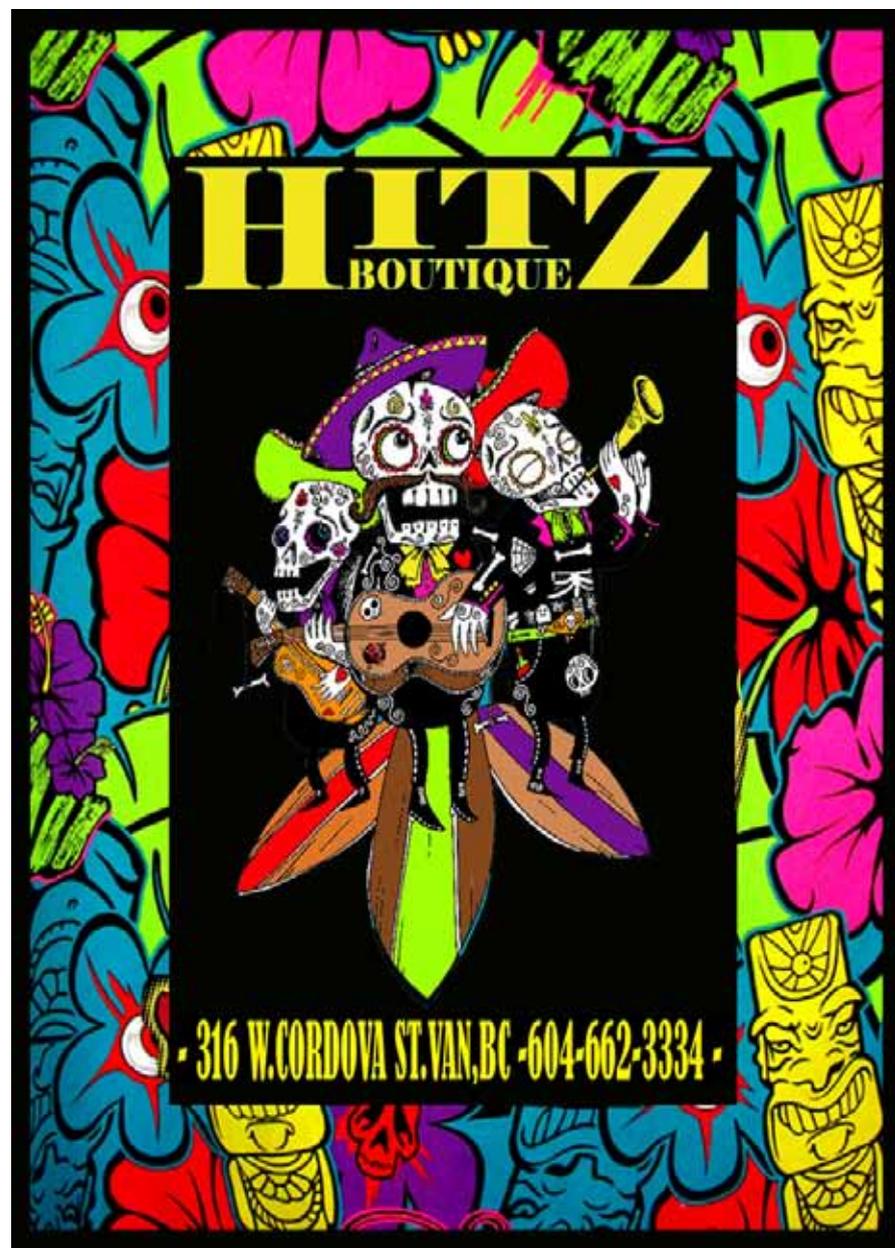
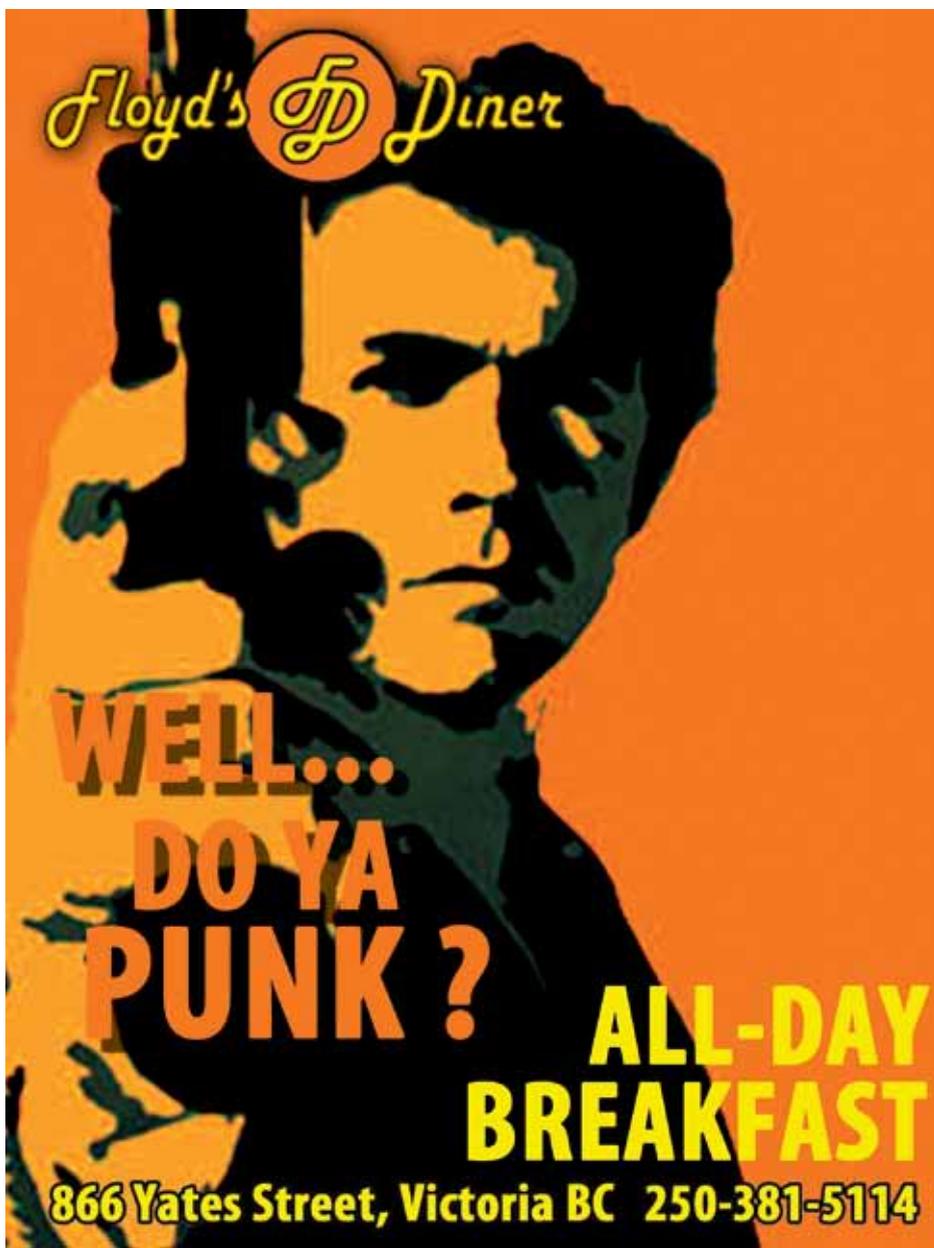


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By Andrea Chirulescu

My second year in Kvinesdal, in the South of Norway, has been one of the most amazing festival experiences one can ever have. I believe I managed to meet the best photo crew There is no age limit for the weekdays of the festival, Wednesday and Thursday. The location is absolutely stunning, being surrounded by hills/ mountains on all sides, a river running right by the backstage area and the grass in the camping make it a perfect location to spend few nights.

The concerts have started on the main stage on Thursday with the melodic/power/ progressive/death music of the Danes from Mercenary. I saw them few months ago as support act for Power of Metal and they made a good impression



back then as they did now, of a daring power metal that has dared to go borrow the meaning aspects of death rhythms.

The madness went on on the main stage where other Norwegians, this time Kvelertak, offered one hour of fury. If it could be thrown, it was thrown, if it could be jumped, it was jumped, if there was place to run, climb up or down, they would run, climb up or down. After so much testosterone, it was time to cool off a bit by watching the Djerv show in the tent, whose singer, Agnete, also participated in the latest Dimmu Borgir album and shows. She has an incredible powerful voice and they work hard on offering a good experience to the crowd, but honestly after the two ones I previously described, it wasn't at all too exciting to watch them. Neither were the Germans from Blind

Guardian or U.D.O. on the main stage afterwards. It's always cool and funky to listen to their famous songs, hear the crowd singing along, but they were not the kind of shows to blow you off the ground through their energy.

I went back to the small tent for the band Insense. I find it hard to place them in any genre whatsoever, I can just say I had the feeling of hearing a slowed down Meshuggah with vocals borrowed from metalcore, yet managing to surprise with the intensity of their growls. It didn't seem like the kind of music concentrating on being too technical or so, but the songs they put together are really interesting to listen to. The last band I watched in the small tent were another Norwegians, Ingenting (meaning Nothing, whose website actually redirect you to nothing.no and

offer you a short history about the Nothing). They are a popular local rock band with the kind of party songs that people love and would scream together with the singer for the duration of the whole set. They had light problems for the first 3-4 songs, so my photographing experience was ruined by the lack of light, cutting off my mood to watch the rest of the show.

The night was ended in style with the Swedes from In Flames whose melodic/alternative death metal was well spiced with pyro effects both on stage but also on its sides and even some lovely fireworks after the show. They're a good live act altogether that would easily make you sing or jump along, despite the tiredness gathered during the day.

The second day in Kvinesdal announced itself quite unstable weather wise, but it turned out better than expected. I'll briefly go through the bands in the small stage and then go back to the main stage. The biggest surprise of the festival for me were the Norwegian/Swedish mixed band Saint Deamon who uses ex Highland Glory singer on vocals. Their power metal that avoided any sign of ridiculousness and sounded close to

perfection. Especially the vocals. But also the fun on stage was something that easily made the crowd love the show.

It was time to really wake up with the punk/hardcore four piece from Canada, Cancer Bats whose singer - Liam Cormier - I don't recall seeing him in the same place for more than 5 seconds. Everyone in the band feels like living for playing live and gives each atom of energy in their body for this show. For more musicians who love to be on stage we get to experience the Swedes extreme metallers from Meshuggah. Intense headbanging, although the rhythms of their music are so atypical that it's hard to keep track, especially when each of the drummer's limbs seem to beat at a different rate.

Black Label Society, for over 20 years their frontguy has served as Ozzy Osbourne's guitarist and he is one of the biggest men I saw performing on stages. It all started with Zack Wyld coming on stage wearing an indian feather headdress and then he kept on changing guitars that seemed like Barbie dolls accessories in his big arms.

The second night had a current Danish sensation as headliners - Volbeat. I've seen this band live quite few times now and each time it's almost like they're playing one of their first shows. The songs and their rockabilly metal rhythms are powerful, the energy is at max, everyone keeps making funny faces, expressing the lyrics of the songs or simply smiling and laughing at something they're pointing at in the crowd. The songs they picked seemed to fit very well in keeping an amazing mood all along their show and made many people dance and sing on the way to their tent. By the way, I think Volbeat was the most listened band in the camping for the duration of the festival.

The night from Friday to Saturday was not the driest one I ever experienced, hence the mud and fixing whatever was damaged overnight was probably the main reason for the little amount

of crowd gathered to watch the black metal band who participated in the pre selection for Eurovision, Keep of Kalessin. We went on with musicians from Trondheim on the mains tage, this time the a Norwegian hard rock/glam metal band TNT, with a history of 12 albums since they formed back in 1982. It was a nice time with good heavy metal/hard rock rhythms on the main stage and really powerful harmonies scattered along the songs.

The only band I saw in the tent this day was Mongo Ninja, a project of a Norwegian famous character, Kristopher Schau. I have seen him in Kvinesdal last here with another project, the Cumshots.



The 2011 edition of the Norway Rock Festival ended in an amazing fashion by a 63 year old Vincent Damon Furnier, whose show, no matter what you want to call it - cheesy, creepy, lovely, awesome, scary, etc - is one of the most extraordinary I have ever witnessed on any stage. He

had 90 minutes to deliver us with his famous hits from Brutal Planet, Billion Dollar babies, to Poison, Elected and Shcool's out spiced with Pink Floyd rhythms. I remember the presence of guitarists on stage, I don't recall anything sounding bad or wrong. I recall a great drum solo during which the drummer was making quite fancy stick tricks. But all these really faded away in front of all the stage crops, effects and acting used. It started with Alice Cooper having spider arms/legs spreading from his back during the first song. Then Alice Cooper was holding a dog on his legs and singing to her. Then he summoned Frankenstein who was walking on the stage from one guitarist to another. Then he got decapitated. Then he came on stage with a jacket saying 'new Song' and took it off and the shirt was saying 'I'll byte your face off'. We got huge balloons floating over the crowd during School's Out. And probably few hundred more things happened on stage that I simply don't recall due how overwhelming the whole experience was.



By Frank Wijers

The Graspop Metal Meeting this year was already the 16th edition of the festival. And as usual, it had some big names again. The weather wasn't as good as the previous years, but I decided to make the best of it, and so did about 47500 people each day.



The Friday started on the main stage with the DIO Disciples. This is the last backing band of DIO, complemented with the vocals of Tim "Ripper" Owens. He actually did a remarkable job. At some points, you could close your eyes and think it was Ronnie in his younger days. After this, I went to Marquee 2 to see The Dwarves. Up next on the main stage was Foreigner. Although it started to rain, vocalist Lou Gramm wasn't shy and stood the whole set in the rain to sympathize with the crowd. After them, Journey brought old times back to the festival.

Back over in Marquee 1 an old legend was up next. The Brazilians of Sepultura put up a great set with a lot of energy. Watain was there next with their black metal. The Swedes went all-out on stage. The tent had a few more style changes left. Next up were the dutch metallers of Epica. This female fronted band had a lot of fireworks with them, and all of them were headbanging constantly. Closing the tent was Iced Earth. It was good to see

Matthew Barlow one last time. After the summer festivals, he will quit the band and will be replaced by Stu Block. They had a nice set with songs of all albums.

The main stage also had a few great bands left. Korn was there for the third time, and though the songs were good, they didn't really impress me.

Next was Volbeat. This band is one of the biggest rising stars of the festival. The crowd really got into their old school rock. Closer of the Friday were the Scorpions. Though they claim this will be their final tour, you can never be sure with rock musicians. The set itself was a bit on the safe side, which consisted of mainly their hits. The crowd didn't seem to mind. With the final tunes of "Rock you like a hurricane" the Friday was over.

Saturday morning started off with more rain and some bad news. Ozzy Osbourne was forced to cancel his gig due to laryngitis. They would be replaced by the biggest Belgian band, Channel Zero. Belgian band Diablo Blvd. with vocalist Alex Agnew (who is a famous comedian in Belgium) got the crowd laughing. Not only do they play good music, but also have a few jokes in between. Next on the main stage was Lacuna Coil. The Italians put up a decent set with only a few songs not from their latest album. Closing the set with a cover of Depeche Mode, "Enjoy the Silence". Firewind were the first band to get the crowd really excited.

In Marquee 1 there were a few bands I didn't want to miss. Trypikon is basically Celtic Frost with a different bass player. The doom style of playing had a lot of young people leaving. The part of the crowd that stayed were enjoying themselves a lot. Next on the same stage was an old time favorite. From Portugal, Moonspell took the stage. The band decided to put up an old school set. Playing only

songs from the Irreligious and Wolfheart albums.

On the main stage, the action really got going. Black Label Society had some serious sound. Frontman Zakk Wylde encouraged the fans to sing louder and louder, which actually was great to hear. They were followed by Channel Zero. The band wasn't ready to do the show yet. They are finishing their first album in years, and were supposed to go on tour later this year, but with the cancellation of Ozzy, they were more than willing to step in. Personally, I've never been a



big fan, but it was enjoyable to see and hear. It finally stopped raining, so more and more people came out of the tents and went to the main stage. Getting the crowd ready for Priest were Whitesnake. I would have preferred to see them a day earlier with Foreigner



and Journey, but it was a nice change of pace. The voice of David Coverdale is still one that can impress you. Closing the night was the Priest. Since they were now single headliner this evening, they got 40 minutes extra to play. They added a special laser show and some songs that weren't played on other festivals due to time restrictions. "Painkiller", "Living after Midnight", "Breaking the Law", all the hits were there. After a little over 2 hours, the set ended, but still leaving the crowd wanting more.

The Sunday was a big change



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from the previous days. Not only was it dry, it was soaring hot. Lacks of sleep and a lot of alcohol made the crowd go quiet and lazy. First band I went to see was Amorphis. They have a unique style of mixing progressive music with death metal. The difference between early and later work was definitely there, but the fans in front of the stage enjoyed themselves. I went to the smallest tent after this to catch GWAR. This band never put music first, and also at this gig, show comes first. Cutting of the tits of the queen of England to start the first song and squirting blood all over the audience. The blood never seemed to end as the got more and more items there to do this, including a dog and Osama Bin Laden.

While walking back on the field, I caught the second half of the show of German trash legends Kreator. Like I mentioned before, the crowd wasn't really ready for it. it was too hot, so most people were just standing and watching, nodding their heads. Mastodon also had problems with the crowd. They took a break from recording their new album to do some shows. Unfortunately, they didn't want to play new songs yet. The

reason they gave was that they don't want people to get a first impression of a song recorded through a crappy phone on

Youtube. We just have to wait for the new album to get here in October.

The first band that got the crowd going was Avenged Sevenfold. They have become a big band in a short while. Looking at the shirts, they had almost the biggest following of the day (though they came close to Slipknot). The stage show was very big, with lots of fire. Most songs were from the latest album "Nightmare".

I went back to Marquee 1 for a last time to see Opeth play. The swedes played a great set with their music, which is basically a mix between 70's music and death metal.

Back on the main stage, Rob Zombie was about to tear it up. He hasn't been at the GMM festival in quite some years and was happy to be back. With a great set of songs (Dragula, Living Dead Girl, etc.) and a lot to see on stage itself, it left the crowd happy. There were strippers on stage, they kicked some 50 beach balls in the audience. Rob himself went in the audience a few times and invited some girls to party on stage for a few songs.

Slipknot was closing the festival for the second time in three years. Unfortunately, the set and show were almost the same as two years ago. Biggest difference was the absence of Paul Gray who passed away last year. His orange jumpsuit was prominently displayed near the drum kit. The crowd got really wild when the drum kit went in the air near the end of the show and flipped over a few times. With some great fireworks, the festival finally came to an end.

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TRIGGER EFFECT

By Allison Drinnan

Montreal's Trigger Effect are that sweet surprise at a music festival. They keep things nice and crazy, just like DIY hardcore/punk shows should be. The wild energy of the band almost pushes vocalist Nick Babeu off the stage into the audience, where he proceeds to stammer around, grabbing fans, staring psychotically into their eyes as his feet slam on the floor and he bites his hands. Covered in sweat and a little bruised and beaten, the band left Sled Island audiences wowed. Seemingly always on the road, Trigger Effect's vocalist was kind enough to take some time to answer some questions via e-mail for Absolute Underground, telling us all about his bands disease, possible fluid releasing and punk rock.



If Trigger Effect's life on the road is anything like their live performance, you can bet they have some crazy stories to share. Babeu didn't divulge too much, but definitely gave just enough to put some sweet images in your minds.

"There's always weird shit that goes on," writes Babeu, "There was a promoter who was being sketchy about paying us in Seattle, but we kept on him so eventually he brought a pair of bongos to the pawn shop so he could get cash. That was kinda funny. There was also the foot-high stack of soft-core porn that Sergio found in North Dakota, which we re-distributed to the local youth. You know those guys who are paid to wear

banana suits and hold up signs on the side of the road? Shitty job. Nothing brightens their day like unexpected airborne smut!"

In 2007 Trigger Effect released Dare to Ride the Heliocraft, a tour de force of punk/hardcore power. Versitis Maximus, originally released in 2010 on their own label Turbo Machine Enterprises, took Trigger Effect to a whole other level. In 2011 the album was re-released through

Indica Records bringing Trigger Effect's sound to a whole new audience. So we had to wonder, what the hell is Versitis Maximus and if it makes you party like Trigger Effect, can we have some? "Versitis is the disease that we've been diagnosed with. It manifests as the complete inability to act appropriately in any given social situation. Basically it means we're inappropriate dumb jerks all the time. So versitis maximus is basically being an inappropriate dumb jerk to the max, all the time. Like making poop jokes at a funeral. When we were in Spain a guy explained the title

to one of his friends better than we could ever have done it ourselves. He said something about taking something that is so basic, primal and stupid, and amplifying it into something huge, loud and obnoxious. Except he said it in Spanish so it sounded wicked."

Trigger Effect are known for their extreme DIY-ness. The kings of autonomy, the monarchs of self-motivation, the princes of pervasiveness. Booking a massive amount of shows completely on their own not only here in North America but over-seas as well, some were surprised when the band signed to Indica Records.

MONTREAL MASSACRE

"We've known the folks at Indica forever, so it seemed natural," states Babeu, "great label, rad people. There's only so much we can do on our own, and we acknowledge that. If someone is willing to come in and expand on what you're already doing, then why not? It allows us to focus on making and releasing music, instead of chasing distro and press. Response to the album has been quite positive so far!"

Not to worry, Trigger Effect still understand the Importance of DIY.

"I think it's very important to be involved with the presentation of your band, unless you just want to become a brand of sorts. Band members being involved with art, manufacturing, merch etc really helps to keep the soul in there.

If the music becomes disconnected from the presentation, it can get weird and kinda soulless. But there's a downside to DIY also, which I addressed earlier."

Although many agree that Trigger Effect are loud, fast and hard there is still the dreaded struggle of punk or metal. Which are they? Can they be both?

"Personally, I really like that people have a hard time putting us in a box, because hopefully that means we're doing things a little bit different from the rest. Genres are defined by existing music, so if someone were to tell us 'oh, you guys are straight up heavy metal, or flibbity-whatever-core', it would be like, oh shit, I guess they've heard this one before. Kind of like telling a story where everyone already knows the end. I think it's lame that people always have to draw lines in the sand, make divisions like that. Who cares? It's all just loud, fast abrasive music with guitars and drums. No?"

Punk is a torrid subject these days, having lost its meaning a little bit in the last decade. Babeu gives us his take on the state of punk rock.

"In my mind, punk rock is about two things. First, it's a release of anger and rage against an oppressive or corrupt system or establishment or whatever. Second, it's about demonstrating a

level of self-sufficiency, showing that you don't need huge amounts of money or other support in order to create art and get your message heard. Both of which are great, but like everything in this world, there's another side to them. I think a lot of the rage in North American punk rock has been lost. Sure, we ended up with a sunken-eyed creepy fuckin nutsack for a prime minister this year, but it's still hard to get real angry when you have beer in the fridge and hot dogs on the grill. People bitch and whine (and it's good to keep trying to make things better!) but compared to a lot of places, we have it pretty well here. We go to places like the Czech Republic and Poland, where it was a communist state not that long ago, where there is still a real, present and violent nationalist/neo-nazi threat, and you see the rage and passion in these people's eyes. Punk rock still means something over there, it's still fresh, it's still an important, meaningful outlet. It's relatively new, and it's an exciting alternative to the reality they've known for so long. Where's the danger, where's the meaning behind joining the ARA in Montreal, or holding a pro-LGBT rally in Vermont? What are they fighting? Creating a perceived problem where there really isn't one is a dangerous thing, man."

Whatever the state of punk rock may be Babeu is sure to let us know that there will be another Trigger Effect release soon.

"We're actually finishing up an EP that will be called 'Escape from Planet Scorpion'. Its a collection of songs all linked together into a 15-minute track that chronicles the trials, tribulations and eventual salvation of a group of people stuck on the Planet Scorpion. It'll be released in the next few months and it's gonna rule!"

And as far as their live show goes, Babeu is straight up in what you can expect.

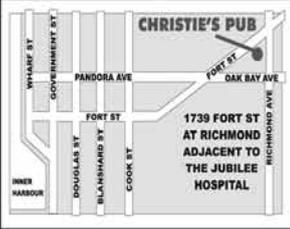
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With Hardcore Fest 7 fast approaching [by the time this goes to print it will have come and gone] I can't help but reflect on this band's rise within the Van Isle scene. This recording they have just put up for FREE download does their spirit justice and is an accurate representation of how raw & cohesive this band was. Mad props to Promises for being all around legit dudes, please go download this EP and enjoy it, VIHC life.

AU: What has been inspirational in your life that you've translated into your craft?

WB: I think I integrate a lot of my interests into my position of playing in a band. As far as inspiration goes, I've been undeniably inspired by the music and lyrics of bands like Embrace, Carry On, The First Step, Betrayed, Youth of Today, Trial, Propagandhi, Good Riddance, Modern Life is War, Bane, and many others. With regard to other areas of my life, I've been a counsellor in training for a couple years at Uvic. I'm months away from completing my Master's in Counselling Psychology, and that path has afforded me the luxury of exploring some really interesting ideas related to mental health and social constructivism. I'm really into a type of psychotherapy called Narrative Therapy, which is an anti-individualistic, non-pathologizing approach to helping, which continually shapes

how I relate to the world. That definitely has had an influence on the lyrics that I write, and has certainly informed my ethics when it comes to how I carry myself in the hardcore community.

AU: Do you get feedback from people who have gone out and researched some of the subjects you pander to the audience?

WB: I have on a couple of occasions. I think that generally it's less the case that people go out and research these ideas than it is the ideas resonate with them. I've had people approach me at shows saying "I really like what you had to say about _____." I've been thinking about that stuff lately and it's good to hear someone else talking



about it openly", or "I've never really thought about _____ before". I have an academic background, so spreading or discussing ideas is something I do a lot of in my life. I don't expect hardcore shows to turn into some kind of post secondary institution, but I do really value bands who expose me to new ideas or subjects. I don't expect everyone to care about what I have to say, but if they do, then I'm stoked.

AU: You've been involved in bands within the hardcore scene for quite some time now. How has this played a role in shaping your life and ethos?

WB: Believe it or not, this question is more or less something I would like to explore in a doctoral dissertation.

That's a huge question. I think that it has impacted my life and ethos in more ways than I can name. Off the top of my head, I can say that ideas like adopting a D.I.Y. attitude has shaped how I pursue my goals. Also, I learned about straight edge in my mid teens, and have called myself straight edge for the past 10 years. I think that my experience in the punk and hardcore scene has helped me to recognize the importance of community, because I've witnessed some wonderful examples of solidarity around various

HARDCORE ALLEY

issues throughout the years. It has definitely helped me to cultivate an appreciation for things with substance, whether they be music, relationships, books, or ideas. I think it's helped me to learn to appreciate listening to myself and what feels right, and to be more comfortable being "out of

step". I can't really imagine my life without some connection to punk rock music.

AU: Your songs carry & try to reinforce positive messages whenever possible, what subjects do you find yourself concerned with when writing songs?

WB: I find I focus a lot on issues related to gender socialization, because that's a topic that I reflect on a lot in my life. Our song Patriarchs is based on ideas pertaining to that subject. I think a lot about how social/cultural norms and values impact us as people, and have written about those ideas in songs about perfectionism and consumerism. I

don't really see much good coming from songs that focus on how messed up the world is without suggesting alternatives or how things might be different. I think that positivity in hardcore is a trend that ebbs and flows. It can be really "cool" to hate things and to write scathing criticisms directed toward all sorts of issues, but that mentality doesn't really resonate with me. I consider myself to be a very critical person, but I intend to use criticism as a vehicle for progression. The thought of writing entirely negative songs just feels unethical to me. I think there is this tendency that serves as a trap that the Western world has fallen into, and a lot of people involved in the hardcore scene have ironically fallen into that trap. I would call that trap "black and white thinking", where things are either good or bad, right or wrong, etc. I try to present a balanced perspective in my lyric writing, where I'm being critical, but also proposing an alternative that I see as a positive thing. There's a lot of injustice in the world, but I don't think that hardcore bands should be limited to simply stating how much things suck. There is always something we can do about our problems, and that's an idea that I think I bring into all the lyrics I write.

AU: Final words to bestow upon us all?

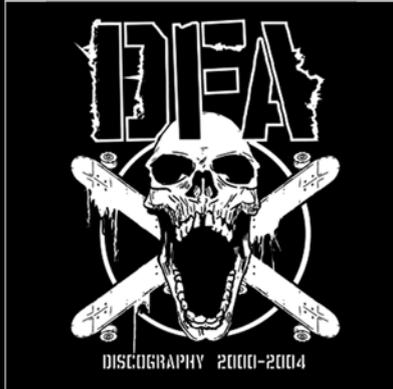
WB: Thanks so much for asking me to do this interview. It's been great to reflect on this band, which I've really enjoyed playing in. I've been all over the place and witnessed hardcore scenes in many different cities, and I can say that Victoria has something special. The scene here is small, but so unified, which is such a rarity. I really appreciate the fact that there's an actual society that contributes to that scene, which I believe is such a shining example of the solidarity possible in this community. Props to all the bands Promises has played with, and thanks to all the people who checked us out! Watch out for other cool projects members of this band will go on to do. Take care!

Go download their EP for FREE! <http://promiseshc.bandcamp.com/album/promises>

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By Andrea Chirulescu

The 3 days full of dark and extreme metal on the Rockefeller and John Dee stages in Oslo have kicked in on Thursday, April 21st and as the first performers we have the Norwegian trio from Diskord on the small stage of John Dee. If by the time I entered the venue I was still a bit sleepy, it all vanished away after the first few seconds of their death metal in which they blended a touch of slow doom or really fast riffs to make it an interesting listen. And to my surprise, the crowd was rather dense for the first band of the day and seemed to know the songs. A thing to appreciate with this band is the fact that the drummer seems to be the main singer and I always find it impressive if you can concentrate on synchronising your 4 limbs while having to sing along.

Soon it was time for the opener on the main Rockefeller stage – Akercocke, an English progressive blackened death metal band from London, England. I was told by a friend of mine that they rarely play live, so it was quite an occasion to see them at this festival.

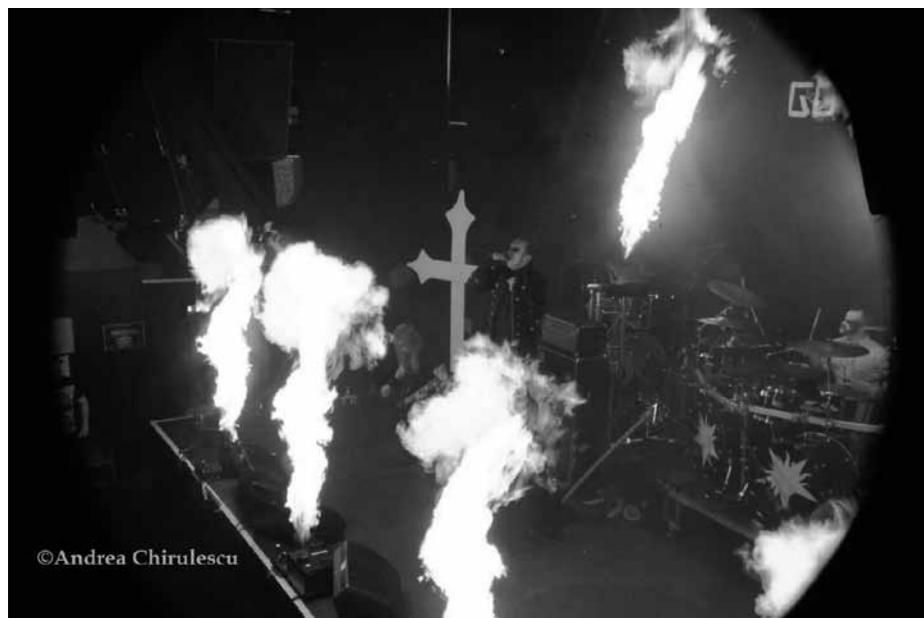
We move on to the next performers, the Norwegians from Gothminister and their industrial metal in the range of Rammstein sound at times. White face paint, plenty of eye makeup,

crosses and weird looking dolls on stage, remote controlled small planes going above the crowd and with cross shaped remotes, lots of pyro effects including sparkles coming out the guitar necks...

A short trip to John Dee after the recommendation of another friend to see Harm, another young Norwegian trio,

this time dwelling in the realms of thrash and with a 'Demonic Alliance' album out in April 2011 – after 5 years of silence since their first release. So I guess the new album was the main ingredient of the playlist as they played in the spirit of what seems to be the tagline on their facebook page 'THRASH TILL FUCKING DEATH!!'. I made it to the next concert on the main stage, as I really wanted to see the reunited version of DHG (aka Dødheimsgard), a band with plenty of member changing history. Another visual performance involving a lot of body paint, this time more varied though – red, blue (Avatar?), but this time music also got my attention with its industrial like rhythms in it, yet more black and tight most of the time.

Another Norwegian trio – for a while at least – came afterwards on the main stage. It was the black/thrash metal band Aura Noir, whose members also play or have played in famous metal projects: Aggressor (Carl-Michael Eide – Ved Buens Ende, Cadaver Inc., Dødheimsgard, Satyricon, Ulver, Infernö and Virus), Apollyon (Ole Jørgen Moe – Dødheimsgard, Lamented Souls, Gorgoroth, Cadaver Inc. and Immortal), Blasphemer (Rune Eriksen – Mayhem). Hence you could easily see their confidence of being on stage and performing for big crowds. With



Apollyon's vocals I always kept thinking they would start playing Immortal songs any minute, but after few songs they switched the drummer and were joined on stage by Aggressor and things shifted a lot to a more thrash'n'roll style. All in all an old school sound and a lot of energy transmitted from the artists, even if Carl-Michael Eide had to sit on a chair due the accident he had back in 2005.

I paid a short visit to John Dee, since I thought I had already seen Voivod last year, but now I am pretty sure I made a confusion between the Canadians and something else. The band on stage now had nothing to do with what I remembered, it was much more heavy and thrash metal with way more movement on the little stage and enthusiasm from the band. It was too crowded though so I had to get out after one song in order to breathe and later on to queue for a good photo spot for the last band of the day, Forbidden. I had previously seen them outside on the terrace during a photo session and they seemed like fun people. Which is exactly what they were on stage – a bunch of people really enjoying to play their old school classical thrash metal at a very high intensity. It was very disappointing to see that most of the crowd was gone though, yet the singer did his best to entertain and involve the remaining ones who gathered in front of the stage and cheered for them. Especially when they dedicated their song, RIP, to the guitarist of Jon Oliva's Pain, Matt LaPorte, who recently passed away. Showwise, nothing fancy visual effects from their side, except maybe some crazy hair-mills from the guitarist.

The second day of the yearly Easter metal festival in Oslo, Norway, has started off with the aggressive rock from Djerv, a band who started catching people's attention only in 2010 but have already made it on the main stage of this festival.

For this night we were announced that the Sons of Northern Darkness, aka Immortal would perform and exclusive and extra set for this festival. Although they seem to be like one of those unwanted progenies (who hardly does what everybody is compelled to) in the world of black metal, they are very loved by fans and by the time their concert started it was as packed as in a can of sardines in the main area from Rockefeller. People got warmed up by singing along with Seek and Destroy from Metallica, that was pouring from the speakers. If you haven't seen them before, the black and white evil face masks à la Kiss might make you think that a scary and serious act is going to happen on stage. Heh. After few minutes though, you might wonder if you're not at the zoo watching some long haired pandas jumping around and doing tricks. Both Abbath and Apollyon move (sometimes quite normal, other times with primate like jumps or fencing steps) continuously from one side of the stage to another, putting on every silly face they have in the inventory, occasionally doing some Gene Simmons impressions with their tongues. In all this chaotic movement accidents may happen and headbanging right behind your stage mate might cause some of your hair to get

caught in the neck of his bass. They are really good entertainers in this serious world of dark metal and they love to make fun of the crowd in between songs – or at the end when Abbath held the microphone down his ass so we can probably hear noises that come from other orifices of his body.

After my 3rd edition at this festival I still can state that being at this festival in Oslo is one of the most appealing ways to spend the easter time so far. The only downside is that the weather decided to be incredibly good these days and being an indoor festival doesn't allow one to take much advantage of that – after the long Norwegian winter. But let's concentrate on the good parts and good music, which started today with a Trondheim based band, Manifest. It's always sad to see the amount of energy on stage and the singer's attempts at involving the crowd, while the people who managed to get up and relocate to the stage at that time are in some sort of trance and barely respond with a head shake.

On the main stage it was soon time for bands with many years of career to rock the place. First of them, from Florida, Malevolent Creation was formed in 87 and whose debut album, The Ten Commandments, was a reference one in the underground metal at its time.

Later it was time for the most insane moshpits of



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making a Canadian movie and going to keep it as local to Calgary as possible.

AU: Are you a LARPer?

MP: My answer to this is I'm glad I didn't make a serial killer movie or a movie about a pedophile or a talking fish. (That's a no, but I did a lot of research and had fun learning more and more about it as things moved along.)

AU: During your writing process, how did the theme of Live-Action-Role-Playing come up?

MP: I think I thought it would make a good documentary when I first heard about and found out someone was in the middle of shooting a doc. My writing partner thought it would make a good comedy. The world hadn't been used in a comedy at the point we began writing and upon more research it seemed like a great idea. I mean, most guys I know, me included played D&D at some point growing up so it wasn't too far from those interests anyway. The main thing was to not just make a comedy that was making fun

Lloyd the Conqueror Interview with Director/Writer Mike Peterson

By Chad Persley

I first heard of Lloyd the Conqueror a few months ago when a received an invite to attend a private test screening of an upcoming feature film. Not only was it filmed in Calgary, but the press release had a very interesting lineup. Starring stand-up comedian Brian Posehn, Mike Smith (Bubbles of Trailer Park Boys), Harland Williams (Dumb & Dumber/Half Baked), David Lawrence and Andy Sparacino (Terry & Tron from FUBAR), who all take part in Live Action Role Playing together. If that enough, the soundtrack is a Canadian All-Star team of Metal, featuring Bison B.C., Three Inches of Blood, Trigger Effect, Striker and more! This has cult classic written all over.

AU: Take us back to the start of this project, filmed and produced in Calgary - as a writer and director, how did you get this project started?

MP: My writing partner and I (Andrew Herman) started writing the script for this about 5-6 years ago. We wrote a script that we thought was really funny. I had not directed a feature at this point

but wanted this to be my first one. We tried to partner with a few other producers but none of them would guarantee that we could make the film how I thought it should be made. This included me being the director, a cast that was funny and shooting and finishing the film in Calgary. Basically, these various producers we approached wanted us to sign the project over to them with no guarantees about any of the things I thought crucial to the success of the film. And they all gave me the line about me being a first-time feature director and how no one would get behind the film because of it. I mean, every feature film director was a first time director at some point. The horror stories are as abundant in film as they are with music. It felt like there were a lot of lessons from friends of mine in the music and film business that applied to what we were doing and that we could learn from some of those mistakes in hopes that we didn't repeat them. I felt like I was ready, the script was funny so we decided to do it on our own. I already had a production company for my other projects so our company basically put together the paperwork and knocked on doors. We called people we knew and found that a lot of them believed in the project, and I guess in us as well. I think the main thing was we had a script that people could read for themselves and see that it was funny. Part of our pitch was that we were



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of these guys and this world. I wasn't interested in making fun of these guys, or at least being mean-spirited about it any way.

AU: How important was implementing a 'metal' soundtrack? Not only are all the bands well known in the metal community, but they are seemingly an all star roster of Canadian talent. Take us through the selection process for these bands, and will there be a full soundtrack album released?

MP: I'm going to tell you, for the first time, in print who all the bands on the soundtrack are: Bison BC, 3 Inches of Blood, C'mon, Barn Burner, Trigger Effect, Striker, Outlaws of Ravenhurst, Miesha and the Spanks and there will be one final song from a yet to be named awesome band that will push it over the edge. This soundtrack will give you a metal boner! Metal just seemed like the right feel. It acts as a great counterpart to the film's classical score as its all big orchestra sounding fantasy music. The first thing I did was show Zak Pashak (Sled Island, Biltmore, Broken City) the movie and ask if he wanted to help me find the right bands for the film. The first band I approached was Bison BC. I went out to Vancouver when they were playing a gig and met up with them, showed them a few clips and they said they were on board as long as their label Metal Blade was okay with it too.

So, Bison wrote a wicked song that plays during the 3rd act battle climax to the movie and Metal Blade was very helpful to make it happen as well. It just sort of worked out from there. We plan on releasing a soundtrack and are talking with a label right now about how that might work out. So, we should have some news on that pretty soon.



AU: You also have put together a solid cast of comedians. How did you land these big names? Was there anything interesting about casting the 'name' and 'unknown' actors in this film?

MP: One of the producers warned me to cast different actors in the film when we were casting. It actually got pretty heated, I could feel my movie slipping away from me. Basically, I was told if I didn't cast any US actors who may have been on Saturday Night Live or some

other TV show that I didn't stand a chance at distributing the film. It got to the point that the names that were being suggested would have ended up being a movie I wouldn't want to watch myself. I had a moment of clarity where I knew I would have to live with watching this movie over and over again from shooting to editing it that I couldn't be watching it and hating the comedy or the actors in it. So, I made a bold move (apparently, anyway) and put my foot down. I love Brian Posehn's comedy and think he's one of the funniest dudes out there. We sent Brian the script and he said that he thought it was really funny and wanted to do it. It was a pretty flattering moment. Bubbles (Mike Smith) from the Trailer Park Boys is a funny guy but no one's seen him do much else. So, I felt like

he was a good choice in that way, but needed to make sure, so he was gracious enough to send in an audition tape. The tape was great and really blew my mind. After that it basically just fell in line.

Darcy Michael is a really funny comedian who auditioned for a different role but wasn't right for it. He was so funny we actually wrote a part for him. He plays the role of the

unicorn which I think turned into one of my favorite sequences that takes place during the film's final battle. I think Harland Williams did it because we had Brian Posehn. I was a big fan of Dave Lawrence from FUBAR and had gotten to know him a bit so

I think he was actually one of the first people I asked to be in the movie before we even knew when, or if we were making it.

AU: Where can we expect to see Lloyd the Conqueror on the big screen?



MP: It's playing a bunch of film festivals in Canada beginning this September. I'm not allowed to say all the festivals it's playing because some of them haven't made these selections public as yet. I can say for sure that it's playing at Calgary International Film Festival which runs from Sept 26 - October 2 which will be kind of a special screening since it's the hometown premiere. I would expect a big party to follow that screening that will definitely include some of the bands playing at the party.

But I would expect a big metal party at any of it's other screenings as well. After that expect a limited theatrical release in Canada to follow shortly after the festival run.

www.lloydtheconqueror.com

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different shops and seeing the Vancouver Tattoo scene and they way its constantly growing, I felt like I had something to offer to it. We decided on the location based upon how classy we wanted our new home to be. All of us have an appreciation for the history of tattooing, and we wanted a place that gave the feeling of a traditional tattoo parlor. What better place than in a 100 year old building in the heart of

Vancouver's historical district, Gastown.

AU: Who are some of your biggest inspirations in tattooing?

MK: Working with the great friends and clients that I have. The best ones just let me go to town on them. They come to me with a rough idea, or sometimes no idea at all, and fully trust me to make it work for them. It's really awesome feeling that always keeps the creativity flowing. To name

some names, there's one major inspiration amongst the great tattoo community in Vancouver. Trent Pare' made the biggest impact in my tattooing, and overall work ethic.

AU: What makes your shop unique? How would you describe your shop's style?

MK: Our approachable crew of artists really creates the vibe the shop has. We keep it classy and traditional, all the while practicing modern sterile techniques. There's also a strong presence of all of our personal effects everywhere. Taxidermy, antiques,

INK SLINGERS

bones, robots, nautical objects, and anything from the 80s, all to sum up as a carnival of awesomeness.

AU: What sort of tunes can one expect to hear when getting tattooed at your shop?

MK: Being a diverse collection of gentlemen, we go all over the map. Starting the day off with some blues, moving into punk rock. Then 90s hip hop and classic rock, and when the moon comes out the metal turns up.

AU: Do you guys do piercings as well?

MK: We have Jesse Longbear who has been piercing since 2001 and his apprentice Chris "Scallywags" Ferroux.

AU: Does most of your work tend to lean to the side of Good or Evil?

MK: The majority of my personal work definitely leans towards the evil side of things, although I really enjoy tattooing both ends of the spectrum.

AU: Any advise for young up and cummers?

MK: The best thing for any new tattoo artists to do is lots of small tattoos in easy spots. Also just do your own thing, don't worry about what everyone else is doing, keep your head down and stick to doing what you do.



Gastown Tattoo Parlor Interview with Mitch Kirilo,

By Ira Hunter

AU: Who works at Gastown Tattoo Parlour?

MK: We have a diverse crew of 6 tattoo artists here. Mitch Kirilo, Craig Moston, Arlin French, Matt Houston, Kyle Harding and Garret Egles.

AU: What styles does everyone specialize in?

MK: There's is quite the wide range of styles here from straight up bare bones American traditional to colour realism and everything in between such as black and grey, portraits, neo traditional, Japanese and anything else you can think of.

AU: Why did you decide to open your own shop and what made you decide upon the location?

MK: Over the years of going through



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Sled Island 2011 - Or is that bike island?

By Pamela Ouellette

Photos by Sled Island Festival

There's a general misconception in Calgary that the annual Sled Island Music and Arts Festival is a monster dominated by indie bands. However, in truth Sled Island is made up of a mishmash of comedy, art, and variety of musical styles; garage, folk, metal, punk, pop, rap and of course indie. The fest has grown rapidly since its conception in 2007, and in June of 2011 boasted a lineup of 200+ artists performing at over 25 venues city wide.

The main stomping grounds and the venue assigned to headlining artists was Olympic Plaza. Here festival goers can bring their families, sip a cool beverage (alcoholic or not), a bite to eat and chill

in the sun in an eclectic atmosphere of people from every walk of life, and revel in a diverse selection of live music.

"It feels like there's exciting, interesting, artistic

things happening in Calgary during Sled Island," says Nicole Abrams, a Vancouver native presently living here. "It makes Calgary feel like a big city for the four days."

Abrams has attended Sled Island three times in her four years here and rode her bicycle everywhere during the fest. "It's a bike revolution. Everyone rides their bike that week to get from show to show quickly."

Outside venues bicycles are stacked as many as three or four deep and locked up to any article of city property the owner deems adequate.



When the sun goes down the streets are packed with busy festival goers scuttling, or riding, from venue to venue in an effort to see as many bands as possible and make the most of their entry fee.

Without a wristband it's difficult to find admittance to a watering hole downtown.

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Dick Lucas - Vocals

AU: Anything to say about the new Citizen Fish album?

Dick Lucas: It is the best one we have ever done. We are quite modest about these things. It features a guy named Matt on trombone, he has played trombone for us before, but he is now part of

the band. His presence and personality boosted our creative prowess up to our maximum level. The only way we can do an album these days is to pre-book the studio six months ahead of time, then get an album's worth of tracks together. We have to work with deadlines, partially why the split with Leftover Crack is called Deadline. The album is ska and punk but also a curious mixture of other things. Some songs, like "Click" or "Wake Up" have musical moments in them, where I can't even fuckin work out how they got there. Someone might say there is almost some regressive ska punk in there.

AU: How many albums does Citizen Fish have out now?

Lucas: Eight and a half. The half is the split with Leftover Crack.

AU: What was playing with Leftover Crack again today like? I know you have toured together at least a couple of times.

Lucas: We have, they are great people, and we

love them to death. They are such individual characters, how they get on, as a band can range from furious, to peaceful, to happy, to aggressive, or crazy. They set fire to the cushion of contentment so to speak. Just when you think everything is going really well, they take that cushion, shred it to bits with a knife and set fire to illusions of how comfortable punk rock is getting in its own illusion of having solved the worlds problems

AU: A lot of people keeping asking for your photo. Which is going to be on Facebook instantly.

Lucas: Or Youtube or somewhere on the Internet. For instance, the other day I was at a party getting pretty drunk after a show, and I was talking to Josh from the Krum Bums. He said, "Dick, I got to tell you, I really love your records", and I said, "Josh, man, I don't

want to hear it, I just want to get wasted." Next day somebody Tweets, or Twitters, or whatever it is called, "Dick (Citizen Fish) to Josh (Krum Bums) I don't care about that, I just want to get wasted." Totally taken out of context, it sucks. And I will tell you why I said that, I don't mind people coming up to me and telling me how good they think the band is or whatever. But when somebody in a band says it to me, I just don't really expect it, because they are in a band already and tour and such. I don't want to come across as though I think bands are better people than everyone else, because that is so not true. Punk rock just is not about having heroes it is about absolute equality between everybody no matter what. It is about the basic roots of human musicianship and talent. It took me 20 minutes to walk 200 yards this evening because so many people wanted to take my fucking photograph. Photographs are the new autographs.

AU: While we are on the subject, anything you would care to add about Facebook and the

subject of cultural acceleration?

Lucas: First of all I would like to know whether it is true that someone involved in ownership of Facebook used to work for the CIA?

AU: I have heard that before.

Lucas: I read it in the Guardian, which is an English left wing paper. The owners once said, "We just want to know what everyone is doing". If there is a big party in England, or rave, or big demonstration, or whatever, the CIA or FBI or whoever just needs to go on Facebook, and plug in the right words. Plus they have ways of tracking this shit that we don't even have any idea about. They can suss out what is going on, and be there before it happens. We are feeding ourselves to anyone who wants to find an event. But then on the other hand, you have Wikileaks; Julian Assange has blown away what happens between diplomats and the upper echelons of government. Wikileaks shows exactly how countries talk to each other. "Please don't do that, if you do this, we will give you that money, etc." This is how they plan their wars and their economic situations.

AU: He has exposed everything to the entire world.

Lucas: And America especially says, "No, no, he is a

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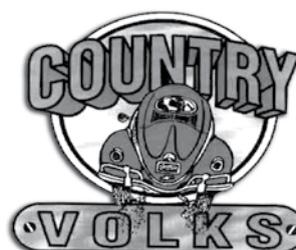
fuckin traitor. He is revealing government secrets, leaving us open to terrorism." What a load of shit.

Just bring the word terrorism into a conversation and suddenly everyone has to bow down and say you are so right; let's all bow down to anti-terrorist laws.

AU: Yeah it doesn't seem like you can even protest anymore.

Lucas: Though one good thing about Facebook, Twitter, etc. is that they combined a whole bunch of people in Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, in order to coordinate massive demonstrations about the very nature of their government. Which shows the power of the Internet at it's fullest potential. It brings people together, no matter what religion, no matter what tribe they are in. They are all slave to American oil, some under a dictatorship. They rose up against it, positive or negative, at least it happened. Which makes the Internet like a double-edged sword.

-Chuck Wurley



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The Descendents/All

Karl Alvarez – Bass

AU: All with all three singers! That was incredible!

Karl Alvarez: It was fun! We have kind of done it before. Years ago, I remember an occasion in San Diego where we had Milo, Dave, and Scott on hand, but Chad wasn't part of the picture yet. I think that is the only time we tried to do something like that. These festivals increasingly become family reunions, it was inevitable that sooner or later we would all be on the same gig.

AU: You were forced into it!

Alvarez: No, not forced into it. One thing that is interesting is that if you write songs, and record songs, they are a little bit like time capsules. So songs that I haven't played in 20 years, if I have to relearn them, it brings back everything, smells, sensations, all of the memories. With the Descendents, smells definitely. I am not that much of a retrospective person, but it forces you to be. All of our songs in Descendents and All are first person, non fiction, so it is good and bad, you relive some of the ugly parts of, in our case, romantic pasts. But maybe that is good, maybe one of the ways to stop fucking up further is to have your nose rubbed in your previous failures.

AU: Are we going to be seeing a new album from either Descendents or All?

Alvarez: Christ I hope so.

AU: I noticed Descendents are playing all over the place, from England to Quebec.

Alvarez: Milo likes to take extended breaks apparently. There are other things too. Of course as a Canadian you know that the healthcare system in the U.S. is really trashed and getting worse. Don't listen to the Conservatives, they will screw you. Here is the way it works: Bill had some health problems, he owed 300,000 dollars. I had some health problems, I owed 16,000. Stephen's daughter had some health problem, she is only nine years old now, and their debt is equally extreme. I am very grateful that we are able to do these bands, because it is going to help cover this shit. None of us drive limos or own yachts. We are just normal lower middle class motherfuckers like everyone else, but one bad medical episode can trash you in the States. But I am happy that we are touring! And back to your question, I hope we record more stuff! We all have our various other bands that we do, but there is nothing like this. Playing with Bill and Stephen is special. I have known Stephen since I was 12 years old, and I have known Bill since I was 17, and I am 47 years old.

AU: What is Filmage all about?

Alvarez: Someone is doing a documentary about All and the Descendents. I just pray they don't interview my exes. I don't know a lot about it. I am the bass player; no one really wants to talk to me. I have said a few things on screen and that is about it. Last night and the night before, after the shows, I walked off stage and was surrounded by five bass players. I should amend that; no one wants to talk to the bass player, except bass players. And when someone says Mr. Alvarez, I look over my shoulder for my dad. I am either



Karl, or "Hey you, fuckhead". You get older and suddenly you are a Mister. I respect that people do it, but then there is that little "fuck you, punk rock part of me" that wants people just to meet me as an equal.



AU: When did All last play in Victoria?

Alvarez: I might be wrong, but I want to say, 1997 or 1998, no wait that was a Descendents tour, maybe 1999 or 2000. I don't know, we used to play there a lot though. We definitely played there with No Means No. And there was about a year and a half when I played with the Real McKenzies too. Didn't go to Victoria with them, but I played Vancouver a bunch.

AU: How did you end up being in the Real McKenzies?

Alvarez: Well, I am glad you asked. My friend Randy, who is a sound man who has worked with a great many bands, called me and asked if I would like to go on tour for next to no money, but have a great time, kilt required. That is all he said. So I contacted him back, and asked, "When do the McKenzies need me?" They are fuckin legendary. And he baited me with the fact that Sean Sellers is the drummer, the drummer from Good Riddance. Since I am a bass player, you give me a good drummer and that is all I really need in life, and to sweeten the pot, Dave from D.O.A. is playing guitar, of course I was going to do it! If they read this, ever, I hope they know I love them! I couldn't make a living tour with them unfortunately, and my girlfriend got tired of supporting my lame ass. They play 400-year-old songs, and you know if a song has been around 400 years, it has to be good.

-Chuck Wurley

Off With Their Heads

Ryan Young – Guitar/Vocals

AU: Are you guys working on a new record any time in the next year?

Ryan Young: We are going to start working on it in September. I think once our summer tour, across the States, with Riverboat Gamblers and Dead to Me is over, we aren't touring for a while. It is in the contract, and we are already late in giving them a new album, so we have to stop touring

and work on one. I have to take some time to slow down, I guess.

AU: You just got back from touring Australia and New Zealand?

Young, Yes, it was fuckin awesome! I can't believe how well that went! We just did the States with Dropkick Murphys and Against Me! which was our favourite tour, and then we toured Australia/New Zealand with Against Me! And that was bumped up to our favourite tour! This year has been really cool, every tour we do, becomes our favourite tour!

-Chuck Wurley

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Cock Sparrer

Colin McFaull - Vocals

AU: When did you first tour North America?

Colin McFaull: We first went to the States for a brief, four-day tour in 2000. Taking in New York, Boston, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Since then we've been back a couple of times to Austin, San Antonio, Chicago and San Francisco again.

AU: Have you ever toured Canada?

McFaull: No we've never been to Canada, although we'd love to. It's on the list of places to get to before we pack up.

AU: Did Malcolm McLaren once try to offer Cock Sparrer money or a record deal?

McFaull: No the truth is he came to see us rehearse back in the day above a small pub in East London. We played him some songs and we spoke about a few things, but never took it any further. I think we realized at the time that he wouldn't be right for us and he probably felt the same to be honest.

AU: Most of you guys have known each other since a very, very young age. Is that what keeps Cock Sparrer going more than 30 years after your started?

McFaull: Will and me have been mates since we were five years old; we went to the same Infants School in Manor Park, East London. We met all the others when we were about 14, at Secondary School. We



The Dwarves

Blag Dahlia - Vocals

AU: Ghost World is one of my favourite movies. What did you have to do with the soundtrack for Ghost World?

Blag Dahlia: Terry Zwigoff is an old friend of mine and he really finds my music to be irritating, so he asked me if I could give him something really irritating for the scene where they go into the bookstore. So I took an instrumental and I put the sounds of jackhammers and pneumatic drills over



it, and he said that it was perfect and he put it in the movie.

AU: Thank you, I have watched the movie many times and wondered.

Dahlia: My question is: why didn't he have those two cute chicks take their tops off? They wander around the whole movie looking like nuns. I told him, "Dude you blew it".

AU: Do you have any idea what Leftover Crack thinks of playing with you? Since they are very anti-sexist.

Dahlia: We are the kings of misanthropy and we hate all human beings

equally, it is not just women. I think music is an extension of your id and impulses, it is not necessarily what you think about things, it is just what comes out. When people take music seriously, they are not experiencing it the way I do.

AU: The new album, Born Again, anything to say about it?

Dahlia: The new album is a classic. 25 years of the Dwarves, and it is just a brilliant record. It is every genre; it is punk rock, garage, hardcore, just everything. We are really proud of it and everyone seems to like it a lot. I think most punk bands get older and they get worse, only the Dwarves get better.

AU: Anything else you would like to say?

Dahlia: I love Canada, and I wish we were more like you, except not as boring.

-Chuck Wurley

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Chip Hanna

Singer, Songwriter and Guitarist

Former drummer of One Man Army, and long-standing drummer of U.S. Bombs

AU: How long did you play in the U.S. Bombs?

Chip Hanna: Started in 1996 and I still play with them. We are going to Europe in June, west coast dates in August, and then we are going to go to Brazil in October. It is great when Duane is sober! I have been to Canada a lot, well maybe not a lot, but I remember that fuckin drive from Vancouver to Kamloops. It is very beautiful through there! Where are you from?

AU: We are from Victoria, on Vancouver Island.

Hanna: Ok. We drove from Vancouver all the way to Montreal. There were moose, and there was flat nothing for miles, beautiful. I have been across North America, every road you can take. That Bombs tour we did with Guttermouth, and without our bass player. No bass player at all for the first two shows. He couldn't get into Canada. You guys have the right idea, keep them fuckin low-lifes out! Hahaha!

AU: When you were younger your country influences came from your parents correct? Did you play country then or

did you just listen to it?

Hanna: No. It was subliminal. I played rock n' roll, punk rock; I played all kinds of shit. I played drums, and then I hooked up with the Bombs, and thought, "Wow this is it right here!"

AU: Some notoriety, some craziness!

Hanna: Lots of craziness, lots of touring, not much notoriety.

AU: The U.S. Bombs are famous in the punk scene.

Hanna: Duane is one of a kind!



He is a cockroach, just like the rest of us.

AU: You came back full circle to the country music that you listened to as a kid?

Hanna: One Man Army broke up and no one was knocking on my door to play drums. My wife said that I should just play guitar and sing. I was working at this Wild West place in Phoenix and I started playing guitar. It fit, as I was falling off buildings, shooting blanks out of a gun, and playing cowboy. It is a whole lot easier splitting the money one way. I do love the

drums though.

AU: When did you start playing drums?

Hanna: When I was six, and seriously at twelve. And I am 46, so it has been all of my life.

AU: Tell us about Chip Hanna and the Berlin Three.

Hanna: That was myself, Tex, Valla, and Andy from Mad Sin. Tex doesn't play with Mad Sin anymore, but Valla and Andy do. Awesome fuckin musicians!

AU: How many Chip Hanna records are there?

Hanna: Two records. I spent 6 months in Germany at one point. The first one we did was when I went over and opened

for the Real McKenzies. I love the McKenzies, those are some party animals, and I have seen some party animals! Paul, Bone, Little Joe, and Sean, they are the best. That was where we got the idea for Chip Hanna and the Berlin Three. The first band I ever played solo with, was the Real McKenzies. The last place I played with them, we played this place in East Germany, and they said ok, we are going to get up with you and do Folsom Prison Blues.

-Chuck Wurley

Cobra Skulls

Devin Peralta - Bass/Lead Vocals

AU: You guys have a new album coming out?

Devin Peralta: We just recorded; we finished up a week ago. It was recorded at Motor City Studio in San Francisco, Fat Mike's studio. We were there for three and a half weeks, and we just have to go back and mix it, and it should be out in September.

AU: Are you going back to putting "cobra" in the titles of the songs?

Peralta: No, I don't know if we will ever do that again. It was fun while it lasted.

AU: Funny titles with much deeper meanings to the songs.

Peralta: That is why I don't want to do it again. For instance take "Faith is a Cobra". In the chorus we say, "Faith is a cult", and I can remember playing shows where both friends and fans were singing, "Faith is a cobra", I could clearly see them. That is not good, so we don't want to do that anymore. We are not really singing, "Faith is a cobra" we are not that shallow. We are not talking about worshipping cobras; we are talking about how all religions like to discredit other religions, saying that



the others are the crazy ones. Christianity says Mormons are a cult, yet Christianity is a cult in itself. So no more "cobra" titles because it just confuses people and meanings get lost. Especially in this day where people just download the music, so they don't have the liner notes and lyrics.

AU: You do write about a lot of important issues, you touch on everything from war, to stem cell research, to straight edge, to music scenes, and even the odd song about girls.

Peralta: You can't really helping writing songs about girls, or love every now and then. It may be

somewhat of a taboo to write about love in punk rock, but if you are writing music, you can't help writing about emotional issues. I have always been a fan of punk rock where they write about issues that matter. I grew up in a family where politics and social issues were important, and I found punk rock and latched onto it, because it was meaningful. It was more than just bands playing music simply to get laid. It was bands doing it because their music had a message and it meant something.

-Chuck Wurley

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Absolute Film Reviews

Atrocious

Cannibal Holocaust, Blair Witch Project, The Last Broadcast. August Underground the POV style of horror has a storied history (albeit a somewhat maligned one) and this latest Spanish submission to the genre follows in tradition of the better examples of the art form in keeping a high level of suspense throughout its running time. The found footage, edited down from 37 hours to 75 mins, follows the last few days of the Quintanilla family at their secluded farm house; starting off with the last reels of it a blur of carnage and ominosity, and then thrusting us a few days back, before the trip begins we know things won't go well for this convent. A legend states that a woman in a red dress will help you if you get lost in the woods, which just happens to be a huge Shining like labyrinth right outside their home. ?elpof course, is an ambiguous word here, as the young adults of the family learn from a family friend some finer details of the story, such as if you hear her moaning in the distance, she is already standing behind you. During the days, they scope out the labyrinth, eventually finding a well where they learn the girl may have been thrown in ala Ringu. As night falls, maliciousness in the woods is affront, they quickly learn the truth of the legend. First time director Fernando Barreda Luna's Atrocious is a good entry into the home video genre, with a chill inducing mood and air of mystery throughout the whole, but the ending and revelation felt a little too Last Broadcastish to feel truly satisfying. The ride getting there is well worth it, however.

-Ryan Dyer

Blood Junkie Troma

As with several other recent Troma releases, Blood Junkie starts with a promo by Lloyd Kaufman and Debbie Rochon introducing the film while having a meal at Troma studios. Whenever they have to say the name of the film, Lloyd or Debbie will hide their mouths while a dubbed in voice says "Blood Junkie". How very Ed Wood of Lloyd to do this, though it isn't like Blood Junkie, or for that matter, the recent releases of Killer Yacht Party, Blood Oath and Eyes of the Chameleon deserve much extra attention besides the updated transfer. Deliberately hokey in storyline, dialogue and style, Blood Junkie reeks of the 80s with its hair sprayed characters (and two that look like Terry and Deaner) being pursued in the woods by a My Bloody Valentine looking fiend who has a fixin for blood. The reason for his lust stems from an explosion in a factory near the campsite. Supposedly he needs it in a Hellraiser sort of way as opposed to a vampiric way. This movie actually looks great, but the unoriginal story, uninspired characters and slow pacing make Blood Junkie feel cheap and longer than it should be. As I've said before on many a film - watch the trailer. You'll get your fix.

-Ryan D

Cropsey Breaking Glass

Anyone who has seen the 1980 slasher flick The Burning is familiar with the word Cropsey. The crispy antagonist of the film bore the name, stalking teenagers in a wooded area. In Staten Island, New York, the legend of a deranged mad man lurking about the woods with the same name terrorized the youth of the area for years. A place of "undesirables", littered with toxic waste, human debris, old medical facilities which looked after handicapped children and abandoned homes where so called Satanic masses went on, Staten Island was an ideal place for a legend like Cropsey to come into fruition. The legend soon turned into reality as five of the disabled children went missing through a period of years. The highly publicized disappearance of one Jennifer Schweiger and subsequent finding of the body (the only one found) eventually leads to the arrest of Andre Rand, the headline already presenting a biased account on him, labelling him a "drifter". With no clear cut evidence linking him to the crimes, the documentary tries to examine the events leading up to and after the series of disappearances, interviewing many of the people involved, as well as examining jail letters from the culprit, and attempting to conduct a sit down interview with him in prison near the film's conclusion. Many factors are brought up in the examination of why the children were taken, with the elimination of undesirables (eugenics), satanic sacrifices (mentioning the Church of The Process, where not coincidentally the leader lives on Staten Island) or for sexual means. Cropsey, an effort by filmmakers and Staten Island natives Joshua Zeman and Barbara Brancaccio, is well worth the watch if wanting to see an overview of the events, and keeps a murky mood throughout its running time. Some parts seemed edited in a sensationalistic way, but its a small complaint to an otherwise well done film. www.cropseylegend.com

-Ryan D

Evil Bong 3D: The Wrath of Bong Full Moon Features

Full Moon Features announced plans a while back to take 3D to where it hasn't gone before. And with Evil Bong 3D: The Wrath of Bong, there's an interactive element that comes with a scratch n' sniff card. When the scene from the film alerts audiences, they're supposed to take a mighty whiff of the card. And there's no doubt that it smells like weed. The 3D can easily be a hit or miss. Given what the 22-min preview offers, there isn't much to be thrilled at. But for the rest where the stoners go on a mind-blowing journey, the 3D effects propel viewers into an acid trip. The craziness that ensues is pretty much atypical for the B-movie genre that this film easily belongs in. This film is a product made by the fans for the fans. Those who are part of that culture can only understand the jokes. People will be shouting Happy 4-20 more than anything else. When

an old coger witnesses a meteorite crashing nearby, the first thing he does (after unceremoniously giving his dead wife a makeshift funeral) is to go investigate. He discovers an alien looking bong in the tiny crater and all he can think of doing is to take it into town and pawn it off. The stoners from the previous films make an appearance, and before one of them realizes it, he's transported into an alien world, complete with hot green alien women who look like they are from Star Trek wanting to give him more than just head. That's where the screener ends, and the fun begins. James Kirk couldn't get what Alistair (David Weldoff) and Larnell (John Patrick Jordan) have to face. Well maybe he could, had Star Trek gone to a different galaxy far, far, away. But this time, at least William Shatner, in the teaser promos for this film, seem to give his stamp of approval. This film is better off being seen live with Charles Band's Horror Road Show at the same time. The fun is like seeing a live Rocky Horror Stage Show.

-Ed Sum

Jack the Reaper Rutherford Entertainment

This film is a little different from the usual ride down the tracks. Instead of an expressionless killer, Railroad Jack shows that he is a happy killer. Railroad Jack is always killing with a smile and soon, this viewer was smiling along with Jack, in Jack the Reaper. Unbelievably, this film has not secured a release date, but this film is deserving of distribution and of horror fan's attention. The film uses a great set involving a carnival in a desert and the drama among the characters heightens



the tension. This is a title that needs to be seen to be believed and hopefully, Jack the Reaper will find a welcoming home soon, so he can terrorize more macabre watching fans. Jack the Reaper begins with a flashback and soon the horror tone is set with a quick pickaxe strike. Next, several young teens are forced aboard a school bus, to make up for a missed assignment. Personally, this reviewer would have written the paper on the industrial revolution, rather than face a ten hour field trip. Later, Tony Todd makes an introduction as Steel and each of

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the teenagers is given a dramatic backstory e.g. allusions to incest, new fathers, and rich kids gone bad. Unknowingly, each teenager has a big target on their back. A nice drive out into the desert is interrupted by a crash and unbelievably a carnival turns up in this isolated locale. Director Kimberly Seilhammer shows her talent for creating a brilliant looking setting and the high quality film stock increases the visual textures. Jack the Reaper is fun to look at. However, the characters in the film have only a little time to enjoy the sights and sounds of the ferris wheel, the merry-go-round etc. Because, Railroad Jack has issues with teenagers and he solves them with murder. This is not a great way to make friends. And instead, Railroad Jack makes a lot of enemies, while turning carnival goers into bloody messes. He does this with enthusiasm and his passion for killing made this horror watcher smile a few times. This film is simply

fun and watching Douglas Tait as the killer creates for some of the most memorable scenes. Hidden behind black eyes, Railroad Jack generates ambivalent feelings, which is a nice change from the stock horror villains of old, who only generate fear. A few minor criticisms pop up, including: the underuse of actor Tony Todd, the ending could have been explained a little better and a female narrator spouts awkward prose at strange, random intervals. Overall, this is an excellent horror film; hopefully, Jack the Reaper receives a release soon, as many horror fans will enjoy this depraved, but happy killer. Unfortunately, this reviewer will never be able to visit a carnival again!

-Michael Allen

Stake Land Glass Eye Pix

So, Zombieland with vampires? Judging by the title and the synopsis of Jim Mickle's Stake Land, at first glance this seems to be. But first you have to suck all of the humour from its neck and then you'll get an idea of what Stake Land brings to the vamp genre. The film actually has

the feel of the recent The Walking Dead series, or even The Road, albeit with monotone narration (and no "rules" from the young protagonist Martin (Connor Paolo) who has formed an unlikely pseudo father/son relationship with fellow survivor, Mister (Nick Damici). As they trek across America searching for a place called Eden (not surprisingly, Canada), a refuge that promises to be as puritanical and bloodsucker free as it's name implies. Religious allegories spring up further in Stake Land, as cults threaten our heroes and with a pair of nuns found recently raped by some of the human trash still scavenging the barren earth. As they go from town to desolate town, humanity shows signs of coping with the end of the world, with bars still full and songs still sung while fanged menaces lurk behind every tree out doors. In one of these bars, they find a pregnant songstress played by Danielle Harris, who joins them on their trip to Eden. Stake Land felt like it could have been a four hour serial, like The Walking Dead, or could be a set of films like a famous series it sometimes resembles, Phantasm. It is basically a coming of age story for Martin, who throughout the film learns to find his manhood through the help of Mister The mood is gritty, the violence isn't held back (babies are killed), and the performances solid. It may not be a slab of meat as thick and juicy as the heralded classics of the vampire genre, but for what it is, Stake Land is worth sinking your teeth into.

-Ryan Dyer

Quarantine 2

Third Street Pictures Quarantine 2 gives a nod to the previous film, by mentioning an isolated apartment on a television screen. This film takes to the skies for the early parts of this feature, before touching down in a creepy luggage hangar. Released in theatres June 15th, this title is now available on video-on-demand and this horror picture does more than simply put zombies (or zombie-like, if you prefer) on a plane. There is a lot of drama here, some romance and a lot of gory violence. Why stop at giving someone a concussion? The original writers, John Erik Dowdle and Drew Dowdle, return to the sequel and the purpose of this film is to open up the Quarantine universe, to show

the infectious possibilities. Welcome aboard Flight Number 666; this flight is going down! The early moments of the film are used to provide some red herrings. You know an infection is coming, but you will not know the delivery. This gentle teasing at the source of the infection creates for some of the enjoyment, as you, the viewer, are introduced to the cabin crew and passengers. As well, John Pogue keeps the camera inside, so that you feel as the passengers do - claustrophobic. However, the action really gets into high gear, when an infection spreads amongst the characters, forcing the plane downwards. On the ground and in the hangar, the actors get a chance to really get into character, as a virus changes normal folks into rabid, blood thirsty monsters. Bre Blair plays the heroine, Paula, who has a lot to deal with after the flight crew turn into ravenous animals. Her performance as an overwhelmed stewardess creates the believability, which is a consistent tone in Quarantine 2. As well, one of the villains, played by John Cooke, is especially well cast and the writing, from a group of scriptwriters, gives Henry (Cooke) some convincing reasons for spreading a deadly disease. Much of the acting is on par with a first rate film, with a budget much greater than the \$4 million spent here. The Center for Disease Control attempts to inoculate the passengers, when they are in the hangar. This only seems to piss the red-eyed infected off, as they renew their energetic attacks a la 28 Days Later. The deadly and fast acting nature of the virus keeps the pacing of Quarantine 2 ever moving forward at a breathtaking speed. As well, the large cast of minor and major characters are also quickly whittled to only a few. While the film exploits your fears of disease, small spaces and unprovoked violence, the film is generating all the necessary excitement to keep viewers enthralled. Quarantine 2 is an excellent film, that is complex and very enjoyable. The shaky camera does not distract, but the murderous rampage of a few, and then a dozen will create a lot of tension. This film is given the big 28DLA recommend and fans of zombie-like, or disease based thrillers will find a lot to fear in this latest film from Third Street Pictures.

-Michael Allen

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Interview With a Corpse Photographer

By Ryan Dyer, Illustration by Danille Gauvin

"I intend to depict the love and dignity...after being robbed of everything."

Corpse photographer Kiyotaka Tsurisaki, known for his 2001 documentary Orozco the Embalmer, has seen his profession take him across the globe where his camera has captured hundreds of faces of death. The above quotation is a precursor to the aforementioned film, one that depicts Tsurisaki's job first hand, albeit via film rather than single images.

Before this, though, he first pursued the S&M video market for two years, "My all porn works are garbage and not worth introducing" before he began corpse photography in 1994.

"After I began to shoot the dead, I was still associated with the bizarre porn world. Nothing changed. I have pursued extreme expression all along."

He first visited Thailand, "because the people are very sympathetic toward gore sensationalism." Then, knowing Latin-American countries were also understanding, went to Colombia next before going to Mexico and Brazil after wards. After Colombia, he chose

Russia for the same reason.

"Before long, I came to see the necessity to cover the battlefields for variety's sake. In Colombia, I went through the conflict zone automatically and I was led to the Mideast in 2001, soon after 911. I had avoided the popular death fields like India or Aokigahara (the most popular place for suicides in Japan), but I followed up such places in recent years (India since 2006, Aokigahara since 2007.)"

He met Froilan

Orozco in September, 1995 in El Cartucho Columbia, a place of poverty, drugs, violence and desperation. He was impressed by the quick and professional demeanor of the former police officer turned embalmer who worked under the harsh conditions of Columbia while using minimal tools in a confined and unsanitary environment. He decided to make a feature about him where he depicted his simple life and the minimal repetition of embalming. Inspired by mondo films like Mondo Cane, Africa Addio, The Last Savage and Des Morts, he began the three year filming process that would end up being Orozco The Embalmer.

The documentary is a vivid and clinical representation of the daily life of the embalmer, which harkens back to a similar documentary featuring a coroner, Der Weg Nach Eden. Equal part dead body preparation study and look at the city streets of Columbia, Orozco, the film juxtaposes images of life, death and handling the tedious and gruesome act as simple occupation, with Orozco always showing great respect to the subjects, making sure they are properly prepared.

Doing four or five bodies a day, the jobs were usually half an hour. His clients are mainly the poor and his mission as an

Absolute Horror

embalmer is offering minimal service at minimal price for as many bodies as possible. At its cheapest, the cost of Orozco's service is US\$10, the cheapest you could possibly find. The documentary depicts several found bodies as a result of murder or unnatural causes, and with some nefarious causes of death, there were also some shenanigans with some of the bodies after death:

"Once, Orozco packed a body with cocaine or heroine for smuggling to the U.S. at the request of a drug trafficker. On another occasion, he prepared a body elaborately at the request of a necrophile."

Orozco, the consummate professional, never showed emotion about his job within the documentary, besides glimpses of frustration when things don't go as smoothly as he wants, but one has to wonder if there were any instances where the man hesitated to go through with the process in the face of something grisly.

"Without fail, he was cool, but not hesitant. No doubt, his job is everything in life. He had almost never rejected a job."

In the future, Tsurisaki has a new creative documentary film in the works. A video collage of the materials shot at the edges of the world including the footage of the Eastern Japan Megaquake.

With a profession that brings him so close to the deceased on a daily occurrence, Tsurisaki's view of life and death must be altered from before he started the macabre occupation. "Corpses in the scenes sometimes speak much about who they really were, because the secrets of their lives can't be kept any longer. As I followed my career, I came to think the moment of death is equivalent to the term of life. Life should be lived for the best death, and death is neither meaningless nor void."



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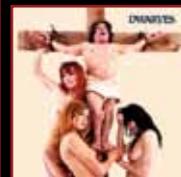
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Absolute Album Reviews

The Black Dahlia Murder – Ritual Metal Blade Records

Misconception: a common fault with Black Dahlia Murder albums is the similarity in songwriting (more at the Gates recycled riffs over blast beats? Oh goody). Reality: that was a fault with Unhallowed; one they've been improving upon over the years and this time around that statement is merely a laughable ghost of a remark. You simply cannot deny the diverse and concise songwriting displayed over 40+ minutes of death metal mayhem. Of course their patented technically enhanced Gothenburg death metal sound is still prevalent and intact, but now they're striving for bigger and better things, pulling out some tricks you'd never expect to hear on say, Miasma. Check out the Decapitated-esque grooves on "Malenchantment of the Necrosphere", the quiet piano led sections of "Carbonized in Cruciform", and "Den of the Picquerist" is damn near a hardcore punk song. Ultimately this is a thoroughly, and I mean thoroughly enjoyable album, and quite possibly the best record of the year.

-Simon Millington

Christian Muenzer - Time Warp Independent

His first album as a guitar instrumentalist, Christian Muenzer's Time Warp proves to be an enjoyable trip through various notable eras in shredder history. The current axe wielder for Obscura demonstrates early on that he has plenty of soaring leads left over from his day job in one of Death Metals most promising acts. Album opener "Maybe Tomorrow" starts off with a Yngwie like feel, full off neo-classical glory and then bleeds into more complex melodic patterns that are accentuated with Vai given talent heard with the expert use of highly technical harmonized whammy bar passages. Muenzer's liquid finger approach to sweep arpeggio's have long been the focal point of his complex lead style. On this outing however, a much larger array of techniques are put to great use in that they function like added roller coaster rides at a horror themed amusement park. But for me it is still the sweeps that stand out the most as they seem to rise and fall with such precision that I am amongst the many who question whether Muenzer is human. With backing musicians like Hannes Grossman on drums and Steve DiGiorgio on bass, Muenzers trip through the six string time continuum are equally backed up making this a well rounded listen that's just as rockin' as it is jaw dropping.

-Dan Potter

Gastric Acid – The Satirical Skunk Independent

Take Choking Victim, replace the angry lyrics with raunchy yet light-hearted skatepunk humour, add a funky bass line or two, and you've got Gastric Acid's debut album. Gastric Acid's lyrical content can take you to strange places, with song titles like "Sun Shining Down on My Bong", "Optimus Prime Minister", and "Transylvanian Transexual", and you may find yourself singing "You're just so god-damn-fucking difficult!" or "She was a man/ A really fucking beautiful man!" after listening to some of the hooks in this album. The Satirical Skunk is sure to be a new favourite soundtrack to have a session to. One track that stands out in the album is "Sweep it Under the Rug", an anti-child-abuse anthem, which is certainly heavy on its own, but can't sink into The Satirical Skunk's shallow themes. That being said, Gastric Acid lacks a concise sound, and the album can take sharp turns that are hard to follow. The Satirical Skunk is a noble attempt with a few problems, which is to be expected in a debut, that hopefully won't cause anyone to ignore this album.

- Drew McLachlan

Growler – E-Z Loader Absolute Underground Records

"Oil/Jimmy!/You've been a bad dog!" These are the opening lyrics to Growler's debut full-length album E-Z Loader. But wait, it only gets better! The track "Coldest Gravy" hits listeners with the hook: "She was a girl that was really low/ She was the world's best stripper that I ever saw, my lawd." E-Z Loader is unapologetic, self-deprecating cock-rock; and it will put a shit eating grin on your face. With song titles like "I'm Your Bastard" and "The Day That Dio Died", what else could you expect? On top of the ball-dropping lyrics, are a generous amount of panty-dropping guitar solos, signature to the genre, liberally scattered through each song. Whether you're a closet lover or an open hater of bands like AC/DC and Nickelback, you will no doubt get a kick out of Growler's all too self-aware brand of cock-rock. And as overtly cheesy these songs are, you can't help but gently bang your head, most likely while wearing that shit eating grin.

-Drew McLachlan

KEN Mode - Venerable Profound Lore Records

With a band name being an acronym for "Kill Everyone Now" lifted from a Henry Rollins book, you'd expect to be barraged by sound-waves, distortion and maniacal screams. That's precisely what you get with this Winnipeg Trio. For lack of a better word, this Noise Rock band have been shredding for quite some time now, this being their 4th full length release despite playing together since 1999. Venerable takes the listener on a journey into the depths of madness. Jesse Matthewson has a range of soft, almost trance like vocals layered all the way to piercing screams. A frenetic display on the fret board of his guitar is being put on display here, almost as if he were putting on a clinic. The bass gets into your bones and rattles your teeth & is in staunch contrast to the stripped down drumming. I'm determined that when siblings play in bands together they have an unbreakable mind meld going on and are perfectly in sync with each other. They are deserved of the hype they are garnering, and their upcoming spots on giant tours like Hellfest in France & SXSW in Texas are long overdue.

-Pauly Hardcore

Likely Rads – Legends In Denim Independent

The Likely Rads are the self-proclaimed best band in Vancouver and they have released a brand new tape. It is clearly a CD, but their insistence to referring to it as tape had me attempting to play it in my tape player. Things went horribly wrong. After days of scratching my head and repeatedly hitting the play button as hard as I could I decided it was high time to put this CD in the CD player. What a row! They play fast, they yell, and drums are hit hard. Anger and hate are not spit from the mouth of Professor No Pants (self-proclaimed best singer in the city) but more so fun and lyrics about love and soft little bunnies and stuff. Professor No Pants is the self-proclaimed best lyricist in all of the city, but the undeclared best stripper, hence the name No Pants. Insanely enough the Likely Rads also have the self-proclaimed best guitarist in the city. His name is Burger because he loves to eat hot dogs. And they have a drummer, but he is a dumb one. Oh no wait, that's Adam. Sorry, I read that wrong. Anyway this CD is awesome, find it, but don't put it in your tape player.

-Chops Pabish

Marduk - Iron Age Regain Records

When Marduk enlisted Funeral Mist mainman Mortuus the quality of their material took another step forward with more depth and doom to go with their already well known speed tactics. Releases such as Rom 5:12 and Wormwood have had a large dose of something far more menacing than just the blast everything in sight that showcased their best work from the nineties. The band however does take a step back into the past with their new stop gap release Iron Age. With a sound that harkens back to their Panzer Division days, Marduk absolutely light up all comers with blazing blasts mixed with well orchestrated war sounds and samples in Warschau 2: Headhunter Halfmoon and Wacht am Rhein: Drumbeats of Death. It is very interesting how the band uses the war sounds as a fifth instrument weaving them in time with the guitar and drum trade offs. Both songs are fast, tight and classic Marduk speed. The third and final song, Prochorovka: Blood and Sunflowers offers more variety than the first two with a slow plodding riff that works with the simple and almost electronic drum beat. As the song fades out you are left wanting more which means Marduk has done their job.

-Jordan Schritt

The Mutated Earthlings – The Mutated Earthlings Absolute Underground Records

The Mutated Earthlings' self-titled album is the solo effort of Victoria, BC's Blind Marc. Yes, he's actually blind, and yes, he plays all the instruments himself. This 11-track record chronicles Blind Marc's attempt to cope with his condition, and is told through soulful disco-inspired ballads, and lengthy technical power-pop guitar solos. Just kidding – thank God – Blind Marc is a veteran of the Victoria punk scene, and has been playing in bands since the age of 16. The album opens with the drum-pounding, background-chanting "2012", a satirical perspective of our generation's latest conspiracy theory. "Build a Bridge" expresses frustration with living on Vancouver Island and subsequently having to deal with BC Ferries, something every Vancouver Islander can relate to. The song that truly stands out in this album however, is "Swearwords in Braille". The lyrics are sung in (you guessed it) Braille, and consists only of (you guessed it) swearwords. The CD even comes with a handy Braille chart that can be used to decode it. The many dots sung in this song are accompanied by several lazy guitar solos that, not despite of, but because of their slow pace and squelched notes, cause them to shine through as uniquely satisfying hooks. The Mutated Earthlings self-titled album is best describes as good, simple punk rock. And while it may not contain the most original of tunes, certain songs truly showcase Blind Marc's personality and uniqueness as a songwriter, keeping the lyrics relevant to our time and place, and keeping the listener coming back for more.

- Drew McLachlan

No Eulogy – Self Titled Independent/Black Raven/No One's Ark

<http://noeulogy.bandcamp.com/>

Clocking it at around 30 minutes, it is likely the "heaviest for the sake of being heavy" record I've heard all year. Though various incarnations of this band have been around for years playing within a few different genres, I believe they have nailed down a sound that distinctly represents everyone involved. No Eulogy play, in essence, crust metal which walks a line amongst various sub-genres, like doom, d-beat, grind etc without fitting in with any of them. The guttural lead vocals pair incredibly well with the shrieking howl of the backups throughout the 7 tracks of blisteringly fast drumming and absolutely screaming guitar solo's. My 2 favourite's are back to back bangers – their shortest song coming in at :53 "JAFP" completely destroys eardrums and finishes with the line "I hope its you, staring down the barrel of a fucking gun" and then swiftly transitions into one of their longest at over 6 and a half minutes displaying their drummer's propensity to go from lightning fast to droning beats seamlessly. This self titled LP is a damn impressive first release and is getting the proper Vinyl treatment; snap one of these up if you are in need of a soundtrack to destroy your current surroundings or just in need of a vessel for your rage.

-Pauly Hardcore

Pour Habit – Got Your Back Fat Wreck Chords

Pour Habit are a pop/punk four piece from Compton, CA. Their second album, Got Your Back, features some outstanding pop punk melded with metal, plus a couple catchy reggae numbers, "Party", and "Conscience Mind of Revelation". The first two tracks definitely hold up the metal end of the spectrum the most, "Dead Soldiers Bay", and "Heads of State", with the rest of the album having a more punk dynamic. Lyrically Pour Habit isn't necessarily touching on anything new, but they do provide their own twist. "Heads of State" sees the songwriter, or songwriters writing an anti-war song, and yet switching themselves into the role of the right wing tyrant character within it. A lot of the songs touch on darker subjects such as war, addiction, and depression. The catchiest one is simply entitled, "Party", and is all about having a good time getting drunk, though this can easily be seen as a dark subject in itself. Pour Habit, like many pop punkers before them, have no trouble writing catchy upbeat songs, while serving to remind us that not everything is sunshine and lollipops.

-Chuck Wurley

Screeching Weasel – First World Manifesto

Fat Wreck Chords

This is the first Screeching Weasel album in quite a few years, and the first ever, without founding guitarist John Jughead. Though Ben Weasel does manage to recruit long time guitarist Danny Vapid, and the guitar tone and style is much the same as any other Screeching Weasel

album (many of which Vapid played on). It is a fairly typical album in the Ramones/Weasel/Queers vein. There are some sappy love songs such as "Dry Is the Desert", some angrier ones, "Totem Pole", and there is a song that just plain makes fun of everyone, from rednecks, to hipsters and from the stupid to the well educated, "Come And See The Violence Inherent In The System". First World Manifesto isn't bad; in fact it is quite good. But I question whether, after so many brilliant albums, this isn't just Mr. Weasel's way of completing a list of what fans want on a Screeching Weasel album. That being said, the album does open taking a stab at punks of today, "Follow Your Leaders", and closes on much the same note, "Little Big Man". So he even if he is simply trying to cash in, at least he is still making fun of those he makes his money from!

-Chuck Wurley

Sepultura - Kairos Nuclear Blast

Sepultura hasn't had it easy. They've been wildly criticized for carrying the name Sepultura since Max Cavalera left and have had a good portion of their fanbase go M.I.A. in the last decade. Things got even worse when Igor Cavalera jumped ship to rejoin his brother Max in The Cavalera Conspiracy. But, Sepultura have soldiered on and released two very fine albums without the brothers in 2008's A-Lex and now their Nuclear Blast debut, Kairos. Spectrum opens the album with a repetitive down picked riff that has a subtle but catchy progression that acts as more of a "Whats to come..." then a full out execution of any overall album feel. The title cut and Relentless follow with both carrying strong riffs and tribal drumming that have great flow and dynamics. Following this is a brief interlude followed by a cover of Ministry's Just One Fix that almost leaves the listener wondering why the band would put a cover smack dab in the middle of their label branded "comeback". Strange, but the cover is tolerable so you move on. Other highlights on the album include the thrashfests that are Seethe and No One Will Stand. The album closes with more interludes, covers (this one being Prodigy's Firestarter?) and original material. With such strong songs in between all the side turns, you would think the band would maybe just trim the fat and deliver a solid meat and potatoes album. As far as the real songs go, most are top notch new era Sepultura mixed with a large dose of the past. Though I personally refer to Dante XXI as the bands best work with Greene, Kairos is a solid album that should be able to please all fans of Sepultura whether it be new or old.

-Jordan Schritt

The Strugglers – Astra-Per-Aspera Independent

The Strugglers' band name is a façade. Yes they may all be over the hill punk rockers, but musically they don't seem to be struggling at all. These 40 something's are kicking out the jams in a big way! But did I mention they were old? These guys aren't just over the hill, they're rolling down the other

side. When you go to a Strugglers show the ladies don't throw their underwear on the stage, they throw depends. This is old school punk rock, emphasis on the old, and if you don't believe me the album even has covers of The Misfits and Bad Brains on it. If you ever wind up becoming as old as these guys and you're able to rock half as hard, you better thank your lucky stars. But I'd advise you not to try and keep up with them, unless you bring a second liver along. If I hadn't have already mentioned 6 times in this review that The Strugglers are all a bunch of old farts you never would have been able to tell just by listening to the record. In my experience, aging punk rockers seem to know the game the best.

-Chops Pabish

The Vicious Cycles – The Strange and Terrible Saga Of...

Independent

The Vicious Cycles are a motorcycle themed band from Vancouver; they are also their own motorcycle club. This album starts off with a shout out to motorcycle greats of the past, then bounds quickly into, "Born Wild", a great rock n' roll portion of their fanbase go M.I.A. in the last decade. Things got even worse when Igor Cavalera jumped ship to rejoin his brother Max in The Cavalera Conspiracy. But, Sepultura have soldiered on and released two very fine albums without the brothers in 2008's A-Lex and now their Nuclear Blast debut, Kairos. Spectrum opens the album with a repetitive down picked riff that has a subtle but catchy progression that acts as more of a "Whats to come..." then a full out execution of any overall album feel. The title cut and Relentless follow with both carrying strong riffs and tribal drumming that have great flow and dynamics. Following this is a brief interlude followed by a cover of Ministry's Just One Fix that almost leaves the listener wondering why the band would put a cover smack dab in the middle of their label branded "comeback". Strange, but the cover is tolerable so you move on. Other highlights on the album include the thrashfests that are Seethe and No One Will Stand. The album closes with more interludes, covers (this one being Prodigy's Firestarter?) and original material. With such strong songs in between all the side turns, you would think the band would maybe just trim the fat and deliver a solid meat and potatoes album. As far as the real songs go, most are top notch new era Sepultura mixed with a large dose of the past. Though I personally refer to Dante XXI as the bands best work with Greene, Kairos is a solid album that should be able to please all fans of Sepultura whether it be new or old.

-Chuck Wurley

Withdrawal - Faith, Flesh & Blood A389 Records

Winnipeg generates angry, pissed off hardcore. This is what I have been able to determine from the plethora of releases to come across my table from the 'peg. It may be the prairie winds and dump truck loads of snow they get that keeps them locked inside, being angry at the world and mother nature – or it may just be that there ain't a whole lot to get happy about down there. Regardless, I'm thankful for the rage that burns inside Adam Dyson & co. that drive them to produce such concise sonic assaults. Opening with Shapeshifter, a particularly scathing track that addresses an ongoing feud [gotta love call-out songs & retorts] and with the addition of some new musicians, completely opens up their sound, even incorporating some incredibly bad-ass dive bombs. The band is quite talented in conveying mood and atmosphere, making the listener feel as though panic and fear are setting in. This band is backed hard, do everything in your might to buy this 7"

-Pauly Hardcore

The Dirtbags/ Mighty Heroes/ Zero Cool

May 14, DV8, Edmonton AB,

Since I moved to Edmonton and got involved with DV8 Tavern, Tavis has always been around. Tavis is an all around good dude, and back in the mid 90's he was the frontman for L.A.M.S. which was a very rad band in these parts back then. I missed a lot of historic band stuff around Edmonton in my travellin' days (My idea of taking an Alberta Break was trying to get as far away from it as I could manage, for as long as I could) but long story short I had heard good stuff about L.A.M.S. from living here and was lucky enough to stumble across a copy of "We Want Your Beer" on CD at the great Freecloud Records. I dug the CD right away, and when I showed it to Tavis he was amazed that I had come across it...apparently not a whole lot of the CD's were made, and with the cover and the whole sha-bang intact it was a good score. I think after attending many a DV8 show, the stage was starting to beckon him...Tav had mentioned starting a brand new band a few times, and totally understanding the ins and outs of band withdrawal I was pleased to hear that he did in fact have something, and something big. Mighty Heroes was assembled to do a one off L.A.M.S. set at DV8 and the response was massive, looking around the room I could tell that even though I missed the L.A.M.S. era that band meant a whole lot to a whole lotta people, there was smoke...there were lasers, and a whole lotta good memories for everybody. Zero Cool was a great opener for the show, and are usually on the scene in most of my articles because they are a great local band and in my opinion a great addition to any punk show...in short Z.C. is a very talented young bunch and shows a lot of 80's punk influence, they have a lot of cool originals, and when they do play a cover it's something classy - like "Six Pack" or "Sonic Reducer". Headlining the show was The Dirtbags, who also have quite a legacy here in Edmonton...The Dirtbags are another band that I kinda missed out on back in the day but when they hit the stage, usually on pretty good bills with Dayglo ect...in bigger rooms you can tell they are also an important chunk of the then and now Edmonton Punk scene, no to mention a lot of fun live. And like most bands I am accustomed to seeing in bigger venues, you can't beat the energy generated by a big show in a smaller room, that's how it all began, is it not?

-Rod Rookers.

Sepultura/Hate/Keep of Kalessin/ Neuraxis

**May 28, Macewan Hall Ballroom,
Calgary AB**

The tour which previously featured Bonded by Blood and Nevermore, now in its castrated version featuring a bundle of bands who seem to be on every Nuclear Blast tour (Hate, Keep of Kalessin) rolled into Calgary for one of the last stops on its journey. With some fresh Canadian t-shirts conveniently missing the date in question, the band who call themselves Sepultura were fighting for the attention of metal heads who were either at this show or Anvil just a few train stops away. Anyone who has had a longstanding love for the Brazilian thrash act and has already (or maybe hasn't) seen the Max bands would owe it to themselves to check out Sepultura. Yeah, they sound a little different, but in live form and with half the set list featuring classic tracks (and two more added tonight for the absent opening acts) you cannot defy the band's professionalism and power. Arise and Refuse/Resist opened the show with a bang as a smoke screen on stage had the members looking like they were wielding weaponry instead of instruments in a full scale riot. Choke from Against, Convicted in Life from Dante XXI, two new tracks from Kairos and a few from A-Lex bridged the new/old gap, though it's not like any of these songs were disappointing; the energy of the Green songs matched up with the classic tracks, and even Ratamahatta a song that some easily dismiss, sounded mind blowing with the additional tribal drums played by the lumbering vocalist. Opening act KOK making great strides in songwriting and performance to show they should have had second billing, Hate is worth mentioning for the bassist's blackened pelvic thrusts and the neuro-mechanical surge of Neuraxis is like the fancy crab meat on a cracker that you don't want to fill yourself up with before the entree.

-Ryan D

Bison/Hightower/Haggatha/Black Wizard

**June 18, Rickshaw Theatre,
Vancouver BC**

I made sure to arrive early in order to avoid the long line-ups I usually encounter at Rickshaw shows. I'm glad I did. The combination of an anniversary party, a bunch of great bands and a five dollar cover resulted in a sizable crowd. Between the staff and a couple of other birthdays, there were a lot of party hats around. Black Wizard played a heavy, noodly and seemingly short set to a full house. Haggatha killed the momentum that had been built up with their slow, sludgy doom style. The drummer had the most

energy and actually seemed out of place for it. They played well together and sounded good, but it was just too boring for me. I think I would enjoy them more as an opening band. Apparently Bison was running late. They were "in the bathroom" we were told. To fill time Hightower, from San Francisco, played an all too brief, energetic three songs. This woke the crowd back up, got them moving and resulted in the first pit of the night. This was the first band I've seen with an air drummer right behind the actual drummer. Very entertaining. Keep an eye out for these guys. Bison emerged from "the bathroom" to an extremely welcoming hometown audience. Until this night, I had never realized that Bison and Haggatha share a drummer. His intensity was matched here and did not go to waste. Nice to see. I've seen Bison a lot over the years and I would have to say this was their best performance. They played harder than ever before with their Sabbath-influenced riffs and a nice mix of songs. If you haven't seen them live yet, you really ought to. They are easily one of Vancouver's top bands. One of the highlights of the evening was seeing the balloons that had been hanging over our heads all night finally unleashed. Blue and pink balloons tumbled down to be burst in time with the thundering drums. Much fun was had by all. Thanks to the Rickshaw. Here's to year three!

-Andrew Clark

Dayglo Abortions/RedD Monkey June 22, DV8, Edmonton AB

This is the kinda stuff that keeps me putting on shows...You never know when a big fish like the legendary Dayglo Abortions might be in a pinch and you just might be able to make the difference between somebody's tour working out for them or being a bust. Basically Dayglo got screwed over at a border somewhere in the the states and it was a case of them going home or trying to re route their tour somehow. Chris from Inner City Merch / Revolver Records got in contact with me and asked if I could throw them on on a Wednesday night, and I had been plugging away trying to find a band to play with Toronto's RedD Monkey who had booked months prior to this development and had no luck trying to round up a local band to back them up. I do the bulk of my advertising / promoting on facebook, and no matter what the fuck people say about using facebook to promote shows it does work, and people do pay attention.. in 2 days I had over 120 people stoked about seeing Dayglo on the DV8 stage. I always tell people that it's what you are pushing and not how hard you are pushing

it - there are countless bands that I have thrown up there months in advance with little or no interest on the event page, (a shit load of bands won't even take the time to invite their friends, leaving us to soak up the losses at the end of the night) but something like Dayglo is a sure fire success because they have done their time and built a massive following in their 30 + year career. They made more then double on the show then they were expecting and told me after the gig that it pretty much put them back in the positive as far as the cost of driving out here ect. A couple of things that made this one extra awesome was for one...it was the smallest room they had played in Edmonton probably in years, and Dayglo Veteran Mike Jakk was playing with them because he lives right here in town. RedD Monkey is not exactly the type of band one would expect to be opening for a band like Dayglo, but they were well received by the crowd and I skirted around adding any more bands who would have liked to have opening for Dayglo on their resume purposely for the simple fact that on a weekday, who the hell wants to sit through 2 or 3 bands they see all the time before the main event, especially if they have to work the next day...It might be on another weekday somewhere in the near distant future, or maybe even on a weekend but I am pretty sure the Dayglos will be back at DV8 for another memorable piss up down the road.

-Rod Rookers

Dropkick Murphys/Chuck Ragan/ Parkington Sisters

**June 23, Macewan Hall, Calgary
AB**

The recent spike in The Dropkick Murphys' widespread popularity can be attributed to hard-work, talent, a unique musical style and unadorned luck. Their music has been featured at MLB games, in Hollywood Blockbusters and in the latest instalments of Guitar Hero. DKM are presently touring their "Going Out in Style" album worldwide to passionate crowds of jumping, stomping, elbow throwing supporters. Most notably, live performances now boast impressive lighting techniques, Irish-style dancers and a set design that demonstrates their prevalent status as a profitable touring band. DKM's distinctive sound uses uncommon instruments such as bagpipes, bodhran, accordion and mandolin, to name a few, and integrates them into a Celtic post-punk treat for the soul. After about 15 years of resourceful music and ball breaking energy, they may be trying to tell us something with an album named "Going Out in Style." Something we don't want to know. The DKM have made an unadulterated impact

on music of the 21st century, as well as set a benchmark for other bands with Celtic influences. If they do decide to throw in the towel anytime soon, DKM will be leaving an undeniable void in rock and roll.

- Pam Ouellette

The Golvers/Zuckuss/Tarantuja/ Messiahlator

June 24, DV8, Edmonton AB

Mr Plow hooked me up with the Golvers and things were looking good from day one. The plan was to try and get Tarantuja on the bill with them and I figured throwing in Messiahlator was a no brainer because both of these locals always rip it up and always bring out everybody I like to see at a DV8 show. Shortly after putting things together Tyson from Filthy Mcnasty's messaged me about booking The Golvers the Monday before our show, and I figured that was cool with us providing I could get Mortillery on the bill with them because Alex had messaged me hoping to get in on the DV8 show, being a big Golvers Fan. Not knowing much about The Golvers other then seeing them on a poster or 2 once in a while when I was out postering, the first thing I heard through the grapevine about them was what a nice of guys they were, and when they rolled out the van that was the first impression I had of them. What was majorly fucked up though, was after their Monday show at Filthys they were involved in a head on collision with somebody who was driving straight at them in the wrong lane, totalling their Van - it was actually Mortillery's van that they showed up in. The way motor vehicle accidents go...that could have it for those guys, but luckily the Metal Gods intervened and they lived to tell the tale. The show was great, the sound was great and The Golvers and Zuckuss were able to make a good bit of cash through merch sales and the support of Messiahlator and Tarantuja, who were willing to waive their earnings to help The Golvers to get back on the road, and back home. Sales were better then average, and once again Edmonton's Metal and Punk community was able to catch another big act in a smaller room, which makes for a much more intimate and memorable event for show goers and bands alike. I am looking forward to working with these fine folks again sometime soon.

- Rod Rookers.

Children of Bodom/Devin Townsend/Obscura/Septic Flesh June 30, Macewan Hall Ballroom, Calgary AB

You only need to look to your right to see a couple of mop-head saplings rocking out to eedled 24/7 to know that it was back to the all ages standard at the Macewan Hall Ballroom after the changeup for Sepultura which allowed people to drink while watching the band. That was good while it lasted, but here we are for an all star and much talked about lineup of openers Septic Flesh, musicians' wet dream Obscura, Canadian cult god Devin Townsend and heart throbb reckless rifiers Children of Bodom. Ask different members of the audience and they will all state they were there for a different artist. I will not hide the fact that I was there strictly for Devin, who only played for 30 minutes anyway. Better to leave em wanting more though. The critically acclaimed Septic Flesh brought an H.R Giger esque stage display. Microphone stands bent in twisted demonically symbolic shapes. Songs from The Great Mass and Communion are intoxicating experiences live. This opening slot, much like the later Obscura and Devin Townsend band, could easily turn into a headlining tour, which speaks for the controversy on the order of the bands, though we all know Bodom has the fan base (somebody said training bra metal and I will not entirely disagree). Obscura, who were through town before with Cannibal Corpse, were obviously the most technically proficient act of the night, catering to the 100 note per second junkies. Hevy Devy took to the stage in a sudden fashion, first telling the audience that he was in good mood and it showed as he thrust his guitar like a phallus, wore a bra on his head and a Christmas wreath around his body. With a catalogue so vast, 30 minutes seemed like a near insult. Good thing I caught those SYL shows back in the day. While I find most of COB's material to be rather predictable (you know you will get keyboard/guitar duelling solos, shrieked, Mustainish lyrics and a lite black metal vibe in every song), their performance was still interesting enough to keep me intrigued - if not reckless, relentless and redundant as it wore on. There was no half car, fire or weenie roast like in their live DVD; they were all skillful business and said "fuuackak a lot". Worthy of recognition, but really just a one trick pony. It was not a silent night, it was a Bodom night; without the other bands, it may have been a boring night.

- R Dyer

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Calgary Comic & Entertainment Expo
June 17-19 2011,
BMO Centre, Calgary AB

Featuring appearances by Doug Bradley, Linda Blair, Elvira, William Shatner and around 100 other thespians, artists, directors and vendors from around the globe, the Calgary Comic and Entertainment Expo has something for every nerd across the board. She Hulks, Black Cats, Avatar bitches, Wonder Womans, Silk Spectres, and Poison Ivy could also be seen walking around, which made the fest perfect for every nerd fantasy as well. Furrries strutted about getting sweaty and smelling like un-bathed animals, geeks with swords posed for extra long photo sessions (just to get their namesake's pose perfect) and noble nerds kissed palms and acted gentlemanly while vendors sold you whatever your adamantium plated heart desired, be it Star Wars comics, Star Wars figures, Star Wars games, or Star Wars Princess Leia sex outfits.



from the response to his Trek co-star last year. In various rooms, panels took place, with one Diamond Dallas Page promoting his website and telling tales of Randy Savage during one, and how to do cosplay in another.

This leads us into the Macabre Masquerade, taking place the Friday night. Elvira introduced a demure Doug Bradley who proceeded to read "The Monkey's Paw" as a life size pinhead statue loomed in the corner as a reminder of the man's perversion. It was somehow

more perverse to see Doug in a white cowboy hat which was bestowed upon him after the reading. First Ozzy, now Pinhead. Dead Alive was simultaneously being screened by Burning Moon

Video at the Plaza theatre, which may have been less silly. Saturday saw more of the same with panels by the creators of ReBoot, the director of The Dead Mile and another white hat infection, this time on Shatner. Zuckuss performed that night at Lord Nelson's, and I am surprised that more Star Wars fans didn't attend a show by a STAR WARS METAL BAND. Yeah, so they're porno grind, which is not very accessible, but the spirit is there, dorks. Sunday wrapped up the expo, which saw more panels, a roller derby game pitting superheroes vs zombies, and gave everyone that last minute shopping

opportunity to get that \$100 vintage Freddy Kreuger doll (maybe next year...). The flea market of nerdism closed for another year. but alas, the fleas did not leave this consumer.

-Dark Beast



Starting on Friday and running for the extent of the weekend, there was lots to witness in the large nerd flea market, depending on your interests. Autograph signings went on throughout the day, with Shatner at times on Friday having nearly no one in line, a surprise

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HOROSCOPES

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

ARIES

August holds opportunities for you to express yourself creatively and to play. You have been getting all kinds of fresh ideas. You can expect to get noticed. Just be aware of a tendency to spend too much money. Yes, you may feel the need to invest in some self promotion, but it is more about the people with whom you connect, than the cash you spend. Latter August and into September has an emphasis upon work and career. You can move up quickly, but do not be disappointed if this happens in stages. Those who love you will encourage you.



Taurus

Through most of August you have to contend with obligations to family and others who rely upon you. Your career may get neglected, but you can cast a spell on your boss to see you in a charmed light. You can line up some exciting social connections, but your time is not your own until August 23rd. After that you find time to play and do some things just for fun. You need to party Labour Day w/e. August 25th has a watch out at work thing that perks up. From September 23rd you will be getting it done and back in bosses' good books.



GEMINI

Through most of this year you have inner power reserves and confidence. Yet, this can have you trying to do too much. Don't make too many promises. Your ruling planet, Mercury, is retrograde most of August, which has you going over old ground, catching up. Early August holds an opportunity to make positive career steps, which may lead to further training. But changes won't be seen until into September. Your ideas will be heard on and several days after the Full Moon August 13th. In September simplify and build security and comfort. You are moving into playtime.



CANCER

Your energy is up and you are motivated to make more money. The Full Moon August 13th reveals your credit status as a mystery. Do what you can to clear it up as the month progresses. Are you being enticed? Don't be a sucker, financially or sexually. A Red Flag alert to those born June 27-29: try not to react to trouble with career or a partner around August 10th. Seethe and plot instead. September is more relaxed with social activities and the support of friends. Growing responsibilities for family and home life get burdensome, yet support is on its way.



LEO

You are summoning up your formidable strength of will to tie the loose ends of your life together. It is not until mid-September that you really start to get it together, but start in August around the Full Moon on the 13th. A romance may beckon and provide some inspiration, but the opportunity is fleeting. You are not finding your motivation in a flirtation. How about some actual solid goals involving career, creativity, learning, or travel? It may seem mundane, but fulfillment comes through the practical stuff this summer, such as making money, improving work routines, a regimen to improve health, and career development.



VIRGO

Do what you can to stabilize fluctuating work and/or health issues. Positive and healthy routines keep you grounded while Mercury is retrograde through August. This is a period of inner reflection and reassessment of beliefs. You are airing out some inner and outer closets. Organizing and simplifying on the outside will help tidy up on the inside. Friendships heat up, with some expecting more from you and others wanting you to butt out. Put some of this energy into social action or a righteous cause. New goals are forming out of dreams and a desire for greater creative expression.



LIBRA

Take on a larger role in your community and amongst friends as the opportunities present themselves. Your talents are needed and appreciated. Even the most hedonistic Libra will rise to the challenge of some responsibility. Some of these responsibilities come from your career, which wants more of your energy for August and half of September. You are learning how to procrastinate less by being in the moment and taking action, rather than thinking about what to do. "Just keep swimming". Wielding power becomes you. If you don't someone less caring and thoughtful will. A decisive Libra? Weird.



SCORPIO

Your career is requires your focus because there are opportunities to seize. Rehearse your spiel because you are being noticed and heard. Meanwhile a domestic or family issue resurfaces. See it as another chance to improve things. Is a partner being stubborn or a stabilizing influence? They prove to be sincere and you will appreciate the support. Into September challenges are looked after. Friends can help here. And you can think about expanding your personal horizons with travel or learning. It is never too late for new dreams and goals, and there is solid support still with you..



SAGITTARIUS

These hot summer days are when Sagies daydream of distant locals and exotic adventures. This year you are putting more thought and energy into forming these daydreams into actual goals and plans. The stuff that can make these happen is in your control. Starting now and into next year the work, money, and wherewithal is in your grasp. Don't piss away opportunities because they aren't immediately perfect. Even if your career is just a means to other ends, it requires your focused energy into September. Effort is rewarded. As October nears you are leading a capable team with your vision.



CAPRICORN

There is an extra intensity to your closest relationships these days. Some ups and downs are inevitable, yet you can bring stability into them with a commitment to more power sharing. Usually this means coming across with more money and/or sex. As a Capricorn, you don't like making big promises because you keep them. Expect your career to be a bit of a burden for awhile and stable. It is well into next year when all bets are off and you make big changes in your personal and professional life. Through September creative projects develop quickly due to opportunities and your own inspiration.



AQUARIUS

A close relationship has attracted your attention big time. To the point where you are second guessing yourself and thinking too much about how to respond and interact. Beware that you are not trying too hard to the point where you are not being honest with yourself. At the same time work requires more energy and caution. Don't hurt yourself, or your reputation. Be Mr. or Ms. Reliable. In latter August and into September you see the significance of relationship changes and how they impact your home life and finances. This get real phase will spur an uncharacteristic emotional response of elation or upset.



PISCES

The Leo-Aquarius Full Moon is on August 13th this year. This marks a time when you are plunged into the familiar deep waters of your psyche. This year your spiritual journey is charmed with more than the usual love and understanding. Take notes because you may be dredging up some fabulous Jungian inspiration for a big creative project. Meanwhile, some not so fresh ideas find fresh support at work. You are able to improve your physical and mental well-being with some resurrected positive habits and routines. Into September communicate to find significant support amongst friends, associates, and with a partner.



David Zunker is an Astrologer, Tarot Card Reader, and occult guy in Victoria, who does readings and classes.

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Sex Column XXX

T&A with Dr. J
Featuring queen of the scene, Wendythirteen

Dr. J: How many times did you get laid inside the Cobalt? What's the craziest sexual experience you had behind those doors?

Wendythirteen: THE FIRST TIME WAS WITH MY THEN PARTNER JLEB... WE GOT CAUGHT BY AN EMPLOYEE..... THIS LITTLE OLD LADY ACCOUNTANT... AFTER THAT THERE WERE A FEW TIMES.... ALWAYS VERTICAL POSITIONS AS THERE WAS NO WAY MY BARE SKIN WAS TOUCHING THAT FLOOR.... MOSTLY HEAVY DUTY MAKEOUT SESHES...

Dr. J: What's your craziest fantasy?

Wendythirteen: WEAPONS LIKE KNIVES AND SPEARS... FUR... BLOOD... RAW MEAT..... NEXT TO A COLD GLACIER LAKE... AND A FIRE ROARING OF COURSE...

Dr. J: What's the craziest thing you've done in bed?

Wendythirteen: THAT WOULD BE YEARS AGO... WHEN I HAD A SUPER ADVENTUROUS PARTNER... R.I.P.... LET'S JUST SAY HOT WAX DRIPPING FROM CANDLES AND INCANTATIONS ABOUNDED...

Dr. J: Who are the top three people on your "I want to fuck one day" list?

Wendythirteen: THEY WOULD BE REASONABLE FACSIMILES FROM BOOKS OR MOVIES I GUESS... TO TANGIBLE HUMANS WITH NAMES CURRENTLY... RARRRRRR....

- A CONAN OR DOTHRAKI TYPE WARRIOR

- JONDALAR FROM THE CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR SERIES

- A SPARTACUS ERA GLADIATOR

Dr. J: What's your favourite position?

Wendythirteen: IM A FAN OF MOST POSITIONS...

Dr. J: As far as freaky fetishes go, where do you draw the line?

Wendythirteen: ANYTHING THAT ENTAILS POSSIBLE DEATH IS NOT A TURNON, IE STRANGULATION OR BLOODLETING.... NOT INTO BEING TIED UP EITHER...BOTHERS MY PSYCHE IF IM NOT IN CONTROL TO KICK THE SHIT OUTTA SOMEONE IF THEY FUCK WITH ME...UNLESS I TOTALLY TRUSTED THE PERSON...

Dr. J: Absolutely! The thing about choking games is you're trying to cut off the blood supply, not the air supply. If she's turning purple you're doing it wrong. You should still be able to breathe, and get that dizzy head rush thing at the same time. I actually thought about doing one of my columns about this. People need to know! Only one guy that's tried it on me has ever done it properly. And yeah, unless there's trust there it can be a pretty bad experience. I'm pretty wary of handing my power over to someone like that.

Dr. J: Have you ever fucked a boy in a dress?

Wendythirteen: NOPE.... ALTHO AN EX OF MINE HAD A PANTYHOSE FETISH...

Dr. J: So who gives better head, the punks or the metalheads?

Wendythirteen: METALHEADS...

Dr. J: I totally agree... just like the way they play their guitars. They put more detail and emotion into it.

Wendythirteen: YEAH, I WISH METAL GUYS WOULD STOP CHOPPING THEIR LOCKS OFF... NOTHING LIKE SWEATING UP THE FURS WITH HAIR DRAPING ON YOUR BREASTS!

Dr. J: How many sex toys do you own and what's your favorite?

Wendythirteen: NONE... ALTHOUGH I DO OWN SOME UNUSED WHIPS...LOVE THE DOMINATRIX CONCEPT...I PREFER INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION OVER PHYSICAL.... AKA I CAN GET OFF BY THINKING....

Dr. J: What are your thoughts on anal?

Wendythirteen: NO THANK FOR ANAL....TRIED IT BEFORE AND IT MADE ME FEEL LIKE I HAD TO SHIT...BAH! WHY BOTHER.... MEN THAT NEED

THAT SHOULD OBVIOUSLY JUST SWING THE OTHER WAY THEN...

Dr. J: Anything else you wanna share? Any weird stories?

Wendythirteen: WEIRD STORIES HMMMM... THAT'S A WHOLE BOOK WHEN IT COMES TO SOME OF THE CRAZY NIGHTS AT THE COBES....

HEARD MY THEORY ABOUT SOUL MATE GENITAL MATCHING?

Dr. J: Go on...

Wendythirteen: GENITAL MATCHING COMPATIBILITY TEST...WHEN A COUPLE STANDS NAKED TOGETHER FACING EACH OTHER THEIR NIPPLES LINE UP AS DO THEIR GOODIES... ESPECIALLY IN THE FIRST YEAR...I'VE TESTED THIS THEORY PERSONALLY...WHEN THE LOVE WANES OR YOU GROW APART YOU'LL FIND YOU DON'T ALIGN ANY LONGER...MOST WOMEN'S NIPPLE'S DIRECTION OUT TO ACCOMMODATE THE MALES CHEST.... FOOD FOR THOUGHT PEEPS...

I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHATS UP WITH MUSICIANS THAT DATE OUTSIDE THE SCENE OR THEIR PARTNER DOESNT SUPPORT EITHER THEIR TASTE IN MUSIC ...OR COME TO THEIR SHOWS ... HOW DOES THAT WORK?

Dr. J: I think some people like to keep their love life separate from the rest of their life. And some people are just there to play music, but it isn't really their life. And some people are just unsupportive bitches, but maybe they give excellent blowjobs.

Dr. J: And last but not least, do you think they should pay me for this shit?

Wendythirteen: HAHHAHA WERE ALL OVERWORKED AND UNDERPAID... THINK OF THE NOTORIETY I GUESS...



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