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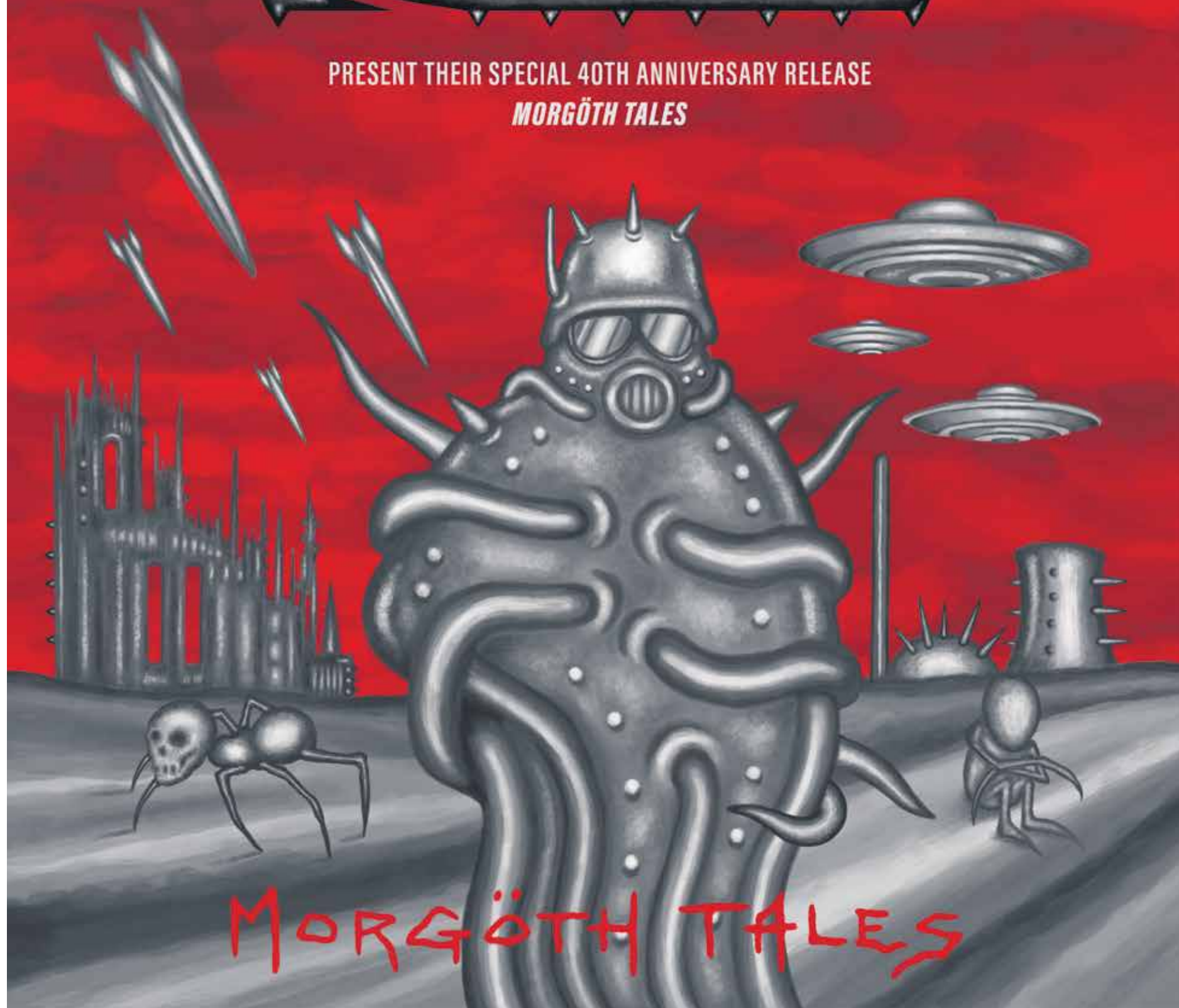
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BUG

Paralysis

Interview by John Carlow

Absolute Underground: Introduce yourselves:

Bug:

Dan (vocals): *The Grey Army, Cyril Sneer*

Dave (drums): *The Accident, Navy Black, Philabuster*

Kevin (bass): *The Red Devils, The Lost Episodes*

Rob (guitar): *The Binz, The Accident*

AU: When and how did the band come together?

B: *Bug* started during the pandemic with Dan and Rob working on a couple of songs with just guitar and vocals in Dan's living room. Shortly after, Dave joined on drums and then Kevin on bass. Rob, Dave and Kevin all knew each other from living in Vancouver and everyone had played in bands in the past and missed making music since moving to the Island, so here we are!

AU: Great name for band. How did that happen?

B: "Bug" is a reference to Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and *Dinosaur Jr.*, both of which are influences.

AU: Does the band write music/words together or someone specifically?

B: The songs are all original, and generally begin with the guitar part more or less written, and are built up from there, collaboratively. Some songs

come to rehearsal with the arrangement almost fully formed, sometimes it's just a riff that gets jammed on for months until the song coalesces and we're happy with it. Everyone has input and regardless of who comes to the table with the initial idea for the song, the end result is absolutely a team effort.

AU: What are your songs about?

B: The songs are not limited by any specific theme, and cover a variety of subject matter: Nostalgia, social justice, war/peace, politics, history, love and longing, life and death.

AU: Have you recorded anything?

B: We recorded a full-length album with Jordan Koop at The Noise Floor studio on Gabriola Island, that should be out later this year. Jordan is a dream to work with, and we absolutely loved our time there.

AU: Moving ahead, what do you have planned for the band?

B: At the moment we're focused on releasing our debut LP, which we are calling *Paralysis*. We are currently doing pre-sales for the album on our Bandcamp at abandnamedbug.bandcamp.com. Check it out! Or don't, we're not the boss of you.

AU: Where do you like to play in town?

B: We've played a few shows at the Phoenix and Screen Test Studios in the past few months and the response has been great! It's rad to see people dance their asses off after being cooped up for the past couple years.

AU: What "local" bands have caught your attention?

B: There's so many awesome local bands on the Island and in Vancouver right now that we're excited about. To name a few: *AK47, AK-747s* (very different, and very awesome), *Toy Tiger, Knife Manual, the Dog Indiana, Bad State, Poor Choices, Skin Crawl, Crosshairs, No Heart, IQ78, Crom/Dam, Line Traps, Chain Whip, Isolastics, Moonbather, Wet Cigarette, Split Arrows, Tent City, Dead Rights*.

AU: Most unusual or funny thing to happen at a gig?

B: Dave destroying his finger and spraying blood everywhere at a show at the Phoenix was a highlight. At our first show, the room was so packed that we had people stepping on our pedals and smashing into us. It led to some technical difficulties, but the atmosphere was electric and that's all part of the fun!

AU: What should people expect when they come to see a BUG show?

B: At our shows expect to move your body and have a fun time! The crowds here in Victoria haven't been shy about throwing their bodies around with reckless abandon, and neither are

VICTORIA'S LOCALS ONLY

we!

AU: Are you planning to do shows further up the island or the mainland?

B: We've got a show coming up in town here in Victoria on July 21st, details TBD. Beyond that, we'll be touring around BC in support of our upcoming LP, *Paralysis*, in the fall.

abandnamedbug.bandcamp.com

www.facebook.com/abandnamedbug

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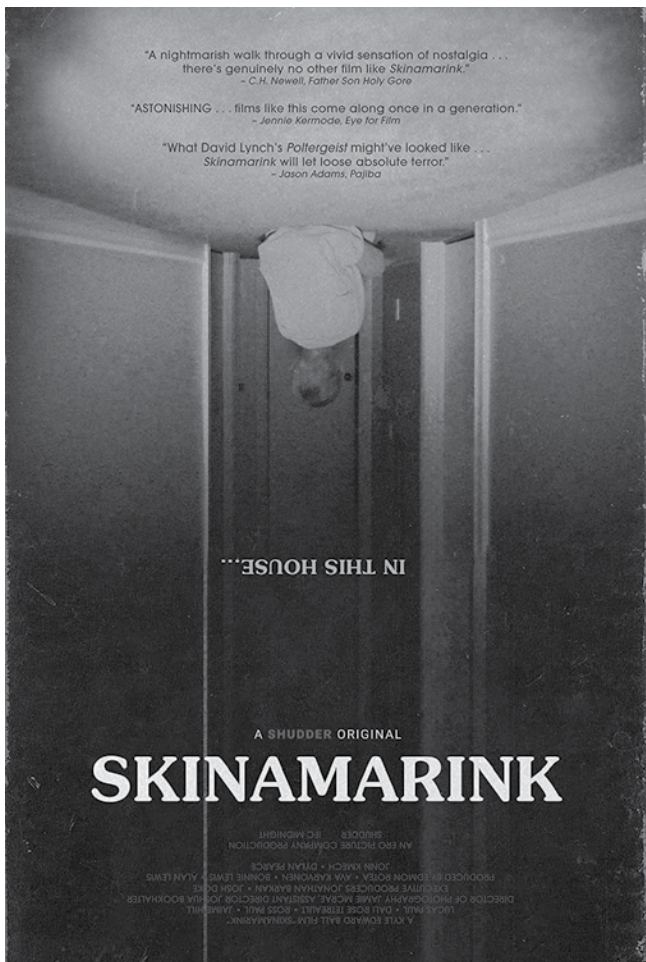
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SKINAMARINK

Interview with Director Kyle Edward Ball

By Brady "Too Scared to Watch It" Tighe
Absolute Underground: Who are you, and what do you do?

KEB: I'm Kyle Edward Ball, the writer, director, and editor of the movie *Skinamarink*.

AU: What is the importance to the community of Calgary Horror Con?

KEB: I don't know how to answer that. All I can tell you is that it's very important to the horror community across the province, including in Edmonton.

AU: What is the film making scene in Edmonton like?

KEB: It's very tight knit and very documentary focused.

AU: Do you have another movie planned?

KEB: I do. Hopefully I will start writing it within the next few months. Stay tuned.

AU: What first got you into film-making?

KEB: When I was about five years old I saw *Tales From The Dark Side: The Movie*. I asked my mom how they achieved certain effects. She explained it was usually a process of something called "trick photography" she also told me a little, in lay persons terms, how movies are made including the concept of a director. I then decided I was going to be a director of "scary" movies. Then I started experimenting with camcorders and such at

home when I was a kid. Then video class in high school, then film school at NAIT and that's more or less how I got here.

AU: What's the scariest movie you've seen?

KEB: Probably *The Shining* by Stanley Kubrick. That movie is something else. It's like something magical. Something that feels like it was birthed instead of made. And it only gets creepier as it gets older. A lot of horror movies lose their effect

over time. *The Shining* doesn't. The Room 237 scene still creeps me out.

AU: Do you enjoy being the director for such a polarizing film?

KEB: It's kind of a weird "be careful what you wish for" situation. When I was a teen and got into the movies of Kenneth Anger, John Waters, Freidkin and Kubrick, I always thought it would be so incredibly cool to make a movie that really pissed people off or polarized people. Then I got my wish

and it doesn't feel how I imagined at all. It doesn't make me happy.

AU: Are there plans for a physical release?

KEB: Blu Ray June 20th.
skinamarink.com



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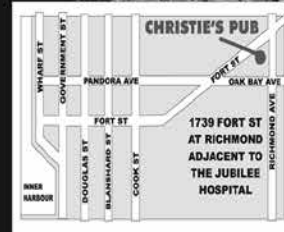
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Armstrong MetalFest

Interview with Co-Organizer Jesse Valstar

AU: Absolute Underground: Who are you and what do you do?

JV: Jessie Valstar, General Manager and Co-founder of Armstrong Metalfest. My job is to make sure all the jobs get done.

AU: Armstrong MetalFest is back for 2023, the second one after the covid Pandemic, how does it feel to have live metal return and grow in the Okanagan?

JV: It's wild. It doesn't really felt like we took two years off. Last year was a little rocky in getting back into the swing of things, but this year feels like we are firmly back in motion and everything is clicking along at high gear!

AU: When Covid hit, was the festival worried it would never return?

JV: Nah, we are a volunteer-run organization. Fairly low overhead.

AU: How did you decide on this year's lineup and headliners?

JV: We have a subcommittee of people who read through all of the band submissions. That group of people ensures that we get a good spread of Western Canadian bands. Recent releases and tours play a big factor in whether or not a band gets chosen. If a band is clearly displaying a fair amount of effort to get their music recognized they bump up our list pretty quickly.

AU: What bands should fans keep their ears open to?

JV: Greyhawk. That band rips. Our Last Crusade, they are going to hit the crowd so hard they will be forced into a circle pit. The circle pit may physically end for the patrons, but mentally they will circle pitting for a good two to three hours after. I know it doesn't sound pleasant, but it will be.

AU: You're stuck in an elevator with the festival's dream headliner, who is it and what do you say in five to ten words to convince them to play Armstrong MetalFest?

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JV: My dream headliner changes from year to year. Me answering the question right now though, I think we actually already had my dream headliner play in 2011: 3 Inches of Blood.

So I'm stuck in the elevator with Cam Pipes and I get 5 to 10 words?

"Please reunite for AMF, I won't request Balls of Ice"

I like to think Cam is at some bar in downtown Vancouver, reading these words with a pint of house. He's probably thinking that this is even more strange reading about what I'm doing in real-time. *takes a sip of beer* Then he thinks to himself that he will likely banish the thought for all eternity for even mentioning Balls of Ice. Cam, I am sorry, please play our festival again!

AU: What has been your most memorable moment of the festival to date?

JV: Jon Goblikon led over a hundred people in a shotgun in the campground. That was crazy

AU: What advice do you have for bands who want to apply to play on AMF in future years?

JV: Effort. Put effort into your band and it will show. Great tunes require awesome art, touring and promo. If you can get a group to all put in 100% effort you will see returns on your effort investment. Like, your band can consist of three dudes hitting a tree stump with oversized forks. If you put in enough effort, even if its mostly horrible, you'll likely see a return on your effort investment. See, we just invented Stumpcore. You're welcome.

AU: Anything else you like to add for festival-goers?

JV: We take great pride in being a clean well-run event. Metalheads know the rules, you pack it in, you pack it out. Take care of each other. Respect for the scene. These are things that are core values to our patrons. All I gotta say is thank you! It's because of the year-after-year attendees that keep the spirit alive, that we keep trudging forward year after year. Bring on 2023!

armstrongmetalfest.ca/tickets



Loud As Hell Metal Festival

Interview with Founder Geoff Bourrie

Absolute Underground: Who are you and what do you do?

GB: My name is Geoff Bourrie, and I am one of the founders and organizers of the Loud As Hell Metal Festival.

AU: Loud As Hell is returning for its 11th edition, what can tell us about this year's lineup?

GB: After not having international artists the

last two years due to Covid-19, we welcome the most international acts of any previous year.

11 International acts will hit the stage including 2 bands from Mexico!

AU: What should festival goers prepare for Loud As Hell open-air and camping?

GB: It is in Drumheller. Generally, it is really hot and dry. We also can see high winds and rain.

Must bring items including identification, water, sunscreen, bug spray, and more water!

AU: What do you find inspires you every year to keep putting on Loud As Hell?

GB: It is the one time of year when you get to see so many of the best people come together in the name of metal! It honestly is our metal family reunion.

AU: Where has the furthest metal fan come from to attend Loud As Hell?

GB: We have had a few different people attend from overseas. Norway and Germany. Pretty cool when you see the country flags set up at their campsite.

AU: What advice do you have for bands who want to apply to play on Loud As Hell in future years?

GB: We get in excess of 400 submissions each year from all around the world. Make your submission honest and fun. And be active on your social media outlets.

AU: Anything else you like to add for festival-goers?

GB: If you have not been to the festival, it really is something unique all on its own. It's 3 days with the metal family in one of the coolest areas in Alberta...The Badlands of Drumheller!

loudashell.ca

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Demonslaught 666

Set to Slaughter With Nekroslaughter Battlefield

Interview with guitarist Evilslaughter

By Ryan Dyer

The speed metal scene in China is growing. Bands like Dog Slayer and Dressed to Kill laid the foundation - fast riffs, Exciter t-shirts, tight jeans and an appreciation for the aesthetic brought by the best of times, the dawn of speed - the 1980s. Bands like Demonslaught 666 have taken the building blocks of speed metal and have painted them black - creating a sound that is as dirty, filthy and evil as it is fast and nostalgic. The band have recently released their new EP, "Nekroslaughter Battlefield." I speak to guitarist Evilslaughter about speed metal in China, the inclusion of Greek mythology into the band's lyrical acumen and "Dirty Pussy Maniacs."

Absolute Underground: "Speed Alcoholic Evil" was your first EP, released in 2021. Tell me about how the band formed to create this first impression.

ES: After I graduated from high school in 2020, I formed this band. But after a few months of searching, I still didn't find suitable members that could form a complete band lineup in the university location within Zhejiang Province. So, I found my friend MørkkaleidcM in Lanzhou, and told him what I thought. We hit it off. Since then, Demonslaught 666 began its activity in the form of a two-man band.

"Speed Alcoholic Evil" is an EP released during the duo period, and it was released by Dying Art Productions from Beijing. The three tracks

included in this EP are my constantly revised and improved works from 2018-2021, which are rougher than the current ones. After the release of this EP, "Skeleton Hell", a bass player, and Silver M. Bullet, a drummer, joined us. Since then, the band has gradually formed a complete lineup.

AU: "Nekroslaughter Battlefield" is your second EP. Where is this battlefield?

ES: The battlefield is the theme concept of our new EP. We want to tell a chaotic story in this album: the witch riding a goat fights with the necromancers in the dark night. It describes the confrontation between two evil forces.

AU: I spoke with China's Dressed to Kill before, who are also speed metal. What interests you in this style?

ES: When I first heard about speed metal, I found that it was also influenced by some traditional metal bands. Heavy metal was the source of the charm. But later I discovered that speed metal is not only embodied by heavy metal, as I heard a lot of bands labeled as speed/thrash, black/speed and so on which called themselves speed metal. I then had my own understanding of this genre: metal with high-speed. The two speed metal bands that have influenced me the most are Exciter and Razor. I'm obsessed with this kind of metal!



AU: You have added black metal elements to the speed sound, making it more sinister and dirty sounding. Do you feel you lean more towards being a black metallor or speed metallor?

ES: For the "black metal" elements in our music, I think most of them come from elders like Bathory and Venom. The charm of the first generation of black metal is infinite. Besides, we were more influenced by some black metal bands with speed/thrash as the main genre. Black metal is just a form of expressing our themes and our own

understanding of speed metal. So, I wish I was more of a speed metallor.

AU: Another band with 666 in their name is Destroyer 666. Any influence from them?

ES: Haha, actually no, the 666 in the name is just because my initial idea was to make a band with satanism/evil/cult as its main expression, so I chose "666" as the suffix.

AU: Tell me about Toxic Death Records...

ES: Toxic Death Records is the label I formed when I was a high school student, and it's also a sign of my process of exploring metal music... Early on I was more inclined to release some thrash/crossover bands, but gradually I also started to release some heavy metal, speed metal, punk or even black/thrash material. In other words, Toxic Death Records also saw the development of my metal music aesthetic. Due to the impact of the epidemic now, I slowed down the releases on TDR.

AU: "Grave Knights of Tartarus" refers to the dungeon in Greek mythology. What other mythological references are in your work?

ES: Yes, Tartarus in Greek mythology refers to the dungeon that tortures the wicked. It is synonymous with "hell" and the body of the underworld of hell. This is our new attempt to introduce terms from Greek mythology into our work. In the past, I've learned on and off some stories from Greek mythology, and this has given us some inspiration for the themes of our music. Perhaps we will continue to try to use related themes in future works.

AU: Let's talk about your stage names and what they mean - Evilslaughter - Guitars. Paravoid - Vocals, Bass. Evakevak - Guitars. A New Machine - Drums:

ES: These stage names are our respective screen names. In fact, rather than using Pinyin directly as stage names, we prefer to use an "anonymous" form.

AU: "Dirty Pussy Maniac" is your prior single. Who is this maniac?

ABSOLUTE ASIA

ES: Haha, this song was written for our ex-bass player Skeleton Hell. Actually, I think he's a total sex and metal maniac and this song is about his metal life. Although he had to leave the band due to work, he may appear in future live shows.

AU: The vocals, guitars and bass were all recorded in your individual rooms. How were the initial songs written, being apart from each other in different cities and who recorded what first?

ES: Yes, due to the impact of the epidemic and the fact that we all live in different cities, it has become difficult to gather together to record. The process of writing songs is all carried out over the Internet: all the music was done on the guitar first, then handed over to the drummer to make the drums, and then finished the editing of the bass and vocals. The guitar parts were recorded by our album producer Haemolacria, who came to Hangzhou to help us complete the recording, and the drums were recorded in a studio in Kunming, Yunnan. At the beginning of August, all of us gathered in Kunming for rehearsal, and the vocal parts were also recorded in Kunming during that time. As for the bass parts, due to these difficulties, I invited my friend Ironthorn. L to help us complete this recording.

AU: The cover art was done by Velio Josto. What direction did you give him for it? I guess the woman riding the goat is the witch, who is in the Nekroslaughter Battlefield, battling the Necromancers?

ES: That's right! The idea I gave Velio Josto about the album cover was: a witch riding a goat slashing the Necromancer with an axe. She was surrounded by a group of these Necromancers, and the ground was full of vipers. He made my idea come true perfectly and it contained all the elements we needed on this album.

[facebook.com/Demonslaught666](https://www.facebook.com/Demonslaught666)



SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

World on Fire

Interview with Front Woman Lisa Thompson

Absolute Underground: Welcome to Absolute Underground Mag, for those unfamiliar with Sovereign Council, who are you, and what do you do?

Sovereign Council: My name is Lisa and I am the front woman for a Canadian melodic metal band called Sovereign Council. We are based in the Kingston and Ottawa area in Ontario. We formed in 2011 and have grown and changed dramatically over the years.

AU: Sovereign Council is back after a short hiatus with a new EP and lineup change, what can you tell us about SC's new sound and direction?

SC: Over the past 10 years, we have matured as individuals as well as a band. Our new sound was created through a collaborative writing process and steering more towards the band

being female fronted. We aim to create powerful and emotional songs both musically and lyrically that we all enjoy performing.



AU: We loved your music videos for "World on Fire" and "Breathe You In" and understand they were done in-house by your guitarist Joe Lyko of Dark Moon Productions. How did you come up with the visual ideas for the videos and can we expect more?

SC: Thank you! Joe and I have been creating content for bands for years now running Dark Moon Productions together. For "Breathe You In", we drew inspiration from the lyrics for the visuals and the vibe. The visual inspiration

for "World On Fire" came from our album artwork. We wanted to incorporate the warmth of the colouring as well as the fire element into the video.

AU: We read that Lisa and Joe are spouses and that while writing material for "World On Fire" EP, you didn't realize you were writing about each other in some of the songs. How is it to work together and also express your feelings together through music?

SC: Joe and I were each going through a very difficult time in our personal lives when we met and started writing together. We were inspired by each other's energy and the music just poured out of us. The lyrics came together just as fast where I would write a few lines, then Joe would write a few lines not realizing at the time that we were writing about each other. Our shared passion for music and art eventually led to Joe and I falling in love. Joe is an extremely talented musician, writer, and audio engineer. Creating together has been an eye-opening experience for me. I can write a full classical piano piece, then sit down with Joe and he will write and track guitars, bass, and drums, which is how the single "World On Fire" was written. We do run into disagreements in the writing process at times but we work together to find a solution.

AU: What are the band's plans this summer, touring, local shows, any idea on a return to Western Canada, it's been 10 years since the last one...you guys might be due?

SC: We would absolutely love to return to Western Canada. It is such a beautiful drive through the mountains and loved the entire experience. Our

OTTAWA ONSLAUGHT



main focus for the upcoming months will be getting back into the studio recording our next EP but we do have a few local shows lined up for this summer. We will be performing at Nerdstock Fest in Ottawa on July 22nd and a couple more shows in Ottawa and MTL that haven't been announced yet.

AU: How's the Ottawa music scene these days?

SC: The music scene in Kingston and Ottawa (and most of Canada for that matter) is extremely supportive and we're proud to be a part of it. It has been a difficult couple of years through the pandemic but the love and support we have felt from other bands and fans in our scene has been amazing and we're very thankful to be a part of it.

Sovereigncouncil.bandcamp.com
youtube.com/c/SovereignCouncil

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June 17	MVLL Crimes, Haters with Bonecrate
June 30	Artificial Dissemination, Caveman and the Banshee w The Dirty Sanchez Orchestra
July 15	The Usual Suspect with Softbox
July 18	Echthros with Simone
July 29	66 Aces with Tadoma
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TEETH

A Biblical Worship of Violence

Interview with guitarist Chris LeMasters

AU: What are you best known for?

Chris from TEETH here. I play guitar in the band, and I'm probably best known (if you could even say that) for posting caveman riffs on Instagram.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band, TEETH.

TEETH really started as a passion project for Blake and I. We'd been close friends for years - touring in separate bands since we were 19/20 - but we'd never actually played in a band together. In 2019 I realized I had a ton of guitar ideas that never made their way into songs with my existing bands, mostly because they were just too heavy/aggressive for what those projects were doing. I thought it'd be a cool opportunity for Blake and I to put our heads together, so we did, and TEETH happened. We wrote/recorded our first singles and realized it was something we both enjoyed a lot, so we kept it going and here we are.

AU: Who else is in the band and what other bands have they been in?

Blake sings/writes and he's been in a variety of other rad bands - Straight Reads The Line, Anniversary, Skynet, Modern Miniatures, etc. Marc is our bassist, and he played in a few hardcore bands from the greater Toronto area - To Cherish and Sawmill Valley among others. Mat, our

drummer, also plays in a cool hardcore band from Windsor called Reliever, and our second guitarist Bryan is in a rad band called The Good Depression.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

I think we definitely fall into the "metallic hardcore" category - I think a lot of our influences come from early hardcore/metalcore like DEP, Converge, Botch, Poison The Well, etc. We're just trying to make

the angriest music possible.

AU: Where are you from and what's the music scene like there?

We all grew up around Toronto - the GTA. Hamilton, Burlington, Newmarket. The scene around here was strong when we were younger - it spawned a lot of really great, influential bands like Grade, Alexisonfire, Cursed, etc and that really encouraged us as kids going to hardcore/metal shows. When we started playing in bands in the early 2000's, those guys were thriving and by the time we started playing those shows, we were playing to 300-400 kids at the local masonic lodge or VFW hall. The alternative music community was strong around here and cleared a path for bands like ours to grow.

AU: Has TEETH released an album recently?

We just released our debut EP "A Biblical Worship of Violence" on Nuclear Blast/New Damage Records, and it's really our first cohesive collection of music. Until now, we've released singles - which has been great - but we wanted to put together something that acted as a snapshot of a specific moment in time for the band. We'd been going through some rough personal stuff - relationships falling apart, life changes, etc - and this record captured a lot of that. We're glad it's out.

AU: Any upcoming shows or tours?

We'll be touring Ontario/Quebec with our friends in Great American Ghost in July/August, and we'll be playing our first proper hometown show

in Hamilton, Ontario on July 21st. Can't wait. It's gonna be mayhem.

AU: How do people find you online?

Follow us on Instagram at @teethnoise

Twitter at @teethnoise905, and click the link in any of those bios to follow TEETH on Spotify, Apple Music, etc.

newdamagerecords.com

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And we were all so young. We spent our weekend nights in recreation centre gyms listening to singers talk about identity politics through garbage PAs in the mid-90's. We were teenagers and we had found this scene that gave us a place to be, a space that was ours, and a chance to build and fight our own wars, separate from society's wars. And somewhere in all that was *Jonas*: the crust punks, the hardcore kids, playing nasty grindcore with a political message.

And everyone loved them. From the suburbs of Gordon Head to the Tillicum Mall area, *Jonas* brought their grinding and, for a brief moment in time, we all stopped and listened. Even curious metalheads came in to see what was

JONAS

Metchoshin grindcore, 1996

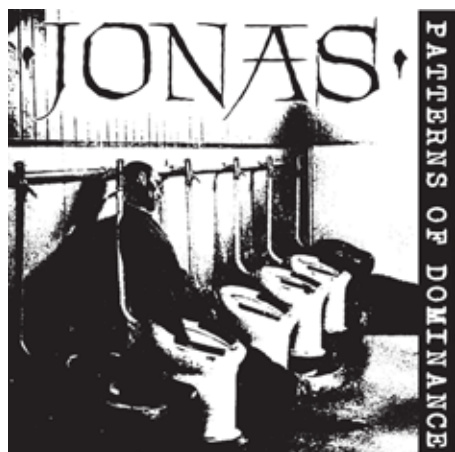
By Greg Pratt

It was an explosion from the west: the Western Communities, to be specific, a vague name for a vague area just outside of Victoria, BC. It's since been re-branded as the Westshore, and it's cleaned up, and it's no longer the butt-end of snide jokes and comments from Victorians. Instead, it's where people go to live in clean suburbs to raise clean families. But those of us with salt peppering our pepper remember when it was an uglier place, remember when there was a ramshackle youth centre there where, astoundingly, *Assück* once played, remember that out of the region came some of the most beautifully ugly music Canada has ever known.

Jonas was only around for a brief moment in time in 1995 and 1996. But I don't lament or begrudge that. Some bands aren't meant to last, and that's part of why they're so special. It's lightning in a bottle, it's youth at a certain time at a certain place, it's an explosion, then it's an implosion, then all we're left with are the memories, the songs, a brief flash, a moment in time, pure energy.

This energy was created by four young men: Hadji

Bakara, Jason Welch, Darren Tucknott, and Shaun McConnell. It was created in between gigs at local community centers with names so specific it almost hurts to type them today: Little Fernwood, Big Fernwood, Inner City Youth Works. The bands were creative and are still mentioned in reverence years later: the *Republic of Freedom Fighters*, *M Blanket*, *Black Kronstadt*, *Ache Hour Credo*, *Third*



World Planet, *Render Useless*. And out of all this, out of taking the #50 Goldstream BC Transit bus, stressing to catch one more song of that touring band's set before running out to get on that midnight motherfucker, *Jonas* was born.

The sounds came out of the crusty hardcore of *Deadset*, and *Jonas* also shared a bloodline with the screaming

emo/hardcore of *Grasp*. It was a strange mixture of the crust and emo hardcore scenes, which perhaps only helped to create the tension found in these songs. These were shows where the slicked-back fashionistas – who thought the higher the hair, the closer to God – rubbed shoulders with the crust punks who hadn't showered in a week; some shot stink eyes at each other, others embraced in an odd but loving coming together of very different sides of the same scene.



live in Victoria shattered with it, and all that's left are memories that no longer seem real, and this collection of songs.

Enjoy what *Jonas* left us: a soundtrack to a part of the world that no longer exists and a soundtrack to the years of young men that no longer exist. The men exist, older and no longer creating this music. That's all dead, but this music is so alive. We're lucky to have it. We're lucky to have this much.

So turn it on, close your eyes, and let *Jonas* transport you to a different time and place, and then let *Jonas* destroy that time and place, and then there's nothing left to do except listen to the silence left in their wake. It's deafening, like the death of the Western Communities, like the death of youthful energy, like the death of all the community centers and all the bands and all the years that conspired together in a perfect fury to create *Jonas*. It's all dead, but these songs are so alive, 12 minutes and 49 seconds being all that remains and being all that needs to remain of *Jonas*.

May these songs live on, in your ears and in mine. May they be the final nail in the coffin of the Western Communities, of late-night rides on the #50 bus to catch shows while living in bodies much younger than they are today, and then to return home so alive with inspiration in our crowded downtown apartments, in our cozy suburban bedrooms. May these songs celebrate all that was so alive in those who made them, and those who listened to them, and in those days, and in those places. May these songs echo and crash into the long, endless night with their glorious imperfections, and may the screaming and the smashing and the grinding help *Jonas* be remembered, by us, forever.

going on. And what was going on was "Pain to Profit," "Exile," "Eternal Struggle." What was going on was a noticeably emotional vocal performance for grindcore. What was going on was something special. The songs alternated from power violence riffing ("End of a Reign") to Discordance Axis-by-way-of-Assück short-fast-loud ("Eradicate"), with stops in sludgy hardcore and grooving punk/HC along the way. This music is as special as the time and the place that spawned it, there's no doubt about it.

There's a cognitive dissonance in the fact that Hadji went on to flirt with mainstream Canadian indie success in *Wolf Parade*; every single goddamn time I heard their name (which, as someone involved in the Canadian indie scene at that time, was a LOT), all I could think of was *Jonas*. And it felt like a secret. And it felt good. Present day, April 2023: the *Wolf Parade* Wikipedia page doesn't mention *Jonas*. Maybe let's keep it that way, just so we can have one thing left that belongs to a time and an era and our memories.

The Western Communities, 1995-96: *Jonas* could only have come from that time and that place. Don't wish there was more, or that the band would have carried on. Enjoy what there is. The idea of the Western Communities lays shattered, the idea of a place where people could afford to

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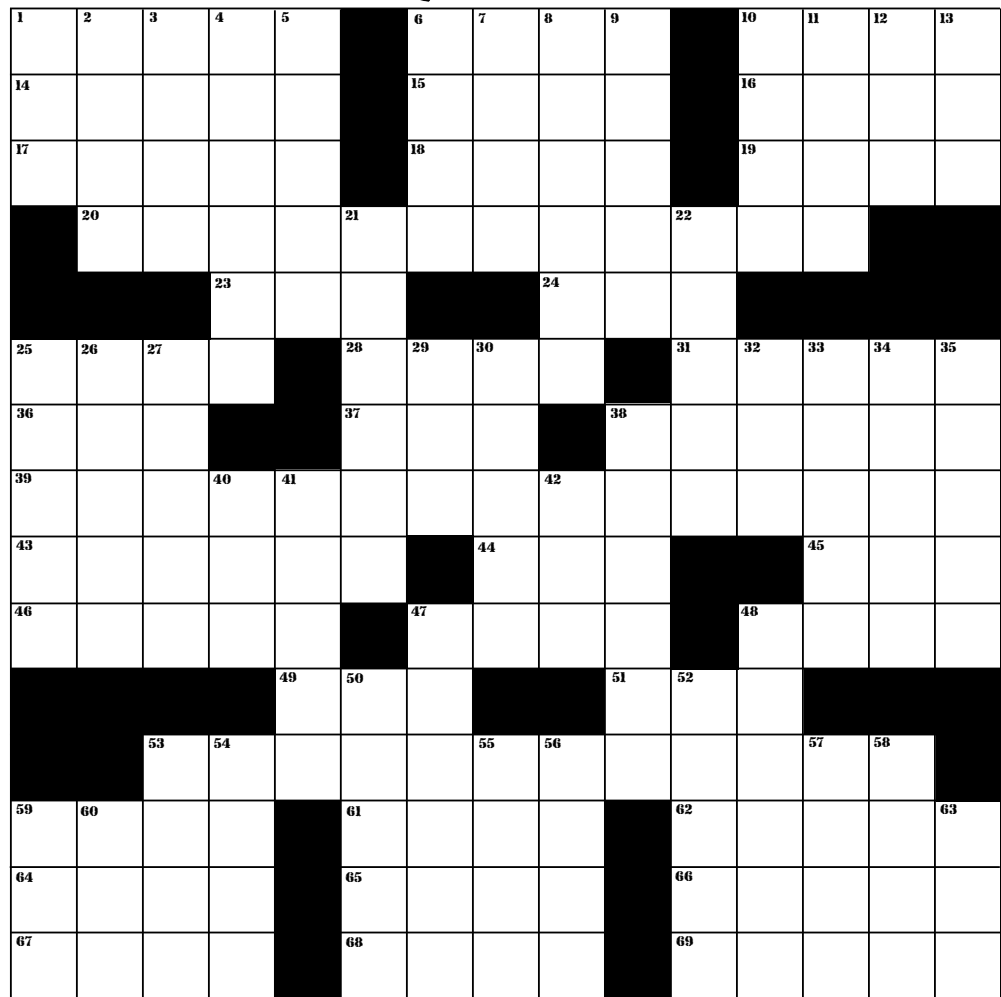
IS THERE AN ECHO IN HERE?

ACROSS

- 1. *When tripled, an Elvis Costello compilation
- 6. *When tripled, a homicidal Punk band?
- 10. *Lady of pop
- 14. Skedaddle
- 15. Bust _____
- 16. One of the Ghostbusters
- 17. Species in many aquariums
- 18. Famously extinct bird
- 19. A long, long period of time
- 20. *A really rad Victoria band?
- 23. Matrix hero
- 24. Twisty turn
- 25. "_____ Effect"
- 28. Garage Punk's Dharma _____
- 31. Brazilian music or dance
- 36. Important computer key
- 37. Words before roll or whim
- 38. Dugout and birchbark are two types of these
- 39. *An ageist Toronto band?
- 43. Most Punk record labels
- 44. Falco's "____ Kommissar"
- 45. Standard for 4G
- 46. Director of "Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!"
- 47. Foreigner: Prefix
- 48. Summer quenchers
- 49. "That hurt!"
- 51. Soviet space station
- 53. *Band that likes scolding police officers?
- 59. Roseanne
- 61. It's a great lake
- 62. Large claw
- 64. Guinness or Baldwin
- 65. Teen trouble
- 66. "Ripcordz _____"
- 67. *When tripled, a song by The Vibrators
- 68. *When tripled, a song by The Damned
- 69. *A band that can't be beat? (with 'The')

DOWN

- 1. Trans-Canada charge
- 2. Rapper who played a kangaroo in "Tank Girl"
- 3. Singer David Lee
- 4. Actress Sophia and family
- 5. Rocket section



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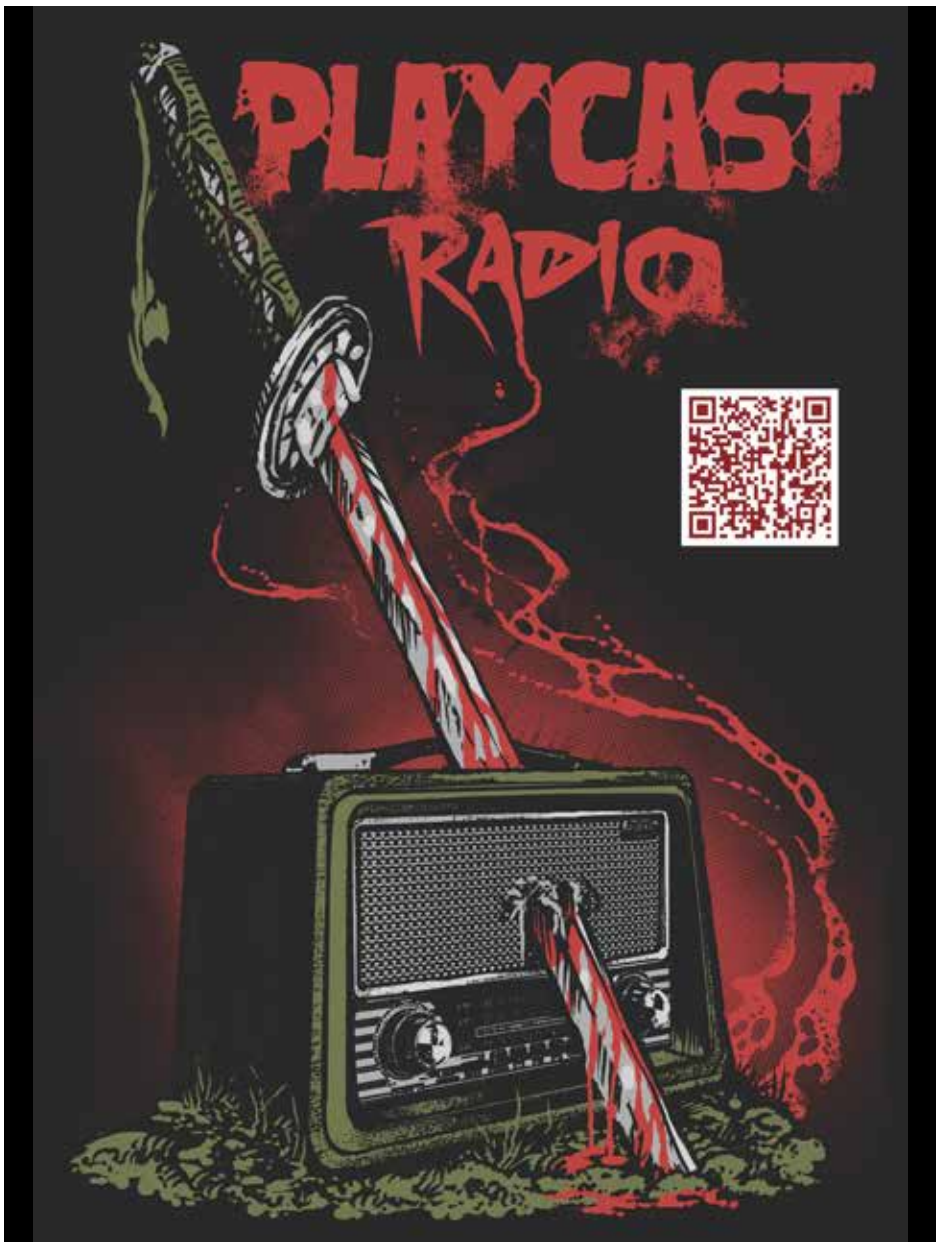
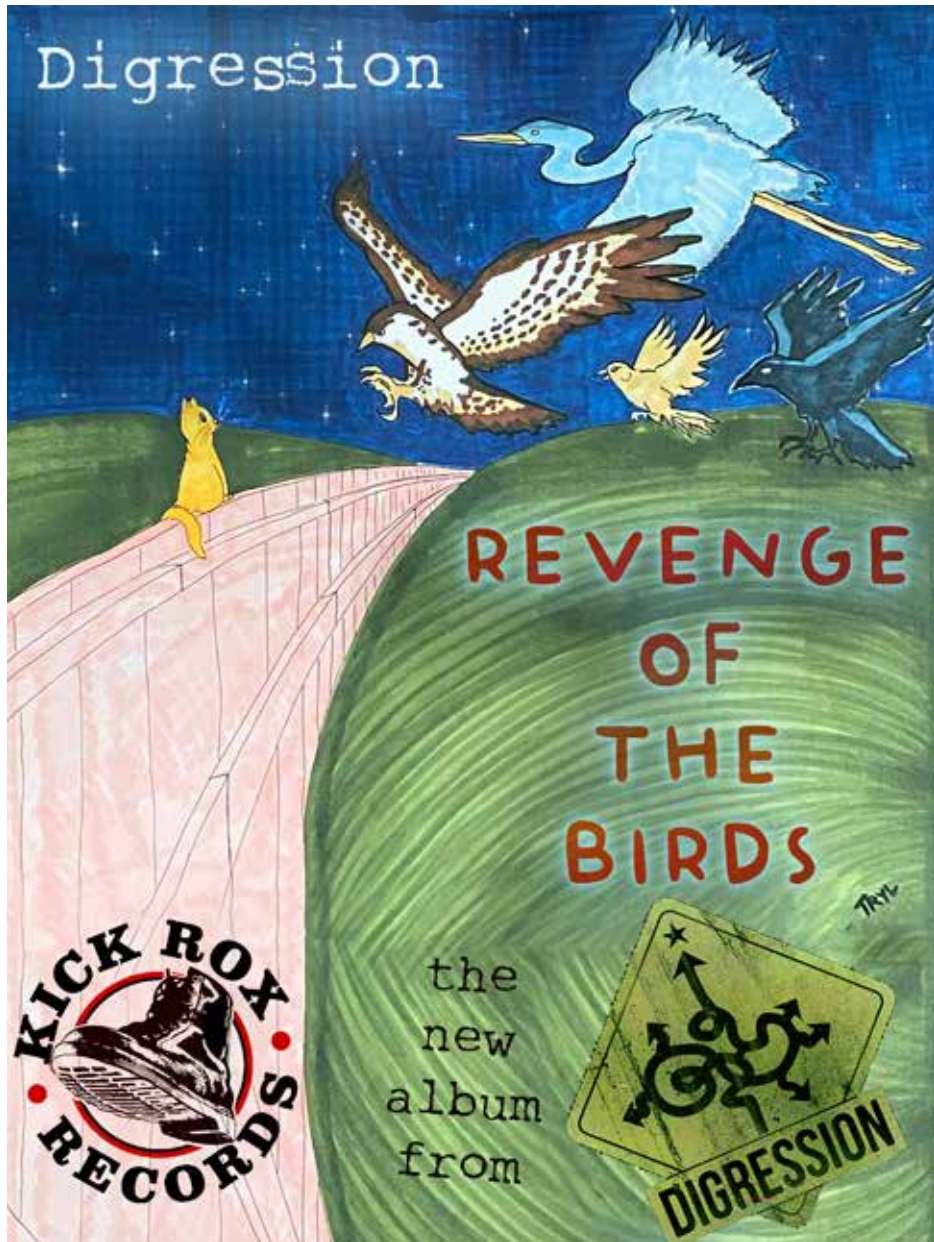
SPRING, 2023

- 6. Nicaraguan nothing
- 7. Bela played him in films
- 8. Gently prods
- 9. Certain collars
- 10. Groovy clothing
- 11. Cruise film "Rock of _____"
- 12. When doubled, it precedes Muck or Dolls
- 13. Wilson or Murray
- 21. Sign on a sorority door?
- 22. Evaluate metal
- 25. Bialik of The Big Bang Theory
- 26. NOFX's "Leave it _____"
- 27. "A _____ in Scarlet"
- 29. Card game from Mattel
- 30. 70's TV show starring Bea Arthur
- 32. A year in the life of Caesar
- 33. Husker Du's Bob
- 34. Actress Midler or Davis
- 35. Word repeated in a David Bowie song title
- 38. Measure of TV colour
- 40. Type of score
- 41. Biblical king of Judea
- 42. Bo Derek, in film
- 47. Superhero team led by Cable
- 48. All-star jockey Eddie
- 50. Danny played by George Clooney
- 52. It opens doors
- 53. La _____ Tarpits
- 54. One type of enemy
- 55. First name for a coconut drink
- 56. Red veggie
- 57. Designer Cassini
- 58. Original pit dance
- 59. Action film director Michael
- 60. Bar option
- 63. "Fast and Furious" gas

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ANOTHER JOE

Ready or Not Interview with Jon Glen

By Brady Tighe

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are your skills to pay the bills?

Another Joe: I'm Jon Glen and I'm the singer/song writer/guitar player for *Another Joe!*

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

AJ: *Another Joe* was formed in the mid-nineties as a 3 piece and quickly wrote/recorded our first album called *Pee Against the Wind* and played our faces off as much as possible. We were able to get a video put together for a song called, "Eat at Bernie's," and it found some rotation on MuchMusic, which was nuts to us and rad!. After playing lots, we released a split album with our friends *Gob* called *Ass Seen* on TV. We then followed that up with our album *Cran-doodle Daddy*. We toured our faces off, and after that, we released our album called *Plasti-scene* on Smallman Records, and shortly after that, we stopped playing. It was a super difficult time for



me, I was dealing with many mental health issues, and with so many drummers in/out of the band leading up to that final album, Alison and I just wanted a break. After 20 years of hibernation (long fucking break!) we released our new album, *Ready or Not* with People of Punk Rock Records. We are back together jamming and have a bunch of shows scheduled to play again!

AJ: I have hummed and hawed about writing a new album for a few years now but kept getting sidetracked by life, but in 2022, it all came together, and everything just felt right to do it. I wrote stuff on and off for myself for years, so I had a ton of music but boiled it all down to a handful of songs and focused on those. I recorded the album with some guy named Ernie, who recorded 3 of our previous albums, so it felt really comfortable. Truthfully I didn't have any intention of re-forming a live band. I wanted to release the album and let it be. However, after re-releasing *Pee Against the Wind* with People of Punk Rock and having so much fun with it and there being such a crazy response, I knew it was the perfect time to re-group and play live again.

AU: How good does it feel to be back?

AJ: It's 1000% awesome. We love playing together and really appreciate what everyone brings to

the table. We have so much individual experience, and we all really respect each other, so it makes for an awesome group, and never mind our unreal fans!? We interact as much as possible on social with our peeps from coast to coast, and they're all killer; we can't wait to see everyone live on the road soon!

AU: What have you been listening to recently?

AJ: I've been listening to a lot of Sting and Bowie lately actually, also *SNFU*, *Bad Religion*, *Codefendants*, *Hot Water Music*, *Social D*, and listening to the new *Rancid*. You know, old school and "new school" punk and classics!

AU: What's the last perfect record you listened to?

AJ: I have maybe three records that I think are perfect and forever listenable front to back, so I will pick one for the sake of picking. I think the *Tool* album *aenema*, is a flawless album; from writing, performance, and production, the time it came out, and where I was in my life then, it's a perfect record for me.

AU: What's the weirdest thing you've seen in public recently?

AJ: The cops in DTES ran everyone off the main street as directed by the city of Vancouver, who had no plan nor interest in helping those people.

AU: What do you miss most about the 90's?

AJ: Nothing and lots! I miss there being a live music venue on every block in Vancouver. On any given night at any given venue, there was a pool of unbelievably talented people in a room absolutely fucking killing it on the stage. Music was incredibly exciting and thriving in the 90's, and Vancouver/Canadian music/bands were over the top talented.

AU: What's your least favourite song by a good band?

AJ: I can't just pick one song on *Into the Unknown* by *Bad Religion*

AU: Who's the sketchiest person you've

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE



bumped a cigarette or a light off of?

AJ: Who the fuck smokes anymore?!

AU: If you could hire anyone to do your album art, who would you pick?

AJ: If it was an illustrated album cover 100% Cory Toomey. If it was an image based/photograph either Ryan Wagner or Ty McLeod and layout/design by me.

AU: Anything else to promote?

AJ: I don't know when this is coming out, but if in time we are playing in High River, Alberta on June 10th headlining the Punk'n Donuts Music Festival at High Brewing Co. with a bunch of awesome bands and June 24th at Bully's in New West on for a super intimate show that's going to be a lot of fun!

AU: Any final words for our readers?

AJ: You're all fucking awesome! Just reading this means you're supporting a thriving community of artists of so many forms that all appreciate you, keep the scene growing, see live bands, check out local art, and for Christ's sake, if you have the itch to play music, fucking do it!

AU: How do people find you online?

AJ: Head to www.anotherjoe.com for show info and links to find us on the web, and interact with us on IG and FB. That's where we hang the most, and of course, you can find our music everywhere you stream music



HIBERNAUT

Ingress

Interview by The Questionaut

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are your skills to pay the bills?

H: We're *Hibernaut* and I'm Dave Jones. My skills, if you can call them that, are writing the songs and lyrics, then doing my best to play guitar and sing them.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

H: After years of playing music together (*Dwellers*, *Subrosa*, *Laughter*, *Sleeping Heathen*) I was feeling the creative itch and asked the guys if they'd be into jamming some tunes I had been putting together. They were, we did, it was fun and we went from there.

AU: Who else is in the band?

H: We've got Zach Hatsis on drums, Josh Dupree on bass and Joey Toscano on lead guitar and backing vocals.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

H: Heavy is the go to for me. Sometimes thunderous and driving, at others slow and plodding with a sense of serpentine, writhing psych. A fevered dream enshrouded in loathing and disgust.

AU: What other words are super improved by adding or combining them with "Naut?" Hashtronaut comes to mind as a flawless example.

H: Dragonaut obviously. There are some Chrononauts in the next album we're working

on. Somnabunaut is in the same vein as *Hibernaut* theme wise but doesn't really roll off the tongue. I would also eat a Pablanonaut pepper. Necronominaut?!

AU: You've just released a new album, Ingress, how did that come together?

H: I had demoed the songs on GarageBand and we added Zach's drums to those. As we practiced things changed and we wrote some more tunes so we demoed again with better equipment and the current versions of the songs, we were excited with what we had. At that point we were ready to book time with Andy Patterson and record for real! We took a week and laid down almost everything. A few day or two sessions after that to add finishing touches and, wango bango, we had our selves a record.

AU: Do you still feel it's important to combine songs into albums in the digital age?

H: Totally! I want to immerse myself into a band's album most of the time, there are often concurrent themes musically that I would miss otherwise. And what about concept albums! It's so easy to make a playlist, we're not dubbing mix tapes or burning CDs anymore. Even when I'm listening to my playlists, or others, I'll often hear a song and start listening to the album its from.

AU: What have you been listening to recently?

H: *Celtic Frost*, I listen to their album *Monotheist* regularly but a recent review of *Ingress* by Scott Spiers motioned the less known, by me, *Cold Lake* and *Vanity/Nemesis* and I've been really enjoying those. Then there's *Face Pulp*, a grindcore band that recently released an album called *Eye Grabbing Detail*. There's so much good music coming out it's hard to stay on top of it and listen to the old jams. Also *Iron Buddha* but that'll be the next answer.

AU: What's the last perfect record you listened to?

H: *Raze//Repose* by *Iron Buddha*, it's the loudest album I've ever heard! It's technically an EP, 31 minutes long, but maybe that's why I'm willing to let it crush my soul almost daily since it came

out. The lyrics are great, the vocals are great, the songwriting, the production and performances, all perfect.

AU: What's the weirdest thing you've seen in public recently?

H: Walking my dog Angus one evening I saw what I thought was a pigeon land on a fence post. As I got closer I could see it was a small owl and when I got closer still the owl flew off and dropped a decapitated pigeon at my feet. Angus was happy about that.

AU: What's your least favourite song by a good band?

H: Changes off of *Black Sabbath's* Vol. 4 is a skipper for sure. I don't hate it but I'm rarely in the mood when listening to that particular album.

AU: If you could hire anyone to do your album art, who would you pick?

H: Jordan Barlow, and guess what? He did it! I saw a piece he had done and knew I wanted his artistic contribution to *Ingress*. He created an outstanding piece for us and was a pleasure to work with and get to know. I hope to continue collaborating with him.

AMERICAN IMPORT

In the spirit of the question though, I say Clark Ashton Smith. I have a copy of Edgar Allen Poe's complete works that he illustrated. That was my introduction to his mind bending projections of the bizarre. Too bad he's currently taking a dirt nap.

AU: Anything else to promote?

H: Right now we have the important part available, the music, but we plan on getting the record pressed as well as CD's and tapes in the near future so keep an eye out for the further roll out of this album as well as the next one we are currently recording.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

H: Listen loud! Share it with your friends! Get into it!

AU: How do people find you online?

H: You can find us on all the things

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GEVURAH Gehinnom

By Hope Gould

Few bands will ever have what it takes to set the bar. Try as they may, a healthy dose of talent, clever compositions and memorable riffs simply aren't enough. What sets the bar, separating the talented from the exemplary, is authenticity – something Quebec black metal band *Gevurah* possesses in spades. It's been six years since the release of their massively acclaimed debut album, *Hallelujah!* and four years since the release of the EP, *Sulphur Soul*, but the duo have been anything but idle. X.T. and A.L. have been tirelessly pouring their authenticity into the opus that is *Gehinnom*, and it is potent. In its wake, *Gevurah* established themselves as one of North America's most formidable black metal acts of the last decade. *Gevurah* is finally descending upon Vancouver's Covenant Festival, where they will headline on Friday night and play the entirety of *Gehinnom* for one final time. In anticipation, X.T. and A.L. share some glimpses into the album's production and the work that inspires them.

Hope Gould: I understand Gehinnom has been 4 years in the making – what parts of *Gevurah's*



sound were you looking to explore or expand on in *Gehinnom* that haven't been touched before?

G: There weren't any areas per se we were looking to expand or explore, *Gehinnom* was rather a condensing experience, trying to be as direct and focused as ever. No compromise, no fooling around. Only the purest essence was to be present on this record; our unhinged energy at

maximum capacity. *Gehinnom* is the culmination of all our past efforts.

HG: What prompted the decision to centre this album around exploring this dark part of one's spiritual path?

G: The act of spiritual and physical death has always been at the centre of *Gevurah*, as such there is nothing new per se about this theme being used as the loom to weave this album, but what may have changed is our relation and our approach to it. Personal experiences, and perhaps a certain maturation, or at least a realization that we who choose to walk this Left Hand Path are indeed dead to the world, and reborn in our own reality which we craft according to our own ethos and beliefs, all these put us on the path that eventually led to *Gehinnom*.

HG: You worked with the inimitable Denis Forkas for *Gehinnom's* striking cover art, as you did for 2016's *Hallelujah!* A Would you

be able to shed some light on the significance of the art and perhaps what it's like to work with Forkas?

G: Denis Forkas works in a very specific way, which completely suits our needs: he does not take any artistic direction and only follows his artistic instinct. Thus, on both accounts, the paintings are his own representation of our concepts and themes. Being extremely well-versed in esoteric knowledge, as well as taking inspiration from dreams, we believe his art complements the music in a way no other artist could. His paintings are as much an artistic expression of our concepts and lyrics as the actual album itself, rather than simply being an accompanying piece or visual depiction.

HG: How did *Gehinnom* come together between the two of you, lyrically and compositionally?

G: From its inception, *Gevurah* was created to be a vehicle through which we could express and experience our spirituality and explore concepts deep with meaning. We merely pick every piece one by one and bring back together what was always there, unseen and broken.

HG: The Québec black metal scene is exceptionally strong, churning out some of North America's best metal for the better part of a decade. Can you share a bit about what it's like to be entrenched with fellow musicians who ignite a flame of strong inspiration?

G: It is strong, yes, and has been for a few decades now, but as far as *Gevurah* is concerned, we certainly stand out among our peers. That was also one of the main motivating factors for starting *Gevurah*, the fact that this type of black metal was completely absent in our surroundings. As far as outside influence from our peers, none is to be found in *Gevurah*. We are seldom talking about the creative process and actively banishing outside influence. All glory should be His.

HG: What is it like for you to let go of a controlled environment and perform these compositions live? How do you prepare your

mind to play something this intense and intricate front to back?

G: We have always felt that *Gevurah's* music was meant to be uncontrolled, unhinged. As obsessed as we might be with every detail on our albums, energy has always been the most important aspect of our live performances. Both environments require different approaches, and in a live setting, different angles of our performance need to be put upfront. In addition, we may rehearse for as long as we want, once on stage, Chaos takes hold, and we become one with *Gevurah*, and let the energy flow unhinged.

HG: I've had the pleasure of seeing *Gevurah* a few times and know that you open your set with a brief ritual. Has this ritual evolved over time? What energy are you hoping to invoke in the audience?

G: Ever since we started rehearsing and writing for *Gevurah*, we have begun our practices with a small ritual, to invoke the right energies, both within ourselves and without as well – to consecrate the space. It has always been a call, a bidding, an opening, a rip through the veil of Da'at. It is much the same now as it was then. In a live setting, it makes even more sense to us, as most people are treating concerts as a social event – chatting, joking, etc. This is also a moment to break that ambiance, and declare our own. We don't believe everyone understands why we do this, but those with the right spirit certainly will. We are here for those few.

HG: Thank you again for your time; Vancouver looks very forward to seeing you at Covenant. The final words are yours.

G: "Hear his footsteps, resonating through the empty halls..."

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gevurah.bandcamp.com

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CALGARY CARNAGE



FLASHBACK

The Draconic Oath

Interview with Guitarist Jacob Chase

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with and what are you most infamous for?

Flashback: My name is Jacob Chase, and I am one part of the dual guitar attack in *Flashback*. I'd say I might be known for being a massive gear slut. I just. Can't. Stop. Buying. Gear. Either that or for being a vandits club member and hosting the wildest party of the year in Alberta, Vantopia

AU: Give us a brief history of the band, who are you and what are you all about?

F: *Flashback* was formed by lead guitarist/vocalist Aidan Demerais in 2016 and started out as a power trio. I joined the band and fucked that all up in 2019. Bassist Kellen Wyslouzil joined forces with us in 2020. That leaves the one missing ingredient, our drummer Lucas Macleod who has essentially been with the band since it's inception. We are based out of Calgary, AB. Our primary objective is to have as much fun as possible while delivering a barrage of crushing riffs. We put all the energy we have into each and every performance and try to deliver the best possible



certainly fell under the Stoner Rock/Doom category. Our new album *The Draconic Oath* has changed gears, we have picked up the tempo and stepped up the riffs but we haven't sacrifice our groove. Dual guitar harmonies? Check. Blistering leads? Check. Hard hammering rhythm section? Check. Groovy breakdowns? Check. Yes, we smoke weed. Yes, we fuck with fuzz pedals and delays, but I feel pigeon-holed by the words "stoner rock". Heavy rockers? Ab-so-fuckin-lutely. Do you like *The Sword*? *Corrosion of Conformity*? *Kyuss*? Yes? Then check out this record!

AU: What can you tell us about your latest EP release?

F: Our new album, *The Draconic Oath*, will be

show we can to the people that wanna rock. We like to get loose and we like to get weird.

AU: Stoner Rock or heavy rockers? Describe your sound for someone who has not heard you yet.

F: There is something about the "stoner rock" label that just doesn't sit well with me. Our first release with this iteration of the band (*Heathen of Influence* - 2020)

available digitally on all streaming platforms. The recording of this

album was all done "in house" in a fairly DIY manner. Aidan has personally tackled recording all of *Flashback's* music. He's developed all the skills required to properly record the band out of necessity and his abilities have greatly benefited us as a band. At 21 years-young he is an impressive source of knowledge for all things music and recording related.

This is the first time that we have outsourced the mixing & mastering, special thanks to Olof Wikstrand of *Enforcer* for the killer job he did helping us make this album sound as good as possible! Long story short we took a ton of food and booze and smokes and weed and about a million amplifiers and went out to a remote cabin (aka PISSLAKE studios) and spent five days hanging out and recording this record for you all!

AU: What themes/topics does your music/lyrics explore?

F: Many of the songs are written from personal experience ranging from issues with isolation, depression, and many of the feelings we have experienced over the course of the last several years while dealing with COVID and the lockdowns. We also touch on less personal subjects, like dystopian futures.

AU: when is the next time we can we see you play live?

F: Our next gig is coming up June 30th in Calgary at Ill-Fated Kustoms with the almighty *Buffalo Bud*



Buster.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

F: Get off your ass and go out and support your local scene! Don't have a local scene? Start a band and make one!! We have to work together to make sure rock 'n' roll and heavy metal will never die. It's our sworn duty. If anybody out there reading this is looking to come to Calgary hit us up and let's set up a show! Or a tour!

AU: Where do we find you online?

F: We recently launched our first official website, thanks to the awesome skills of our very own drummer Lucas. There you can find our online store and links to all of our music and music videos. (flashback-yyc.com) We are also very active with our social media accounts through instagram & Facebook. Fuck it - subscribe to our YouTube channel while you're at and go check out our new music video for "Spirit Ripper". Look us up!

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THE PENSKÉ FILE

Half Glow

Interview with Vocalist and Guitarist Travis Miles

By Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Who do I have the pleasure of speaking with?

The Penske File: Hey, this is Travis (vocals and guitar)

AU: Where are The Penske File from?

TPF: *The Penske File* is from Burlington and Hamilton Ontario

AU: How's your local music scene?

TPF: Growing up we caught the tail end of a very cool all ages music scene in Burlington which has a large part to do with our inspiration to start playing punk rock together at a young age. Today, things have mostly shifted to Hamilton and there are many great artists, friends, bands and venues that call Hamilton home. For many reasons, it is a great place to live as a musician.

AU: Where does the band name come from?

TPF: All throughout middle school and high school we played together in a ska punk band called *The Bad Names*. As our tastes and style



shifted a bit we decided to rename the band while we were in Grade 12. Our best pal and late second guitarist Chris came up with a list of about 10 or 12 names. After a brief stint entertaining the idea of changing our band name to *FM Sharks*, and then *Exercise Tiger*, we resolved that *The Penske File* was the name we disagreed upon the least. It's a reference to a famous (and hilarious) Seinfeld episode. It's also the name of a *Kid Dynamite*

song. Both of those truths were highly appealing to us 13 years ago, and I suppose still are to this day.

AU: Can you tell us a bit about your upcoming album Half Glow on Stomp Records?

TPF: We wrote most of the record amidst a fairly demanding touring schedule, supporting our last record, *Salvation*. In between tours we holed up for days in our practice space or Drive Studios to hash out ideas. We wrote more songs for this record than any record we ever have before. Some things got in the way of its completion: multiple robberies, a global pandemic and delays with recording to name a few. In an unforeseen way, such circumstances gave the band a little bit of a welcome break and we are all absolutely buzzing to get back out there with the new album.

AU: Do you feel that the new album deviates lyrically or musically from your previous records?

TPF: For sure. If it didn't that would be lame. It still very much reflects us as individuals and a band. People change constantly and I feel like their music should too. On *Half Glow*, there is more contrast and confusion involved, somehow. Sentimental hangovers respond to sentimental parties.

AU: Who or what are your biggest influences lyrically?

TPF: Personally, lyrics mean a lot to me when it comes to the music I attach to. I find that most often I write about the things that I have a hard time understanding or digesting in a tangible way: big feelings, small feelings, the way I interpret other human beings navigating the world, the ways in which I can't understand

STOMP RECORDS

how to navigate it myself. Things that are abstract in my rational brain find their way into my music.

AU: Where did your last tour take you?

TPF: We haven't played outside of Canada for more than a few gigs at a time since before Covid, and are excited to change that once *Half Glow* makes its way into the world.

thepenskefile.net

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STOMP RECORDS



DOGHOUSE ROSE

Unlearn

Interview by Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Hello! Who am I speaking with and what are your responsibilities within the band?

Doghouse Rose: Sarah Beth Rose- Lead Vocals and rhythm guitar, Jefferson Sheppard-Bass, Garrick Zagerman- lead guitar Jordan Zagerman- Drums

AU: Where's Doghouse Rose from?

DR(G): We're all from different places around the country but the band was formed and operates in Toronto.

AU: What does the name of the band mean?

DR(S): A Doghouse Rose is the flower you bring your partner as an apology to get out of the

"doghouse" when you've messed up. Also we just thought it sounded cool.

AU: Can you tell us a little bit about the sound of your band?

DR(S): We have a pretty wide range of influences. If I were to boil it down it would be melodic punk rock with a vintage feel. Kind of *No Doubt* meets *NOFX*.

AU: Who are your favourite female artists of all time?

DR: There's been a



lot of unsung hero's through the years. It's hard to narrow down but to name a few Debbie Harry, Gwen Stephanie, Phoebe Bridges, Pauline Black, Ella Fitzgerald, and every spice girl, especially Sporty.

AU: You have a new album coming out soon on Stomp Records called *Unlearn*, correct? Anything specific that you would like to share about it?

DR(S): It's definitely a super collaborative record. We all put a lot of ourselves into the songwriting. It gets super personal and vulnerable at times but we aimed to load it up with bangers as well. This was the first recorded with our current lineup and everything just lined up and felt right.

AU: Have there been any lineup changes within the band since the last time we spoke a couple of years ago?

DR(J): At a family event, Garrick and I met each other again after not seeing each

other since we were kids. The timing of it felt very serendipitous because we were looking for a new guitar player at the time. The first time we all jammed together we wrote the first song for the new record. Before the end of the rehearsal we all knew this was it.

AU: Has the Doghouse Rose been embracing the lack of Covid restrictions and playing lots of shows?

DR(J): We're definitely a road warrior band. We're stoked to be back out there doing what we love best. We've hit the ground running, touring across Canada and Europe and are really excited to push into new areas with this new record.

AU: Do you guys have any upcoming tour plans that you would like to talk about?

DR(J): We're currently finishing up an Ontario Quebec run with our label mates and long time friends *Raygun Cowboys* and have a fall Euro tour in the works.

AU: What is something completely unique that sets your band apart from others?

DR(S): Perhaps the sheer amount of sweat we produce during a show. We bring every ounce of energy we have to every performance. But ultimately I'd say it's our bond as a unit. We're a little family and I think that comes through in the music.

AU: How do people find you online?

DR(G): We've got a new video out for the first single of the album on YouTube starring our friend Jacob and a hot dog. We're really active on Instagram and you can find all our music on bandcamp or any streaming platform.

AU: Thanks for taking the time to answer these questions.

Thanks for hanging out with us. See you in the pit!

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Nonny

Non-Alcoholic Craft Beer

Mix In a Nonny

Interview by Bobby Barrel

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what is your hidden talent?

Nonny Beer: We're chatting with Lane Matkovich - one half of Nonny Beer. Hidden talent? I'm pretty good at skipping rocks.

AU: What was the genesis of Nonny Beer and what is your mission statement?

NB: My brother and I have talked about starting businesses since we were kids, but never found the idea or timing to make the jump. After we realized drinking a ton of beers all the time wasn't quite aligning with our personal goals, we set out to bring a non-alcoholic beer brand to life. We truly created Nonny to scratch our own itch. We want Nonny to be the beer brand to change people's mind about non-alcoholic beers.

AU: How long have you been involved in the world of brewing?

NB: Prior to jumping into Nonny full time, Leigh worked with a small brewery in Vancouver for five years on the sales and marketing side of the business. I couldn't be further from brewing specifically as I was in e-commerce, but we're both big beer fans. We're also no strangers to making pretty funky at home ferments.

AU: Why is a non-alcoholic option an important part of the drinking process?

NB: For the longest time I didn't get it. That was

until I started trying out some of the newer non-alcoholic beers, and having them in my fridge. All of a sudden I realized I could be just as content with an after work beer being non-alcoholic rather than some of my other go to beers. Making such a small change ended up leading to a big impact. On a night out I realized I could alternate beers leading to a much easier morning. On the other end, it made it a lot easier to opt out completely and make that

Saturday a whole lot more productive. Drinking is a huge part of our culture, and if we're able to give people a great option to mitigate the downsides, or stop completely, I think that's a big win.

AU: What are some of the types of non-alcoholic beer you produce?

NB: We currently have two styles - a Czech Pilsner and a Pale Ale. We also released a Dark Lager recently as a seasonal, and we'll be looking to do more of that throughout the year.

PALE ALE | TROPICAL & JUICY

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AU: Any unique brewing secrets you can share? What is the difference in how alcoholic and non-alcoholic beer is brewed?

NB: A lot of the larger breweries use methods that require brewing full-strength beers, then strip the alcohol out using different equipment. For us we wanted to keep things traditional, and simple. We brew using all natural beer ingredients, and brew with some tweaks to work towards a beer that's under 0.5% and maintains a high quality.

AU: Where are you located? Can people stop by to sample your beer?

NB: We brew our beer with some great partners in Alberta that have a wealth of experience with non-alcoholic brewing which is hard to come by.

That said, Leigh and I are based in Vancouver, and focused on growing non-alcoholic beer in BC.

AU: Where is Nonny currently available?

NB: You can find a list of our great partners on our website, or available for purchase online as well! www.nonny.beer/pages/find-us

AU: Do you plan to attend any events this summer like the Great Canadian Beer Festival?

NB: We'll be traveling to Fernie to support the Fernie Gravel Grind, and we'll definitely be supporting local events here in Vancouver and across BC. For the most up to date information, follow us on instagram! @nonny.beer




Grodziskie

The champagne of Poland!

By Daniel Van Netten

Grodziskie was nicknamed "Polish champagne," by Napoleon and the name stuck. The style originated in 15th century in a town called Grodzisk Wielkopolski. The beer style is primarily

made of oak smoked wheat malt with a higher attenuation yeast. The sweetness of the smoke and oak character lend to a very refreshing beverage. The beer style is light in colour, highly carbonated, mild hop bitterness, and served in a tall glass. During the Second World War, Nazis confiscated Polish breweries and produced a low alcohol lager to support troops against the Russian front. After the Second World War, Poland was handed to Russia and became a satellite state. Under communism, brewery production was nationalized by The Polish Peoples Republic. In Poland, currently, three breweries own 80 percent of the market. With the production of lager, the last brewery brewing Grodziskie ended in 1993. The style was kept alive by home brewers, trying hard to keep cultural identity alive. In recent years there has been an explosion of craft breweries throughout Poland. Historically, Poland was a country that in the Middle Ages, had thousands of small breweries. I had made Grodziskie three times before going to Poland in



January 2020. We went to many breweries and the style was undermined; "Grodziskie tastes like hot dog water", "we make hazy IPA", "American style beer". It seemed IPA is dominant in the craft beer scene,

but maybe one day Grodziskie will make a comeback. I found Grodziskie at a tourist shop in Warsaw, a city where the identity was almost erased, but from the ashes...Grodziskie! "The champagne of Poland!"

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John Maxwell Tattoos



plans to re-establish yourself as a tattoo artist again once you get settled?

HJ: Starting back in the east will be a lot of work. Lots of amazing artists! I'll be starting out with the Toronto Tattoo Convention, then a guest spot at Good Point Tattoos in Oakville, Ontario June 20,21,22,24. Followed by sometime in Bancroft, Ontario at The Painted Lady Parlour July 1-9. Hopefully some more guest spots to announce soon.

AU: What do you know about John Maxwell, the artist who will be replacing you at Urge when you leave?

HJ: John seems like an incredibly talented artist with a specialization in realism, which I think will be a great addition to Urge's range of tattoo styles available.



Farewell Hansom Jeff!

Bidding Urge Farewell after Ten Years

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are your skillz to pay the billz?

Hansome Jeff: I'm Jeff! Some know me as Hansom Jeff, a tattoo artist specializing in geometric and ornamental tattoo designs.

AU: How did you get your start as a tattoo artist?

HJ: I got my start at Waycool Tattoos in Oakville Ontario under the mentorship of Bert Jackson.

AU: How long were you an artist at Urge Studios?

HJ: I have been at Urge for a little over a decade and leaving this tattoo family will be tough. But with parents getting older and grandkids growing up it was time to exit the west coast.

AU: What are your



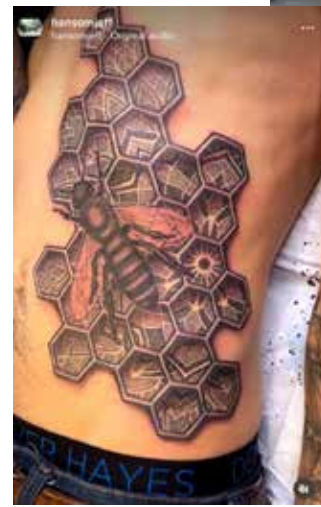
AU: What are some of your fondest memories of working at Urge?

HJ: Some of my best memories from Urge will include conventions, Urge parties (Urgies), the laughs, the tears. We supported each other in all facets of life. We are family! Not just a bunch of artists working in a shop.

AU: Is it true that you were voted "Best Kisser" two years in a row at Urge?

HJ: Best kisser two years in a row! I'm sure it could be more. But a gentleman doesn't kiss and tell.

@hansomjeff



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Stop It, You're Killing Me! (Or, "Horrible Things are Happening to my Body!")

By Vince D'Amato

Last issue we talked about body horror, which *Re-Animator* director Stuart Gordon had described as "your body betraying you in horrifying ways" (I'm paraphrasing a little from his introduction to the book *The Mammoth Book of Body Horror* which sort of translates to your body suddenly getting a mind of its own and taking over of its own accord – which is indeed a terrifying notion... and something that also prompted me to think about a wholly different kind of body-involved horror (as it's not quite philosophically firmly within the ideas behind the Body horror sub-genre); this would be more along the lines of "Horrible Things are Happening to my Body" directly due to some horrifying outside force – such as maniacs, monsters, or demons from hell. I'd honestly consider what happened to David in the John Landis classic *An American Werewolf in London* a significant contribution to this particular canon; witnessing that monstrous transformation for the first time was pretty intense. For decades, Universal Studios kept Rick Baker's brilliant practical effects work on display for tourists. But there's something inherently intense in seeing a character's body go through an agonizing transformation, be it via a full moon, or a cannibalistic maniac with railroad spikes and a sledge hammer. This is not the body betraying itself, but rather, some pretty evil people and/or forces twisting bodies for their (and our) own horror entertainment – and here, these visceral scenes of horror and agony can go on in length for some time, far longer than most of the "creative kills" that usually populate slasher franchises, but not exactly long enough to be tagged as Torture Porn. No, these horrifying experiments in cinematic body modification had been going on for decades before the term Torture Porn was even coined in the early 2000's. We begin with David Cronenberg, who's key films would go on to define cinematic body horror from the mid-seventies into the late-nineties.

Shivers / They Came from Within (1975)

Before he gave us his brilliant body-horror vampire film *Rabid*, David Cronenberg delivered his first feature film to a wholly unsuspecting audience in the mid-70s; *Shivers* concerns some gory biology-



run-amuck, a theme he stuck to and pushed boundaries in for years afterward; but here in *Shivers*, the biological horror comes to form as infectious swarms of violent body-parasites, maggot-type things that invade the plethora of human tenants in a high-rise, turning the victims/hosts into mindless sexual puppets. Shortly after *Shivers*, Cronenberg would shift into his own brand of full-blown body horror philosophy with Marilyn Chambers in *Rabid*, and continue down this path with *The Brood*, *Videodrome*, and *The Fly*.



This is the Brian DePalma film that put him on the map, his first that would trigger a life-long career obsession with exploring madness and sexuality in highly stylized horror/thriller contexts, leading to his trilogy of utterly brilliant 80s psycho-sexual thrillers *Dressed to Kill*, *Blow Out*, and *Body Double*. In this early-career film from DePalma, Margot Kidder plays twin sisters with seemingly minor body deformities and deceptively minor mental health issues... until after one gory murder, these details are revealed to be anything but minor – and are in fact the product of some serious experimental tampering by a group of underground doctors and nurses, revealed through a brilliantly extended third act. *Sisters* is firmly in my top-five DePalma picks of all time.

Leatherface: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre III (1990)

Prolific horror-movie-sequel director Jeff Burr directed this low-budget and slightly clumsy, yet overall entertaining, sequel for New Line Cinema smack in the middle of their *Nightmare on Elm Street* horror explosion. But when protagonists Kate Hodge, William Butler, and Ken Foree (Dawn of the Dead) run afoul of Leatherface himself, director Jeff Burr amps up and lingers on the gory violence for so long that the film had to be cut down by several minutes to get an R-rating for its theatrical release. The violence that Tobe Hooper cleverly only alluded to in his original creation turns wildly explicit in Burr's capable, if slightly less confident, hands.



The Dentist & The Dentist 2: Brace Yourself (1996 & 1998)

More mayhem from the trio behind *Re-Animator* and *From Beyond* – and like Cronenberg's *Shivers*, these two films were recently re-released through Lionsgate Films' nostalgia/retro Blu-ray resurgence label Vestron Video. Director Brian Yuzna's double-punch of this anxiety-inducing mad dentist concept is for the most part clever and a little more artistic than expected, and with an original script by Stuart Gordon and Dennis Paoli you already know that you're going to be in for something of a gore-show before you even start in on the films. What's really clever, though, is the plotting and pacing that this creative trio hammered out for the first film, and I have to give Yuzna credit for making the sequel, *Brace Yourself* into a valiant attempt at over-the-top mad doctor horror (without Gordon or Paoli). As a director, Yuzna has an undeniable talent for delivering wildly entertaining horror sequels – and incidentally, Vestron also re-released other Yuzna and Gordon/Paoli films which together make a great horror-night line-up, including *Return of the Living Dead 3*, *Beyond Re-Animator*, and *Dagon*.



Irreversible (2002)

Gaspar Noe's infamous turn at cinematic ultra-violence continues to be controversial, even within the realm of transgressive cinema and two decades later. It helped usher in the "French Horror New Wave" in the early 2000's (alongside the aforementioned "torture porn" category.) The much-talked-about (and much-walked-out-on) 12-minute rape and battery scene in the middle of the film changed French cinema forever, and seeing the charming Monica Bellucci placed in this situation is both horrifying and uncomfortable. Yet the integrity of Noe's vision catapults this seemingly self-reflexive "revenge" film onto a weirdly transcendent level of its own. His philosophical aspirations go beyond mere transgressive cinema here.

The People Under the Stairs (1991)

This horror satire is one of my all-time favourite Wes Craven films, about a pair of psychotic landlords who kidnap teenagers from low-rent slums and keep them hostage in their mansion of horrors and maze-like crawlspaces. The only "daughter" is abused into obedience, and so is acceptable to them. The boys however, are nothing but endless headaches, and so instead

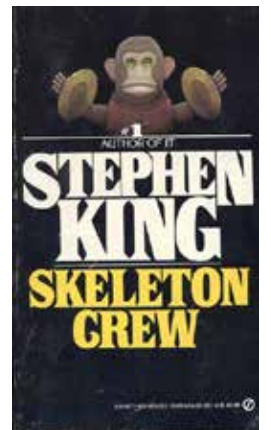
of dispatching them permanently, the "parents" (played to comedic perfection by the 1990's *Twin Peaks* couple Everett McGill and Wendy Robie) relegate them all to a prison under the stairs, transforming them into sub-human cave-like monstrosities in their light-less captivity. Oh, and the film is steeped in social and racial allegory which is still relevant today. Definitely a minor masterpiece from the late horror auteur.

Raw Meat/Death Line (1972)

Gary Sherman's early British horror film is sort of a companion piece to the sub-human slum-monsters of *The People Under the Stairs*, this time the "monsters" are (or were) people in poverty who ended up living in the closed-off subterranean tunnels of a decommissioned tube line of the London Underground. These people go about capturing unsuspecting Underground commuters for their hinted-at and implied cannibalistic motives. Thematically, *Raw Meat* shares more common ground with another Wes Craven horror masterpiece, *The Hills Have Eyes*, but stylistically it's in a separate category, with a far more hip-looking British art-house/exploitation style concentered in the early 70's. *Raw Meat* would have certainly been a little much for the traditional Hammer Horror studio in London, which was producing the comedy-horror-lite *Dracula A.D. 1972* (also with Christopher Lee) in the same time period.

"Survivor Type" (by Stephen King, from his book "Skeleton Crew", 1985)

Of course, there is no way I could have signed off here without mentioning what is likely the most infamous short story Stephen King has ever written in his lengthy and celebrated career. "Survivor Type" concerns a lone starving man stranded on a desert island, who must resort to cannibalism – only there's no one else on the island other than him. This horrifying tale can be found alongside other tales of Body and Mind modification in his book *Skeleton Crew*. Enjoy!



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Darkside Releasing Presents

The Black Forest (A Mata Negra)

By Vince D'Amato

Hello, horror and indie-horror fans, I'm extremely happy to have the opportunity here to share with you my own personal favourite thing about distributing horror movies – being able to check out some seriously cool, edgy, independent and underground horror films. This issue, I've selected producer Mayra Alarcón, and director Rodrigo Aragão's *The Black Forest* (A Mata Negra), a bona-fide stand-out in Brazilian horror and an award-winning splatter-horror festival film which was co-produced through the Blood Window initiative from Argentina, a horror-cinema organization designed to help fund and produce horror films by South American filmmakers. We came across this organization during the Cannes Film Festival back in 2018 when the film was being screened along with nine other Blood Window films for the film market part of Cannes. We were extremely lucky to have been able to find producer Mayra Alarcón through this market screening, and have recently re-released



4 more of her and director Rodrigo Aragão's early films including *Dark Sea*, *Dark Swamp*, and *Night of the Chupacabra*.

Set in the woods in the heart of Brazil, *The Black Forest* concerns Carla, a young woman who sees her life descend into utter bloody chaos – as well as the lives of everyone around her – when she finds the Lost Book of Cipriano, whose magic, besides granting power and wealth to whoever possesses it, then releases an apocalyptic evil upon the Earth from somewhere in the depths of hell. After she accidentally unleashes the demonic powers of the book, her entire world suddenly veers into blood-splattered pandemonium as Carla now resorts to casting one Satanic rite after another in her desperation to fix a long corpse-strewn trail of missteps, played to bloody and hilarious effect, which caused *The Black Forest* to quickly become dubbed "The Brazilian Evil Dead". And yes, this film is exactly as funny, gory, and entertaining as I'm trying to make it out to be – or hopefully have made it out to be. Much like Sam Raimi's *The Evil Dead* and its sequels, it's all played completely straight by the actors, which elevates this film into a kind of delirious kick-ass horror territory, which even got *The Black Forest* to end up on one of *Bloody Disgusting's* top-ten horror lists of 2019. Check it out!

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PINERIPPER

Home-brewed, Saskatchewan-Flavoured Metal

Interview by Brady Tighe

AU: Who are we talking to and what are your skills to pay the bills?

You're talking to *Pineripper* from Saskatchewan! Fuck paying the bills, we're here to talk about music!

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

The only three metalheads from the Moosomin area started jamming together, later a drummer showed up, then we stumbled across a bassist.

AU: Who else is in the band?

Kent: Self induced larynx destruction, tech, and production

Mike: Flip beak hats, relentless riffs, and solo shredding

Derek: Precision, timing, and fingering

Spencer: Brown notes, good vibrations, and backing vocals

Bryce: Garlic bread cremation, cymbal cracking, and skin smashing

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

Kent: Heavy, filthy, violent, comforting, and honest.

Derek: *Pineripper* is home-brewed, Saskatchewan-flavoured metal; it's loud, it's heavy, it's the real deal! We're more like a shot of strong whiskey than everyone's cup of tea! So far, each song has evolved into something a little different than the ones before it, making them a little harder to nail down to a specific genre, but making them all distinctly *Pineripper*!

Bryce: I don't think we even know. We take influence from every corner of metal. I guess it's like when you mix all the paints together and end up with brown. That's what we are, Saskatchewan sludge!

AU: Why isn't there a fiddle in the band?

Derek: Do you know how hard it is to find a heavy metal fiddle-player? We only had one person show up for an audition. He could really shred, but his fiddle sounded terrible. He told us it was made of gold (we thought it was just spray paint) and that he'd won it in some contest in Georgia back in '79. He was always mumbling something about beating the devil so we decided to let him go...

AU: What is the scene like in Saskatchewan?

Kent: The scene is; we can see for 100km in every direction and we're the only thing here!

Bryce: We are kind of disconnected from the "scene" due to where we live and being that we formed during covid, but we're working on becoming more involved with the city scenes and helping to spread distortion across Saskatchewan and beyond. Regina has a great promoter (shout-out Zandra!) who has done a fantastic job of bringing metal to the community. It's pretty wild getting to see bands like *Mayhem*, *Vader*, *Primitive Man*, *Soufly* and many more in a small ass club in the middle of the prairies. Saskatchewan has also produced some homegrown heavy hitters, with bands like *Into Eternity*, *Shooting Guns*, *Planet Eater*, and *LavaGoat* all holding their own on any stage. Saskatchewan hillbillies know how to tear shit up!

AU: What's the smallest town you've played a show in?

SASKATCHEWAN SLAUGHTER

Smallest town would be Moosomin, with around 2500 people. If we can include villages, then Togo would be the smallest, coming in at 86 residents.

AU: Does the band's van/car/truck have a cool name?

Bryce: No cool names, but a trailer we used had a bent axle which caused it to swerve violently down the highway!

Derek: The truck we've been using was already coincidentally & conveniently badged as a "Power Wagon," so I guess when we have the trailer in tow...it could be considered A Vulgar Display of Power Wagon?!?!?

AU: What is a *Pineripper*? Besides a sick band name.

Spencer: A pretty sick band!

Kent: A sick band! -Spencer

Derek: It's not what Urban Dictionary would have you believe, for no mere dictionary can define it... It's also a chainsaw.

Bryce: My wife told me it sounds like a tree-fart.

AU: What's the last perfect record you listened to?

Kent: Dopesmoker by *Electric Wizard*

Mike: The Blackening by *Machine Head*

Derek: Winter Kills by *DevilDriver*

Spencer: Illusions by *Borealis*

Bryce: Nocel by *Furia*

AU: What's the weirdest thing you've seen in public recently?

Spencer: A lady being gently escorted out of the Regina Costco while screaming at the top of her lungs how she couldn't get a \$50 refund from the "rich fucks running the place!"

Derek: Kent.

Bryce: A bunch of dudes trying to be a metal band in cowboy country?! I also saw the remains of a rabbit torn to pieces by coyotes in my back lane the other day.

AU: What's your least favourite song by a good band?

Kent: Stairway

Derek: This is the toughest question yet for some reason. Totally drawing a blank, can't think of one off the top of my head, but I'm sure there are lots. So in summary, "The Mechanix" by *Megadeth*.

Bryce: Derek, the question said "by a good band..."

Spencer: "Archetype" *Dark Tranquility*

Mike: Anything from *Metallica* from St. Anger on.

AU: If you could hire anyone to do your album art, who would you pick?

Kent: Whoever did Holy Diver.

Mike: Someone who knows their way around heavy metal flake and pinstripes.

Derek: Todd McFarlane / Greg Capullo.

Spencer: Jill's mom.

Bryce: Kerbcrawlerghost without a doubt. Anyone not familiar should check him out. Pushead, Malleus, K3N, and Dan Seagrave would all be mint as well!

AU: Anything else to promote?

We are releasing a few singles throughout the summer, so watch for those. There are also some videos from the first *Pineripper* live show on youtube to checkout. Keep an eye on our socials for upcoming performances, hit us up if you're looking to get some Saskatchewan sludge in your ears!

AU: Any final words for our readers?

Prepare your fuckin' necks! *Pineripper* is best enjoyed LOUD, so crank it up, check it out, and tell all of your friends!

AU: How do people find you online?

www.pineripper.com

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TAXI GIRLS

Coming Up Roses

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you best known for?

Vera: Hi! We're *Taxi Girls*, a three-piece female power trio from Montreal - relatively new to the scene and eager to be a part of it. Already known for our catchy hooks, vocal melodies, buzzing guitars, double-tap drums, and more!

Jamie: We are new! So we aren't known for much yet, but that will change very soon! We got a lot of fun music coming up quickly here!

AU: Give us a brief history of your band, who is in the band and what are you all about?

Lynn: Jamie and I used to play in *Pale Lips* together and that project faded out slowly with covid. My guitarist from *Dirty Cheetah* told me to check out this band *Wshr/Dryr* that was a two piece band with a drummer friend I knew very well, and fell on Vera who I thought looked so cool and had to meet her. Messaged her and a year later here we are.

J: We love making and playing music!

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.



instruments very well, their sound, their equipment and honestly we are in very good hands.

J: Montreal is like a breeding ground for good music. There is definitely something in the water here that sprouts the creative process. There are always lots of great bands rolling through town, and a lot of great smaller venues (Turbo Haus, L'Escogriffe) and collectives (Les Insoumises) that keep the scene alive.

AU: Have you released an album recently? Tell us about it! What can we expect to hear?

V: Our debut EP *Coming Up Roses* is out on vinyl and cassette on July 7th. It's 5 tracks - some punk and some roll, definitely something for everyone. People can expect a fresh take on summer

V: High energy punk and roll.

L: It's a mix of everything we like in music.

AU: Where is your band from and what is the music scene like there?

V: We're from Montreal where the music scene is very much alive. We get to play with such a diverse bunch of bands and artists, which really helps the creative process along! We're always getting inspired every time we play a show.

L: We are surrounded by amazing artists who know their

sounds with high energy - the perfect album for summer road trips to the beach!

AU: Does the new album explore any particular themes or topics?

V: There's a mix of themes - but off the top of my head: situationships, re-claiming your power, winter blues transformed into angsty longing for summer days, Roe vs. Wade and body ownership, and of course...love!

AU: Any stand-out tracks you are stoked on?

V: Is it bad to say every single one?

L: They are all pretty unique and different hard to really pick and choose one to be honest. "Hands Off," might be one that sticks out to me.

J: I also kind of love them all. I would probably say my favorite is "After Effect" - but I truly love them all.

AU: What record label will your album be coming out on? How did that come about?

J: Our record will be coming out on Wild Honey (Italy) and the tape will be coming out on Dirt Cult.

AU: Any tours or festival plans for this summer?

J: We're going to take our show on the road next year. It's pretty hard to tour without any material to support you. We are looking forward to heading to new places - hopefully touring in the US and of course, heading back to Europe with Otis Tours in 2024!

AU: What should we know about you that we

MONTREAL MASSACRE

don't already? Anything else to promote?

V: We're all really different and that makes for the best kind of music. We've got different musical backgrounds and tastes which I think really adds to how fresh our sound is. Not sure when this is going to be printed but we should have both of our singles out with accompanying videos! "Sunshine" and "After Effect", check 'em out!

J: We are working hard, writing as much as we can at the moment. We are hoping to get together some new stuff for you in the new year! Keep your eye on

our socials - you won't be disappointed.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

V: If you've been yearning for the resurgence of the glory days of music, which is anything before the weird 2000's in my humble opinion, then your call has been answered. It's still totally cool and worth it to be in a band. It's a lot of hard work and you only really see the fun parts from the outsiders perspective, but never let that get in your way. I truly believe that you gotta dream big!

J: Green Day is and always will be a power pop band.

AU: How do people find you online?

J: @taxigirlsmontreal is our thing! Don't go googling *Taxi Girls* too much - you'll find something else entirely.

@taxigirlsmontreal



Photo Credit: Kidd Gloves

WAX MANNEQUIN

The Red Brain

Interview with Chris Adeney

By Ira Hunter and B.A. Johnston

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

Wax Mannequin: You're talking to Chris / Wax Mannequin. People tell different stories about my stuff so I'm not sure which is the most current. There was a few years I wore a lit candle on my head when I did shows. The wax went down my face and everywhere. Still do this once or twice a year on special nights.

AU: Give us a brief history of Wax Mannequin

WM: I recorded my album on Fostex cassette 4 track in 98/99. Released in 2000. It was a scratchy psych-folk record. Then a pal started putting on shows for me in Hamilton. Another friend started booking my tours around the country. I had a lot of social anxiety in the early days so I'd hand out stamp cards to people at my shows. You get points for coming. If you get enough points you get a super power. The powers were pretty ridiculous – like "Moon In Your Basement – this super power lets you harness the force of the moon which will be in your basement". Another power let you turn into a robot for one hour every morning. That one was called "Morning it the Best Time."

Eventually I stopped doing the points thing because it was just too much for me. I did plenty of other weird stuff. Always with the music and the shows though. I toured pretty much non-stop between 2001 and 2010. Canada and Europe mostly. Australia. Now I usually do one or two

tours a year, festivals and shows in between. More band and less solo/one-man these days, but I still do that too. I put out eight records and some EPs & singles on my own or with different labels. They're all good but my newest record is the best. Lots of strange rock, disturbing art-folk stuff + devious performance antics over the years. I keep doing.

AU: Describe your sound and lyrics if possible.

WM: No, ya, no. Lots of sides to the sound. I won't waste too much of our time describing it. Others are better at doing so. I like big abrasive smashing rock and warm, unwholesome embrace words. Scott Walker + Vic Chesnutt + King Crimson + Dio

AU: Have you released

an album recently? Tell us about it! What can we expect to hear? -Does the new album explore any particular themes or topics? -Any stand-out tracks you are stoked on?

WM: My new record is called *The Red Brain*. My music jumps around a bit stylistically – prog / gypsy folk / art-punk / absurdist stadium metal...other stuff & non of the above. I've always been about content/lyrics more than style, but it always sounds like me. Unshakable melodies, craft, weird words that punch you in the neck and spine in a nice way. The new record is about having a strange brain, about being all grown up & about gracefully transitioning to a delirious future when we're all long gone but somehow music is remembered. The album gives subtle nods to each of my previous ones. It's kind of a gateway drug to my older stuff. Stand out tracks: "Red Brain," "Obelisk," "Reasons," "Wrong About You." Those are some of the bangers/pop ones. There are subtler, weirder ones on there too that I like just as well.

AU: Sex, Drugs, or Rock 'n' Roll? Or all of the above?

WM: This, that, the other thing, I suppose.

AU: What's your favourite submarine sandwich shop in town and what's your go to order?

WM: Atlantic Submarines 212 John Street South. Gyro Sub. Smelly, saucy. All the things on it. Especially all the sauces.

AU: You ever wear shorts on stage. If not, why not? How hot would it have to be to get you to wear them on stage.

WM: Never done that but I could probably rock some cut off Wrangler jean shorts pretty

effectively. No temperature restrictions. Bring me the shorts and ask nice. Extra frayed and dangling.

AU: You are trapped in a hotel for 24 hours alone with a VCR. What tapes you bringing?

WM: The Video Dead, The Quiet Earth, Read All About It (old TVO show) and Degraasi series

AU: How do you get to shows? Describe your band ride.

WM: 2012 KIA Rio. Has CD player. Only a bit rusty and sunroof usually works.

Any upcoming shows or tours?

WM: Yea lots. Ontario and west Canada mostly. Record launch tour.

Uxbridge, Springtide Festival on June 10
Toronto, Dakota on June 24

Peterborough, June 27, Theater on King
Windsor, July 8, Phog Lounge

Toronto, Music on the River, July 14

Hamilton, Casbah, July 15

London, Palasade Socialbowl, July 21

Guelph, Hillside Festival, July 29

Touring west in August – lots of dates still coming together.

Fort St. James BC - Music on the Mountain festival
Aug 19

Thunder Bay, Tumblestone Festival .. lots of shows around then

HAM JAMMERS

AU: What should we know about you that we don't already? Anything else to promote?

The Red Brain on vinyl is delayed because of world economic turmoil. It'll be out soon. It can be pre-ordered from my bandcamp or my label,



Photo Credit: Keegan Richard

Coax. Candles (shaped like my face), sometimes with music inside shirts with pictures and words on them.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

I hope not.

Insta: @wax_mannequin

facebook.com/waxmannequin

waxmannequin.bandcamp.com



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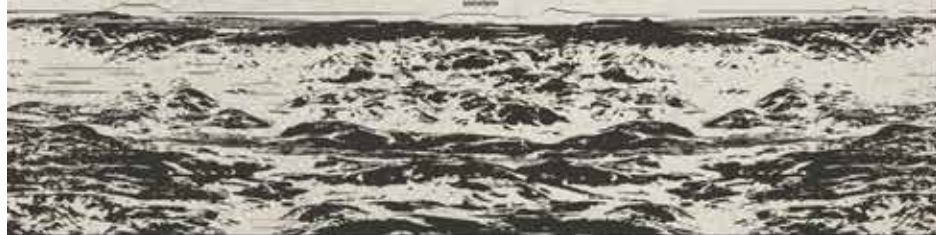
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Punks in Recovery

By Gregorio "Crusty Craig" Lewis

Greetings from Mexico my friends. I am grateful to be here with you in Absolute Underground. The past two months have been quite an adventure. Thankfully, a good adventure can result in wisdom for change.

Here are five things I learned over the past two months:

#1) As much as there are many bad people in the world, there are also many good people. It is fair to say that I've been judgmental of a lot of people because I automatically believed, based on the traumatic experiences that I have survived, that I couldn't trust anybody. I'm probably not the only person out there who has felt this way and I'm also probably not the only person out there who has had this belief obstruct their progress, happiness and peace. I definitely understand and respect why I thought the way I did but I also recognize that it is time for me to make a change. So I'm opening myself up a little bit more. I'm

trying to be less of an asshole and more open to others when they show me that they have interest in me or what I do and/or if they're being kind to me. I hope the people reading these words right now who understand this reality suffer less than I have in the learning process to become happier and to get better.

#2) Being a punk rocker or a human rights activist or a feminist or a survivor or a mental health advocate does not automatically make you a good person. Critical thinking matters. I identify as a punk rocker, a human rights activist, a leftist, a survivor and a mental health/trauma recovery advocate, and I do want my actions to support liberation for all and I do wholeheartedly believe in equity as a foundational concept for a better society. Trying to walk your talk is important, however accepting that myself, and all of you and everyone in the world will fail is part of being human. I believe that if you make a mistake or an error in judgment, that you should try to make it better. The good guys and the bad guys are sometimes the same guys.

#3) I openly identify my politics as being left, however I find myself constantly disappointed to the point of feeling betrayed by the communities that I feel most connected to ideologically. It's fair to say that life is hard for more or less everybody these days. It truly takes a real degree of compassion to stand up for marginalized and vulnerable people; however, personally speaking; for me no one is free until all are free. I'm concerned that this truth has been forgotten in our current human rights activist climate. It is fair to acknowledge that this climate is partially if not predominantly rooted in privilege.

#4) If someone needs help, help them if you can.

#5) Being a punk rocker for life truly has equipped me with tools with which to survive in a way that seems that most members of western society don't have in their toolbox. For all the people who agree with this previous sentence, I love and respect you because you had to learn this the hard way. They will better understand what I mean when I, and many of us say "Punk Rock

Saved My Life".

Thank you to Absolute Underground for caring about me and for allowing me to share something of value, hopefully, with all of you.

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Structured / Abstraction





Can your Pussy do the Cock?

by Billy Hopeless

Ok, so I'm just walking the dog on my home turf of Gastown, Vancouver, and as always reading the writing on the wall. I spot a gig poster that reads Kitty and the Rooster and shows a depiction of a female with a cat head and a male with a rooster head. Of course, my dirty mind smiles and I'm intrigued to search out more info on this cock and pussy duo, thinking if nothing else I'll be able to put the words cock and pussy in print more times than the golden age of Penthouse or Hen House magazine, in this case Forum. Turns out Kitty and the Rooster are a twang reverb filled surf garage cluck and meow duo from right here in Vancouver composed of minimalist drummer Jodie Ponto and guitarist Noah Walker. Upon receiving this interview, the duo responded, "Well these are the best clucking interview questions ever! I wish everyone wrote questions like this!" That's right you bunch of sick sub-genre barnstormers, Billy Hopeless is the cat's meow, a peck above the rest, and is proud to present the Kitty and the Rooster, or as I call it "The Cock and Pussy show!"

Billy Hopeless: So first off which came first the Cock or the Pussy? How did you get together and form this feathered feline garage-a-Billy rock and roll duo?

Kitty & Rooster: Kitty & The Rooster is the product of a love affair in a soggy tent during a very rainy music fest in Wells, BC. A few years after our fest-mance we started to get to that point in a relationship where you either need to have a baby or start a rock band. We picked band.

BH: So why did you decided and do you remain a Duo? Is it because it's cheaper and you don't have to share the chicken feed and catnip or is it because you can't find an asshole you like to play bass?

K&R: Being in a couple duo has several benefits:

1. You don't have to pay a band
2. Touring is much easier because we fit into one car and one bed.
3. You always have someone to hook up with after the show!

BH: Now you already have your first album "One Gig Hard Drive" out and you're just releasing the follow up "Ain't Pussyfootin' Around" on June 9th. Tell us about the recording process and what we can expect from the second litter of hatchlings? Who's putting it out and will it be on Vinyl?

K&R: The new album *Ain't Pussyfootin' Around* picks up where the first one left off. It has ten more ridiculous tales of being in an unknown Canadian band. The album was recorded in Cumberland BC at Hidden Well Studio with Corwin Fox. We have recorded both of our albums with him and we can't imagine ever going anywhere else because it is the best recording experience ever. This time we treated ourselves to a couple extra days in the studio to add some flourishes. Tom Heuckendorff (Zolas) played organ and Jody Peck (Miss Quincy) and Kathleen Nisbet (Viper Central) sang harmonies. We even

spent one glorious day that came to be known as "Dick Day" where we constructed a Dr. Dre style rap track called "Dick Roulette". So far, no big record labels have come calling so we are releasing everything ourselves. We would love to make vinyl but it costs \$2500, I mean we could buy another tour van for that! For now, we are just putting it out online and making a small run of CDs for the people who drive \$2500 cars old enough to have a CD player.

BH: From wearing latex rubber masks onstage many times to conceal my mesmerizing good looks myself in order

to not steal the attention from my other bandmates, or the brilliance of the music, I know how hot it can get. Do you have any funny stories about incidents under those wet sweaty pussy and cock guises?

K&R: We always do a grand masked entrance to start our shows and it is hilariously treacherous trying to get on stage in those things. Like you said, they are hot & sweaty & you can't see or hear a thing and there have been more than a few times where we have bitten the dust. When you are in the middle of a song and you are rocking out so hard that you fall down it looks really cool and punk rock but when you come out in a mask and you fall down and you haven't even played a note yet it looks pretty lame.

Some funny recent masked stories:

A lady tried to talk to Kitty during our set while she was still wearing her mask. She wanted to tell her, "I have only had a vagina for 8 months but already that mansplaining stuff from your song [Play Like A Motherfucker from our new album] is happening to me!". Good story, terrible timing. After the same set some teenage girls asked to take their photo with us and we could see them miming sucking cock out of the corner of our masks while their mom taking the photo was awkwardly pretending to be a super cool mom who was not scandalized to see her daughters doing that.

BH: Please do tell us about your backup singers The Cockettes. Who's in the bag of chicks and what does it take to be a Cockette?

K&R: We have Cockettes sprinkled all over Western Canada. We are happy to have the two Cockettes who sang on the album (Jody Peck and Kathleen Nisbet) joining us for our album release show on June 9 at the Waldorf.

Recently we had our first ever Cockette section with actual cocks (Hank Pine, Jack Garton, Sammy Volkov)! They keep threatening to perform at the next show with no pants on as The Shirt Cockettes.

We played an Easter Sunday barn burner in Nanton, AB featuring The Shirt Cockettes and a guy came up to us after the show and said, "I just have one suggestion about the backup singers". We thought he was maybe going to say turn up the vocals or something like that but he said, "If you're going to keep doing that bit you should handcuff them". And then the lady he was with specified, "SEX handcuffs. Furry sex handcuffs".

BH: Not to ruffle your feathers but let me get this from the Cock's mouth, Noah Walker I read on your web page that you are proclaimed an East Van guitar legend. Please tell us what makes you have the right to cock strut around with such a title that compares you to the stature of a White Spot burger platter?

R: I'm pretty sure my web page does NOT say that! Ha ha. I think maybe Commercial Drive guitar legend might be more accurate. Just kidding, I make no claim to Triple O status but I have been around this town playing a lot of guitars with a lot of bands for more than twenty years. You can see my top 60 here:

www.noahwalkermusic.com/credits

HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU

BH: Ahem, directly from www.kittyandtherooster.com "and East van guitar legend Noah Walker". Directly from www.whitespot.ca "The Legendary tm".

Now back to the interview. Who were or are your influences? I always think up to par with the triple Ole sauce Canadian Swamp a Billy garage stomp Deja voodoo when I think of a band of your ilk, but who where your influential craws and paws?

K&R: So glad you asked! It's no secret that Kitty & The Rooster are dedicated students of classic surf music from the early 60's. Surf songs generally don't have many lyrics though, except one or two words like "TEQUILA" or "Let's Go Trippin'". We wondered what it would be like to put some funny stories over top of that pounding surf beat. During the pandemic we taught our roommate how to play bass and now have an all surf instrumental side project called The Reverberators.

BH: Not to be confused with the Vancouver surf instrumental band the Reverberators that was spawned off the Vancouver surf instrumental band the Surfdusters of course. Ok, now let me tongue wag and play with the pussy a bit? What kind of drum do you beat

and how do you solo on a solo? Have you given it a name?

K: I play a stand-up drum set called a cocktail kit. It's a purrrfect allusion to our band name and with the stand-up kit I'm not stuck sitting at the back of the stage while The Rooster gets all the glory up front! We are

working on a new song right now that is an ode to my cocktail kit called Banging On A Cock, "she's banging on a cock, banging on a cock, banging on a cocktail drum..."

BH: In your song "4 Non Yukon Concrete Platinum Blondie" you call out a list of bands named after cities as Shitty band names. Well, coming from a band with a pussy band name I've got to ask why do you call these shitty band names and not such lame band names, in the only opinion that matters, like Said the Whale and the opening mentioned 4 Non Blondes, what's going on with that?

K&R: Ha ha whoops, maybe we had too much

slap back delay on our vocals. The lyric is: Boston!...Is a city band name, Chicago! ... is a city band name etc. then it slowly morphs into Chilliwack!... It's a shitty band name.

The verses of that song list all the "blank the blank" band names, "animal" band names, and "city" band names. We have some other bonus verses that we sometimes do live listing acronym band names and brother/sister band names but maybe we should have a new verse where we list all the Billy band names! (Billy Talent, Billie Eilish, Billy Idol, Billy Bragg, Billy Hopeless!)

BH: Oh, I see like City wok on South Park with the city Chicken and understand completely, no cause for Rattled Roosters (who by the way were a Vancouver rockabilly band in case anyone got any ideas) Do you have any special guests appearing on the new album? Like maybe one of those Canadian pop punk egg-men The Mcrackins or Mr. the cat came back himself Fred Penner? It's too bad my brother Chi Pig wasn't still with us or he'd be a great addition to making a menagerie-a-trois. Who's on your wish list of possible barnyard commando draftees?

K&R: I guess we already blew our load answering

the special guests on the new album question right off the top but we do have a big schemin' dream to record an album with full string and horn sections and call it *Kitty & The Rooster: Pet Sounds*.

BH: Well, Ding Dong Dell, Pussy's in the well, and we're just about Rock-A-Doodle done here. So before

you go tell our readers of your upcoming show dates and where they can find your caterwaul and crow filled music and any other parting words.

K&R: We are doing a big Vancouver album release show at The Waldorf on June 9 and then firing up the Cock Rocket (our tour van) for a big summer season of touring. We are playing a cluck-ton of festivals and shows in Western Canada and going out to Alberta so many times we should probably just move there. You can see all our tour dates at kittyandtherooster.com/shows

Photo Credit: Jodie Ponto



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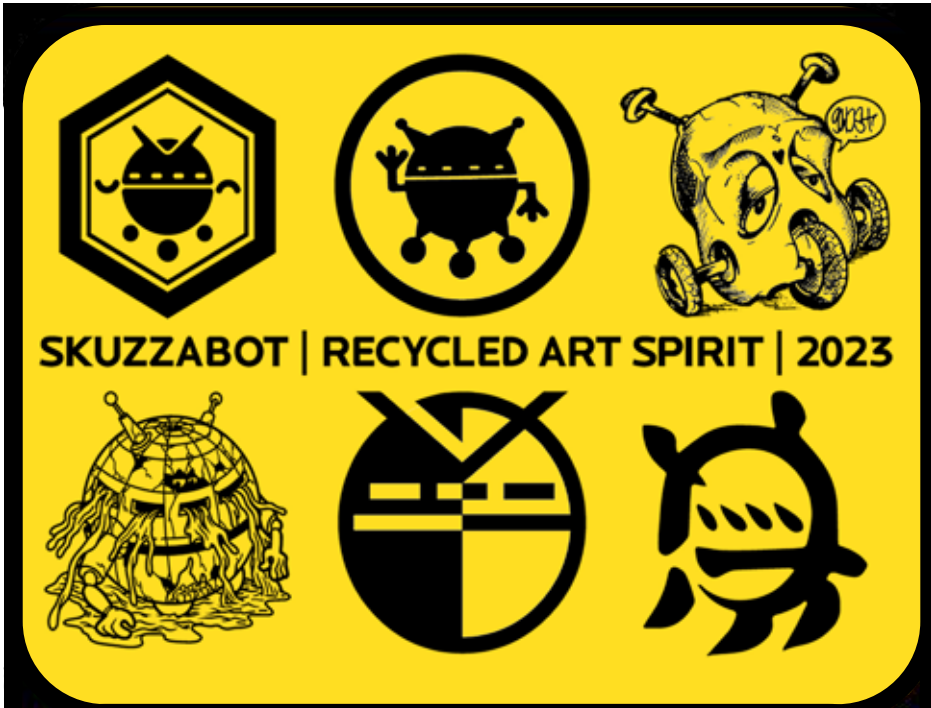
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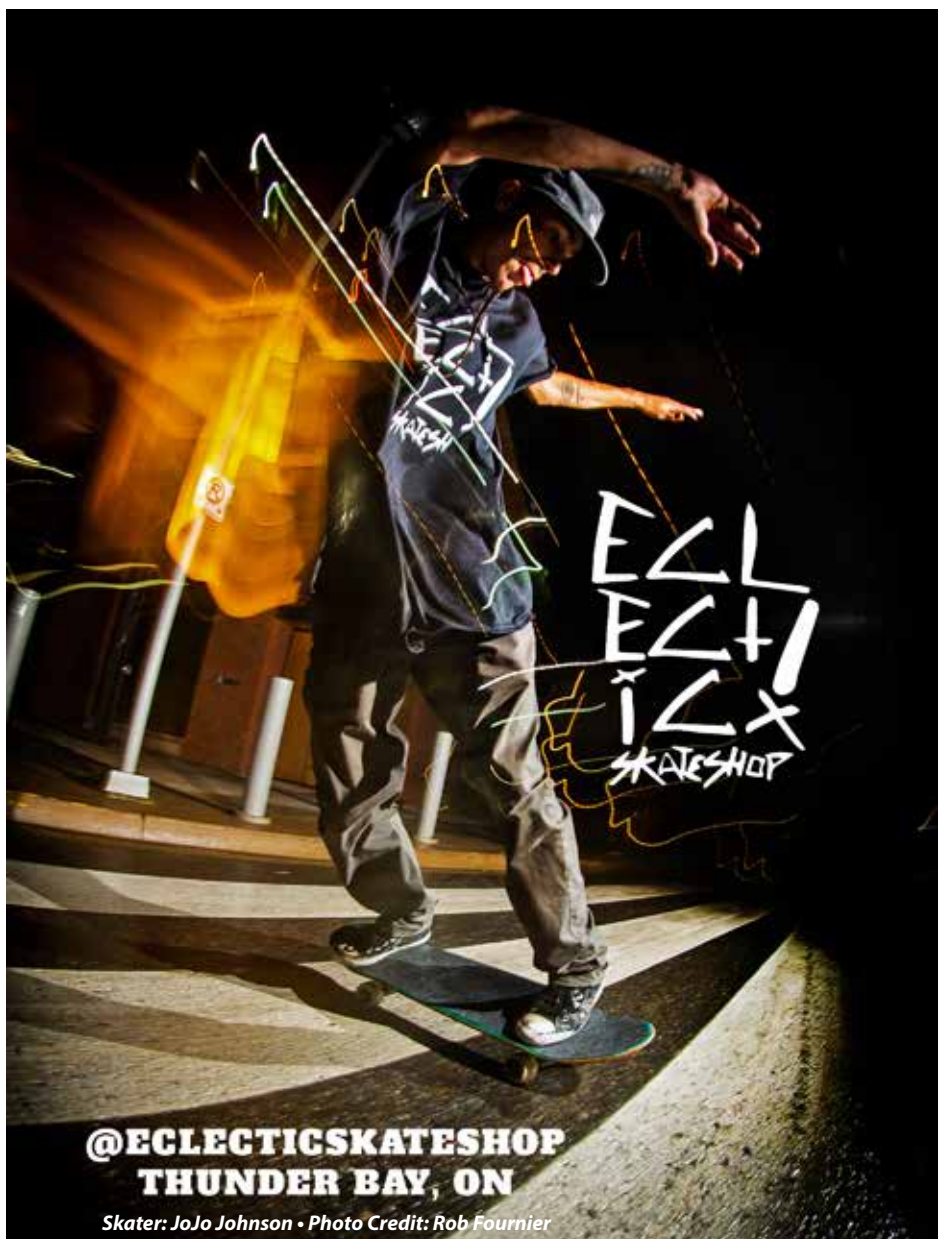
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ALL NATIONS



All Nations Cannabis Interview with Master Grower Bryson Rabang.

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are your skills to pay the bills?

Bryson Rabang – Master Grower, All Nations, Grandson of Bob Rabang, born and raised Native American from Washington State

AU: When did you first start growing Cannabis?

AN: Cultivating cannabis for six years in Chilliwack, BC

AU: What drew you to the Cannabis industry?

AN: My grandpa went to prison for Cannabis in the early 2000's. He believed in the medicinal value of cannabis and saw the economic opportunity of what this plant could bring to our communities. Having been raised by my grandpa, I was exposed to cannabis early

and now carry on his legacy in the legal cannabis space.

AU: What strains do you currently produce and what makes them unique?

AN: Sto:lo Haze is our own genetic, grown here on Sto:lo traditional territory. Sto:lo means "river people"; the river was our highway and the main source of our wealth and trade. This strain represents the Sto:lo people and the territory on which it is cultivated. It's a high potency Sativa, and perfect for a good day on the river.

AU: Do you prefer Sativas or Indicas?

AN: Indicas all day baby!

AU: What is your favorite all-time strain to smoke?



AN: Mac Daddy is our diamond bud. "Super terpy" and fire!

AU: What is it like being one of the only Indigenous LP's in BC?

AN: It's groundbreaking. I'm still in shock at how big our company has become in Canada and Internationally, and it motivates me everyday to produce the highest quality cannabis.

AU: Why is it important to support Indigenous growers?

AN: Our communities didn't have that many jobs, we depended on landscaping and fishing, which



are seasonal. This facility has brought stable year-round jobs and it's time for us to be recognized as a hard working people.

AU: What makes an expert grower in your opinion?

AN: Sacrifice and a lot of dedication. Because the plants need 24/7 attention; they are like babies, they need all the TLC.

AU: What are some growing secrets or tips you can share with our readers?

AN: If it's not dry, do not apply.

AU: What are all of your sub brands and what is the difference between them?

AN: All Nations is our premium craft brand, where we only use our top-shelf flower. Our sub brand, Uncle Bob, represents our elders and those people in all communities that fought for cannabis legalization.

AU: Where are your products available?

AN: AU: Where are your products available?



AN: Our products are available in BC, SK, MB, ON, YT & NU. You can pick up our Uncle Bob branded products from Direct Delivery partners, such as Evergreen Cannabis in Vancouver (ecsvan.ca).

Evergreen also always stocks our top shelf flower and prerolls too.

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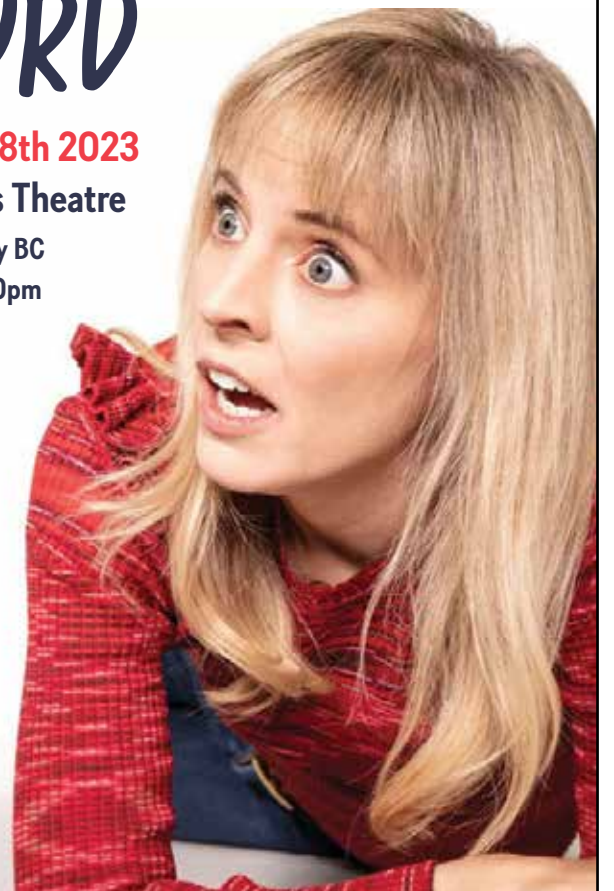
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WrestleCore of Oz: June 9 at the Rickshaw Theatre

On June 9th, the Rickshaw

Theatre will be transformed into a surreal wonderland as WrestleCore presents "WrestleCore of Oz." This event will be headlined by none other than the legendary Short Sleeve Sampson, the diminutive dynamo who packs a mighty punch. Prepare for an evening of jaw-dropping maneuvers, intense rivalries, and unexpected surprises as WrestleCore takes you on a journey down the yellow brick road of wrestling glory.

RussellMania: July 29 at SoftBall City, Surrey

Prepare for a clash of titans as WrestleCore teams up with Russell Brewery in Surrey to present "RussellMania." Taking place on July 29th, this larger-than-life event will feature not only mind-blowing wrestling matches but also a scorching live performance by the renowned band, Big Wreck. The fusion of pulsating punk rock music and bone-crushing athleticism will create an atmosphere like no other, leaving fans begging for more.

LuchaLibre Spectacular Cinco Diablos: August 5 & 6 at the Waldorf

Mark your calendars for August 5th and 6th, as WrestleCore unleashes the "LuchaLibre Spectacular Cinco Diablos," a two-day extravaganza showcasing the heart-pounding artistry of Lucha Libre. The event will feature none other than the NWA tag team champions, La Rebellion, consisting of the formidable duo, Bestia666 and MechaWolfe. Prepare to be

TURNBUCKLE SANDWICH

mesmerized as Lucha Libre's gravity-defying acrobatics, and fast-paced, high-octane action take center stage.

WrestleCore has carved its own unique niche in the world of professional wrestling by blending the raw energy of punk rock with the theatrical spectacle of wrestling. It has garnered a loyal fan base who eagerly await each event, knowing they are in for a jaw-dropping, heart-pounding experience unlike any other.

As the summer sun shines brightly over Vancouver, WrestleCore is set to ignite the stage with unparalleled athleticism, awe-inspiring high spots, and fierce rivalries that will keep fans on the edge of their seats. These three extraordinary events are poised to push the boundaries of what you thought was possible in the world of wrestling.

Whether you're a die-hard wrestling fan, a punk rock enthusiast, or someone seeking a

thrilling and unforgettable experience, the Summer of WrestleCore is an opportunity you simply cannot miss. Grab your friends, don your battle gear, and join us as we plunge headfirst into a world where passion, rebellion, and pure entertainment collide!

For more information and ticket details, stay tuned to Absolute Underground magazine or visit the official WrestleCore website. Get ready, Vancouver, because WrestleCore is about to unleash a summer of unforgettable madness!

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WrestleCore's Summer Spectacular: Unleashing Punk Rock Wrestling Fury!

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LIAM VS THE WORLD



concept of mass hysteria has existed for a very long time, but the meme is different. It's organic, it has legs, and due to the ubiquitous nature of internet culture, a hysteria can transfer itself from person to person at a more rapid rate than ever.

It's comforting to know that the horror movie you're watching at home on a Friday night is sheerly taking place inside your TV. It's not real. Few of us enjoy watching footage of actual grisly murders but we can watch Texas Chainsaw Massacre and love the shit out of it, even the gory parts. But what if, because of the rapidity of information transfer, horror started to bleed into reality?

That's exactly

what happened in 2016 - the CLOWN clawed his way out from the sewers, from the subterranean world of our nightmares into reality.

Maybe you remember, but if you don't, this is what happened: All throughout 2016, reports began pouring in all over the western world of scary clown sightings. Menacing people wearing clown costumes staring at people, sometimes even chasing them. The Russian embassy in London issued a warning to its citizens that people in clown costumes were causing "fear and bewilderment", and to beware. Supposedly the craze began with a man in Green Bay, Wisconsin, dressing up as a clown carrying black balloons - this turned out to be viral marketing for a horror movie he was making.



seriousness - some very concerning, some obvious clowning. Personally, I remember thinking it was viral marketing for the new IT remake, or sheerly the work of a small amount

of tricksters trying to have some fun. I was shocked by the amount of sightings listed in the Wikipedia article for the "2016 clown sightings". I urge you to check it out and not feel a little disturbed. Perhaps most disturbingly, the end of the article describes a scene from Florida, Halloween, of 20 people in clown masks swarming a family and attacking them. Now "fact checked" to be fake, social media posts had been warning of a "clown purge" on Halloween 2016.

It is certainly true that the internet will drive human will and cause strange shit to happen. It is certainly true that the meme of the clown sightings drove copycats. I even have a friend who knew an actual person who was part of a group that got together and did it for fun. We buy products because of ads we see, we feel compelled to take part in social and political trends, we do our hair in a certain way because it was shown to us on the internet.

Why the clown? The clown, the jester,

the laughter, is almost a primordial meme that has been living inside our minds. Supposedly the first clowns come from as far back as 2400 B.C., in Ancient Egypt. Native American cultures practiced "ritual clowning", and the role of the jester in the European Royal Court was important as he was the sole individual who would criticize the king and entertain him at the same time. From the Wiki article on Clowns: "The comedy that clowns perform is usually in the role of a fool whose everyday actions and tasks become extraordinary—and for whom the



ridiculous, for a short while, becomes ordinary." It is easy to see why the clown has discovered a resurgence in the minds of people today, via the internet: we all vie for that 15 minutes of fame, to become extraordinary for a moment, to



be seen and to make others laugh (or cry). This can manifest in many ways: most TikTok videos are someone acting as a clown, using humor to



drive engagement. It becomes darker when we see individuals take inspiration from The Joker, notably James Holmes who, with bright orange curly clown hair, murdered 12 people in Aurora, Colorado, at a screening of The Dark Knight. This was even echoed again, murmurs surrounding the release of The Joker with Joaquin Phoenix of there being a similar event potentially occurring. I remember being in the theater and feeling genuinely uneasy.

As defined by Richard Dawkins, memes are "the selfish gene", meaning they serve their own ends and replicate themselves to serve those ends. They are often mindlessly passed from person to person, mutating and shifting along the way, implanting ideas and sometimes causing genuine mental aberration or leading to violence. The clown does exist, in some realm, and he is desperately trying to crawl into the physical world. He has a will and a personality. He speaks to some deep, primordial aspect of ourselves that is a peculiar mixture of humorous, terrifying, mocking, violent and performative. In a world now dominated by social media, the world truly is all a stage. It seems now more than ever, it is a clown's world. The more I see of him, the more I ruminate on what he truly is, the less I laugh at his antics.

- Liam Crocker

WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY

Meme - an element of a culture or system of



behavior passed from one individual to another by imitation or other nongenetic means.

Remember all the way back to 2016? It was a wild time. Shit was really popping off. It felt like the internet was bleeding into reality, didn't it? The United States elected a president that was basically "memed" so much by the internet that he actually became the leader of the Free World. The



According to the New York Times, things got decidedly creepier as children in Greenville, South Carolina, reported clowns flashing lasers from the woods and trying to lure them with cash. A teen standing outside for a smoke in Sweden was stabbed by a man wearing a clown mask, also in 2016. The reports go on and on, varying in

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POWDER SEEKERS



After World War 2 there was a large German presence in Chile and it shows in the design and construction of the lodges and it is quite easy to look back in time and think "Wow, the Germans really knew how to build a resort." The main difference is you are in the Andes mountain range and there is cacti growing on the way up the insane mountain road. Switchbacks

winding past the open pit gold mines and burned out hulks of tour buses (presumably full of tourists) that slid off the road and tumbled down the cliffs of insanity. Keep going up all the way up to where the air is seriously lacking oxygen and you will find yourself in the parking lot of any one of the three resorts. Now get a cheap lift ticket (cheap by North American standards) and discover the lifts are older than I am. There are pole tows. A stainless plate that is mounted on a warped pole. Put the plate between your legs and hold on as you are jerked up the hill at high speed to be deposited on a 47 degree slope with no flat area. Get rid of the pole plate quick so you don't get dragged back down and wham! Best view ever, sketchy as hell but worth every second of nerve-racking bus ride up. Enjoy the super sketchy lifts. No tree wells here! We are

riding about my skill level, who got me some grass but not enough. So when I reordered the next day his friend, the grower, who we shall call "Guilly" wanted to meet me.

I said "I will take it" then he said "All of it?" and I said "Si." He said "No Señor, I was just showing you all the different types I grow. These are mostly



spoken for." I said. "It's on the table isn't it?" He said "Si but please this is for my friends." I said "No problem bro, but I will take as much as you can sell me as we are going on a long trip and I highly doubt I will find anything nearly as good anywhere else in Chile." He said. "Si, I will get you as much as I can from my private stock." At that point I knew we were gonna be good amigos.

Next issue is an introduction to the backcountry riding and guiding that is the most secret in the southern hemisphere Dos Tiempos and adventures in Patagonia!

Tree Well Alert From The Powder Seekers

By Brydo "Big Guacamole" Parker

It is when you are having the best time in the deepest freshest snow, when you are nipple deep in glory pow, and when you are flying a little far away from your wingman. Just cruising through the tree tops and suddenly, snooch, the snow gives out and you are sliding a little deeper and deeper wrapped around a tree. With every second and every little move you collapse further and further in a tree well. What do you do!? Blow your whistle, yell. Make an air pocket in your jacket and make a space for your head. Try to get your feet and bindings under you. Try to release your bindings, grab a branch and don't let go!! Do all this in a fraction of a second! Go take an avalanche course and train with your buddies by deliberately getting stuck and performing self rescue. With them laughing at you but ready to pull your carcass out of the hole if you can't do it! Train, train, and then train some more. Do not leave your wingman. Keep an eye on each other when riding.

Powder seeking is the name of the game. So it's spring and what is a powder seeker who has that multi-mountain Epic Pass with access to South American resorts to do? Go to Chile!

We fly into Santiago, like France there is a Three Valleys called Tres Valles in Chile.

The resorts of Farellones, El Colorado, La Parva, and Vale Nevado are quite close to the city.

winding past the open pit gold mines and burned out hulks of tour buses (presumably full of tourists) that slid off the road and tumbled down the cliffs of insanity. Keep going up all the way up to where the air is seriously lacking oxygen and you will find yourself in the parking lot of any one of the three resorts. Now get a cheap lift ticket (cheap by North American standards) and discover the lifts are older than I am. There are pole tows. A stainless plate that is mounted on a warped pole. Put the plate between your legs and hold on as you are jerked up the hill at high speed to be deposited on a 47 degree slope with no flat area. Get rid of the pole plate quick so you don't get dragged back down and wham! Best view ever, sketchy as hell but worth every second of nerve-racking bus ride up. Enjoy the super sketchy lifts. No tree wells here! We are way above the monkey tree/cactus line but you can ride right down past the lifts to the desert-like terrain past the parking lots and keep going. Hitchhiking or walking is the only way back. What a blast!



Now readers pay attention, this is important. If you have read any of my previous articles about Japan you will recognize the Snow Ninja. He, Ira and myself met up in Santiago and looked up some of Chile's best snowboarders, Paulo Audisio and Cristián Wehrhahn who were in Hokkaido riding with the Snow Ninja in Chile' summer, our winter.

Now the Ninja is renowned for having the very best grass in Japan, the Japanese do everything very well, and grass is no exception. Grass skills in Japan are a precious commodity, so when we hit Santiago a couple of phone calls led me to Angel, a good

Now the Ninja is renowned for having the very best grass in Japan, the Japanese do everything very well, and grass is no exception. Grass skills in Japan are a precious commodity, so when we hit Santiago a couple of phone calls led me to Angel, a good

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Killer Klowns From Outer Space THE CHIODO BROTHERS Candy Coated Kills

Interview by Ira "Cream Pie" Hunter and Raymond "Klownzilla" MacKay

AU: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

SC: This is Stephen Chiodo. According to horror fans I'm most infamous for directing and writing *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* with my brothers.

EC: I'm Edward Chiodo. Guilty as charged *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*. Hey, but we do have a cool recent credit with Marcel the Shell with Shoes On. It's certainly not in the horror genre, but it's something we're extremely proud of.

AU: Were you all doing stop motion animation before breaking into Hollywood?

SC: Oh, yeah. When we were younger living in New York on Long Island, we were making monster movies and stop motion animated films

down in our basement, and when we were in high school. So it's always been something that was a form of play back then, though we got interested in it and got involved in it as a profession.

AU: Any of those early ones available to watch?

SC: Yeah, I believe there are a few online right now. We were emulating the films that inspired us, so we had a film called *The Beast from the Egg* with a little tin foil egg and a creature comes out of it and it grows - every minute it grows bigger.

EC: You can see some on our YouTube channel, Chiodo Bros. Then a couple of them are extra content on DVD/Blu-ray releases of *Killer Klowns*.

AU: Where did the idea for *Killer Klowns* come from? Was this your breakout film?

SC: It was our first feature film and to date our only feature film. I was trying to imagine what was the most frightening image I could think of. And for me, it was driving down a lonely mountain road at night, and having somebody pass me on the left. Then, when I looked to see who the driver was, it was a clown. A clown being where it shouldn't be was really frightening.

EC: Yeah, then we kind of started to riff from there: Well, what would the clown be doing there in the middle of the night? What if he wasn't in a car, what if he was just floating out there? Maybe he was from outer space? *Killer Klowns* from Outer Space. Why were they here? Of course, the klowns are here to kill us. It just opens up the whole circus motif and all the ideas for what we call candy coated kills.

AU: Where has the massive resurgence in the popularity of *Killer Klowns* come from?

SC: I was gonna ask you! 35 years! Why all of a sudden? Why now? Is it something in the air? Is there something about the insanity of our movie that has now kind of melded into the insanity of our real world? I don't know. You tell me.

EC: It's multi-generational now. People who saw it when they were kids are showing it to their kids and their grandkids now. So it has really evolved. We always saw it more as a sci-fi comedy with horror elements but the fact that the horror community has embraced it and shown it so much love over the years has really been

heartwarming. It's become the entry level, the gateway drug into horror.

SC: Yes, it's not so offensive or visceral that you can't show it to younger children and I guess they get hooked on the genre.

AU: Did it get a theatrical release back then?

SC: It got a limited theatrical release, but it went quickly to VHS back in those days because they were trying to fill the shelves of the video stores. Then it went to USA cable and I believe that's where we found our audience with people watching it again and again.

AU: The *Killer Klowns* theme song by *The Dickies*, how did that come about?

EC: Our music supervisor at Trans World Entertainment, Bob Hunka, he had friends over at Enigma Records, who managed the *Dickies* at the time. He just gave them a weird one line description of what the movie was about, and asked if they would be interested. Then they came back with the demo of the song. Leonard

played us the song and they'd nailed it. They just caught the character and the flavor of it. It brought a whole new element to the movie, and set the movie off in a very fun, rambunctious way that brought in their audience and fans as well.

AU: Were there any candy coated kills or effects that ended up on the cutting room floor?

SC: We didn't cut anything out of the movie. But we did cut things out of the original script. We originally had a giant turntable in the funhouse spaceship that our heroes were hanging on to as centrifugal force was throwing them outward

towards a gang of klowns that were going to kill them. And there was one other gag, where klowns were juggling lawn mowers and chainsaws and washing machines until they exploded and kind of decimated everybody in this bar. Even in screenplay form, we thought that was a bit much for us to produce and pull off.

AU: What about a *Killer Klowns* sequel?

SC: Sounds like a good idea. It might be fun to do a sequel. Except for the fact that we've been trying to get it off the ground for the last 35 years.



EC: The closest thing we have to a sequel is the video game. And with all the licensing bolstering the property, who knows?

AU: What's your involvement the game?

SC: We were brought in as visual consultants

and executive producers so the video game has the same feel and look of the original 1980s movie.

AU: What were the names of the *Killer Klowns*?

SC: Well, that's a big debate. We never really gave the klowns names in the context of the movie. They didn't really speak so there was no characters there. But on stage when you had to call up one of the klowns to be in a scene we had names for them: Shorty, Tiny, Spike, Killer, Stretch, Slim but that was never communicated to the fan base. The names you see now that they've

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attributed to them on the Funkos and all the products are all fan names.

AU: How did you get the money to make the Killer Klowns from Outer Space movie?

SC: We had this Killer Klowns idea so we went and pitched it over at Trans World Entertainment. And we sold it in the room. They said, "Oh, I can sell that." I think he bought it for the title. I'm not sure he had any idea of what we were going to do. I imagined they thought we were going to have an actor in white makeup with a nose going around killing people with a machete or something. They had no idea that we had really taken the concept into a broader world of alien clowns. We shot it in six weeks in Santa Cruz, and they left us alone.

AU: So I'm assuming it opened a lot of doors for you after the movie because you worked on Critters next.

EC: The first *Critters* was actually before *Killer Klowns*. It was a great eye opening experience to see how movies were made and being really hands on right on the frontlines of that movie. So then the following year when we got *Killer Klowns*, we had learned quite a bit. Actually, the art director of *Critters*, Phillip Dean Foreman, became our art director on *Killer Klowns* because we loved what he did. And then after *Klowns*, while we were in post-production waiting for it to be released, we did *Critters 2* with the same team.

AU: You worked on all the Critters sequels?

EC: Yes. One through four.

AU: I heard Klownzilla at the end of the film was supposed to be stop motion animation but you couldn't afford to do it so you put a guy in a suit instead? Is that the story?

SC: Yeah, that's pretty much it. We had a \$2million budget for the entire film, but a lot of that went to regular production costs. So the special effects budget was probably the least money spent on that film. So when it came down to that final sequence, the amount of time it takes to do stop motion kind of made it a no-go.

EC: We were specialists in it. So yeah, of course we wanted to have stop motion in it and we love big, animated monsters in movies but logistically, and budgetary wise, we just couldn't pull it off.

AU: Have you ever considered starting a Lick-A-Stick ice cream company?

SC: It would be great if we could really launch a Killer Klown marketing campaign in food, toys, and apparel. I see people walking around in the daytime in their pajamas. We could do Killer Klown pajamas.

AU: What's the secret of killing a Killer Klown?

SC: The nose. The iconic red nose.

EC: Yeah. It works on klowns and it kind of works on just about anything.

AU: How did the casting process go?

EC: Mike Tobacco was the first character we cast. We wanted that kind of cool suave good looking leading man type and Grant Cramer brought all that to the table. Then with Suzanne Snyder as Debbie Stone, when we put them in

the room together, there was this chemistry and a connection that became very obvious.

AU: What about casting the Klowns?

SC: Well, that was an interesting casting challenge. We weren't able to really bring in clown performers from Los Angeles, where we would have had a greater opportunity to have dancers and performers



and mimes. We shot locally in Santa Cruz and Watsonville so we used the local talent, and they were talented, but it wasn't as wide a field for us to choose from. So we had to really train the local talent.

EC: Somebody like Harrod (Blank) just answered an open call for extras. Actually, we were looking for extremely tall people, and extremely short people. And then if they had dance or mime experience, that was a plus. But originally, it was purely physicality.

AU: What can you tell us about your brother, Charles Chiodo, who is missing from this

conversation? What does he bring to the table?

SC: Charlie was our production designer, working with art director Phillip Foreman to realize the physical sets from Charlie's designs. And Charlie designed the Klowns. They weren't men in costumes, we wanted to make them an alien species of white pulpy slug like creatures that just happened to have markings that made them look like our clowns. And then Charlie just banged out a bunch of really cool designs. And the Klowns really are the highlight of the movie.

EC: Yeah, and Charlie is Klownzilla. He is the person inside that suit. We shot some stuff on location, Gene Warren Jr. came up to Santa Cruz and they built the clown arena, in miniature in their parking lot. And in the middle of the blazing hot summer, we went down and shot that end sequence with Charlie in the suit. Knowing that it was a thankless, incredibly difficult job, he didn't want to subject any other actor to it



SC: Yeah, he did what I wanted him to, he walked down that birthday cake, and he couldn't see where the steps were. He just blindly walked off and punched that little JoJo clown off the ice cream truck.

AU: I'm assuming back then the masks were foam latex as opposed to the silicone masks they use now. Did any original masks survive?

SC: A collector has them in a private collection somewhere. It was classic traditional techniques. The klowns were sculpted by Jim Kagel, one of the best sculptors in the 80's. We made plaster molds and we cast it in natural foam rubber latex. And that skin was then placed on top of some mechanics that were built by Dwight Roberts.

AU: Looking forward to Calgary Horror Con?

SC: Oh, yeah. It's a different audience. It will be fun for us to meet Canadian fans who like our film for the first time.

chiodobros.com

Killer Klowns from Outer Space

Interview with filmmaker and actor Harrod Blank

by Ira "Hostile Species" Hunter and Raymond "Coulrophobia" MacKay

AU: Who are we talking to?

HB: This is Harrod Blank and we're talking about *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*, which I just happened to audition for in 1986 for being an extra in a crowd scene. I'm tall, six foot four and a half. They looked at me and they said, "Hey you look like you're strong enough to wear one of these Klowns outfits, would you like to try it?" and I said "Sure." I did a group scene in costume and they asked, who is that Klown? They looked on the clipboard and said, that's Harrod Blank. Then they say "You're going to play a Klown." I said "Great." But the funny thing is that I showed up in an art car that I made, which is called Oh My God!, because that's what people say when they see the car. Then I found out later in the movie that they had a Killer Klown art car. I was just blown away with the serendipity. It just fit and fell into place. Then 30 years later, I'm asked for autographs, which is just the most surreal thing in the world.

AU: I did an interview with the Chiodo brothers. They wanted me to ask all you guys, why is Killer Klowns so big right now?

HB: It's resonating with misfits in some way. It's resonating with individuals, with the outsiders. I'm not sure why. The only thing I can think of is that somehow, they are attracted to the individuality in the movie that they can be who they are, and the movie celebrates that.

AU: Which Klown did you play?

HB: Between Mike Martinez and I, we played seven different Klowns together. I played the big ones, so any of the bigger Klowns. So specific scenes that I did were Rudy coming out of the elevator with the popcorn guns. That's me. Another character I played was, not sure the name of the Klown now, Chubby?

AU: Jumbo?

HB: Not Jumbo. Jumbo was played by a basketball player that I played against. His name was Steve Rockhold. I think he was six foot 11 or seven foot one, that guy was a giant man.

Another scene I did was Chubby sucking the blood out of the cocoons, and I did the lifting of the garbage can lid. I did a lot of hand stuff, shadow puppet stuff with my hand. The balloons were with my hand. The wide shots were done by another Klown. In group scenes I would generally play Rudy or another one of the taller ones. I was in the amusement park scene with the maze. At the time it was surreal. I thought wow, this is a really handmade creative movie. I just thought it was just ripe with creativity and talent, but I had no idea it was going to become a cult classic. I mean, we are working with now almost a fourth generation of fans. There's five-year-olds that are watching this movie. It's just amazing.

AU: What was the makeup and costuming process like?

HB: Basically, there was two different types of scenes, two different types of Klowns. There were Klowns that their facial expressions would move and be operated by remote. Those heads had gears in them that would open the mouth and the eyes. So, when we do a close up, you would see reactions. Then there were masks that didn't have motors in them. They were the same character, but it just didn't have the motors. When they put the masks on, they would seal it with airplane glue. I didn't know at the time that would make me high, but it did make me high in at least one scene which was concerning. If I did it again, if there was ever another one, I would ask them to find a different kind of sealant.

They had a seam on the back of the head and so once you're in costume, you're in. There is no getting out they actually have to cut it with a razor blade. That made it pretty claustrophobic. The popcorn gun scene was at least three takes, it might have been more.

I just remember Stephen after the first take said "Look, you've seen Rambo, right? I want you to do that. I want you to come out and swing that gun around with intent." I said "Sure, okay." Then I came out with so much passion and intent that my energy carried me off the set and I almost fell into a ditch because I was wearing the big shoes. That was really close. I could have really broken my leg or something if I fell in that ditch. Because I got high off that glue.

AU: Would you return if they asked you to do a sequel?

HB: Of course. I can't wait. I would love to do that. Like I said, I just want to change out the glue. I think I could still carry the weight and do it. If they wait another ten years though I might be getting too old to do it.

AU: What was the name of the documentary you made about art cars?

HB: *Wild Wheels* was my first one. Then I made a movie called *Automorphosis*. They're both feature-length documentaries. I played the central narrator type guy.

AU: Working with the Chiodo brothers is kind of a unique situation where it's three brothers. How was it working with all three of them?

HB: I thought it was great. I thought it was an advantage. They really were so talented in what they did. I felt that way about all three of them. I did meet and work with all three of them. I didn't work with Edward as much as he was on the producing side of things. But I did talk to Charlie a lot and I thought he was super creative. He made all the caricatures and outfits, and he was always thinking on the spot of how to shoot things and do things. Stephen was kind of running the ship and directing. I just thought it was great that they had three brothers that worked together. I think that's partly why the movie is successful. They had very little money to work with. They made a product that was probably more likely in the \$10 million range as far as the execution and the creativity. But they did it for \$2 million. It's because of those three guys that they were able to do so much with so little.

AU: Any closing thoughts on the lasting legacy of *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*?

HB: I'm all in with it. I would really like to do more work and do some really wild stuff. So, I'm tickled pink to be part of this. It is sort of like a weird family to be honest with you. Seeing the other crew members, Grant and Suzanne and Mike and The Chiodo brothers. We call it the Killer Klowns family. It's really kind of cool because every few months we get to go out to dinner together and do these conventions. It's just total fun. I really like the idea of this Calgary Horror Con gig because we get to see part of Calgary and do some fun stuff, and that makes it even better.

AU: Any final words for Canadian Klowns?

HB: Keep it going. Let's see some wild stuff. Maybe a bunch of Klowns will show up at the event and we can do a weird shoot. A Klown convention. I'm game for anything so if you or a reader gets back to you and says, "Hey, I want to invite the Killer Klowns to my French restaurant." We're in. We like going on adventures. So, if there's a restaurant that wants us to show up and treat us that would be fun. We're open to doing stuff.

harrodblank.com



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KILLER KLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE

Interview with Killer Clown and stuntman Mike Martinez

by Ira "Balloon Animal" Hunter and Ray "Klown Nose" MacKay

AU: Who are we talking with?

MM: Mike Martinez. I've been a stunt guy for over 40 years. I've done a lot of films, but the one that I'm mostly recognized for is Killer Klowns from Outer Space. As ridiculous as that may sound.

AU: For Killer Klowns, were you hired as a stunt person or as an actor?

MM: I was hired as a stunt guy. A friend of mine was the stunt coordinator. They filmed Killer Klowns in Santa Cruz and we were the local stunt team. We went to Los Angeles and met with the Chiodos because we wanted to see what kind of stunts could be performed in the costumes. When we got there, they said, "Well, somebody should put the suit on," and I looked around and everybody was looking at me. So I put the suit on, and they wanted me to do some poses and move around and figure out what we could do and it was decided that I was going to become the main stunt Bozo for the show. I was about seven of the different clowns depending on what needed to be done. I also doubled Michael Siegel, who was one of the Terenzi brothers.

AU: Were you a specific clown as well as doing the stunts for the other ones?

MM: The one that kind of stood out was the Slim Clown because that was the one who did the floating clown bit when he was smashing into

the car and knocks it off the road and then goes walking up to the edge of the cliff and started laughing. So I kind of became known as that clown mainly. But then I did other stunts for the klowns like the one that ended up getting hit by the SUV, when the two leads were escaping from the clown ship when they're trying to get away. I ended up in some of the other klowns chasing them, and then also when they had to put squibs for gunshots on the klowns and things. I was kind of getting switched around sometimes. I wasn't in the Slim costume because I was working stunts with Suzanne (Snyder) because she had to do a lot of her own pratfalls and things. So like when the klowns kidnapped her from her home. I wasn't in costume there because I was working to keep her safe.

AU: You were the one driving the invisible car?

MM: Yeah, exactly.

AU: What was the makeup and costuming process like? Did they have all the costumes made for specific body types?

MM: The klowns were kind of a one size fits all kind of thing. The masks weren't like the masks they have now. They were a thick latex, and when you were putting it on, you had to squish your face into the mask to where you could see and hold it in place. Then they sealed the back of the

mask. You could actually manipulate the mask a bit, if you opened your mouth, the clown would open his mouth a little bit. But also sometimes the masks had motors in the head so the eyes could blink and things like that from remote control.

AU: Harrod said he was getting high off the glue that they would seal you in there with.

MM: I remember Harrod talking about that, I think when he was Rudy with the popcorn gun when he came out of the elevator. He was kind of starting to feel woozy from the glue. Yeah, they used super glue on the back sometimes. Sometimes the mask and wig was able to just be held on by Velcro, but when there was more action involved, like when I got hit by the SUV, they actually did glue the mask onto my head.

AU: What was it like working with the Chiodo brothers, with them being a 3 man team?

MM: Stephen was the director and Charlie was the one designing the klowns and Ed was more of the producer, but they always kind of collaborated on what needed to be done. We filmed for about six weeks. Started out filming at night because of the exteriors and then we went onto stage where we filmed for about two weeks at night again. Everybody had kind of gotten used to working at night. So we just continued to work at night, which made it fun. We kind of took over this small hotel in Aptos. Everybody would come staggering out, like around 11 o'clock in the morning, and just sit by the pool hanging out until we went back to work.

AU: It was a family of klowns, like a circus.

MM: Exactly.

AU: Did you get to keep any of the props?

MM: No. Things like the gloves and the masks were latex and so they probably wouldn't last.

AU: Harrod said he saw a bunch go in the dumpster. But then I asked the Chiodos and they said they were in a private collection.

MM: At the end of the show there was a big pile

of stuff, mostly the pieces of the set, that wasn't going to be used anymore. I walked around and I had a camera with me all the time shooting behind the scenes things. Everything looked so campy so I knew we were doing something kind of weird. Had no idea it was gonna go where it has gone though, you know?

AU: Yeah. When I was interviewing the Chiodos, Stephen wanted me to ask everyone, "Why now?" Like, why after 35 years is Killer Klowns making this massive splash again?

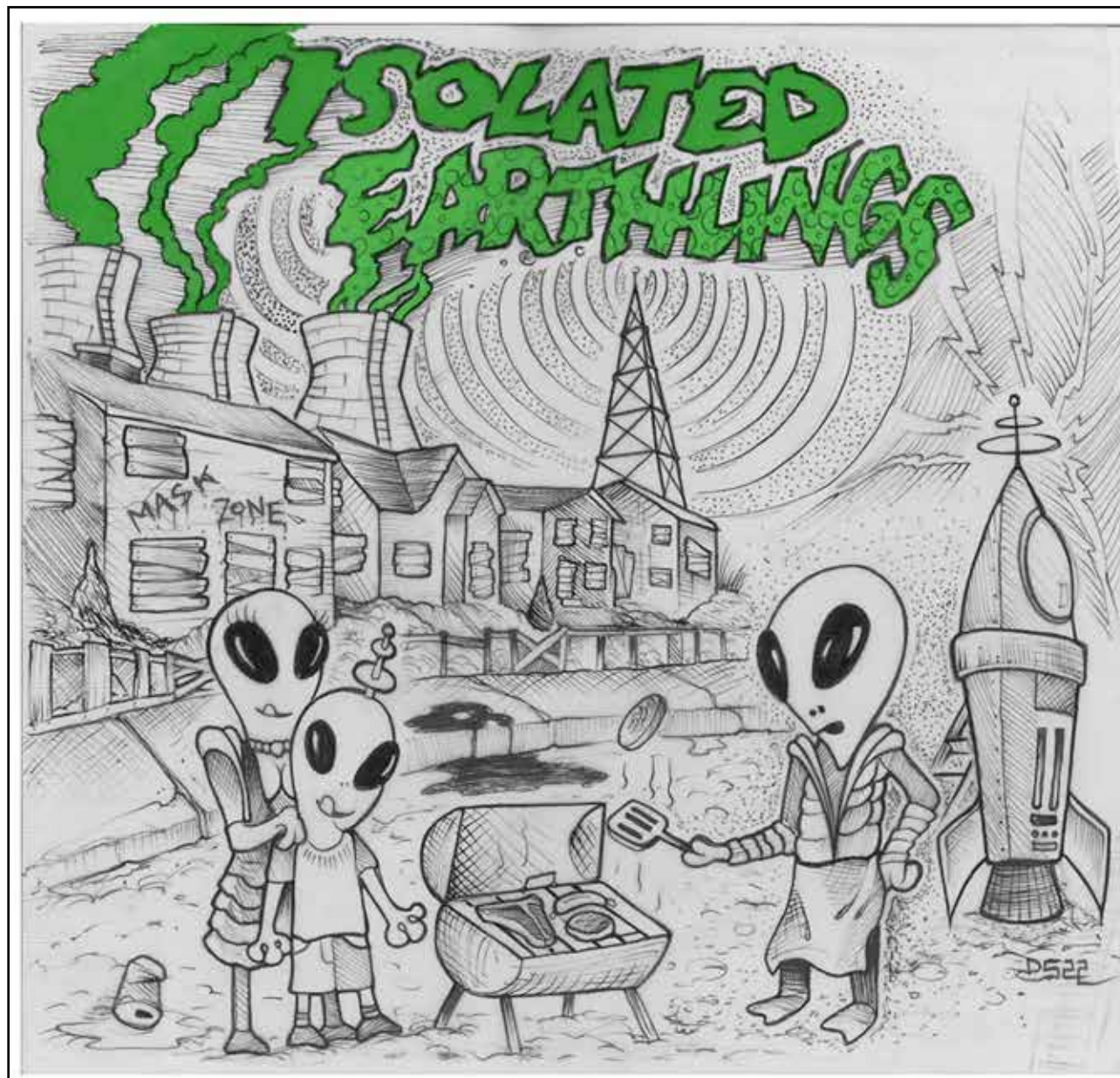
MM: Who knows? Ever since it came out on video it got a cult following. Then when it came out on DVD that kept things going. When people find out I'm a stunt guy, and they say, "What movies have you done?" and I say "I did Terminator" and I start naming others and as soon as I say Killer Klowns from Outer Space, that has always been the one that's gotten the biggest reaction no matter what else I've done. It's really weird.

AU: You have over 100 stunt credits on IMDb like Jurassic World, The Matrix, and Willow. What are some of the best stunts you've coordinated or performed?

MM: In the 80s I became known as the Fire guy. I've personally done about 50 burns, and I've coordinated another 50. And back in the 80s, it seemed like every monster and every bad guy was dying by fire. I learned how to do burns from this guy named Tony Cecere, who did the burns in A Nightmare on Elm Street and The Thing.

AU: And Tony Cecere is going to be a guest at the Calgary Horror Con as well, correct?

MM: Yeah, Tony, he's gonna be there. It's funny. I saw him at another convention and I showed him one of my burn pictures that I did for a Primus video of Mr. Crinkle. He looked at it and said, "I want to keep this, pick one of mine," so we ended up getting a picture together, of me holding one of his burns and him holding one of my burns.



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AU: Heard anything about a sequel or a reboot or a requel for Killer Klowns from Outer Space?

MM: They've always been wanting to do a sequel. But they just can't manage to get the rights back to allow them to make one. Even though they wrote it and produced it and everything, they don't own the rights to Killer Klowns. MGM had the rights, because when Trans World Entertainment, who made the film, went out of business, MGM bought all their properties. That's how come the DVD didn't come out for the longest time because nobody even knew who had the rights to it. Finally, MGM came up with their Midnite Movies collection, and Killer Klowns came out. There were three movies, it was Killer Klowns, Buckaroo Banzai, and I can't remember the third one. Apparently, Killer Klowns sold 700,000 copies in a month. That's when they said, "Wait a minute, we might have something here." MGM was making money no matter what, so they're like, why should we risk doing a second one? But MGM got bought up by Amazon. So who knows? Amazon is always looking for content for Prime. So hopefully something may still happen.

AU: Most dangerous stunt in Killer Klowns?

MM: Actually the floating clown thing. There was a miscommunication because the stunt guy driving the car, when they yelled cut, they didn't say it out loud enough in the radio for us to hear. He was asking me, "Did they yell cut?" but I've got this big clown head on so I can't talk. Then all of

a sudden, I felt branches hitting me. I stuck my head inside the car, told him to stop and when he stopped the headlights that were on my feet were pointed straight at a tree. It was like 10 feet away. I would have got it face first.

AU: It was like a sidecar?

MM: Yeah, it was a cool contraption that had an arm on it made by the effects guys. It was connected to the rear of the car. It took them like two hours to get me into the suit and on the contraption because they had to put the suit around me. And wires went up my arms to toggle switches that were connected to the palms of my hands. Worked really well and the whole arm was just painted black so on screen it disappeared.

AU: Nowadays they'd do it with CGI I guess.

MM: Everything we did was practical.

AU: Excited for the Killer Klowns video game?

MM: I'm curious to see what people are going to think about it and the more buzz the more popular the film's going to be and maybe it could help get a sequel made. I was talking to Stephen about sequels and he says that if he were to ever do one, he wants all of us to be involved again.

AU: There was also a vinyl soundtrack released.

MM: Right. I have actually signed a lot of the album covers people bring to the conventions.

AU: I love The Dickies punk circus theme song.

MM: It's pretty amazing that they were able to come up with that song with not really knowing anything about the film, it matches so well.

AU: What other kills did Slim do?

MM: He's the one who did the shadow puppets that ate the people up and put them in the bag. When Slim went to the door when he kidnapped Debbie there was this guy, Steve Rockhold, he was a big tall guy, so he was Slim there. It's kind of interesting, people asked me if I was the one who picked Debbie up? But the Slim clown for that was on a framework and we just attached his hands to Suzanne's shoulders. Then we had Suzanne on a teeter totter and I pushed down on

one end and that's how she was raised up to look him eye to eye. So people ask me "Were you the one who picked her up?" and I say "Kinda".

AU: You worked on Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade?

MM: Yeah, I doubled Harrison Ford when he had a couple of scenes driving the sidecar. And then also when he had to spell Jehovah and accidentally steps on the J, falls through the floor, and pulls himself back up. I did that, which I had to do a whole bunch of times because the fedora kept falling off. I'd go through the floor, and then the hat would fall off. And Indy can't lose his hat.

AU: Did they finally get the stapler out?

MM: Yeah, exactly.

AU: Have you been lucky as far as avoiding serious injuries throughout your stunt career?

MM: I've been very fortunate. I've never broken a bone. I've separated both of my shoulders and both of my collarbones, getting hit by cars. I've never had anything happen that kept me from being able

to work. I think some of that is because I kind of made a name for myself as a driver. So a lot of times I was driving the cars in chase scenes.

AU: I guess it's better to be the one driving the car instead of the person getting hit by the car. What's your next project on the horizon?

MM: I'm mostly retired now but I still do a lot of stunt rigging. I'm working on a project where I'm helping work on a shot where these two guys are having a jet pack race. I'm going on 70 years old, I can still do stunts. I still train. But I'm kind of leaving it for the younger guys who are still making a living at it. I give a lot of advice to guys.

AU: Any Advice for new filmmakers?

MM: They say horror films are a good bet. If you do it, and you don't want to get too graphic, some people like the gore and everything but I think the thing that made Killer Klowns popular is the fact that it's not gory. It's kind of campy, it's fun. I

think a good funny horror film can go a long way.

AU: Is there a possibility of a documentary about Killer Klowns from Outer Space? Harrod could direct it and Grant could produce it.

MM: Yeah, right. It would be interesting to do. There's a lot of behind the scenes that the Chiodos took, but they haven't actually done a full documentary yet.

AU: Have you attended any conventions with John Massari, the soundtrack composer?

MM: He has gone to a couple of them. Yeah, he's into it. He's done something where they've shown the movie with a live orchestra. I unfortunately wasn't able to make that but it would have been pretty interesting.

AU: He's going to do another one. So you get another chance. Are you looking forward to being a guest at the Calgary Horror Con?

MM: Yeah, definitely. They're flying us out a day early because they want to take us on a tour of the Canadian Rockies, which should be kind of fun. It's great to get together with the Killer Klowns cast, we've kind of become a family now, between the Chiodos and the actors and Harrod and I. They're just fun to go and hang out and talk to people who are enthusiastic about the movie,

AU: What are your last words on the lasting legacy of Killer Klowns from Outer Space?

MM: I don't know because we've never hit a plateau yet. The fan base just keeps building and I'm kind of curious about where it could possibly go. We're in our fourth generation of fans.





KILLER KLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE

Interview with actors Grant Cramer and Suzanne Snyder

by Ira "Shadow Puppet" Hunter and Raymond "Raygun" MacKay

AU: Who are we talking to and what are you most famous for?

BK: I'm Grant Cramer and I'm probably most famous for playing Mike Tobacco in *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*.

SS: My name is Suzanne Snyder and in the horror population I would say what I'm most famous for is *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* where I play Debbie.

AU: What was it like working with the Chiodo brothers as a brothers filmmaking team?

GC: They were awesome. We're all still super close. They're funny because they're grown men, but they've been working together since they were little kids so they still have all the dynamics that they've had their whole life. So they argue and hum and haw and then at the end of the day, they

come up with brilliant stuff.

SS: I really loved working with all of them. They all had different roles during the movie, but they were all very creative. They kind of divided and conquered; Ed (Edward Chiodo) was more the producer. Charlie (Charles Chiodo) was creative and Stephen (Chiodo) was the director. But they all kind of did all of it and gave each other ideas. They were so creative and so talented. I was fortunate that I got to work with some of the Klowns. That was really fascinating because it was more practical special effects. They were very patient and they showed

me how everything worked beforehand. I was really just in awe of what they were able to do. So that was really fun, too. Stephen was really a great listener and really liked collaborating. Yeah, that was really fun. Also they made Debbie such a great character, right? She was like an intelligent kind of girl.

AU: What did you think of the script when you first saw it?

GC: Wow, when I first read it I just kind of...I mean it's not the kind of script that normally comes across your desk. It was totally crazy. When I read it, I said, this is weird, this is cool, this is funny and it's so different. I don't know if I ever expected the movie to become this crazy successful cult movie that it has. But I definitely thought it had that kind of possibility.

SS: My agent read the script and she said, "I know the title is really weird. *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* you kind of go what is that? Right? But these guys are the Chiodo brothers are some of the most talented special effects people. They're going to be as good or better than Stan Winston. They're out there, they're amazing and I really think you should read this script because I think it's going to be a cult classic." I was like ah okay?

I read it and Debbie was a great character. Then they started putting everyone together and Grant and I actually had a really great chemistry together when we auditioned and I thought the script was really unusual and could be very cool.

AU: What was the filming process like?

GC: The filming was crazy because I think if I recall correctly, we shot all of the interiors the last week of shooting. Six weeks of shooting up in the Santa Cruz Aptos area. For almost the whole shoot for like five weeks in a row our call times were four o'clock in the afternoon so we would be ready to shoot as soon as it got dark because the whole movie takes place in one night. So that was kind of wild, spending five weeks in a row sleeping until the afternoon and working all night. The entire time we were working at night they had been building the interior of the spaceship and all the crazy hallways and gags and everything like that in this big warehouse. We were watching it go up till the last week of shooting, so we were really excited to get on a normal scheduled that final week and get in there and do all the fun



gags. The ball pit and the monsters and the doors and all that kind of crazy stuff.

AU: What was it like working with the Klowns?

GC: Oh, they were wild. Right?

SS: They were gigantic! Gigantic, I remember. They had all these really cool things that they did. They could open their mouths and they could smile and their eyes moved. The puppet

that bit me in the shower had really sharp teeth. I thought they were actually scary. So that wasn't very hard to be afraid of these vampire Klowns running around.

GC: They were cool.

Obviously they had the suits with the Klown masks that the people wore. But then they had what Suzanne was talking about a special animatronics versions of them with a lot of controls and things that made the mouth open and shut and the eyes blink.

AU: It's been 35 years since the movie was released, how has the film impacted you and your career?

SS: The movie didn't do very well when it first came out, and the people who produced it really didn't do a very good job of selling it. It was a great experience. I got to work with some really great actors like Grant, John Vernon and John Allen. I got to work with the Chiodo brothers who are amazing. But I don't think it really impacted my career that much. Except that it was just another job that I did. How it's impacted my life and my career since it became alive on it's own; from these amazing horror fans and people that love it, the families that started watching it when they were young and then shared it with friends and shared it with their spouses and then their children and then grandparents. I would say that's how it's impacted

me, through the amazing fan base that *Killer Klowns* has. The stories that people tell me about how it's changed their lives or a couple gets engaged to it, or it's watched in the hospital room by a child that has cancer so that they laugh. It bond's families together. I would say that has impacted my life more than anything else.

GC: When the movie came out, I think Trans World, which was the company that produced



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it. They were making a lot of low budget genre movies and back then everything came out theatrically. It wasn't like now there wasn't this big home video market. So I think their idea was to stick it in the theaters for a little bit and then the VHS would come out. They had a machine designed to just try and make money off of it. But the Chiodo's, they had no idea. Every once in a while, you think you're just making some kind of, you know, programmatic type of horror movie, and the filmmakers have a very different idea of their film. To them it's their shot. It's their baby. That's how it was with the Chiodo's. The crazy thing was that when it came out they stuck it in theaters and it was only there for like a week. But the reviews that came out were amazing. It got these rave reviews, it was the pick of the week in the LA Weekly. The LA Times called it the funniest movie of the year. I guess you could say kind of foreshadowed the later release. Crazy enough, with a movie like *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* they actually got it. So because it kind of just went away out of the theaters really quick, they never really had a chance to promote it. It took a while. *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* just kept on chugging along and chugging along. People kept on finding it and then some of the cable networks started to play it routinely.

SS: Yeah.

GC: Suzanne did you notice too? It was like all of a sudden, just more and more people were coming up and going, "Yo dude, you're that guy, oh my god," like years after. What it did is it created a second career for us, and it created a family. We all show up and support and move around and

enjoy the fans and just really get off on being together. That we were able to create something that gives something to people all these years later.

I got off a plane the other day, and I was like, what's this? It was a card that had stuck in the bottom my backpack. It was from a girl that said I'm just so happy to meet you. My grandfather fell in love with that movie and he turned it on to my dad. Then my dad waited until I was old enough to watch it. I'm like, wow, a third generation person that loves this

movie.

AU: When I interviewed the Chiodo brothers, Stephen wanted me to ask everyone, why now? There is the video game coming out and the soundtrack and all the merchandise. Why do you think that there's such a resurgence in popularity?

GC: I think it's kind of built off on top of itself. I mean, when I first started doing conventions about ten years ago, it was really cool to watch a certain amount of people be really into it. But it's grown exponentially. I remember we went to



a really big convention on an anniversary. They did the entire episode on *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*. We were kind of blown away that there was that much interest that this big convention had made the whole thing about *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*.

Then all of a sudden there was some new stuff, like the Funko Pops that came out. Then all of a Universal does their Hollywood Horror Nights and *Killer Klowns* is one of the main attractions.

The soundtrack is really cool too. They didn't just release a soundtrack. They released this vintage LP with beautiful artwork on it. It's not like they just threw stuff out there. Whoever did that did a great job.

AU: Are you guys looking forward to the Calgary Horror Con? Suzanne, you were a guest that I met there a few years ago.

SS: I am hoping to be able to go. But I actually may not be able to.

GC: I am really looking forward to Calgary, I have never been.

AU: Did you develop an aversion to popcorn and or cotton candy working on the film?

SS: I love popcorn and I love cotton candy. No, I love it.

AU: Has there been any serious talk about a potential sequel for *Killer Klowns*?

GC: There has been on and off. It heats up and then seems to go away. I'm not sure where exactly it is right now. Everybody kind of feels that at a certain point it almost becomes irresistible. It almost becomes almost impossible not to do it. That's what we're all hoping. The video game has finally come out, the LP has released, and all these other different things have happened that at a certain point the powers-that-be have to just see that there is a real market for a sequel out there.

SS: That would be amazing. I would really like to be in the video game too. Our characters aren't in the video game.

GC: All the fans who come up to us have been asking are you in the video game? They all seem very disappointed that we're not. We hope they come to us maybe on one of the next iterations and ask us.

AU: What else is on the horizon for you guys? Do you have any other projects in the works?

SS: I'm working on something right now that I hope will happen. I can't really talk much about it. I hope Grant and I work together again.

GC: Me too. For the last 15 years or so my day job has been as a film producer. The last movie that I made was called *Willy's Wonderland*. It had Nicolas Cage battling possessed animatronics. I pitched it as *Pale Rider* meets *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*. We tried to make



something that was in that same vibe. I don't know if you've seen it, but it's really fun. That came out a little over a year ago or so and has done pretty well. It's kind of got a *Five Nights at Freddy's* vibe to it, but with Nicolas Cage. The next film that I'm producing if all goes well will start shooting in September. It's a crime thriller called *Neponset Circle*. Which is an area near Southie in Boston.

It stars Guy Pearce, Jeffrey Morgan, and Martin Sheen.

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

SS: Thank you.

GC: Thank you, we love Canadians. I've never been to Calgary but if they're as nice as everybody is up in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, and all the other places I've been it's going to be awesome.

SS: You're going to love it. Yeah, Calgary is awesome.

GC: Yeah, Canadians are just the most awesome people. My partner in businesses is Canadian. Just nice people.

SS: Yeah. We love you.

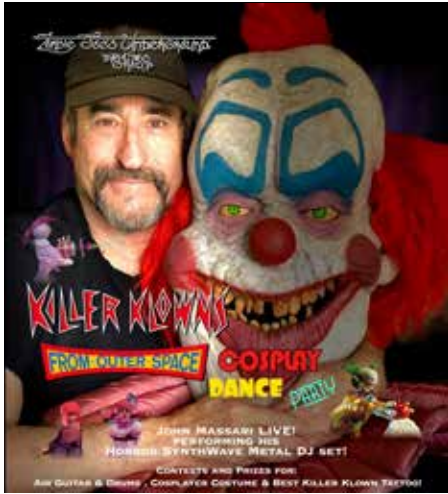
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KILLER KLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE

Composer John Massari

Interview by Ira Hunter and Ray MacKay
Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you best know for?

John Massari: My name is John but my legal name is actually Giovanni Massari. I am known as a composer of music for film and television, or as we like to call it these days a Media Composer. One film or project that I'm most known for, which is now known and recognized as an official brand and it's taken a long time to get there is *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*. I composed the music score for that movie.

AU: Is that an Italian name?

JM: Yes.

AU: Is there any connection there with the The Chiodo brothers because I believe they're Italian as well?

JM: That's just a happy coincidence. We are all from New York. They're originally from the Bronx, and I am from Brooklyn.

AU: How did you first become interested in movie soundtracks?

JM: My interest in movie soundtracks started when I was a little boy. Me and the kids in my neighborhood thought it would be a great idea one afternoon to go see a triple feature at the local theater. I was six years old. It was *The Time Machine*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, and *The Mysterious Island*. We were there all day and I was absolutely floored. I loved every minute of it. I was in a complete awe. I was completely mesmerized by the music. I later found out what I felt that affected me most about all that experience at the movie theater was the musical score. And coincidentally, at that time, my mother bought a piano. And I started tinkering with it. I took piano lessons, and I would always tinker at the piano or you couldn't get me away from that. I still have that piano by the way. I think somewhere around age, maybe 11 or 12 I realized this is what I want to do for the rest of my life. Music gave me such a powerful experience. I wanted to create music and I wanted to pursue my music to give people a positive experience.

AU: How did you get your first break in the film industry?

JM: I was 21 or 22 and at the time I went to UCLA, it was a year before Christopher Young who did *Hellraiser*. While I was there, James Horner was getting some sort of a degree and I met him there. Also Don Davis, who did that score for *The Matrix*, was also in school with us. So these were the people I was hanging out with. We were always doing something that had something to do with music, and film music in particular, and I met other filmmakers, other writers, other musicians. I eventually ended up working on a Disney TV special.

AU: How did you land the job for the *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*?

JM: Well, I was just about to say that while I was working at Disney. A friend of mine found a little ad in the *Hollywood Reporter*. And he says, "Hey, I just came across this, you may want to check this out. There's someone back East that needs someone to do music for their movie trailer." And so I said, "Okay, I'll respond to that."

I sent a resume in with an audio cassette of horror-themed I'd composed and I fully expected

to never hear back from the people.

About three weeks later, I got a phone call from a guy named Eric Young and he said, "You know, of all the tapes I've heard, yours is the one that really resonated with me. Would you like to do my trailer?" And so we recorded it with a small orchestra. It was really awesome. We struck up a great relationship and are close friends to this day. He moved out to LA, and one day, he called me and said, "Listen, I realize you're a serious composer. You might or may not like this, but I have some guys I worked with back East, they're three brothers who do special effects. They've done stuff for Tim Burton. They're really talented. But you may not want to do this movie because it just sounds crazy." I go, "Well, what is it?"

"They just finished shooting a movie called *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*." I don't even think he

knew the title properly. I think he said something like, *The Invasion of the Killer Space Clowns*. And I go, "Are you kidding me? Finally, someone made a movie for me." And so I got in contact with the Chiodo brothers and I had to audition, just like anyone else. When we started the movie without any music or sound effects, it was actually really creepy and scary. So I saw an opportunity to do not only horror but also comedy, because there was this farcical comedy aspect. I picked out the scene where the two characters, Mike and Debbie come across what they think is a circus tent in the middle of a forest, later to find out it's a spaceship and the Klowns chase them out, and then the Klowns march on to the town. So this is a perfect keystone moment. Because if you just watched this one scene, you get what the whole movie is going to be like, it sets the tone. So I figure I'm going to be doing some horror music, and some fantastical chase music that is reflective of the killer clown universe. And I get to do something I always wanted to do, something as a tribute to my roots in hard rock and metal

Everyone unanimously liked what I did. Especially "The Killer Clown March."

AU: Why do you think *Killer Klowns* is so popular now after 35 years?

JM: We were in the movie theaters for I think three days in Los Angeles? The *LA Times* and the *LA Weekly* gave it really nice reviews. And then finally, the print newspapers went crazy. People got to read it and decided, "You know, this weekend, let's go see that movie that was reviewed." They came to the movie theater and it was already gone. It was absolutely good. And it was really sad. However, what is wonderful is that the movie did resonate with people and people love the craziness and the imaginative spirit of the movie. And it took a while when it got to cable, and then VHS, and then got on to DVD. I think the audience grew and grew over time, to the point where it's become a part of American culture.

AU: Where did the idea to perform the soundtrack live at screenings come from?

JM: At the 25th anniversary, where someone from the Chiodo Brothers company invited me to come to a convention called *MonsterPalooza*. After seeing the fans responses, I thought I could put together a live concert, since the music from *Killer Klowns* was very influenced by classical music, right? I thought, "I'm going re-orchestrate it for an orchestra and perform it live." So I contacted MGM, And I told them my idea and they supported it. It took me five years from the 25th anniversary, to the 30th anniversary to put on the show. I'd been planning it the whole time. Everyone was totally dialed into the concept. I'm glad I had Mark Robertson, who is like one of the top concert masters in LA. I had Alex Levy, who works with Michael Giacchino as a music producer and editor. He set up the program that keeps the orchestra in sync with the film. Then we performed it one night only at the *Montalban Theatre* in Hollywood. I had cosplay performers in the lobby. We had most of the cast there, and Grant Cramer and Suzanne Snyder did a pantomime of one of the scenes. We did a Q&A and put on the concert. It was a magical event.

And if your next question is are we going to do it again? All I can say is, stay tuned.

AU: Tell me about the *Killer Klowns* video game. Are you working on new music for it?

JM: I started working on it last year. I started by elevating the score. You definitely know when you hear the music. You go, oh yeah, that's from the movie, but it's picked up a few notches. There was a conscious decision to be true to the movie, and the whole musical vocabulary, so that it will translate well in the game and bring us to a new generation.

AU: Recently was the first time ever the soundtrack had been released on vinyl?

JM: Yeah, Waxwork Records did it. That was a lot of fun. After I did the film, I said, You know what I want? To go take the masters back and do what's called the record book, which is the movie mix, that is going to work with dialogue and sound effects. There's certain approaches you have to have creating and producing music when it's going to be put into a film. There's a different philosophies when you make a record. So I did that two years after the film. The music

director of the company was a sweet man. He gave me all the 24 track channel master tapes back, then I went and did a record mix. So I had this wonderful, colorful score. That's what you hear in the Waxwork release.

AU: Anything else to promote?

JM: I have another show that I do called the *Killer Klowns from Outer Space Cosplay Dance Party*. I do a DJ set that's kind of a mash up from the film with synth metal, and I'm also able to incorporate some of the video game music elements.

AU: When you did the live thing in Hollywood,

the band *The Dickies* came out at the start and played the theme song. Did they also come out at the end again when the credits rolled?

JM: Absolutely. They came back on stage.

AU: That's so cool.

JM: Yeah, it was a real blast. I assume they just did their own thing. I didn't have any involvement with them writing that song. I think that song was written before the movie was even shot.

AU: Yeah, just based on the synopsis.

JM: Yeah, it's a brilliant song. When I say I saw the film for the first time without music, the only music in it was *The Dickies* theme song. That definitely set the tone. I went, "This is kick ass!"

AU: Final words on the legacy of *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*?

JM: There's more to come. There's so much gratitude and love I have for the fans that have supported this film, and the fans that understand my music. I can't tell you how much it really inspires me. And it makes me want to compose more music in that genre. I'm still working.

AU: Anything else to add?

JM: I really do hope the Chiodo Brothers keep creating more *Killer Klowns* content because they have their vision and their love of the genre from the perspective of from when they were kids. They have propelled the *Killer Klowns* brand to what it is. They are solely responsible for dreaming of this wonderful world. And I'm so grateful for them. And it really inspired me when I first saw the movie, I got the spirit of the creativity in their work. I really hope they do more original work.

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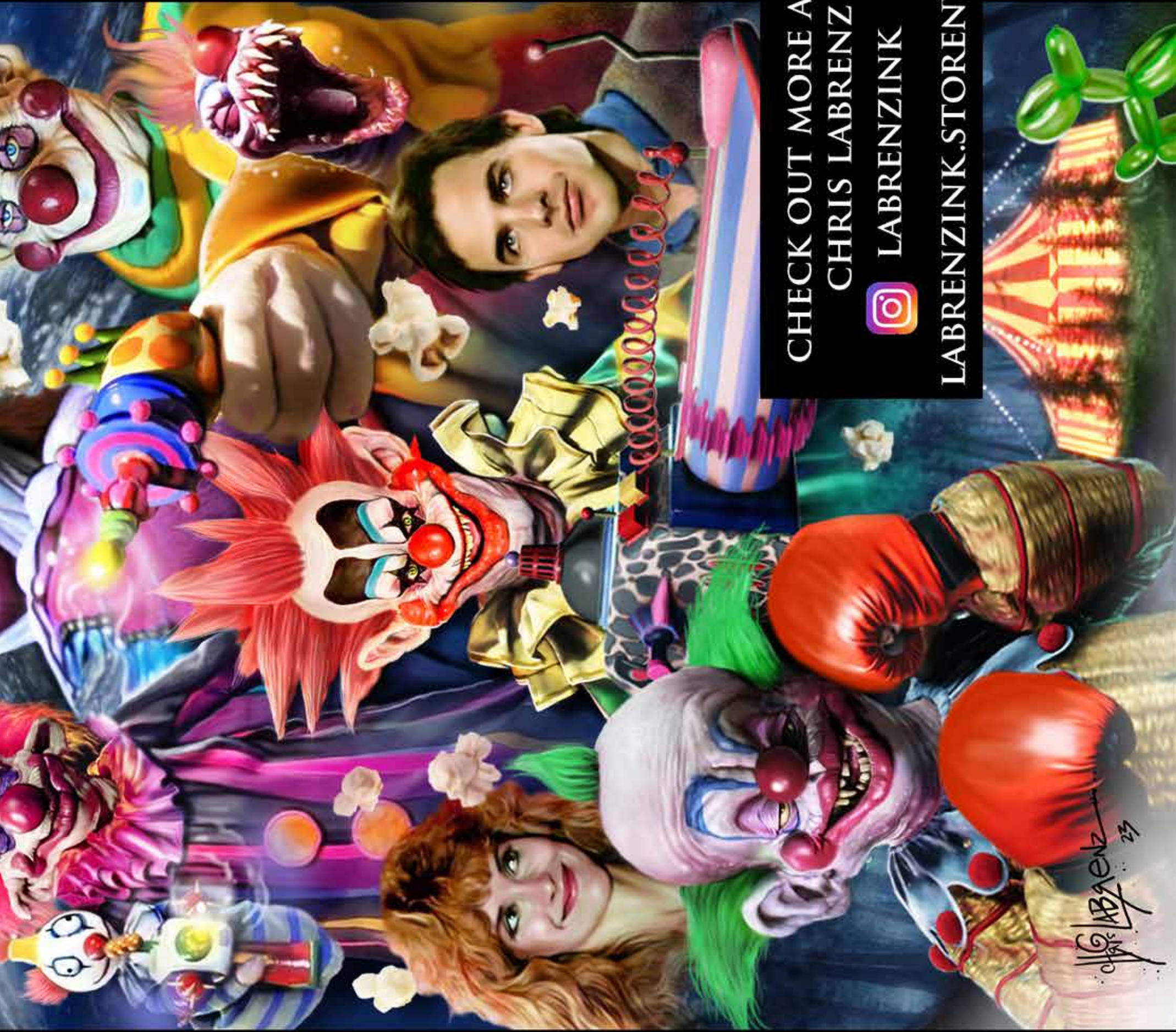
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PUNK ROCK BOWLING & MUSIC FESTIVAL 2023

Holy shit, it's hot here. The airport didn't seem to be sprinkled with punks as years passed.



After a quick bite, we headed to the Thursday night club show. First up (after a quick puff outside) was the West Seattle party that is Zeke. A blistering pummeling

of the fastest leads at the festival. It was a completely different lineup from last seeing them in 2017.

Next up were the pop punk Kings the Dwarves, just ask Blag. A notable absence was HeWhoCannotBeNamed. Occasionally a fan would make it onto the stage next to Blag, only to be handed the mic, not know the words, and dive into pit as the only way out. I wish I could have stuck around for all of the Dead Boys but after hearing *Sonic Reducer* I retreated for a gyro and bed. Working till 4am the night before will have that effect.

Friday morning reality set in that I was an old man. Function over style was the game plan, my old knees were rattling with the shoes that I brought. Got new comfortable kicks at the outlet mall, met up with some old LA pals and headed to the Punk Rock Museum. It was an overwhelming smorgasbord of punk

rock relics from punk's inception. From actual SST transmitters that pre-date Black Flag, to the wide spectrum

that is punk rock and punk adjacent, including my hometown heroes Chixdiggit. Be warned, bring snacks! I got hungry and lost focus halfway through.



was noticeable, read into that what you may. Saturday was Festival Day 1, the usual shit of long lines, punishing heat, lack of shade and the confusing reconfiguration of the festival. For these reasons our group opted to head there later, CH3

played and was background music while we accessed the new, but old environment. We got settled in time for FEAR to hit the stage. Rumor has it that this would be their last performance, they've had a nice run. Adolescents played the second stage while we looked for a spot for our group to post up. This was the first year that someone in our group reproduced and brought their offspring to the



Our club show on Friday night was the Swingin' Utters, they were solid, and it was a nice surprise to see Darius Koski in his element, I enjoy his singing the most. Notably absent was Jack Dalrymple. Youth Brigade closed out the show with one of our fearless leaders, Shawn Stern, on stage. The absence of a Stern on drums



festival. One little seven-year-old boy named Deegan, he had an army of grown men and women attending to his every need. It was akin to Joffrey from Game of Thrones but with 100% less asshole. Even though both stages were closer than years past, we were not able to see The Slackers by deciding to cozy

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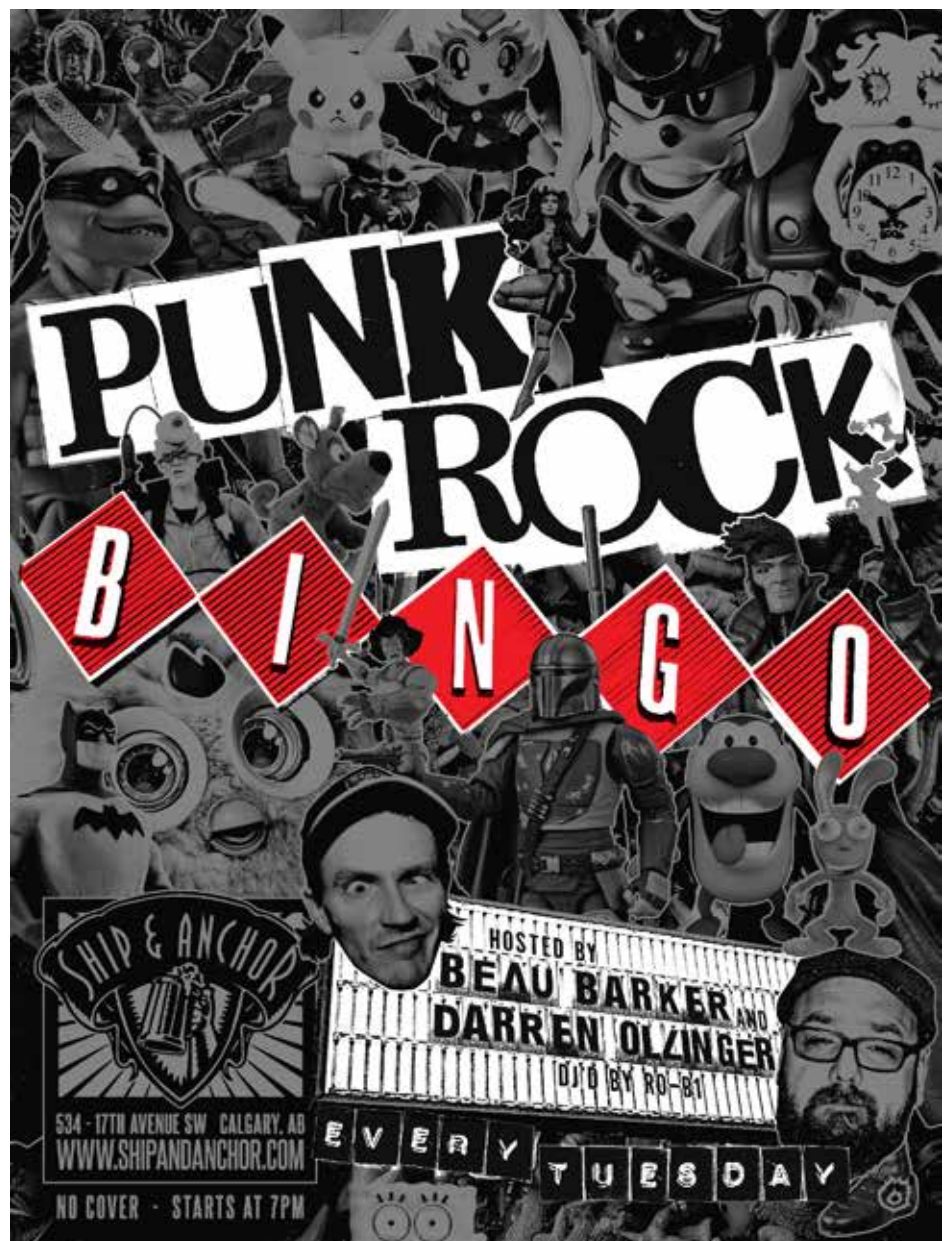


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up to the main stage.

Me First and the Gimme Gimmes were great, it would be their second set of the weekend, and later that night they would be called in to pinch-hit for The Damned as a member was not feeling well. They played their wide array of songs; my favorites were from the do-op era with songs from the album *Blow In The Wind*.

A favorite of Deegan's was up next, The Interrupters. It would have been nice if someone around us would have dialed back their chattiness with their white line fever energy, what an annoyance. As the sun set Bad Religion took the stage. Holy fuck they look old, as do we, father time takes no prisoners. They played for over an hour with Mike Dimkich, as always, chewing the same cud of gum during the set. They sounded so clean, with great harmonies. They looked as comfortable headlining the main stage as they would be at Denny's ordering off the senior's menu.

Had to rush out during the end of their set to make sure there would be no fuckery in line for a new venue, *Place on Seventh*. Western Addiction ruled, super playful with the sparse crowd that was filtering over from the festival. The set inspired my new pal Kristin to start a Henry era Black Flag cover band, more on that later...Copyrights were up, I have seen them before and was less than a casual fan, there was no denying how tight they were, I walked away a fan.

While everyone in my camp left for other shows, I stuck around for the metal band masquerading as a punk band, Strung Out. I have seen them many times, enough to be embarrassed. When not headlining, I've seen them play less than stellar sets. This was not the case on this night. While there were some sound issues, most of their set was great, with the metal tones of the guitar really coming through and no issues with Jason's vocals. It was iron man Jake Kiley's third set of the night, 1- Me First main stage 2- Secret show replacing The Damned 3- Strung Out club show, busy guy.

Sunday was a midday trek to the festival to see No!se with a new lineup. I can say the former lineup were the nicest guys in Oi. The new lineup consists of Matt on vocals only, and with the departure of Jesse and Nate to focus on family, the rest of the line up including a new bassist, was rounded out by Tacoma's Hilltop Rats. The whole set was shaky with bad sound and Matt's vocals sounding rough (that is what the indoor Vegas smoking will do to one's vocal cords). It was endearing to see Matt not knowing what to do with his hands with vocal only duties for the first time. Despite the issues it's always a treat to see No!se anytime I can.

Once again, we elected to settle in near the main stage, chill out a bit, drink some \$10 fruit punch slurpees, and smoke some weed to set the mood for Roy Ellis w/ The Aggrolites.

Last year I got covid for the second time and had to miss Face to Face while they came through Calgary on their farewell tour. There was no way I was going to piss this chance away, especially with how great



their last album was. The kings of the Inland Empire played the hits, "Old songs for Old people" as Trever Keith described them in the middle of their set.

Rancid was up next. I fucking love them and they don't tour my neck of the woods nearly enough. During the third song "Maxwell Murder", the barricade, built like a paper fortress, gave in. Midway through the song "The 11th Hour", the band had to stop playing. Lars Frederiksen proclaimed from the stage - "The most important thing to us is your safety, ok! So scoot

back, this is not a Limp Bizkit show, so scoot back



a little bit". Lars and Tim tried to stretch for time as the barricade repairs commenced. Attempting to

disarm the restless crowd Lars treated us to a sing-along of "The Wars End", strumming the opening cords as the crowd sang along. Next up Tim tried to keep us occupied during the ongoing barrier repairs, Tim softly sang the chorus from "Ruby Soho" and the crowd was in. After that the two left the stage for a 25minute absence, during that time our leader Shawn

Stern came out to address an unruly crowd, and being met with boos, he thanked the crowd for our patience and declared a full Rancid set would be played.

Playing past curfew would likely cost PRB thousands, possibly tens-of-thousands in fines and overtime. The band came back out to "Journey To The End of East Bay", and all was right with the world. Anytime we get to watch first ballot hall of famer Matt Freeman play bass is an opportunity to witness greatness.

Matt's other - other side gig, The Vulturaz, would





for headliners, Dropkick Murphys.

After an early escape from the festival, and a trip back to the hotel to stash our merch, we trekked to *Backstage Bar & Billiards* to see The Drowns and The Chisel once again.

The line up outside was bullshit, and they weren't letting in people who had tickets, saying they were at capacity. Luckily, my friend Kat had two tickets to T.S.O.L. that her friend got too fucked up for. We got in that line no problem, then bluffed our way in the back to

be playing tonight as well. This club show was at another new to me venue, *The Usual Place*. A nice cozy venue, which is probably why I felt mildly sexual harassed by them in the best way possible. Matt did not join his bandmates on stage though. Left Alone played a solid catchy set with Freeman watching from the side. Fanboy me wanted Left Alone to play the Rancid cover *Black Derby Jacket* they so beautifully do, but it was not to be.

Manic Hispanic and their shenanigans were up to close out the show. The 50% show, 50% comedy is a great way to close out the night. RIP to both Gabby and Steve Soto.

Monday is the last and most grueling day. Svetlanas had me at the festival grounds early. Today the second stage had all the bangers. I really wanted to check out Ratfuck on merit for a solid name, but no way was I about to slug it out with the sun in the very early afternoon. Svetlanas are one of the few bands keeping punk dangerous again. Once we got our second stage spot and we didn't leave the area for much, as the anticipation of The Chisel later on, was large.

Up next was Fea, they were the nice surprise for the day, having never checked them out before. A bit of garage punk played with ferocity. The first course was up, it was The Chisel from London. The crowd from Hepcat on the main stage was starting to file in, as well as the people hiding in the shade from the back of the stage. The Chisel played on the second stage with very little shade from the 5:50 PM sun. Those poor translucent skin lads from England. They brought the ruckus with the pit being rowdy and established.

Next on the second stage were the grandfathers of Hardcore, Agnostic Front. The crowd and band symbiotically fed off each other. Everyone pumping their fists and shouting along. The final festival band for me was The Exploited.

A notably thinner Wattie Buchan was at the helm. All hell broke loose on the final song "Sex and Violence." Wattie jarred the crowd to come on stage and participate and that's when security was tested and failed. Waves of people were crawling over the barricade, security went to stop those barricade jumpers, leaving zero resources for catching all the body surfers. Wave after wave they all ate shit crashing behind the barricade, the fences dividing the side of the stage and the festival grounds were shaking, it was very primal for a few minutes, not sure if anyone was hurt bad. I didn't stick around



catch The Drowns' last two songs. Next up was a visibly pissed up, chatty, The Chisel and it was awesome. Their second set of the day. I found myself trying to mimic their cadence, so fun on stage, probably the opposite of being stuck in a van going cross country. I went back to the *Fremont Country Club* for Punk Rock Karaoke during The Beltones. I always find myself watching Greg Hetson play. There were some ringer singers in the mix, completely taking command, and there were some folks who ate shit and relied on the crowd to bail them out.

That's another Punk Rock Bowling in the books. I heard lots of complaints, but at its heart it's a great festival and is very well run. A large part of attending every year is just to see my friends from all over and at this point unless the festival and the club shows are all dog shit, I'll still attend as long as I have the means. This year I bought on the blind sale in October. One of the best parts of PRB is making new pals along the way and getting to know old friends a bit better. This festival can't be an easy undertaking, especially after the last few years. Thanks Uncle Shawn Stern, until next year.
- Glenn Mendoza



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PUNK ROCK MUSEUM

Interview with ambassador **Talli Osborne**

By **Matthew Rooney**

Osborne is the Punk Rock Ambassador for the recently opened Punk Rock Museum in Las Vegas, Nevada.

AU: The Museum is based in Las Vegas, and I think that caught a lot of people's attention as Vegas is not really known as a punk rock hotbed. I have two questions on this, how did you decide on Vegas and were other cities considered, and if so where?



Talli Osborne: Well, the thing is, the obvious cities that people think about are LA, New York. But first of all, those cities are like some of the most expensive cities in probably the

world, definitely in this country. I think the building we have, it's 12,000 square feet. That would be literally millions in those cities. And it was not even close to a million here.

AU: Museums typically have a scholarly component to them. I know there are some historians involved in the museum but are there any plans to become involved with an academic institute?

TO: We haven't talked about that, I don't think, having an actual like educational component.

The thing is, all of these tour guides, they will be like, there's no school of punk rock, you know what I mean?



AU: To the gig posters. Where have you gotten them from so far? Is it more American or international?

TO: From all over the world. But yes, the collection does have a majority of American content.

AU: Is it difficult to display the show poster flyers and how does the curatorial process work with them? I can't picture them all being on display

TO: No, it hasn't been a struggle, some of the original like epic ones, they're obviously behind glass, and then some of them we've done color copies and just like papier-mâché them to walls.



AU: The collection is kind of incredible, how did you coordinate the whole thing? Just reaching out to collectors, individuals, and institutions?



TO: We have some incredible things in our museum and they're not even charging us, they're just lending it to us. It speaks for punk rock. People want to be a part of it and of course collectors like that we have more memorabilia than we can fit in our 12,000 square feet. Which is pretty cool.

AU: What's the most surprising or awe-inspiring piece in your opinion?

TO: We have Joe Strummer's last bag of weed. So I think that's so punk rock.

AU: How does the museum define punk? The collection includes stuff from the *New York Dolls*, who were proto-punk, and *Devo* and *Blondie*, who are more associated with New Wave. Would say artifacts from *Link Ray* or *Duran Duran* be considered? Or stuff from an act with heavy punk links like *Motörhead* or *Grandmaster Flash*?

TO: That's one of the first discussions we had, what is punk? Well, if you think you know what punk is, you're wrong, because there's no real answer to what punk is. This actually isn't even a hard question because we've talked about it a lot, and we want this museum to be completely inclusive.

thepunkrockmuseum.com



Alley Encounters



SHATTERED TEETH

AU: What's the name of your bowling team?

ST: Shattered Teeth.

AU: Is Shattered Teeth a band?

ST: Shattered Faith is a band. The guitarist for Shattered Faith is on my team and I'm a dentist. Shattered Teeth.

AU: What is it about bowling and punk rock that goes so well together?

ST: Oh man, I'm just getting through a hangover.



AU: What is your strategy today? Day drinking or straight-edge bowling?

ST: I'm going to go straight-edge bowling today.

AU: I think you're probably in the minority, as a straight edge bowler.

ST: I guess so, I don't know. We'll find out, right.

AU: What bands are you looking forward to seeing at Punk Rock Bowling & Music Festival?

ST: Agnostic Front, maybe Rancid. I saw Militarie Gun and Lion's Law, that was good.

AU: If you go bowling you miss the Lion's Law pool party. You have to choose between bowling and the pool party.

ST: I've seen every band here multiple times. I'll take the bowling this time. The bowling is fun, man. Here comes our ringer Denny McGahey the guitarist for Shattered Faith.

AU: What is Shattered Faith all about?

DM: I don't know anymore. It's a bad day to ask because my faith was definitely shattered at the blackjack table last night.

[facebook.com/ShatteredFaithBand](https://www.facebook.com/ShatteredFaithBand)

BOWL-KKAKE

AU: What's Bowl-kkake all about?

BK: Holy shit, man! You can't ask me that question at nine in the morning. It's just a bunch of guys having fun with other guys and one woman on the bowling lanes. Good clean fun.

AU: What is it about punk rock and bowling that goes so well together?

BK: They both involve a lot of drinking and

breaking things, like pins in a lane.

AU: What bands are seeing this weekend?

BK: Bad Religion. 100%

AU: Did you get the signed Greg Graffin book?

BK: No, we showed up late so we didn't get it, unfortunately. But he's the man, he's the best.

AU: Any bowling techniques to share?

BK: Just if you can remember doing it, you're doing it wrong, drink drink drink.

AU: Are you guys in a band?

BK: Not anymore. It was called Dirty Santas. It was just ridiculous. It was an all Santa review. Every song I'd lose a layer and we had a lot of songs. It was very exciting at the end.

AU: So you started off as a big fat Santa and you end up naked?

BK: Yeah, it was like all Santa songs. But mainly a bunch of AC/DC covers.

AU: Instead of Hells Bells it would be like Santa's Bells?

BK: Yeah, it was fun.

AU: Where are you guys from?

BK: Los Angeles.



AU: What's the craziest thing you've ever seen in Vegas?

SH: One of my teammates bowled over 200 once and that's just unheard of, he was piss drunk.

AU: Does day drinking help you bowl?

SH: It's going to help us for sure. We need the high octane pilsners flowing man.



FEAR & BOWLING IN LAS VEGAS

AU: What's the name a bowling team?

F&B: Fear & Bowling in Las Vegas. This is Ivan here with my man Kieth, Lindsay and Morgan. We're going to win today's competition.

AU: Do you guys wake and bake? Or do you do the beer buckets for breakfast?

F&B: It's an all-day everyday kind of thing buddy.

AU: What is it about bowling and punk rock that goes so well together?

F&B: The drugs, the music, did I mention the drugs? Oh, and the hookers too.

AU: Are you guys a band too?

SH: We were at one point but not anymore, we were called Giddy-Up Pussy.

AU: What bands are you looking forward to at PRB this year?

SH: Pretty stoked see Noize tomorrow. Of course Bad Religion tonight as well.

AU: Craziest thing you've seen in Vegas?

F&B: Children, they shouldn't be here.

AU: Are you good bowlers?

F&B: Oh yeah, we're like 300's or something.

AU: Any bowling tips?

F&B: When you see the balls, rub them really really hard.



AU: Anything else to add for the small children at home that might want to come to Punk Rock Bowling next year?

BK: Get your laminate machine working and your fake ID ready because it's the best time you'll never remember.



SPEED HUMPS

AU: Who are the Speed humps?

SH: Some crack bowlers from Breckenridge, Colorado.

AU: Are you guys a band too?

SH: We were at one point but not anymore, we were called Giddy-Up Pussy.

AU: What bands are you looking forward to at PRB this year?

SH: Pretty stoked see Noize tomorrow. Of course Bad Religion tonight as well.



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CHARM CITY GUTTER PUNKS

AU: What's the name of your bowling team?
CCGP: We are the Charm City Gutter Punks. We are from the Baltimore area, hence our matching socks.

AU: Ooh. Does John Waters bowl?

CCGP: I really don't know but he's more than welcome to join our team next year.

AU: Who's on the team this year?

CCGP: Well, it's me, I'm Ellen and Patrick and Nikolas, and then Johanna.

AU: What is your game plan for the day? Is there going to be day drinking involved? Or are you going straight-edge bowling?

CCGP: For us, it's all about form.

CCGP2: I smoke a lot of weed so it's not gonna be straight-edge for me.

AU: What bands are you most excited for?

CCGP: Oh my gosh. Which ones aren't we excited to see? We saw The Reverend Horton Heat last night and they were just absolutely amazing. Looking forward to the Dropkick Murphys, The Interrupters, Rancid, The Aggrolites, and Fishbone.

AU: Any secret bowling techniques to share?

CCGP: Yes, matching shirts.



SUCK LESS BOWLING

AU: What bowling team are you on?

SLB: Suck Less Bowling.

AU: You all have nick names, what are they?

SLB: Lord Todd, The Dave, The Doogle, and Sinjin.

AU: What is Suck Less Bowling all about?

SLB: It's all about wishing you were good and trying to suck less.

AU: What is it about Punk Rock Bowling that makes you get up at nine in the morning?

SLB: I've never got to bowl, this is the first year bowling. The music all day, the camaraderie, all the punks downtown is awesome.

AU: What bands are you looking forward to most at the festival?

SLB: The Interrupters, Me First and the Gimme Gimmes, The Venomous Pinks. Just about everybody, it's all good music.

AU: Will you be day-drinking at the alley?

SLB: Probably, seems likely.

AU: What do you think of PRB as a festival?

SLB: First time but it's been awesome so far.

SLB2: I love it. It's been 12 years, I've missed it. Thank God I'm back.

AU: Will it be pina colodas or buckets of beer at the bowling alley today?

SLB: Buckets of beer.



GUTTER FINGERS

AU: What is the name of your bowling team and what are you all about?

GF: Gutter Fingers and we're all about having fun.

AU: Gutter Fingers. The sound of that is making me hungry.

GF: For some nasty pizza.

AU: What is it about bowling and punk rock that goes so well together?

GF: I would say fun, beer and music. Just having a good time.

AU: What's the game plan? It's pretty early in the morning but is there still some day drinking planned for the bowling lane?

GF: Absolutely and some greasy food.

AU: Are you going for a pina coloda angle or a bucket of beer?

GF: We need a bucket of beer. That's what gives you the strength to keep going and beat other people.

AU: From past experience I've found that usually by the second game you're kind of in the zone and everything's perfect but then you

keep drinking and the third game goes to shit.

GF: That's exactly how it is. But this year is going to be different. Our first game went to shit and we're just going to get better.

AU: Who are you excited to see this weekend?

GF: The Slackers, Face To Face, there's so many.

AU: Any bowling tips or techniques to share?

GF: I think the tip is to not practice all year long and just go for it.

AU: Have you ever ended up bowling against someone really cool?

Like you're suddenly bowling against NOFX or something?

GF: Last year was pretty cool. We had the Reggies bar people next to us. They were a super fun group and they were like, next time you're in Chicago, come see us.

AU: Whoever you end up bowling against kind of become like lifelong friends.

GF: Yeah, I mean, social media friends at least.

AU: It's a shared experience.

GF: It is. That's something we experienced the first year that we bowled, we were like, Holy crap! This is

so cool.

AU: Who is the best bowler on the team?

GF: Every day is different. Depends on what we drank last night and what we'll drink today.




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THE CASUALTIES

Until Death

Interview with frontman David Tejas
by Ira "Halfway To Hell" Hunter
and Ray "Riot" MacKay

AU: Who are we talking to?

DT: David Tejas of The Casualties, Starving Wolves, and Krum Bums. Professional jumper and climber.

AU: What was your first introduction to punk?

DT: I first remember seeing and hearing the Clash and my Dad telling about the Rock the Casbah video being filmed in Austin, TX, where I live. I was also way into skateboards, and music and skating goes hand in hand. A friend introduced me to The Exploited and it was all over for me.

AU: How's the music scene in Austin?

DT: Austin, TEJAS! The music scene is strong and growing, with the youth. Concrete Elite, Riverboat Gamblers, User Unauthorized, Drakulas, Vasla...

AU: How did you first meet The Casualties?

DT: I first met the dudes in San Antonio at a show, then in Baltimore, then back in Austin, where we quickly became good friends.

AU: What influences your songwriting?

DT: In all my bands, we are pretty well diversified in what we listen to, but also all the obvious ones as well. UK82, '77 Punk, American Hardcore. But we all have our hidden loves also. Meggers loves ABBA, I love Faith No More and Roky Erickson.

AU: Any career highlights or lowlights?

DT: Every show is a highlight and a lot can be hidden bummers. I think the goal is to not show disappointment, unless outrage is appropriate! Like if Nazis are at a show, the club are being assholes to the kids. On very long tours, I have had my issues of being tired and hiding, which I'm not proud of. I love to hang out and talk with everyone. But sometimes 8 weeks in the cold in a shitty van can really get you exhausted.

AU: What can people expect from you live?

DT: Full on explosions of energy!

AU: How many times have you performed at Punk Rock Bowling?

DT: I'm not sure, a lot!

AU: What drew you to the festival originally and what makes it unique in your opinion.

DT: The LOVE of Youth Brigade and the history they've created. From a young kid watching the film, Another State of Mind, I always hoped to do what they did. I think I did, in my own way. Touring with no money, a shit van, no help... And helping create our scene in Austin.

AU: What's your best bowling score?

DT: 10,00000000000000000000000000

AU: Any bowling tips to share?

DT: Righty tightly, lefty loosey

AU: Any crazy Vegas stories to share?



DT: Most good ones I don't remember, just sad stories told to me later! Hahaha.

AU: What bands are you most excited to check out at Punk Rock Bowling this year?

DT: GBH and The Exploited for sure, but I love The Chisel, Surfbort, and the Svetlanas too.

AU: Any plans to come back to Canada, eh?

DT: I can't wait to get back to Canada! Early 2024.

AU: Any new albums to mention?

DT: Starving Wolves just recorded a new album. I am super excited for this to come out. We really went out of our comfort zone on this one. I like for albums to feel like a rollercoaster

of emotions. So that's what I hope it is for our listeners.

AU: What in your opinion differentiates punk and hardcore?

DT: Only the hair cuts!

AU: When touring, do you prefer staying at the pitbull palace or the kitty litter castle?



DT: Pitbull palace 100% I can handle dog fur all over. But not the piss smell of kitty litter.

AU: What's the most wasted you've ever been and still pulled off the show?

DT: I don't remember, but I did it. I did an entire Euro tour blacked out. I do not recommend it!

AU: Where do you think the future of punk rock is headed?

DT: I hope back to house shows and kids starting bands and really working hard in their parents garages!

AU: What is THE essential punk album?

DT: Punks Not Dead, City Babys Revenge, The Feeding of the 5000... too many!

AU: What is your favorite non-punk album?

DT: I'm listening to a lot of Charley Crockett.

AU: Any final words?

DT: Go support live music and fuck AI.

AU: How do people find you online?

DT: Just look to the sky and I'll be there!!!

facebook.com/TheCasualties

instagram.com/thecasualties_official

facebook.com/starvingwolves

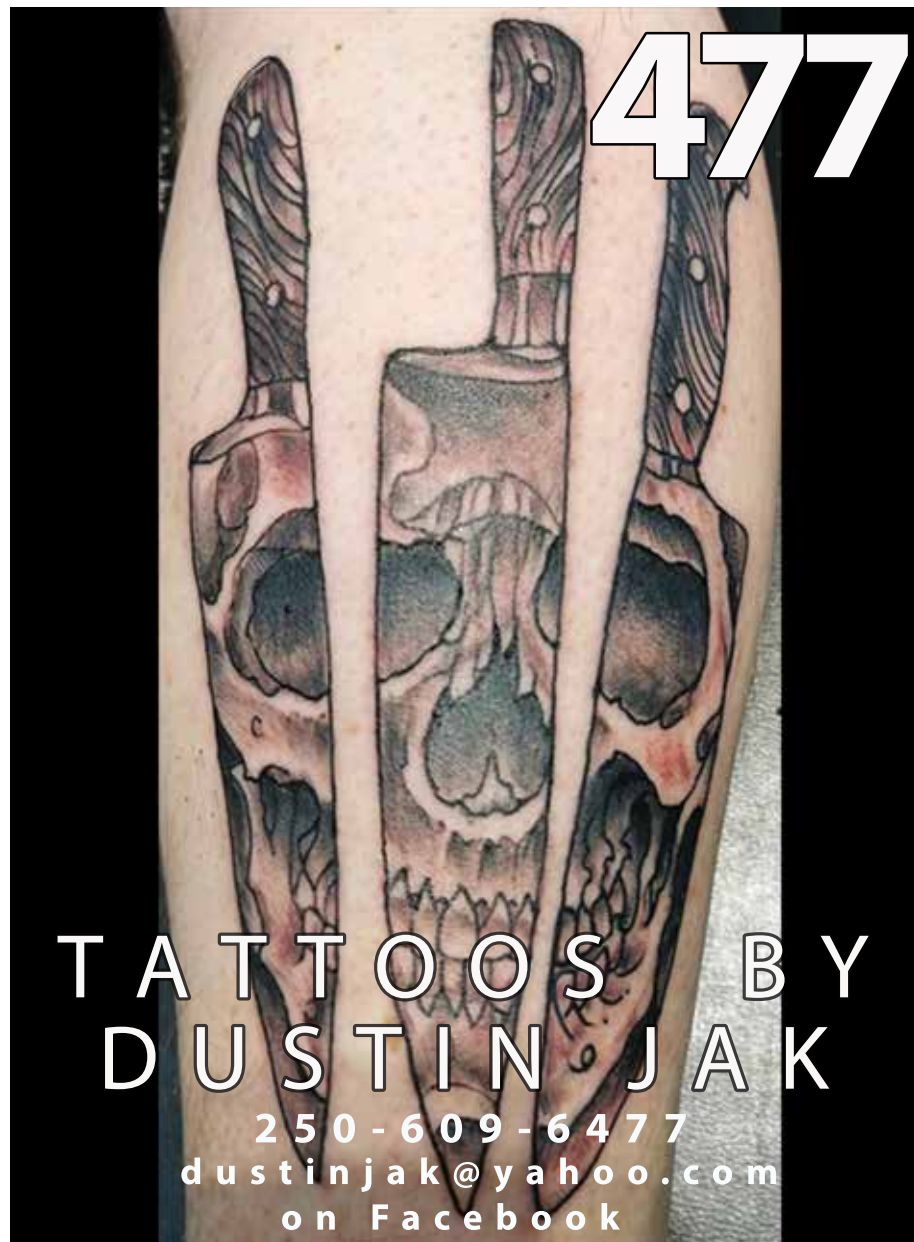
starvingwolvesatx.bandcamp.com

facebook.com/krumbums

krumbums.bandcamp.com

ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

2023 FESTIVAL GUIDE



TATTOOS BY
DUSTIN JAK

250-609-6477

dustinjak@yahoo.com

on Facebook



Photo-Credit- Mike-Rosati



145. My 'team' proved to be a collection of disabled non veterans and we got eliminated...quicklier.

AU: Any crazy Vegas related stories of debauchery to share?

There's a great "your mom" joke in this question, but I'm not going to stoop to that level! Meanwhile, your readers need to get my solo record Introducing Ralph Champagne and my new novel Highland Falls!!!

AU: Did you get lucky in Vegas this year, either gambling or with the ladies?

Yes!

AU: What makes the Punk Rock Bowling music festival unique in your opinion?

It's a festival where the Dwarves are treated like

DWARVES

Rock Legends

Interview with global sensation Blag Dahlia

AU: Who are we talking to?

Blag the Ripper aka Ralph Champagne. I'm a Rock Legend who founded the infamous Dwarves!

AU: Any hidden talents unrelated to music?

I'm a really good kisser.

DWARVES

AU: Tell us about the Punk Rock Bowling club show the Dwarves played this year with Zeke, and the Dead Boys. What did people miss if they weren't there?

They missed three of the greatest bands of all time. Dead Boys are the missing link between punk rock and Alice Cooper. Zeke is harder and more fire breathing than ever. And of course, Dwarves are still the best band of all time.

AU: What can you tell us about how Punk Rock Bowling has grown over the years?

It went from a bunch of fan boys snorting blow in a hotel room to everyone snorting blow at a resort. I approve of the evolution!

AU: How many times have the Dwarves performed at Punk Rock Bowling?

I'm not sure, but let's say three times on the Main Stage and five times at a club show? Our new drummer Snupac was discovered at PRB singing along to all the words, at age 12 I brought him up on stage and he nailed every song. Now he's keeping the beat in the Dwarves and singing in Get a Grip. The man is a star!

AU: What drew you to the festival originally?

Drugs, money, and the augmented breast marathon that is Vegas! Oh, and some pretty stellar bands.

AU: Have you ever bowled in the tournament?

I bowled once and rolled a respectable

the legends we are. Amen!

AU: Were there any bands playing this year at PRB that you were hyped to check out?

We missed all the bands this year because we had to fly out at 5AM Friday to play in Philadelphia, a town that could fairly be called the Anti-Vegas.

AU: Were you able to check out the new Punk Rock Museum in Vegas? (I did see a couple Dwarves gig posters on display)

Stoked! I'm giving guided tours there July 4, 5 & 6! Get your ticket and bring me free drugs!

AU: Where's the future of punk rock headed?

Klezmer, definitely klezmer.

AU: What do you love most about Vegas and what do you hate most about Vegas?

Promoters high on booze and cocaine!

AU: Favorite punk album of all time?

Blood, Guts & Pussy!

AU: Any plans to tour Canada?

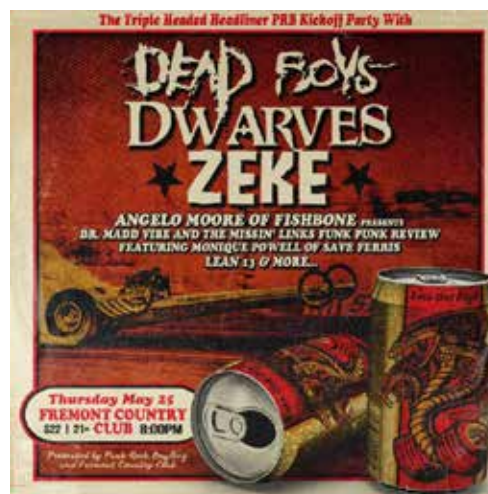
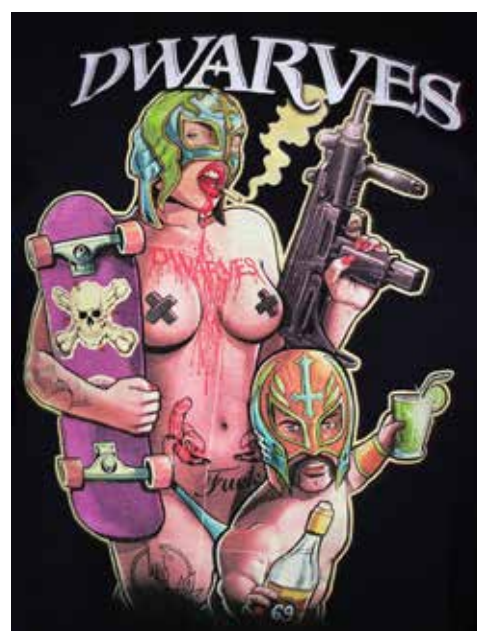
Yes, we love Canada. Attractive people with disposable income and just the right amount of Socialism.

AU: Final words of wisdom for the children.

You will die eventually after much misery and pain.

AU: How do people find you online?

Hear music, see videos, tour dates, merchandise, and everything else DWARVES, BLAG and RALPH CHAMPAGNE right here: thedwarves.com



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NOI!SE

Interview with Lead Vocalist Matt Henson

By Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Who am I speaking with and what roles do you fill within No!se?

No!se: I'm Matt. I sing, write songs, and formerly played bass. My day job created some issues with my wrist that forced me to transfer bass duties to my friend, Aaron.

AU: Where did No!se start? Is the band still based there?

N: Tacoma, Washington. I'm the only member who no longer lives there. My family and I live on the East Coast.

AU: I understand that there have been several personnel changes within the group recently? Who has left, and who is new, or has returned?

N: Nate and Jesse left the band last month. I considered ending the band altogether, but they both encouraged me to continue so we moved Kenny from drums to guitar, added our original guitar player Justin back to the lineup, and also added our friends Aaron and Mike, formerly of Tacoma band the Hilltop Rats.

AU: No!se have played various American cities, and done a tour of Europe, correct? Have you guys played any other countries?

N: We've played just about every major city in the U.S. along with Switzerland, France, Germany, and the Netherlands.

AU: Any plans to tour new places soon?

N: Definitely! We have just booked 4 shows in the U.S. and plan on scheduling more down the road.

AU: Do you see No!se ever playing in Canada?

N: Absolutely.

AU: Pirates Press Records re-released Rising Tide a couple of years ago, are there any plans to re-release any of the first EPs and 7 inches?

N: I think we are going to focus on new music and putting out unreleased stuff.

AU: Name two of your favourite

No!se tunes and tell us a little bit about them.

N: Oh man. That's tough. My favorite is "Two Faced." I wrote it on the bass, which I don't do very often. I wanted an intro and outro so that the song kind of told a story with the bassline able to bounce around the chord progression since it's pretty simple. The lyrics describe some personalities that I think we all have experienced (as the name suggests)

"Idle Action," is probably the other just because of how much fun it is to play along with the fact that the song is, I think, what started our momentum as a band.

AU: Is a new No!se album something that we will see anytime in the near future?

100%

AU: Do you guys have any pre-gig rituals?

N: Not pre, but Kenny and I have a pretty consistent post show routine that consists of drinking beer, eating Taco Bell and watching Forensic Files in the hotel room while we make smart ass comments to each other.

AU: You are playing Punk Rock Bowling in Las Vegas again this year. What are some highlights from the last time you played/attended the festival?

N: The best thing about PRB (and there are tons of great things) is the interaction with friends and fans. We love hanging out with people we haven't gotten to see in forever. PRB is like a family reunion in a lot of ways for the bands just as much as it is for everyone else.

AU: What are some of your all time favourite

PIRATES PRESS RECORDS

shows that you have played?

N: Oh wow, that's tough. My top 5 (in no particular order) are:

Hamburg, Germany
Venlo, Netherlands
Salt Lake City, Utah



Pomona, CA
Boston, MA
(Seattle and Tacoma don't count)

AU: How do people find you online?

N: Their browser, typically.

facebook.com/destinycitynoise

noisepunk.bandcamp.com

piratespressrecords.com

Band Photo Credit: Gordy Carbone

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AU: What is your band all about and how would you describe your sound?

Thunderfuck: We sound like a bunch of dicks, just dicks slapping.

Hot Hands: Rock n Roll at Hardcore speed.

Thunderfuck: Badgers mating in the Peruvian moonlight

AU: Where are you from and what is the music scene like there?

Hot Hands: Assville.

Thunderfuck: Bonerville

W.I.L.F.: Most famous for a lady who plays the spoons

Hot Hands: Also Steve Martin

Thunderfuck: He wants to suck Steve Martin's dick.

AU: What does it say on your dating profiles?

Thunderfuck: "Hot Hands: looking for Steve Martin lookalike"

AU: Did you play a side show during Punk Rock Bowling this year? What did people miss if they weren't there?

Lily Larceny: We played three times at Hennessy's Tavern. Multiple orgasms each performance.

Kozy: They missed titty flashes

Thunderfuck: Getting proposed to? The entire festival

AU: What drew you to Vegas originally?

Hot Hands: Dicks.

Thunderfuck: Steve Martin's

chalky penis.

Kozy: Money? Titties. I heard Vegas has a very nice ecosystem.

Lily Larceny: Reverend Dave proposed, so we had to see if he meant it.

AU: Have you ever bowled in the tournament?

Any bowling tips?

Hot Hands: No, but I know how to handle balls.

Thunderfuck: I really enjoy holding a big black ball.

Kozy: Is bowling the sport where you throw the ball into the hole?

AU: Any crazy Vegas debauchery to share?

Kozy: I got married.

W.I.L.F.: We don't wanna rehash that.

Thunderfuck: Ask for the police report.

Lily Larceny: I got sick during Bad Religion.

AU: Did you get lucky in Vegas this year?

KillerK: I won a pizza.

Lily Larceny: I snuggled Kozy's boobs.

Kozy: I won \$8 and lost \$8.

AU: Were there any bands playing this year at PRB that you were extra stoked to check out?

Lily Larceny: I think I had seen every band that was playing the main fest this year.

Kozy: Madam Bombs. CAM GIRL mostly tho. Astral projecting from our own bodies so we can watch ourselves play.

Lily Larceny: Watch ourselves play with ourselves. Get Hennessy's a mirror on the ceiling, for our sexy time.

AU: Were you able to check out the new Punk Rock Museum in Vegas? If so, what were your thoughts?

Kozy: We went, it was so bad ass. When I walked in the first thing I saw was a big picture of Laura Jane Grace.



Thunderfuck: Yeah, it was really cool.

AU: Where is the future of punk rock headed?

Kozy: CAM GIRL

Lily Larceny: The future of punk is trans.

Kozy: Trans women led. KillerK: The back of our van.

AU: What do you love most about Vegas?

Thunderfuck: Leaving?

Lily Larceny: Punk Rock Bowling.

Kozy: Titties

Hot hands: Sleep.

Kozy: I don't think I slept for more than 5 minutes in Vegas.

Vegas Encounters

CAM GIRL

Lily Larceny (lead vocals)

Kozy (guitar, back up vocals)

Hot Hands (guitar, back up vocals)

Thunderfuck (drums)

KillerK (bass)

W.I.L.F. (van driver, merch dude)

AU: What are you most infamous for?

Hot Hands: We're Cam Girl and this song is about dicks.

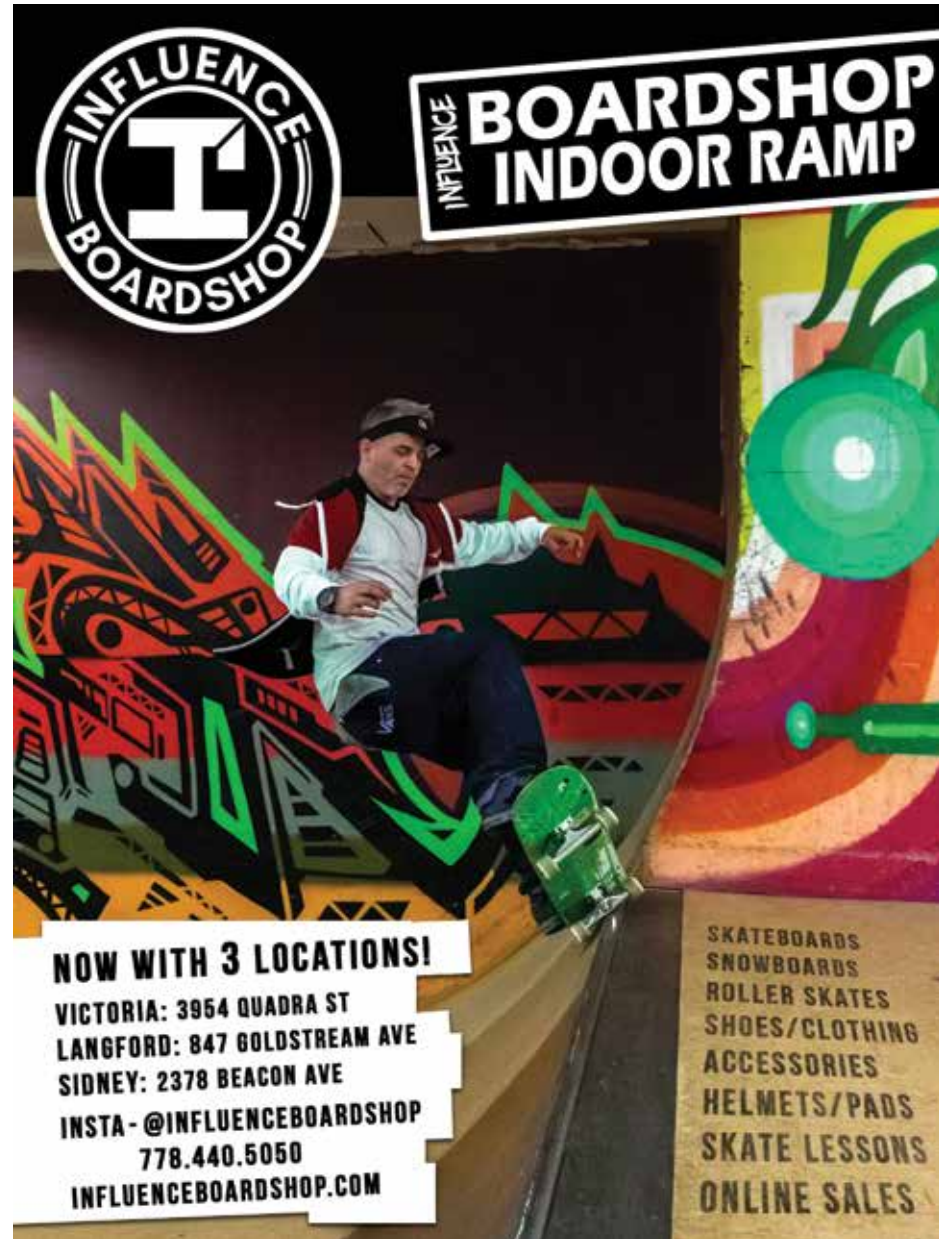
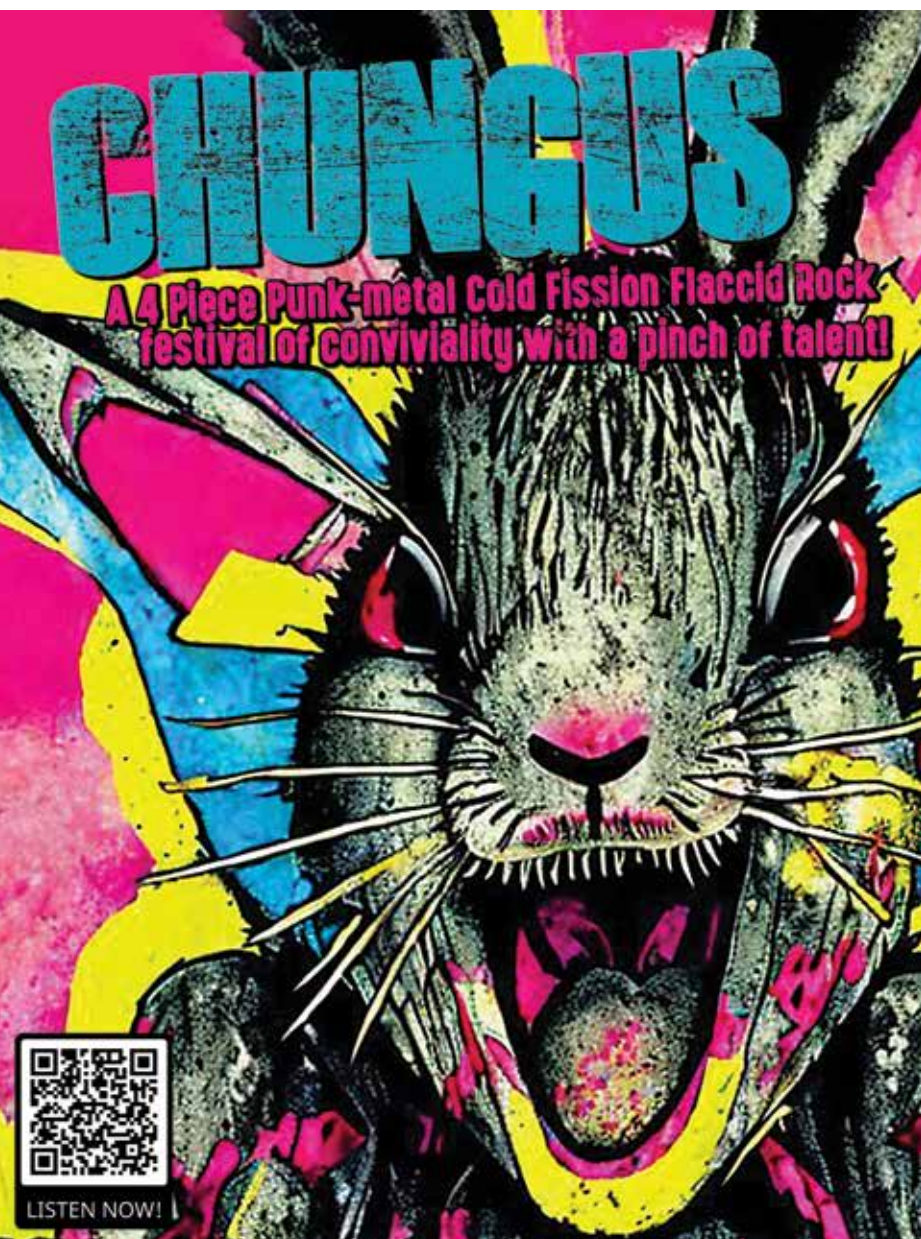
Kozy: Also the song about pussy.

Lily Larceny: I like pussy and dicks, I don't discriminate.

AU: Any hidden talents unrelated to music?

W.I.L.F.: Well, Kozy does all the band art.

Kozy: I'm coming out, I'm Banksy.



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SOME KIND OF NIGHTMARE

Interview with guitarist Chy Mess

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you best known for?

SKON: My name is Chy Mess and I play guitar in *Some Kind of Nightmare*.

AU: Any hidden talents unrelated to music?

SKON: Not really. I barely have a grip on the music thing.

AU: What is your band all about and how would you describe your sound?

SKON: We mostly sing about the lower class struggle and how draining it can be to just simply exist sometimes. Most folks describe us as a street punk band. But we like to add a little bit of everything we like into our sound.

AU: Where are you from and what is the music scene like there?

SKON: We started out in Ohio. Then we moved to California. But we've been touring mostly full time since 2013. So a little bit of everywhere. Most of the places we go to have a very strong and thriving underground music scene.

AU: Who else is in the band and what does it say on their dating profiles?

SKON: My wife Molly plays the bass and sings. And we work with a few different drummers around the U.S. Hopefully my wife doesn't have a dating profile. That'd be a little awkward.

AU: Tell us about the Punk Rock Bowling club show *Some Kind Of Nightmare* played this year with *Unit F*, *The Venomous Pinks*, *The Skulls*, and *Avengers*. What did people miss if they weren't there?

SKON: We're very grateful for the opportunity they gave us to hop on their festival. The show was a sold out, 450 capacity room, and we saw a ton of familiar faces from all over the world in the crowd that night. It was truly an amazing

experience that we're still feeling the high from. If you missed out on it, we hope to lure you next time.

AU: What drew you to the Punk Rock Bowling music

festival originally?

SKON: We've played a handful of unofficial PRB shows over the years. Meaning, playing people's



backyards while the festivals happening. This was the first time we were asked to actually be a part of it. The overwhelming amount of people coming together to celebrate this genre of music is at the top of this list of what draws us to it.

AU: Have you ever bowled in the tournament? Any bowling tips?

SKON: I'm a terrible bowler so I've never tried to enter the tournament. But a really good tip is, try to hit the pins with the ball.

AU: Any crazy Vegas related stories of debauchery to share?

SKON: Sorry. What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas. I don't make the rules.

AU: Did you get lucky in Vegas this year?

SKON: We got added to the Saturday guest list at the last minute, so yeah!

AU: What makes the Punk Rock Bowling music festival unique in your opinion?

SKON: I think the size of it. And seeing so many punks running around the streets of Vegas.

AU: Were there any bands playing this year at PRB that you were extra stoked to check out?

SKON: I was super stoked to see Dee Skusting and the *Rodents* play on that big ass stage with such a full sound. We've known them for years now, and it warmed my little heart to see them reach such an amazing new step.

AU: Where do you think the future of punk

rock is headed?

SKON: We can all only hope that the next generation of bands and show growers are able to keep it as strong and alive as we, and the generations before us have.

AU: What do you love most about Vegas?

SKON: Just the craziness that occurs there on a daily basis. It's never boring. And we have a lot of really good friends out there including our Asteroid M Records family.



AU: What do you hate most about Vegas?

SKON: Hangovers.

AU: What is your favorite punk album of all time?

SKON: Rancid's *...And Out Come the Wolves* was the album that really sucked me into the scene and I still love and appreciate it as much now as the first time I listened to it.

AU: Any plans to tour Canada in the near future?

SKON: It's definitely coming up soon. We're working on

passports, and when to exactly make the leap over.


AU: Any final words of wisdom?

SKON: Music is art. Do what makes YOU happy. And never give up on it.

somekindofnightmarepunk.bandcamp.com

Live Photo Credit: Clinton Smith






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Punk Rock Trailblazer: Alice Bag

Interview by Aeryn Shrapnel

Absolute Underground: Who are we taking to and what are you known for?

Alice Bag: I'm Alice Bag. I'm an OG punk from Los Angeles, California. I was in one of L.A.'s earliest punk bands. We are especially remembered for wearing paper bags on our heads when we played. Many of the early L.A. bands weren't properly documented, I was very lucky because my band was featured in *The Decline of Western Civilization*, a well-known and highly regarded early punk documentary.

AU: You belong to the first wave of LA punk in the mid-70s, what's different about the scene now?

AB: Punk has grown so much in size and scope. When I got into punk, it was a small group of weirdos who had never fit in within their own communities. At that time, the idea of punk was unknown in most suburban households so people didn't know if we'd escaped from the circus or if we were a dangerous street gang. It amazes me how big punk has gotten. Punk Rock Bowling attracts so many fans and so many acts from all over the world. It would have been



inconceivable for me to anticipate anything like this in the mid 1970s. At that time, I was dancing in the flame of a lit match that I thought would blow out. I recently learned that there's a punk museum here in Vegas which is pretty wild. Punk in a museum, who'd have thunk it? It's crazy and cool because it takes the whole DIY ethos to a new level. It's great that punks are documenting their own cultural movement.

AU: Why did you start writing music and what attracted you to punk?

AB: I was attracted to punk because it was raw, intense and wildly creative. When I got into punk, it felt like a movement that I could help define, it was that new. There were few rules. The only real rule was not to do the same old boring shit. I felt that it was particularly welcoming to women, queers and people of color.

AU: Who did you look up to at the time?

AB: Musically? I was into glam rock just before I got into punk. I still love the music of David Bowie, early *Queen*, *Mott The Hoople*, *Elton John*, but at the same time I was also into the music of Billie Holiday, Bessie Smith, Etta James and Aretha Franklin. I grew up listening to mariachi music, so that's another favorite flavor. Later, when I got into punk, I fell hard for *The Weirdos!*

AU: Who do you admire now?

AB: There's not one particular person that I admire because there are heroes all around us every day. The traits I admire are a willingness to speak truth to power and the tenacity to persevere in the face of

adversity. Musically, I'm mostly inspired by the changes I want to see in the world.

AU: What's your musical process?

AB: Mostly, I get angry about something and instead of yelling or breaking things, I write a

song. Occasionally, something positive inspires a song but I think music is therapeutic for me, it's how I work out things that bother me.

AU: What made you decide to write books?

AB: It's weird how I started writing. One night, a friend told me she thought I was a good storyteller and that I should write a book. I told my husband about it and the next day he left the laptop open on our kitchen table. He had created a blog for me called *The True Life Adventures of Violence Girl*. It was clear to me that he was challenging me to write. So I did. I had never wanted to be a writer but because punk had taught me that I could do whatever I wanted and make my own rules, it was surprisingly easy. I approached each chapter like I would a punk song: I made them short, honest, and unfiltered.

AU: Like many of us, you were hopeful that the pandemic could spark much-needed change for the better. Did things unfold the way you thought they would?

AB: Things have changed for the better, but social and political progress need to be monitored and adjusted constantly. We can't expect one party or one person to transform the nation. Long lasting change is a very slow process because it requires changing minds and traditions, not just policies. I think artists and especially musicians have a unique opportunity to help with that deeper kind of change. Our music can literally resonate in a person's body, and our lyrics can help expose people to different ideas and hopefully, it all happens while you're singing along having fun.

AU: How do you feel about the state of the world?

AB: I'm concerned about the health of the planet that we all live on. I'd like to see us all make an effort to take better care of it, if not for ourselves, then for those we leave behind.

AU: Some people think politics don't belong in

punk. What would you say to them?

AB: Who said that? Were they wearing a red hat? Punk is about expressing your truth, whatever that may be. There is always room for dialogue when



people are encouraged to listen and express themselves openly. Dialogue, not suppression of ideas, leads to long lasting change.

AU: I noticed you have a section on your website called "Women In LA Punk: Archives" that features interviews with some bad-ass women. Can you tell us about that?

AB: Several years ago, I started noticing that there were a bunch of books about punk at my local library, but when I opened those books, the people mentioned and pictured were

about 90% white males. That concerned me deeply because it didn't reflect the experience I had in Los Angeles where women had played a very strong role in shaping the scene. So I started interviewing women whom I had personally known to have been part of the L.A. Punk scene.

AU: What are you listening to these days?

AB: Right now, I'm loving *Amyl and the Sniffers*, *The Linda Lindas*, *Otoboke Beaver* and *Las Ratapunks*.

AU: Any plans for the future?

AB: I'm gonna bet on black!

alicebag.com

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END IT

Interview with Drummer Chris Gonzalez

By Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are your skills to pay the bills?

End It: Yo, I'm Chris Gonzalez. I play drums and handle all of our merch and booking duties.

AU: Any hidden talents unrelated to music?

EI: I like to skate, Akil is a top-notch bowler, Ray has acting skills, big John will out-lift anyone and out race them with his car, Pat is a gambling expert and will outlive all of us.

AU: What is your band all about and how would you describe your sound?

EI: Straight up in your face hardcore real deal Hardcore. Even if we are called sell-outs.

AU: When I saw you play live at Punk Rock Bowling in Vegas, I was getting hints of early Cro-Mags. Are they an influence on your sound at all? Any other influences to share?

EI: Absolutely, we all love the mags. End It has played with them too.

EI: Akil always asks us to bowl every trip and we never find time to but we will soon. He's a pro.

AU: Tell us the story of the nice blue shirt you wore for your PRB Festival performance that just happened to match all the security shirts at the festival.

EI: It was hilarious.

AU: Did you get lucky in Vegas this year?

EI: Pat won \$800.

AU: What makes the Punk Rock Bowling music festival unique in your opinion?

EI: The bands, the vendors, the location, everything about it.

AU: Were there any bands playing this year at PRB that you were extra stoked to check out?

EI: Face To Face killed it, Rancid, The Damned, so man bands.



AU: Where are you from and what is the music scene like there?

EI: Baltimore, Maryland and it is thriving.

AU: Tell us about the Punk Rock Bowling festival show End It played this year. What did people miss if they weren't there?

EI: They missed an amazing and well put together fest. We seriously had so much fun and I told the promoter that we'd come back every year.

AU: I was very impressed with the mic drop cartwheel you threw down to start the show. Is that one of your signature moves?

EI: Akil always surprises us and the crowd whether it's a song he sings, joke he tells, we never know.

AU: What drew you to the Punk Rock Bowling music festival originally?

EI: We grew up listening to a lot of those bands so it was a no-brainer.

AU: Have you ever bowled in the tournament? Any bowling tips?

AU: Where do you think the future of punk rock is headed?

EI: It's in good hands.

AU: What do you love most about Vegas?

Del Taco.

AU: What do you hate most about Vegas?

Del Taco aftermath.

AU: What is your favorite punk album of all time?

AFI's Answer That And Stay Fashionable.

AU: Any plans to tour Canada in the near future?

Hold Your Ground fest with No Warning in September

AU: Any final words of wisdom?

Don't forget your roots.

@enditbaltimore

Photo Credit: Kenny Savercool

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lots of jewelry and big chunky boots that make me over 6 feet tall.

AU: Tell us the origin story The Side Eyes.

Astrid: Kevin and I met on a dating app and decided to form The Side Eyes the night of our first date. We recruited his brother Chris (who was still in high school at the time) to play bass for us, and had our good friend

on the drums. We had the best time playing crazy backyard parties and garage shows in Orange County, California in that first year. Eventually,

The Side Eyes

Interview with vocalist Astrid McDonald

AU: Have you got a new album to mention? Any stand-out tracks?

Astrid McDonald: Our second album, "What's Your Problem?" Releases June 23rd 2023 on In the Red Records! We recorded the album in 2019, and have been playing these songs live even longer, so it is so exciting to be able to finally put it out there. We feel like *What's Your Problem* is a harder, faster big sister of our debut album *So Sick!* (In The Red Records, 2017). Our music video for two songs, *False World* and *Nothing To See* comes out very soon so I am most excited about those songs! They are by far my favorite to play live from our new record.

AU: Tell us about the Punk Rock Bowling club show The Side Eyes played this year with Youth Brigade, Swingin' Utters, Loud Grave, and Bad

Thoughts. What did people miss if they weren't there?

Astrid: It was SO much fun! I powered through the show with food poisoning from a Vegas celebrity restaurant that I shall not name and that made for a very funny story after the fact. The show was awesome, the crowd was great and we were so excited to have been asked to play! We love Vegas so we made a weekend out of it, won and lost money gambling, and ate lots of food and it was the best.

AU: What drew you to the Punk Rock Bowling music festival originally?

Astrid: I had always had friends play and attend the festival for years but I never had the opportunity to go myself, so it was such an honor to be asked to play in 2021! It was our second show back after taking a break from playing live during the pandemic, so it was really nerve wracking having such a big show be a "come back" of sorts for us. But we had a blast and felt so supported in the community it brings together! We were asked back this year to play a club show

and it was the most fun.

AU: What is your band all about and how would you describe your look and sound?

Astrid: We have always juggled The Side Eyes with work, college, life, other bands, so it has really represented the ultimate escape for us - which I hope is what we represent to those who listen and attend our shows as well. We just love gathering together in the midst of our busy lives, hopping up on stage, and giving the most intense, wild and fun performance imaginable. Its incredibly cathartic and I feel so lucky that we have gotten to do this over the last 8 years! Our sound can be described as hardcore punk. We are really influenced by bands like Gorilla Biscuits, Ceremony, Circle Jerks, Bad Brains, Glue (Texas). Regarding our look, we have always just kind of done our own thing! Chris likes to dress like a cowboy, Kevin likes to wear jerseys and Nikes, and Sam and I just wear whatever we are inspired to wear that night, he has a million cool band shirts. I love wearing



Sam Mankinen joined the band on drums. After all these years Kevin and I are now getting married, his brother is still in the band with us, and Sam is one of our best friends so there is a strong family love among us.

AU: How do people find you online?

We are on instagram at @thesideeyes!

Photo Credit: Daniel Vargas

Hanson Jeff

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AU: What's the origin of Playboy Manbaby?

Robbie: We used to be in a band called "The Red Hood" and one night we were practicing in an old chemical factory and some rich guy who knows karate showed up and we all fell into a giant chemical vat and emerged forever altered and bent on vengeance against the rich as Playboy Manbaby.

AU: Where you from and what's the scene like?

Robbie: Phoenix Arizona! It's amazing. It's a big city that feels like a little city.

AU: Who else is in the band and what does it say on their dating profiles?

Chris: "I'm happily married and have been for a long time"

TJ: "Must love basketball trivia"

Chad: "I'm definitely the most desirable/datable person in the band"

Dave: "If we do karaoke I will destroy Mack The Knife out of nowhere"

AU: Tell us about the shows you played at PRB. What did people miss if they weren't there?

Robbie: The first time we've ever played a show

in the AM! Watching me try and jump down from the mainstage which was much higher than expected. The first time we've played a show where people are moshing in a pool. We had Chris from Crazy & The Brains show up for a song.

AU: Was it cool to see festival organizer Shawn Stern show up for your set at the pool party?

Robbie: So fuckin cool! Especially that early!

AU: Any career highlights to share?

Robbie: I think being in a band with my best

friends for 10+ years is an experience that has made my life so much better.

AU: What are some of your best known songs?



Robbie:

According to Spotify our most played song is "Cadillac Car" which I wrote after dwelling on Folsom Prison Blues as a song. It's a another very anti-authoritarian anthem and like all our songs, hopefully it convinces you to live how you want and be your most authentic and bizarre self.

AU: How did you fit 18 songs on a 7" record?

Robbie: We started making Tik Tok videos and we made a ton of 30 sec or less songs so we thought it would be fun to press some to wax so you're about to get an absurd stream of very silly songs.

AU: Please describe your hair style and pants.

Robbie: The person who cuts my hair calls it a "Kentucky waterfall". My pants are from Big Bud Press, I only own like 5 clothes, and most of the things I like are absurd, specific and comfortable.

AU: What drew you to Punk Rock Bowling?

Robbie: It's all the bands I grew up listening to and now I get to play on shows with them? Most notably DEVO in 2021.

AU: Any bowling related antics to share?

Robbie: We got real drunk and bowled at like 4am once, didn't get bowling shoes and slipped a lot. Chris beat me at bowling but we were both so drunk I convinced him in the morning I won

the game. I hope he doesn't read this.

AU: Any Vegas stories of debauchery?

Robbie: We had two members throw up on stage once. Now that's a Vegas only experience.

AU: Did you get lucky in Vegas this year?

Robbie: I lost \$10. I will never financially recover.

AU: What makes Punk Rock Bowling unique?

Robbie: It's a mecca. People from all over the country come to pay homage. It's amazing.

AU: Any bands at PRB you were stoked on?

Robbie: Surfbort, The Damned, Manic Hispanic, Grade 2, impossible to mentally handle them all.

AU: What do you love most about Vegas?

Robbie: Old weird Vegas. The neon signs and bad street performers and wedding chapels.

AU: What do you hate most about Vegas?

Robbie: The actual strip. Everything is a scam.

AU: Any plans to tour Canada in the future?

Robbie: God I hope so. Someone make it happen.

AU: Have you got a good joke you can tell us?

Robbie: I'm sorry, I only have bad jokes.

AU: Any final words of wisdom?

Robbie: It's just a ride and we can change it anytime we want. It's only a choice. Just a simple choice, right now, between fear and love.

AU: How do people find you online?

Robbie: @playboymanbaby on LinkedIn and all the other shit too.



PLAYBOY MANBABY

Earworms For The Masses

Interview with frontdude Robbie Pfeffer

by Ira "Mermaid Pterodactyl" Hunter

AU: Who are you and what are you famous for?

Robbie: Hey I'm Robbie and I'm in the band Playboy Manbaby. I'm definitely not famous in any sense but some people know me from being in this band, and for making tiny videos on the internet or for talking about Arizona politics.

AU: Any hidden talents unrelated to music?

Robbie: All our album art and shirts and animated music videos are done by me. Other than that I'm pretty much talent free.

AU: What is Playboy Manbaby all about?

Robbie: We're a multi-media art project, so, we're a traditional band but we also make

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SLAUGHTERHOUSE

AU: Who are we talking to and what are you best known for?

This is Eddie and Taylor. Hopefully best known for being in Slaughterhouse.

AU: Any hidden talents unrelated to music?

Taylor: Eddie has a black belt in Jiu Jitsu, and we're both pretty good at bowling.

AU: What is your band all about and how would you describe your sound?

Eddie: I like to think Slaughterhouse is about authenticity and honesty. We play the best

representation of what we like to listen to.

Taylor: I think our sound is punk meets death rock with a twist of goth, a squeeze of post punk, and a dash of hardcore.

AU: Where are you from and what is the music scene like there?

Eddie: Most of us reside in the South Bay of Los Angeles between San Pedro and Redondo Beach. The beach cities have a lot of pride for the bands that have come from there; such as Black Flag, Circle Jerks, Descendents, Pennywise, Redd Kross etc, but the town has since changed. San Pedro has a very active DIY scene of doers; Zines, record labels, DIY shows, art, skateboarding, local venues/bars. The South Bay is great. Can't beat the beach.

AU: Who else is in the band and what does it say on their dating profiles?

Eddie: Nick plays drums. His tinder probably says, take a number.

AU: Tell us about the Punk Rock Bowling club show Slaughterhouse played this year with Alice Bag, Niis, and the secret Surprise guest. What did people miss if they weren't there?

Taylor: We had never been to Punk Rock Bowling before so it was fun that our first time was when we played! Earlier that day we got to go to the festival and catch Surfbort and Adolescents and see some friends. And our club show was awesome. Alice Bag and her band were so nice and fantastic live. The actual secret headliner (The Damned) had to cancel so Me First and The Gimme Gimmes played last minute and saved the night.

Eddie: Our pals Niis pulled out of the show shortly after the announcement. They landed a tour with GBH and are killing it. Alice Bag is iconic to L.A. punk and women in punk. It was an honor to share the stage with her.

AU: What drew you to Punk Rock Bowling?

Eddie: I'm a Youth Brigade Fan. The Stern brothers put on the event. I think that's cool.

AU: Have you ever bowled in the tournament? Any bowling tips?

Taylor: No. I would love to enter someday. I love bowling. Do your best to knock down all the pins, that's what the pros say.

Eddie: I bowled in a tournament in Vegas once.

I subbed in my moms bowling team. Played in a league and finished at the tournament.

AU: Any crazy Vegas stories to share?

Taylor: I don't remember most of the weekend, so no.

AU: Did you get lucky in Vegas this year?

Taylor: A little.

Eddie: Luckily, I only lost \$20

AU: What makes PRB music festival unique?

Taylor: The fact that it's catered to people who love punk music is pretty unique for a music festival. It seems like it's not supposed to have been successful but it has been for 24 years and it's beautiful.

Eddie: That's got to be the only music/bowling event in the world right?

AU: Were there any bands playing this year at PRB that you were extra stoked to check out?

Taylor: I was pretty happy to have caught L7 at the club show, they were fucking awesome.

Eddie: I was stoked to see Surfbort. There are a lot of new bands that I'd like to see at these events. Some of the young punk bands are really exciting and I hope to see them on those bills more.

AU: Were you able to check out the new Punk Rock Museum in Vegas?

Eddie: We did not. My old bass cab is in there

though. I had it in my possession for a few years but it belonged to Jason Thirk of Pennywise. RIP. Justin Thirk and Fletcher trusted me with it when I started playing bass in Slaughterhouse. I'm thankful and honored to have played it.

AU: Where do you think the future of punk rock is headed?

Eddie: Back to the kids.

Taylor: and the women;

AU: What do you love most about Vegas?

Taylor: The chaos, and that it's a fantasy land.

AU: What do you hate most about Vegas?

Taylor: It's too fucking hot.

AU: Favorite punk album of all time?

Eddie: I refuse to limit it to just one.

Rudimentary Peni - Death Church is awesome

Bad Religion - How Could Hell Be Any Worse?

Adolescents Blue Album

T.S.O.L. - Dance With Me.

Taylor: X - Wild Gift, and Peni's Death Church is damn near perfect.

AU: Any plans to tour Canada in the future?

Eddie: Hopefully 2023 or 2024.

AU: Any final words of wisdom?

Eddie: If there's food, eat it, if there's a bathroom, use it.

Taylor: Wherever you go, there you are.

AU: How do people find you online?

Taylor: slaughterhouseband.com, sslaughterrhouse.bandcamp.com, you can buy our record at waterunderthebridgerecords.com or recessrecords.com. We're on Spotify, Apple, YouTube, all that jazz.

Photo Credit: James Duran @deathbyjames





WARBRINGER

**Weapons of Tomorrow
Interview By Erik Lindholm**

Out with *Evil Invaders*, *Schizophrenia* and *Mason* on the Ravaging Europe 2023 tour, Warbringer's singer John Kevill sends travel updates from the long road, promoting the new record Weapons Of Tomorrow



Absolute Underground: Where are you now? Paint a picture for the readers. What's going on outside your window?

John Kevill: There's a forest rolling by, somewhere in Germany. I'm sitting in the bus lounge having coffee and eating a sandwich. We got held up for hours being harassed for no reason at the Polish-German border, and now are running super late to the show in Munich. Our tour manager is here with me being generally pissed off.

AU: You're currently out on tour in Europe. Where did you last play? Tell us about the city, the venue, the crowd!

JK: Last night was Krakow, Poland. The city was nice, quite cold though. The venue was called Kamienna 12 and had an excellent large stage, good sound, generally very good place. The crowd was fantastic and very enthusiastic, so we had a really good time playing for them.

AU: Most interesting food you've tried so far this tour? And would you eat it again!

JK: Normally we just eat at the venues - sandwiches, pizza. The other tour staple is late night kebab.

AU: The video for "Unraveling" just dropped, what a mad live video! Where was this filmed? Could it be part of a larger concert release?

JK: This was filmed at the Glass House in Pomona, California, where we had a totally amazing show. It was something we put together just to promote this tour we are now on, and will likely be the last release from the extended Weapons of Tomorrow "cycle".

AU: Give us a tour survival tip you've learned

on this run of dates? You might be able to save a future metal band on the road...

JK: Basically for me it's the same every day - lots of sleep, lots of water, stretch daily. Even then your body will hurt if you are thrashing and head-banging properly. Spend as much of the

day as possible recovering and maintaining. Fuck around a minimum amount and focus on sustaining yourself for the shows - that's the reason you are doing all this.

AU: How does it feel to be traveling in Europe with the threat of conflict with Russia at hand? Your band name is timely these days! War is here. What's your read on the scenario?

JK: When in the entirety of human history has it not been? Power flows

from the barrel of a gun. Hard for me to say of the present situation as there is not much chance for hindsight.

Like practically every conflict ever fought, it is a profound tragedy and a waste of human life, a creator of immense suffering, and evidence that our species is doomed by its own hand.

AU: Thank you for taking the time to connect with us in Canada, and tell us about your journey. Send a final message to the skateboarders listening to thrash out there:

JK: Thank you! We are about through now... 20-25 shows left still, and almost zero days off. The wheels roll on. Keep

on thrashing, and we hope to see you all in the pit sooner rather than later.
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Useless ID

Live In Tel Aviv

Interview with lead singer and bassist Yotam Ben Horin

By Raymond MacKay

AU: What was your first introduction to punk music?

In Summer 1993 my family moved to Israel from Brooklyn, NY. I was 14 and already listening to alternative bands from watching "Alternative Nation" and "120 minutes" on MTV. Every now and then something punkier would come on but it took me longer than that to connect the dots. I received the Nirvana "Come As You Are" book in the mail, I read it in four days and stumbled upon names like Bad Brains, Black Flag and MDC. I've kept those bands in the back of my mind and they became a mystery. Fast forward to a year later, I was kicked out of school and signed up to an Art class at a different school. It only took like a week and one of the kids in the class was bringing me dubbed tapes of Bad Religion, Pennywise and Black Flag. It was like finding lost treasure since there was no internet at the time. I loved all these bands more than anything I've ever heard. The music was fast, melodic and the message was stronger than what anyone else was singing about. From that moment I did anything in my power to find more punk and hardcore bands.

AU: Are there pivotal moments in the band's history that you feel significantly shape what Useless ID is today?

I feel that we really honed in on our sound after that first experience at The Blasting Room recording "Redemption", Bill and Jason kicked our asses at any given moment. We were a band before that, but that experience at the Blasting Room was the beginning of the band's sound you've heard since, especially on "Live In Tel Aviv"

AU: Do you feel like each band member brings something unique to the table? How so?

What's interesting with us, it's kind of a rotation of roles. In the early days Ishay and Guy used to bring in the bulk of the songs. Later on, I started writing a lot so organically I became the main songwriter. Ishay would be in touch with many bands back in the day and was the communicator with the outside world, always getting the word from FAT if they're doing a record with us or not. Guy has managed the band since day one and has dealt with all the touring schedules for many years, then I started doing that stuff after "State Is Burning". A few years back we had a 7" on FAT

where Ishay and I both contributed songs for. Corey who has now been in the band for almost 8 years helped finalize our overall sound since he comes from similar musical backgrounds.

AU: How would you describe what Useless ID does, musically?

First and foremost, we're a punk band. We tried to go slower with our album "Symptoms" and ended up not really playing those songs live. Whatever the case, we all have a collective energy when we're playing a bit faster. The thing with us is that each album is different, tempos change, we discover new music so we're not forced into one sound. The band's sound comes from the four of us, not from the style of music. The best songs I've written for Useless ID always came as non punk songs but then when we played it, it sounded like us. So, yea.. we're not the band where you know what to expect with each album.

AU: Your new album, Live In Tel Aviv, is live and unedited - was this important to you? Why?



Throughout the years, we've heard stories about how a band records a live show. Goes home, re-records everything and leaves in the crowd noise. Or re-does vocals on the existing music. I get it but I also think it's dishonest if you're going to call it "Live at..." unless it's "Live with overdubs at Budokan" but then no one would buy it. I feel that on this record we sounded the best we've ever sounded, even with the rough mixes (the mix you receive of the tracks before their mixed) it was kickin'! While Jason was mixing it, I asked him if he did anything to our performances editing wise and he said "No, you guys don't need that. You know how to play your stuff"

AU: Does working with Double Helix Records feel different to you than the prior labels you've been on?

We have a wonderful relationship with the people at FAT. Double Helix though has that energy where everything is new and unknown. With our history of being a band for almost 30 years, it's refreshing to release this album with them. Jeff and Em are personal friends of mine and I feel like I've known them forever even though it's been a couple years. They're super involved and excited which gets us excited about the release of "Live In Tel Aviv"

AU: What is your most memorable concert/tour story?

By this point there are so many but in 2012 we were on this tour opening for Die Toten Hosen in front of roughly 15,000 people a night. It's then that you kind of pinch yourself and wonder how a few kids from Haifa, Israel ended up with one of Germany's biggest bands. But then again, they probably started out just like us, with a vision in a garage or a basement.

AU: What are some of the inspirations you draw on while writing your music?

I try to be reading and writing most of the time and I haven't been in one place for more than a month since 2015 until recently where I'm living in California. Being on the road has its benefits where it's a different experience every day, you meet new people, new city, new show. Many things from there can crawl into one's writing.

At the same time, I've had some struggles in my personal life for the past few years so I tend to write about that a lot. Every now and then I'll remember something or somebody from my childhood and write a song about it as far as lyrics go. As for music, at this point it's like second nature, most of the times I grab the guitar something will come, it may take a few minutes of stumbling upon chords and playing but for me it's that little moment when I drift off and stop noticing what I'm playing. I'm in another state of mind and then I wake up from it and I have a chorus or a fully formed song.

AU: What do you consider to be the "essential punk album"

I'll go for "essential hardcore punk album", Gorilla Biscuits "Start Today".

AU: What do you consider to be the first punk album?

I'd have to say the first Ramones.

AU: Who are your strongest musical

influences?

Bad Religion, Descendents, Elliott Smith, Beach Boys, Gilbert O' Sullivan, Paul Westerberg to name a few...

AU: If you could hire anyone to do your album art, who would you pick?

My wife Paola Cascioli, oh wait.. she did the artwork for my album "Young Forever" and an upcoming Tommy and June EP

AU: Any final words for our readers?

Thanks for reading and hope to be back in BC! It's been a minute.

@uselessidpunk

uselessid.bandcamp.com

doublehelixrecords.com

Photo Credit: Stephen Jackson

SHRED SESSION



Let's Celebrate Another Skatepark in Victoria

By Jimmy Miller

We've done it again. Victoria, BC has another skatepark. Exhale. We deserve it. Our western communities have grown absurdly fast, and the increasing populace deserves somewhere free to play. It's as simple as that.

Other places in Canada need help too, regardless of city expansion. I often get messages asking for tips and guidance; they don't know where to start or how to convince officials. In short, it takes love and a commitment to dig-deep, as a community and personally.

Admittedly, putting yourself out there is hard. Doubts can seep in slow like poison and thwart belief systems. Have faith. Although it's an oversimplification, haters inevitably hate and the projects with the most value always take the most time to manifest.

In this crescendo moment of my own philanthropy, with the goal of inspiring others, I was asked to share my opening-celebration speech by Absolute Underground. I humbly offer it as public domain. Please paraphrase or cite as needed. Regardless of skatepark style, construction company, size, scope, or if it's a DIY, I hope this helps you reach similar success ...and if it does, I look forward to skating it.

.....

Hello everyone,

Thank you for joining us on this very special day. Although I speak to you with one voice now, I proudly represent something much bigger: collective perseverance of spirit.

By facing bureaucracy head on, the Westshore

Skatepark Coalition's strength of character has always on full display: we shared a willingness to roll-up our sleeves, get involved, and get the job done. We discovered allies in unforeseen areas and detractors where we thought we had supporters. We bit our lips when required, sometimes painfully, yet we also shouted from rooftops ...and just look at where we are now.

Uniquely, skaters have a way of downplaying the intensity of certain situations; we share empowering language before and after launching ourselves into the unknown. We mutter reassuring things like, "it's not that hard" or "you've got this!". Even after enduring a harsh slam,

we'll share reassurances that "it wasn't that bad" so we can stick the landing another day. Skateparks don't happen by accident, they are a result of this type of grit, devotion and dedication.

Looking back, my personal initiation into advocacy happened back when there were no skateparks, skaters were hated and the idea of "one of us" being cooperative was unwelcome.



Thankfully things had changed since the 80's, or so I had thought.

In 2015, when the Belmont skatepark was destroyed, all of those shed stigmas became reapplied. Others and I were rightfully angry. Although it's not my failure to bear, I would like to apologize to the children and the young-at-heart who have been without a skatepark for the last seven years. It is my hope that this new skatepark will officially cleanse the troubles of old and provide a new place to learn, grow and share joy. Like the undulating embers of a dwindled fire that has caught fresh air, our

community hub has reignited into a source of strength, warmth and belonging. Welcome.

Skateparks offer spaces to hone physical and mental resilience. In contrast to the divisions of the world, skateparks are a place of diversity,

inclusion and they act as a safety-net for vulnerable youth. SKATEPARKS ARE A VALID PART OF OUR COMMUNITY.

Now for my lengthy list of thank you's:

First and foremost, I say thank-you my immediate family for their patience and support during this process. I mustn't forget my extended family as well, my Westshore Skatepark

Coalition peers: Laura Dalby, Neal Donegani, Lana LeBlanc, Daniel Opden Dries & Craig Hanna. I owe a debt of gratitude to these fine people that I've leaned on so much over the years that cannot be repaid.

I so appreciate all of our supporters. You have all stayed with us as we raised funds, waded through many challenging political layers, and

budget alterations, inside and outside of a global pandemic. The long city meetings and our shared bee stings during hot summer bottle drives have paid off.

I need to say thank you to West Shore Parks & Recreation, who has had our back since day one and gave us this spot to build our home. Geoff Welham's grant writing skills are that of legend, but most notably, we were imparted one Bobbi Neal, a force to be reckoned with, as a friend, a colleague, and as one hell of a behind-the-scenes operator.

New Line Skateparks also deserves praise. As our chosen construction firm, they helped to make our design vision a reality through various public consultations, email threads and good old-fashioned digging, forming and pouring.

Appreciation rightfully goes to our gracious financial supporters, most notably Pacific Economic Development Canada and Thrifty Foods.

I would also like to thank all five municipalities, Kiwanis Club of Victoria, the local skate shops (Coastline, Influence, Artavi & Goodnews) and our gracious 100x1000 donors who gave us the nest-egg to grow from. And lastly a special shout out goes to Red Dragon Apparel who gave us our granite bench feature.



You know, as long as this journey has taken, and as much of a victory that this skatepark is, I choose to claim this moment not only as a win to celebrate, but also as a steppingstone. This project started with an idea, so can others:

How about a sanctioned street plaza in-between housing developments? A small neighborhood skate-spot on the edge of a basketball court, or



something indoor for the wet times of the year? In a gathering such as this, where ears might be receptive, and undeniable proof is visible, I dare to be that cheeky dreamer yet again.

In closing, please remember, our project isn't just a single skateboarder's vision -yet through a skater's lens, we ignored the odds, downplayed the intensity of the situation and we evoked change ...so in a sense "it wasn't that hard", "it wasn't that bad" and together we all stuck the landing. Thank you.

Photo credit: Dan Holding

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BLAST FROM THE PAST

BLAST FROM THE PAST

That Black Sabbath Tribute Band

Lucky Bar - Victoria, BC

Canada Day 2003

By Clark'Super'Mantei

Hello again past and future past blasters. This issue took me a while to figure out. There were other fun experiences to review, yet ultimately I settled upon a local Black Sabbath tribute band that performed 20 years ago right here in Victoria, B.C. where I live today.

I had the idea to write about The Firm from their last show in May of 1986 in Seattle as I was there. It was Jimmy Page's band and I recently had words with their bassist. That article is now part of the August issue coming. Then there was the 15th anniversary of RUSH in Vancouver, yet they are well documented too. Then there was the 40th anniversary of the 3 day US Festival in California in late May of 1983. In fact I was there that month and had to leave on my 16th birthday to fly home, yet I so wanted to hide out until the festival and experience it in person. Instead I bought the next issue of Circus Magazine to read up on the event. Day 2 was Heavy Metal day and actually featured a Canadian band called Triumph. During their performance they appeared without the leather, studs and tattoos and seemingly stole the show with their amazing magical performance. That festive event is also very well documented.

Then I got to thinking about Heavy Metal and its origins and I thought of a tribute band from 2003 that I was actually in. I was the drummer. The band paid homage to what many call the "birth cry" of Heavy Metal. They were named Black Sabbath and they are indeed legends in the history books. There were many aggressive styles of hard rock and with the British Invasion of the mid 60s rock and roll was booming in the U.K. and America and there was no stopping it. It started when Rhythm and Blues morphed with Skiffle creating Rock'n'Roll with ELVIS and later The Beatles, who exploded on the scene. Eventually the recording studio became a vehicle for creation and with the psychedelic trippy music and the folk scene in full bloom a generation was encapsulated with "Happenings and Be-Ins" all over, it was a cultural and musical revolution. The Beatles led the way and a long strange journey was in the making. The 1967 'Summer of Love' showed off a hippie era of hoping for 'Peace and

Love' and everything was groovy too. Except it wasn't. There was turmoil. The war in Vietnam was an issue. Bands like The Doors were brave enough to write about 'The Unknown Soldier' and the Beatles with 'Revolution' or 'Helter Skelter.' Music was a vehicle for free speech really. Yet who was telling stories of the darker side of life? This led to Black Sabbath.



In the late 1960's in Birmingham, England there was a fun blues/rock band playing the songs of the day. They were a hippie band with a furious attack on this music. They even wrote songs of their own. They were called 'Earth' and they played wherever they could get gigs. They were a tight band and played well. One day when they were out and about they saw a line up to a horror movie being played called Black Sabbath and they jokingly said to themselves "Isn't it



wild how people line up to see something that scares the shit outta ya?"

That idea spoke and the rest is history. Their names were Ozzy Osbourne on vocals, Tony Iommi on guitar, Bill Ward on drums, and Terence(Geezer) Butler on bass.

They immediately changed their name to Black Sabbath and started to write scary music in hopes of creating a new brand of poetically aggressive and powerful themes in rock and roll.

They even wrote a song called "Black Sabbath" which features the 'tritone' better known as 'the forbidden note' in music. It's all legend now.



Birmingham was a steel factory town. Yet metal sheets are heavy too. On his last shift at work before touring, Tony Iommi accidentally cut off the end of two of his fingers and thought that he was through. Then a record of Django Reinhardt was given and he had hope. He changed to thinner strings due to his injury and pretty much re-invented the way he played. Finding thinner wires to help his sensitive fingers. Again, it's legend. A rock is hard and heavy, I once thought now it's heavy metal maybe? Black Sabbath's new style and direction touched millions immediately with their incredible riffs and themes and stories that would almost sound as scary as the topics were. War and God vs the Devil were all topics. Drugs. Ghosts. The Living Dead. Hope and truth as Ozzy sang "I want you to listen" and "I love you all". Eight LPs in as many years. Their debut LP arrived on Friday the 13th, 1970.

Songs like "War Pigs" and "Hand of Doom" or "Into The Void" were so heavy and thunderous it couldn't be denied. They were a force of nature indeed!

Let's go back to 2002. I was living in Louisiana and spent a few months working all over the USA in colleges and universities showcasing big screen movies and video dance parties. I was free to roam and also homeless for the time being. Just a gypsy working away and traveling around. It came time to leave as the shows ended

for the season. Then the phone rang. It was an ole bassist friend from a KISS tribute band I knew. Rick (bassist in Armoros) Lee and I had played in a KISS act in 1993. He was also in 'Black Diamond' Kiss tribute for years and I trusted he would make this work. He's a workhorse indeed. He wanted to know if I was interested in trying out for a new tribute band honoring Black Sabbath. I said "Yes of course I will." So I traveled 3600 miles to Vancouver, B.C. in May of 2002 and arrived on my b-day as well. The audition went well as I was at the ready.

The singer was Chris Andres and he sounded like Ozzy. He was spot on. When I met him he had a name tag sticker "Hello my name is," thing on his shirt. Only he wrote Satan in red pen on it and with red glasses on I had to know "He's playing Ozzy!?" I had visions of touring everywhere and saving money and shopping at record stores etc. Cool as a bucket list to scratch out in fact.



Well, one problem. The guitarist spot was always up for grabs and by November I'd been at it for 7 months living in a storage locker housing my stuff, unsure if I would ever tour.

Then I met my old friend Kelly Nordstrom and asked if he would like to try. Everyone thinks it is easy to pull off Iommi it seems; yet it isn't so easy. Kelly is a seasoned musician in several bands and he said "YES!" I was thrilled. I spoke with Kelly this week in 2023 and he had this to say about why Tony Iommi is such an influence on him. "I first identified the sound of Iommi's guitar as a feeling and energy I had never known before. It was captivating, drawing me into the rhythmic and lyrical possibilities of electric guitar." Well said. Spot on!

Kelly pulled off his audition without a hitch and once the New Year arrived we practiced every Saturday for 6 months hoping to get a booking agent. We also adopted the look of Black Sabbath from the Paris 1970 concert film and made the clothes they wore and grew out moustaches and looked like we came from a time capsule in 1973. An agent never happened and with only a couple local gigs in Nanaimo with local acts we knew, and so the band fizzled out with no way to do any tours or shows. Yet in 2003, 'The Osbournes' show was in full bloom and Black Sabbath was what gave Ozzy his start. I then thought of a name called 'That Black Sabbath Show' and I called a local Victoria bar called 'Lucky Bar' run by Ben Alway, who was a great manager and a top notch guy and he was thrilled to book us too. (sadly Ben passed away this past March. R.I. Peace Ben. Love you forever.) Ben said that Canada Day was the only slot available. "On a Tuesday evening after a 4 day weekend? Um, Ok, I guess. Sure. Book us." I told the guys and they all said YES!

The show was opened by local band Zappnin Black whose drummer is the one and only Reverend Donnie Black on drums and ringmaster duties. His trio along with Tommy Black on bass and Skai on guitar ripped it up, over and knocked it outta the bar with a solid set of originals blended with stellar guitar solos and a fun blast of kick ass energy and humor. Thanks Zappnin Black! Donnie Black was also in a band named 'Malevolence' and their guitarist and vocalist was the one and only "Jason Walton"

who went to my school in fact and he was always drawing sketches. He politely drew us a poster for our show that night. It's featured here. Thanks again Jason, your art and musicianship are top notch. Fuck yeah! Ben also made a local poster that actually said 'That Black (Fucking in tiny letters) Sabbath Tribute Band.' As he said he could never write the 'F' word until now. Ozzy would be proud. Haha.



Showtime. All of this word of mouth and poster all over the town actually worked. After the Canada Day fireworks in the inner harbour happened I thought the place would fill up. Yet that didn't happen. Everyone walked by. The opening act went on and then I noticed a lot of people filling up the venue. I knew everyone else in the band had a special history to past bands in Victoria. I was just the drummer. The place filled to capacity before we hit the stage. On that note I had two ladies we knew walk on stage and light about 100 small candles for us all. Rick painted a giant castle wall and had skulls and assorted armour on stage and Chris had a preacher's podium to deliver the words of Sabbath from. The place held a sacred vibe that night indeed and at

about 2 minutes to midnight the lights went down and the pouring rain and thunder took over the PA system and we were ready. That siren went off and I hit that hi-hat 4 times and we opened with none other than the very first song they ever wrote. That was "Black Sabbath" from the debut album (with the scary witch by the old house standing in the yard). The audience was ready and we gave it our all and with the amps cranked, we blazed into a stellar performance knowing this might be the only show we ever play again. We played like a well oiled machine, sounding like a rusty old tank powering forward and obliterating everything in its path. We channeled those songs through us and into the souls of those in attendance that black magical night.

I will say that this performance was captured on a Sony PC 330 camera and it has finally been fully transferred and I hope to put it on YouTube this July 1st. A two song transfer of that gig actually got us a really good agent who offered us gigs throughout B.C. to start that summer. Yet the severity of that year's forest fires shut everything down sadly. I also gave a copy to a Black Sabbath associate in 2004 and was invited to see OZZFEST at the White River Amphitheatre that July 27th, 2004. Same in 2013 and 2015 I was guested tickets and autographs of the new Sabbath album 13 tours and final songs with autographs that I gifted to



Kelly. On that note I'll add that Kelly Nordstrom is today an amazing guitarist and has a new project called eMolecule with Simon Collins too. The album is called 'The Architect' and it is a heavy guitar and drum driven prog rock masterpiece. Check it out. As for Chris Andres, he's doing well with his outlaw country music and has received several awards.

I'm glad to have performed with these musicians. For me?... Playing the style of Bill Ward's drumming was an honor I'm forever proud of. His fierce jazz and bombastic blues chops are not an easy task.

One thing is for certain. For 50 plus years Black Sabbath has remained an influence on generation after generation and I'll leave it with one sentence to end this article, and that is...

"LISTEN TO BLACK SABBATH!"

Until the next issue...

I wish you all health and happiness.

Rock Out and Rrrroll On.

Clark'Super'Mantei

emoleculemusic.com

officialchrisandres.com





MATT WAGNER – Part 3

The Legend Continues

Interview by Ira "Magic Is Green" Hunter

Absolute Underground: Have you seen any people that have your art tattooed on them?

Matt Wagner: Oh, loads and loads. I've seen so many goddamn Grendel tattoos. I can't even count them. I was in Baltimore a number of years ago and this guy steps up to me. Big guy, probably six three probably 260-270 pounds shaven head, deep voice he said "Hey, I want to show you something." He turns around peels up his shirt and he is covered neck to ass and shoulder to shoulder in Grendel tattoos on his back. They were all based on my cover paintings. So they were very complicated and highly rendered. I just said "Wow, dude you get a free sketch." A number of years ago in San Diego a guy came up to me and flashed me his shoulder. He had just got the Grendel eyes tattooed on his deltoid and he said "Hey, grab your Sharpie there and do your signature underneath that, you're M Wagner." So I did that. He came back the next day and had that tattooed overnight.

AU: The first five issues of your comic Mage have a very distinct look. But then I think starting with number six, the colouring kind of changed?

MW: The colouring changed and we took on an inker. The first several were done on a

very defunct process called gray lining. We were painting on stat paper. Very hard to paint on, no tooth to it, no absorbency. Then we discovered a process called blue lining which you could transfer to any surface you wanted. So all of a sudden I was able to put it onto watercolour paper. Which provided me with a much more lush and vibrant palette and surface to paint on. The colouring got so involved at that point that I knew I was not going to be able to write, pencil, colour and ink a book. So I took on an inker and that was Sam Kieth. Long before the days of his own book The Maxx. So yes as of issue number six everything kind of took a slightly slicker, more professional turning.

AU: So you coloured it all too?

MW: Yes, and at that point colour meant so much to me that if I had to sacrifice one thing, it would be the inking. I did not want to give up the colouring. The colour had such an important role in that series particularly.

AU: Mage is definitely influenced by the Arthurian legend. Do you have a favourite film or book related to King Arthur? I really liked the Excalibur movie personally.

MW: Excalibur is The One. My son and his buddies just watched Excalibur. He'd always seen parts of it

because I would have it on here and there but they just watched it beginning to end recently and he was just like, "Holy shit, that is great!" He really loved it.

AU: Did you do any comics previous to Grendel and Mage? Comic strips for a school paper or anything?

MW: Yeah I did. I

went for two years to a University in Virginia called James Madison

University. While I was there I did a comic strip for their twice weekly paper and eventually I became their graphics editor, which is a fancy name for fill-in-illustrator. Wherever they had a dead spot where they had no copy, no add no photo I had to do a fill in illustration. But that was almost the best schooling I had in my entire years in college because it was very professional. For the first time in my life, I wasn't drawing because I wanted to, I was drawing because I had to. I showed up at nine o'clock at night and I couldn't leave until all that shit was done. It usually took me until two or

three in the morning. For that I got a one credit A per semester and I think it was about \$40 per month. So back in 1980 I thought I was on top of the world.

AU: How did you end up getting to work on Batman?

MW: My first time working on Batman was in the Batman/Grendel team up. So not only did I get to work on Batman but I got to team him up with my character. I should say crossover, they didn't really team up, they fought. That was just a result of Comico and DC, the two big publishers back in those days, were kind of trying to make sense of this uptick in independent publishers and trying to work with them in many regards. They kind of concocted this idea themselves and asked me if I wanted to do it and of course, I said yes. From there, I got invited to work on some other Batman stuff independently. Archie Goodwin invited me to do a three part storyline for the first incarnation of Legends of the Dark Knight. That was the Faces storyline I did with Batman and Two-Face. Then of course, there was another Batman/Grendel crossover and that led to just more and more over the years.

AU: Is there still a dream project that you're dying to do?

MW: I'd like to do another standalone Superman story. I got to work on Superman in the Trinity storyline I did for DC. But I wouldn't mind doing a standalone Superman story. I did one recently, a short story

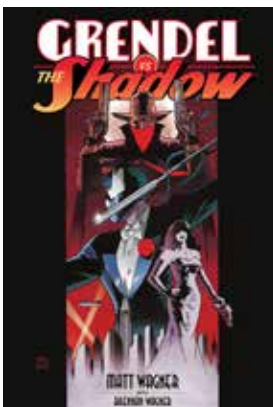
for the Superman Red and Blue project that DC did last year.

My main interest in Superman would be doing a period placed piece. I think almost all pop culture characters

work absolutely best in the time period they were created in. James Bond works best in the Cold War. The Shadow works best in the 30s. Batman in the age of TMZ, I don't see how any billionaire could lead a secret identity life like that.

AU: Any advice for people looking to get into the comic book industry?

MW: "My advice is, you have to draw every day and not just when you feel like it. I always tell them, look if you were an athlete, if you were on the football team you have to practice every day, they have to train every day. If you were a musician, if you had an instrument that you played, you'd understand that you have to practice every day, right? Well, no different with drawing you have to do it every day. You have



to learn to draw not just the fun shit but all the shit around you. I tell them, "Yeah that's great to draw Spider-Man. It's great to draw Batman. You need to draw telephones, you need draw cars, you need draw buildings, you need to draw all the things that populate the world that your characters move around in." So teach yourself how to draw that stuff too not just capes and muscles.

AU: How have you seen the comic book industry change over the years?

MW: I can't even begin to enumerate. It's a completely different beast now than when I started. It's a completely different beast from 10 years ago. It is a constantly churning maelstrom.

AU: Do you have any thoughts on the number of comic artists passing away recently? It's been a sad year.

MW: It's just a matter of time, man. If you last long enough, you're going to start to see friends start to die. That's just the way the world works. Luckily now we're at a stage where those people aren't lost into obscurity. Usually it sparks a reinvigoration and interest in their work

and usually it's the proper appreciation. Wally Wood one of the most famous draftsmen in the 50's and 60's died alone broke and drunk. A very sad situation there but that wouldn't happen today.

AU: Yeah, now they have the Hero Initiative to help artists make it through tough times.

MW: I try to do a lot of work with the Hero Initiative.

AU: Any final words of wisdom?

MW: Well, there's very few art forms that will afford you the creative freedom and opportunity for experiment that comics do.

AU: How do people find you online?

MW: On Facebook or Twitter. Of course you can find any of my books at my various publishers, Image Comics publishes Mage and Dark Horse publishes the vast Grendel library. All of which is being recently reissued in a series of big fat Grendel omnibus editions. The third volume out of seven just came out.

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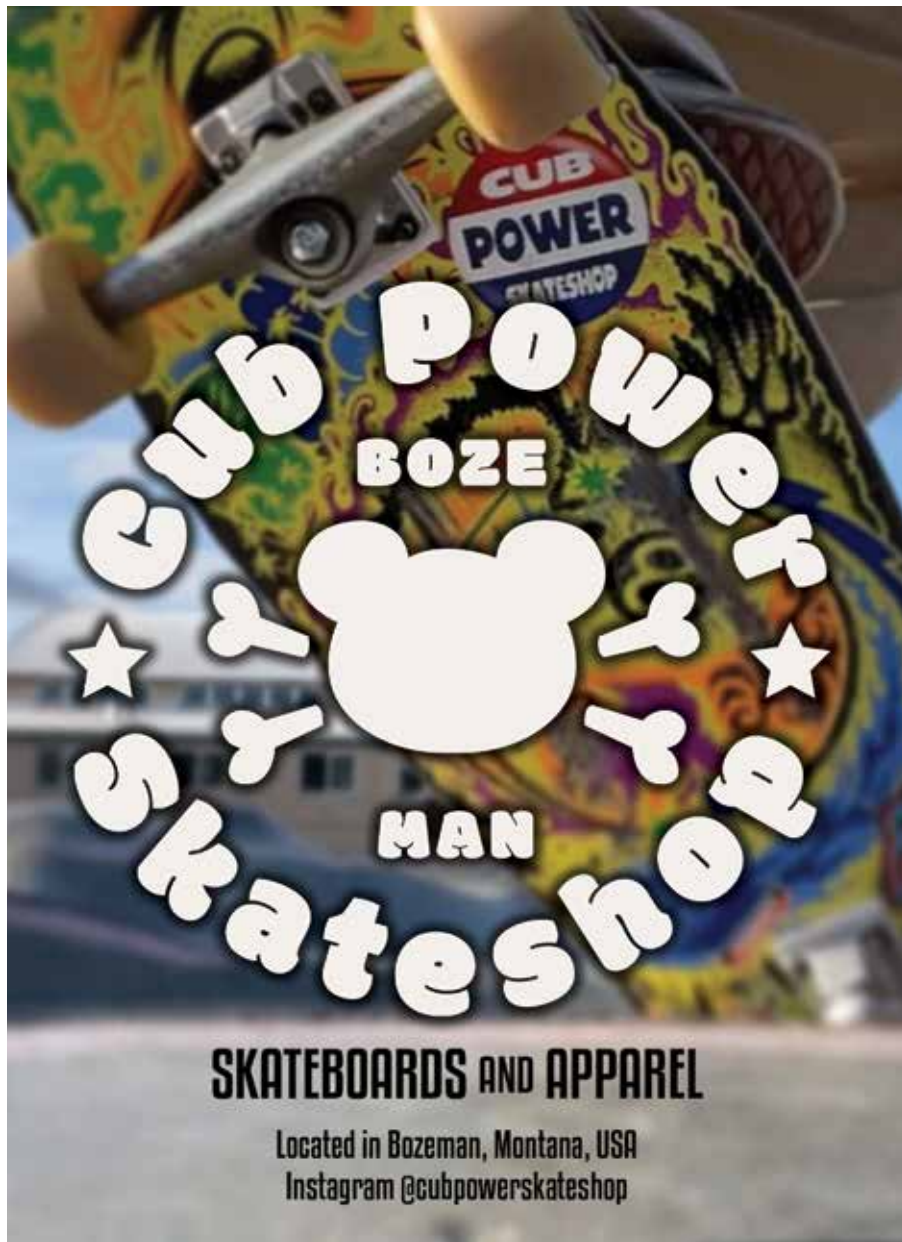
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COMIC-GEDDON

Comic-Geddon

Beyond Mortal

Dark Horse Books presents *Beyond Mortal*, a new original graphic novel from Cullen Bunn (*Shock Shop*, *Harrow County*, *Lamentation*) and Danny Luckert (*Shock Shop*).

Comic book readers are familiar with the world of Bronze and Modern Era comics: stories of gleaming steel metropolises populated by daring superheroes battling for truth and justice, facing down power-mad masterminds and would-be world conquerors.

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Beyond Mortal is perfect for fans of *The Sixth Gun*, *Harrow County*, and *Locke & Key*.

"If you know me, you know I love superheroes," said Bunn. "You also know I love-love-love horror. While I've frequently infused horror elements into my superhero comics, I've never done a full-on horror book in a superhero universe. Well, here you have it. *BEYOND*



MORTAL is sort of a fever dream of heroics and terror. And I think fans of superheroes will love it. And so will horror fiends.

"Cullen Bunn has created such a rich, lived-in world with *BEYOND MORTAL* and it was an honor to help it come alive," said Luckert. "This book starts at a 10 and never lets up!"

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The Carlson Loft / Powell River

By John Carlow

Absolute Underground: Introduce yourselves and your venue.

Carlson Loft: Donna Rabbet and Cecil English. The Carlson Loft in Powell River.

AU: When and how did you come to be a live music venue?

CL: The Carlson Community Club is a well-established community hall in Powell River. They have always had live entertainment. Recently we installed a modern state-of-the-art sound and lighting system in the upstairs hall. It has been re-branded as The Carlson Loft.

AU: What is your background in the music scene?

CL: We are retired and operating as volunteers to bring more live music to Powell River. Donna was the manager of The Town Pump and 86th Street in Vancouver for many years. I was a co-owner of Profile Studios in Vancouver and produced a bunch of fairly well-known indie records all through the 80's and 90's. I have also toured a fair amount as a live sound mixer for a lot of the bands that I recorded and produced albums for. During the period of 2014-2020 Donna and I also installed and operated sound systems in a variety

of Vancouver venues.

AU: What is your capacity and what kind of shows do you have there usually?

The room capacity is around 150, and we do all kinds of music for the community.

Because of our history in the indie music scene, we mostly get approached by touring indie bands that play the clubs featured in Absolute Underground.

AU: What do you offer a band wanting to do a show?

CL: We offer a well-promoted show, in a great room, with great sound and lights. The stage is 3' high, 20' wide and 12' deep. On stage there is an 8 channel monitor system with a great wedge monitors and a sub for the drummer. There is a 32 CH transformer split onstage for anyone who wants to do their own IEM monitor setup.

The sound system is modern with flown speakers throughout the room and an array of floor mounted subwoofers. Everything is perfectly time aligned to fill the room smoothly and evenly with great sound. The FOH console is a 32 ch x 32.

There is a designated merch area for the bands to set up in. We do not take a percentage.

AU: Does PR have a metal/punk scene?

CL: There are a couple of local punk bands, but the scene here is definitely lacking in that regard. Hopefully, now that we have provided a new stage to play on with great opportunities for opening bands, more punk and metal bands will spring up. There are a bunch of cover bands that have been playing the old haunts for decades. There are lots of singles and duos in a variety of styles.

AU: Is the city supportive of the music scene?

BACKSTAGE PASS - VENUE PROFILE

CL: So far everyone has been incredibly supportive of live music. Much more so than in Vancouver. Honestly it seems like half the people we meet are from East Van and have recently moved here. When Joe from DOA asked the crowd how many were from East Van, at least 100 people put up their hands.

AU: How does one promote a show in Powell River?

CL: We have a mini billboard outside of the club which we use. We also have a group of local merchants who allow us to put big 24"x 36" posters in their store windows. Additionally, there are a bunch of places with bulletin board space that we have access to.

In the beginning we tried to do big poster campaigns on the poles all over the city, but the posters only stayed up for a day; not sure why. A local magazine, Qathet Living, has also been running stories about the shows that we are doing.

AU: Do you ever see out-of-towners at your shows? If yes, where from?

CL: A fair amount of out-of-towners do come to the shows. Powell River is a really great place to visit. Many people have moved here from Vancouver and Victoria because of the housing crisis.

AU: Who would you like to see come to town?

CL: We would like to see Dayglo Abortions here! The Ripcordz barely missed their opportunity this time, but they will be back. John Wright of

Nomeansno is working on a band for his Dead Bob project, so hopefully we will be the launching pad for that! We'd love to do a Real McKenzies show; The Corps; Victim's Family and or Freak Accident. At some point we'd love to do a Roots Roundup show, also a Brickhouse show. We love rootsy Americana style music, so we've been talking to The Graham Brown Band, Chris Andres, and Duane Watson.

Some real dream shows would be Cracker, James

McMurtry, Chuck Profit, Old 97's, Slobberbone, Alejandro Escovido, Jace Everett, The Farmers, and Joey Harris and The Mentals. There are so many bands that we dream about passing through our venue!

AU: Memorable shows that came to play Powell River?

CL: We are just getting started. So far we have done

DOA, Pink Mountaintops, and Bonnie Scott, a female fronted AC/DC tribute. Coming up we have Econoline Crush, Calm Like a Bomb, a Rage Against The Machine Tribute, and Totally Twain, a Shania Twain tribute.

AU: What would you like to see happen, moving forward?

CL: Hopefully, since we now have a serious venue, a thriving music scene will spring up to take advantage. Our only objective is to do our part to create and nurture a vibrant music scene in Powell River. So many of our friends have moved here; we need to keep them entertained.

[facebook.com/eastvanliveproductions](https://www.facebook.com/eastvanliveproductions)

Photos courtesy of Carlson Loft.

VOICE OF THE STREETS



internationally recognized. We really needed to give bands a reason to play here as we are relatively geographically isolated. But now-days, we have bands asking to play a year or more in advance on the regular, so we've been able to fill up the roster quickly. Getting the bands is the first really important thing, but certainly not the only thing. The rest of the time is spent doing ticketing, promotion, getting accommodations together,

raising money, rides, gear, etc.

AU: Where is Have A Good Laugh festival based?

C: HAGL has always been in East Vancouver.

AU: How did it come to be and what year did it start?

C: I moved to Vancouver in 2013, I started to plan out my own festival with the goal of making (or persisting the idea that makes) Vancouver a destination for punks and punk bands. I had no money, a shit job, but big dreams, so I connected with as many people as I could and gathered a team. Our first big headliners were *Disorder*, *Screaming Dead* and *Paranoid* (among other great bands) which I knew would (and it did) bring a lot of attention to the fest, especially since none of those bands had ever played

in North America before. The first festival took place in June 2016 over 4 days and was a success in the eyes of the attendees, and for me, it was a learning experience.

AU: What are the criteria for a band to be able to play HAGL?

C: Well first of all HAGL is a punk fest, so your

band must be some sort of a punk band. We generally do one day centered around oil and streetpunk, a hardcore punk or d-beat day and finally a crust day. So if your band falls into one of those loose categories, you sound good, and are willing to travel, we will consider and likely book you. We definitely seek certain bands out, but since we get so many requests from awesome bands all the time, we usually only have to seek out a handful and the rest come to us (so contact us if you wanna play!).

AU: What bands are you most excited for this year and what bands have stood out for you in the past?

C: For this year, I'm really excited to see *Chaotic Dischord* (who isn't!?), *Cotard*, *Krash*, *Electric Masochist* and *Dust Collector* - but I do genuinely enjoy all the bands playing. Past years highlights have been *Asocial*, *Varukers*, *Vaxine*, *Instinct of Survival*, *Voltage*, *Fatum*, *Zygame*, *Generation Suicida*, *Tom & Bootboys*, *Ultrarat*... really the list goes on!

AU: What's the longest distance a band has traveled to play the festival?

C: In terms of distance traveled, probably *Fatum* from Moscow, but we've had bands from all around the place so it's hard to say without looking back at who's all played.

AU: How many days long is HAGL?

C: The first year was four days, since then we've

taken it down to three...maybe one day it will be two, we'll see how well I handle stress over the years.

AU: How many venues on average is the festival spread over each year?

C: This year we only have 2.5 venues (0.5 for

the planned guerrilla party), but in the past we've had as many as five.

AU: What's the craziest story you can think of that happened at HAGL?

C: Now that is hard to answer...Maybe *Tom & Bootboys* playing naked at 2 a.m. on the train tracks while a train rolls up and punks are diving off the cars into the pit... That was pretty fuckin' wild to say the least! We enjoyed doing that so much, we've kept the tradition of doing guerrilla shows every year for the finale.

AU: Where can one find more information and buy tickets?

C: Tickets, schedule, music, contact & everything else can be found at haveagoodlaugh.org

AU: Cheers, anything you like to add or mention?

C: Thanks for the interest in the fest, and thanks to everyone who has continued to support us over the years, it's been a pleasure! Stay punk forever and we'll keep bringing the noise!

haveagoodlaugh.org



Have a Good Laugh Festival Interview with Cordie Charge

By Chuck n Daz

Absolute Underground: Oi! Thanks for taking the time and speaking with us!

Cordie Charge: No problem at all!

AU: Who are we speaking with?

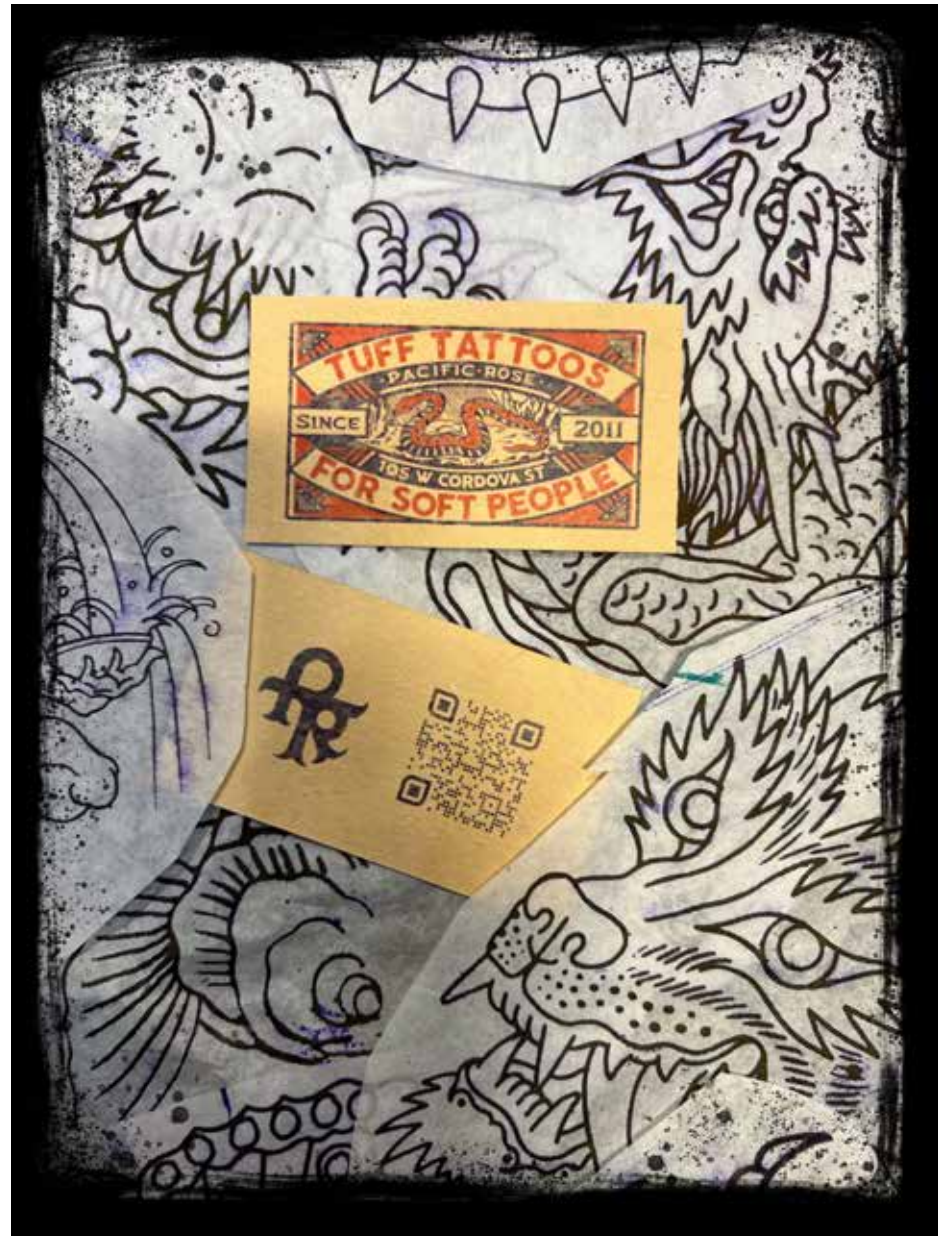
C: I am Cordie Charge, founder & one of the coordinators of HAGL fest

AU: Who else is mainly involved in Have a Good Laugh Festival?

C: Over the years we've had quite a few people come, and some go. Right now we have a solid group of about eight of us; We've got two Tylers, Pedro, Don-Don, Chelsea, Megan & Tim. Everyone on the team now has been doing it for several years, though I am the only original coordinator left.

AU: For a festival run by a bunch of punks that are doing it for the love of the scene, how long does it take to organize the Festival?

C: It takes about nine or ten months to get everything together. In the earlier years it took a bit longer, but that was back before we were





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your new lineup, how has the transition been for this record with new players and a new direction in sound?

RC: Quite seamless. We always wanted to make a heavier, stripped-down, and more technical record. With the addition of Samuel Ridout on guitars, this was a natural progression, as he is incredibly technical, and is heavily influenced by bands like Meshuggah. This is not something we've ever had in Red Cain, and so experimenting in that direction, adding djent touches and more progressive elements played extremely well with the vision we had for this album.

AU: Your new album *Näe'bliss* is a *Wheel of Time*-inspired concept record. What is about Robert Jordan's fantasy epic that drew you to dedicate an album to it?

RC: A few members of the band are fans of the series, and for Evgeniy, our singer, it was the first fantasy series he had read in English after coming



to Canada, so the impact it made was immense. Aside from being in many ways a genre-defining series on par with LOTR or Game of Thrones, *WoT* is also incredibly interesting conceptually. It has a quite unique world that's well-known from the POV of the protagonists, but the opposite side perspective is left relatively ambiguous, as can happen often in fantasy novels. We are always interested in the concept of the antihero and wanted to explore the motivations and goals of

the antagonists, along with a commentary on the nature of branding points of view "evil" without uncovering and understanding the motivations of those who stand behind them. Luckily, the world is complex and brilliantly constructed, so filling in the gaps was possible – plus it was an interesting thought experiment for us conceptually and musically.

AU: Nerd Alert: Top Five Robert Jordan's Books and which one is the most metal of them all?

RC: Lord of Chaos takes that title - for the absolute carnage during the Battle of Dumai's Wells, the birth of "Darth Rand", and the chain of sheer brutality that it kicks off in some of the subsequent books. In terms of the other four, *Fires of Heaven*, *Shadow Rising*, *The Gathering Storm*, and *The Great Hunt*. Hard to choose, as aside from 2-3 novels, the series is top-notch throughout.

AU: For your closing album track, *Fires of Heaven*, you collaborated with Ottawa's Lycanthro's James Delbridge on guest vocals, how did this come to be?

RC: Evgeniy and James know each other pretty well and are usually in contact, and we're fans of his work with Lycanthro. We were looking for a vocal counterpoint for Evgeniy's vocals in this track, and James's old-school thrash vocals were perfect here. We basically asked him to bring Iced Earth/Judas Priest into our track, and he delivered in an epic way. A good friend and a talented vocalist.

AU: Are there any plans for future collaborations in mind for future Red Cain recordings?

RC: Absolutely. We always try to include other talents in our releases – it builds relationships, crosses fan-bases, and makes for a more varied listening experience. It's certainly a goal of ours and we have a few candidates in mind for the next releases.

AU: In the past, you have entered your very well-done music videos into Film Festivals. Will you be doing the same for your amazingly produced music video "We Are Chaos"?



Thanks for the compliment! We definitely intend to do this, and big credit goes to Zak Kelly, who worked with us to make our vision a reality with "We Are Chaos", and who is a good friend who we collaborated with before on other work.

AU: Touring is back stronger than ever across Canada and beyond, any plans for Red Cain on the road?

RC: We're still coming off studio work for this record, but the dream is certainly to tour and visit our fans outside of Canada. We'll see what the future brings!

AU: Anything else ya like to add for our readers?

RC: Thanks for having us and continuing to feature great artists, AU! We're very excited about *Näe'bliss* - it's an exciting and strong evolution for Red Cain and our sound. More than anything else, we want to know the impressions of longtime fans, or even casual listeners, so please reach out with your comments! And continue to support musicians and bands, local or global – it's more important than ever as we pick up the pace again in 2023!

redcain.ca
[instagram.com/redcainarmy](https://www.instagram.com/redcainarmy)

RED CAIN

Näe'bliss

Absolute Underground: Welcome to Absolute Underground Mag, it's been a while since we last spoke to Red Cain, what has been up to lately?

Red Cain: Happy to talk with you again! Plenty of studio work. We've finished our "Kindred" album cycle, and as an homage to one of our biggest literary inspirations is releasing a new album based around the *Wheel of Time* book series – but of course, with the usual Red Cain themes and recognizable style. We've also made some lineup changes which made us a lot stronger in the musical direction we are going.

AU: The new album *Näe'bliss* that features

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SET & STONED Interview with Guitarist and Vocalist Cody New

By Ryan Dyer

In the town of Crossfield, Alberta, there's not a lot going on. You can sit around and get stoned and have a dismal future that is all but set in stone, or you can start up a band and eventually make your mark at one of the best music festivals Western Canada has to offer at the moment, being The Electric Highway. Set & Stoned chose the latter option. We speak with vocalist Cody New about the journey to get here and what's next for the band.

Absolute Underground: What is the origin of Set & Stoned? How did you guys all meet and decide to make an impact with this band?

Set & Stoned: We formed in 2012 in Crossfield, Alberta Originally as a three piece band. As you can imagine, there is not much to do in Crossfield. The band was a way for us to have a creative



outlet. We soon began playing in other towns and cities. Myself and Jordan Wilkinson also spent some time playing in other bands over the years. Long time friend and current drummer Jay Skelly was playing in another band when we first formed and he joined the band in 2019 and has been a great addition to the team. Jordan met Connor while playing in another group and Connor joined Set & Stoned in 2021, making Set & Stoned a four-piece band for the first time in our band's history.

AU: You played night two of Electric Highway. I noticed that you guys had the biggest and most active crowd out of all the bands on that night. How was the experience for you?

S&S: The crowd definitely seemed to be on our side that night which felt great for sure. The experience feels more rewarding when the crowd has lots of energy like that.

AU: Your EP was released this year and contains four songs. I can tell you worked hard crafting these songs. How long did it take for it to come together?

S&S: We started tracking it over Christmas break in 2022 and we released it in early March 2023. Three out of four songs we had been playing for several years. "Stoned Alone" is a fairly new song but we thought it would fit well on the EP.

AU: The song "Bird in a Cage" hits differently. Could you talk a little about the songwriting influence and lyrical content of this track?

S&S: "Bird in a Cage" is definitely a song close to the heart. It's about feeling isolated, feeling trapped in your own skin, the loss of hope and the heavy weight of death and grief. It is also about overcoming those feelings - fighting through your fears and not remaining in a place of sadness. When I wrote the lyrics, I was in a dark place but I feel expressing my experiences through music has always helped me get through painful times.

AU: I am a fan of the album cover. What is the meaning of the green skull and crow with the glowing eye?

S&S: Our album cover was done by our very own drummer, Mr. Jay Skelly. Jay has worked as a tattoo artist for over 10 years and there is no end to his talents. For the EP, we wanted more of a concept design instead of just our logo. Our logo has sort of a cemetery feel so I think he did a fantastic job with this.

AU: I said your sound reminded me a bit of Soundgarden, songwriting wise, after seeing you. After listening to the EP, I still somewhat think that, and it isn't an insult! I've read your influences as part of your bios on the website, but for the sound of Set & Stoned, which bands do you cull from?

S&S: Truthfully, our influences are all over the map. We always have a difficult time when people ask us about our genre. We feel we have a broad range of songs that fall under many different genres. As of right now, we only have the four songs released on Spotify, but we hope to record and release as much as we can in the next few years. We are sitting on a catalogue of Set & Stoned songs yet to be recorded. Connor also has a bunch of songs from his solo work he would like to bring to the table so we want to get back to recording ASAP.

AU: Your older song "Destroyer" is looser and more psychedelic. Will you be returning to this sound?

S&S: "Destroyer" is an older instrumental track that we still love to play to this day. We feel most of our songs have some psychedelic element to



them in one way or another. As for the mood of the song, we try not to limit ourselves and are open to play whatever feels right for the song.

AU: Is the sound of Set and Stoned set in stone? How do you see the band progressing?

S&S: Nothing is set in stone. Nothing is permanent. We live in an ever changing world. The only real guarantee is no one gets out alive. We just try to do our thing and have some fun in the process.

AU: What other ambitions do you have for Set & Stoned?

S&S: Our main focus is to release more music. The live performance is also very crucial and we look forward to playing more events and festivals. This summer is already booking up and we can't

wait to get out there more. Another ambition would be to start touring more and playing new places. We have played in or around most of the major cities in Alberta but we would like to expand to new provinces and maybe do some touring outside of Canada as well.

facebook.com/SetAndStoned
setandstonedband.com/

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ARTIST PROFILE



Chris Labrenz Mad About Monsters

Absolute Underground:
Who are we talking to and what are your skillz to pay the billz?

Chris Labrenz: The name they gave me is Chris Labrenz. I live to draw and draw to live! I create tattoo, custom art and art for fun! I've been drawing since I was old enough to hold a pencil.

AU: Are you looking forward to exhibiting at the Calgary Horror Con again this year?

CL: Currently going to attend the Calgary Horror Con! My favorite weekend of each year! I attend many conventions but this show in particular is a very

personal fun filled family event! I've grown close friends over the years attending this convention with many amazing people!

I've made a lot of friends at this particular event! And look forward to gaining more!

AU: Tell us about some of the experiences you've had when giving celebrity guests your artwork.

CL: Over the years I have met my full share of celebrities and am grateful



to get to know many of them personally and even call some friends!

AU: How was your recent encounter with director Sam Raimi at Calgary Expo last month?

CL: Meeting director Sam Raimi recently was several moments in time I won't forget! He was humble and made the encounter personal and it turns out he says he's been a "fan of my work" as well! I felt like we inspired each other in our encounter! I won't forget it!

AU: What mediums do you work in?

CL: I tattoo, and create art in old school methods such as pencil, pencil crayon, fabric markers, and I color most of my work digitally.

AU: What tattoo shop do you work at?

CL: I tattoo out of Black Gold Tattoo in Edmonton and have been with the same shop/family for about 14 years. It's my second home!

AU: Dream project you are still dying to do.

CL: Dream projects... I have many! I would love to bring some personal projects I have created into film/television or books. I also have some funky secret projects I have been silently working on for a while.

AU: Any words of wisdom for aspiring artists?

CL: In terms of giving words of wisdom or advice! Keep at it! Art is passion, a positive healthy drug! Use and abuse it every day! It's a great form of self therapy and always great to show something physical for your time!

AU: Where can people see examples of your artwork online?

CL: You can follow my inner workings on Instagram: @labrenzink

I also have an online store: labrenzink.storenvy.com

Thx for looking and stay weird and creative!



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Floyd's Diner

By Ed Sum

In Victoria, B.C., Floyd's Diner has been a mainstay since the start of the century. Although the original location on Quadra and Yates closed down (it's become a poke salad lounge according to Google), I'm glad they have other locations to keep going at. Regulars come here for the ambiance. You can feel it with all the vintage and pop culture decor that decorates the place. And the vibe you feel from entering is what defines the experience. The staff are very friendly, and as for what to eat, not many appetites are prepared for the Mahoney!

This meal can be anything. It's described as whatever the cooks want to whip up! Pictures

from their website show just how innovative and huge they are. And the pricing reflects that. It's not so much about whether this meal can be finished in a sitting, but if you're willing to gamble! If you flip a coin and call it right, you pay double the price, otherwise it's a free meal! Or to be fair, one can just pay the listed price which is \$23.95!

As much as I'd like to take that on, I'm not always a gamblin' man. On a nice day, I visited the Langford operation (721 Station Ave) with a buddy, and it's a big place! I've been to the original, and I'm sure this other location is at least 1.5 times bigger. When we got seated, I admired the decor. It's everything I recall and more.

As for the fixings, I opted for the Monte Cristo sandwich and it can be made on three kinds of bread; although I'm not a rye man, my friend and waiter somehow convinced me that it's the best combo to go for. While I agree, health-wise, I still prefer sourdough. I don't mean to be dour but I felt conflicted. Although that lunch was very satisfying, I should have stuck to my guns. As the

side to accompany this meal, I stole a few fries from my friend's plate to rate: they were more thick cut than thin. I'm sure I could've asked for how I like 'em, but alas peer pressure! They at least had a good crisp. At least the salad that came with my meal was very fresh, and the Bugs Bunny in me was very happy.

I could make it a mission to visit all the operations around town to see if I can taste the differences. Honestly, it's not needed. They have to maintain a standard that Petr Prusa, the owner and founder, established. I applaud him for making sure his operation managed to weather the pandemic storm. While other places went under, they've managed to expand! When all their buildings are

i LIKE FOOD

painted pink, Floyd's Diner is hard to miss!

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floydsdiner.ca

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LITTLE EVE



Catriona Ward
Tor Nightfire
October 11, 2022

Little Eve is an early novel from recent horror darling Catriona Ward. Having first received a limited run in the UK via Weidenfeld & Nicolson in 2018. The author's current international success has prompted a more widespread distribution and, being a lover of the classic gothic tale format, I found myself eager to devour this one.

The story kicks off with tantalizing descriptions akin to the dream of Manderley's locked gate which begins Daphne du Maurier's gothic staple *Rebecca*—except the gate leading to Altnaharra Castle swings open instead of being padlocked shut, and the scene that Great War veteran Jamie MacRaith walks into is certainly no dream. Five bodies are laid in star formation within a circle of standing stones splashed with blood. Gulls flock amidst the bodies, pecking at flesh. Possibly the most disturbing detail is that every corpse has a weeping red-black wound where the right eye should be.

As the narrative unwinds the events that lead up to this terrible tableau, we are introduced to the family that lived at Altnaharra before the slaughter. We learn, bit by bit, of the lives of the women and girls who sheltered there away from the Impure, and of a man they called "Uncle" who channeled the voice of the great Adder that would come to wash away the world and lead them to salvation.

For those who don't enjoy the careful creeping pace and florid descriptions of classic horror literature this one might be a bit of an effort, but if you are willing to see it through you'll be rewarded with a deeply involved, deeply disturbing story of family, pain, perception, and the horrors that can come from belief.

Laura Phaneuf

THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PICTURES VIDEO GUIDE



Gary A. Frank
McFarland May 13, 2009

This book very much lives up to its very long and precise title, covering weird detectives in a variety of media! This is the sort of book I love, a thing of beauty and joy forever, for the reader will always return to it to dip into the storehouse of wondrous facts contained therein! It's impossible to cover a fraction of the marvelous books and films covered here, so I will just pick a few personal highlights. Kim Newman's incredible sequel/re-imagining of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* remains one of the best books I've ever read, I cannot recommend it enough, and it remains a mystery to me that it has yet to be filmed.

A sign of how thorough this book is, the inclusion of a 1973 film called *Baffled*, starring Susan Hampshire and Leonard Nimoy. I love this film, so charming.

Then, we have *Night of the Demon* (1957), a truly great British occult detective film. The excellent Jonathan Creek series is included, as is one of my all-time favourites, the much-missed 'Supernatural'. Finally, I loved seeing the inclusion of Hammer's *The Devil Rides Out*, a truly smashing film! Indeed, to sum up, this book will awaken your own inner weird detective as you hunt down some of the gems you'll read about.

Steve Earles

TEAR



Erica McKeen
Invisible Publishing
September 6, 2022

Finding a new Canadian horror author is always a pleasure, so coming across Erica McKeen's debut novel *Tear* ignited my curiosity. After finishing the book, it remains difficult to ascertain whether or not that curiosity has been quenched.

Frances lives in the basement of a nondescript house on a nondescript street of London, Ontario. She rents the house with three other students, who live upstairs. Frances has a hard time sleeping...or maybe she sleeps too much. The problem is that she can't really seem to remember. She is always hungry but she never eats. She has started to forget when she last left the basement. When she finds the door at the top of the stairs locked, she starts to question if she ever in fact existed outside of it. The first half of McKeen's novel reads slowly, drowsily, and full of stylistic repetition. It isn't until Frances notices an insistent scratching coming from inside the walls of her room that the story starts to transform from a dazed and depressive one to something altogether more terrible.

While the extent of my enjoyment is not easy to parse (this in itself must lend some validation to McKeen's deeply introspective style), there is no denying that *Tear* took me on quite the journey as a reader, maintaining my rapt attention all the while. I find myself looking forward to a greater sampling of this neophyte author's work, and I await her next public offering.

Laura Phaneuf

"THIS SHARK, SWALLOW YOU WHOLE"

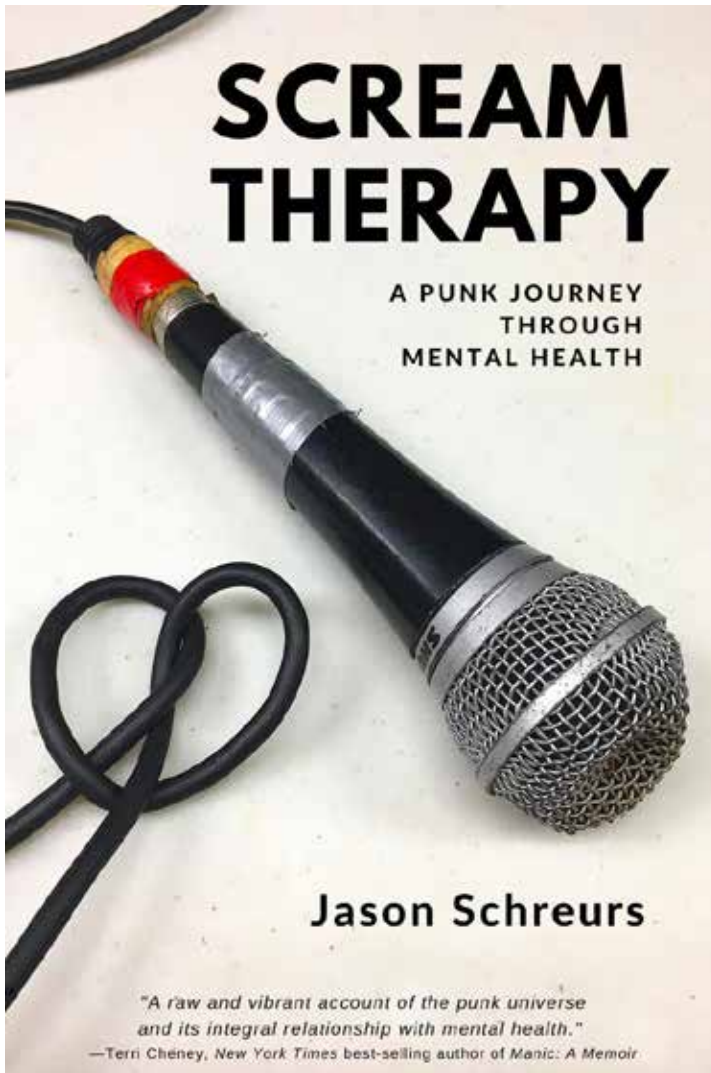


ESSAYS ON THE CULTURAL INFLUENCE OF JAWS
Edited by Kathy Merlock Jackson and Philip L. Simpson
McFarland March 15, 2023

Jaws is one of my all-time favourite films, one that made a huge impression on me as a youngster. Who can forget the scene of Quint being eaten and still fighting back!! So, it's great to see such a fine collection of essays on the cultural significance and influence of *Jaws*. My favourite essay in this collection is the wittily-titled "You're Gonna Need A Bigger Boom: *Jaws*, Mythbusters, Science and the Legacy of the Blockbuster." By Michael J. Meindl, but all the essays are worthy. Now, read the essay and stick on *Jaws*, you know you want to!

Steve Earles

"EVERYBODY IS A BOOK OF BLOOD: WHEREVER WE'RE OPENED, WE'RE RED."
CLIVE BARKER, *BOOKS OF BLOOD: VOLUMES ONE TO THREE*
Submit your inquires or reviews to demonika@absoluteunderground.ca



tour that I went on in August 2018. The shows represent my mental state at the time, and are kind of like the hinge of the book that holds the whole thing together. What I look at is mental health from punks in the scene and medical professionals who are also punks. And there's, of course, my own story, which is a memoir of my life from growing up in a small town to going into the city and getting involved with the scene and the work that they do now with mental health.

AU: After reading *Scream Therapy, A Punk Journey Through Mental Health*, I see it's very personal. Was it difficult to pour your soul out?

JS: I knew it was something that I had to write. It details a severe mental crisis. Likewise, it details the transformation that I had around finding my peace. It was all stuff that came out easily.

My writing style is very off the cuff; I don't feel like I have to push to get it out. To relieve the traumas honestly was not difficult. I think that it was therapeutic, and it was a way for me to make sense of everything. And the book is very much about my journey.

AU: So when did you realize that you can finally turn this around and also be someone to help others?

JS: I've done volunteer work. Not only did I facilitate a support group for bipolar folks, but also offer coaching. I had formal training because you have to. I mean, I'm never going to feel like I'm completely stable and that I'm out of the woods with this lifelong condition; I could have a relapse anytime. Mental health is something that you manage.

AU: There's a documentary called *Cover Your Ears* by Sean Patrick Shaul where he presents a very good case about why censoring music is bad. That's because some advocacy groups see that certain bands are negative, and are singing about things that young ears shouldn't hear. They believe it contributes to delinquency. How do you respond to that?

JS: Well, I think it's all bullshit. You can look at studies on all sides, and you can find the results that you want to find. The ones I was looking at that I really resonated with were the ones that are talking about how there's this myth that "loud and angry music" will make someone angrier. It's just complete falsity.

Take it one step further and go to start playing in a band or go to a show and start yelling the lyrics, a band on the stage and yelling at all your friends. You're now releasing even more of that, of that distress. So yeah, I think it's complete garbage that these people will say this kid will hurt somebody, because he was listening to Cannibal Corpse.

AU: I'm reminded of William Cosgrove's quote about how music can soothe the savage beast.

JS: That's exactly what it is. Music can also soothe or invigorate the person who is not a savage beast. So you can listen to a band like Hot Water Music, who is all about positivity. Or a person can be really depressed and listen to sad music, and that may be a way of relating to their emotions. It's like a size fits all sort of thing, or you can use it for any kind of therapy.

AU: Was that the reason you decided to create your *Scream Therapy* podcast?

JS: It came from a time when I was completely broken, and I didn't know how I would get back to journalism—which is what I already always did my whole life. I felt like I was done! Depression completely enveloped my entire life, and my podcast was my first step to getting back into this kind of creative pursuit.

Also, I knew I wanted to write the print version right away after coming home from the hospital the very first day after my outburst. That's where my brain went automatically. But those notes that I wrote down sat there for a good year and a half because I just could not do anything.

AU: How long has that audio program been running?

JS: It started in January 2020 and it's every two weeks. And I'm on episode 70 right now. And there's also *Flex Your Head*, which is myself and friends talking about classic punk albums. My hosting platform is SoundCloud, but you can get it anywhere like on iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, etc.

AU: About your book tour, are there any plans to expand beyond this region?

JS: I'm traveling the Pacific Northwest for now and will need a grant to go further. I will be attending Fest in Gainesville, Florida next. Likewise, I've gone for the last 10 years in a row, and it's terrific! A reading at the Gainesville library is planned, and then I'm hoping to do something back East, like either Toronto or Halifax.

screamtherapyhq.com



Sometimes, All You Need To Do is Scream

Interview with *Scream Therapy* Podcaster Jason Schreurs

By Ed Sum

After Jason Schreurs' successful *Scream Therapy, A Punk Journey Through Mental Health* book tour, he's most likely ready to take on the rest of the world! That's because he finds his love for punk rock music effective to help control his mood swings. Plus, it is a lot more therapeutic than most scholars and therapists take it for. Sometimes to be able to scream and shout is all one needs.

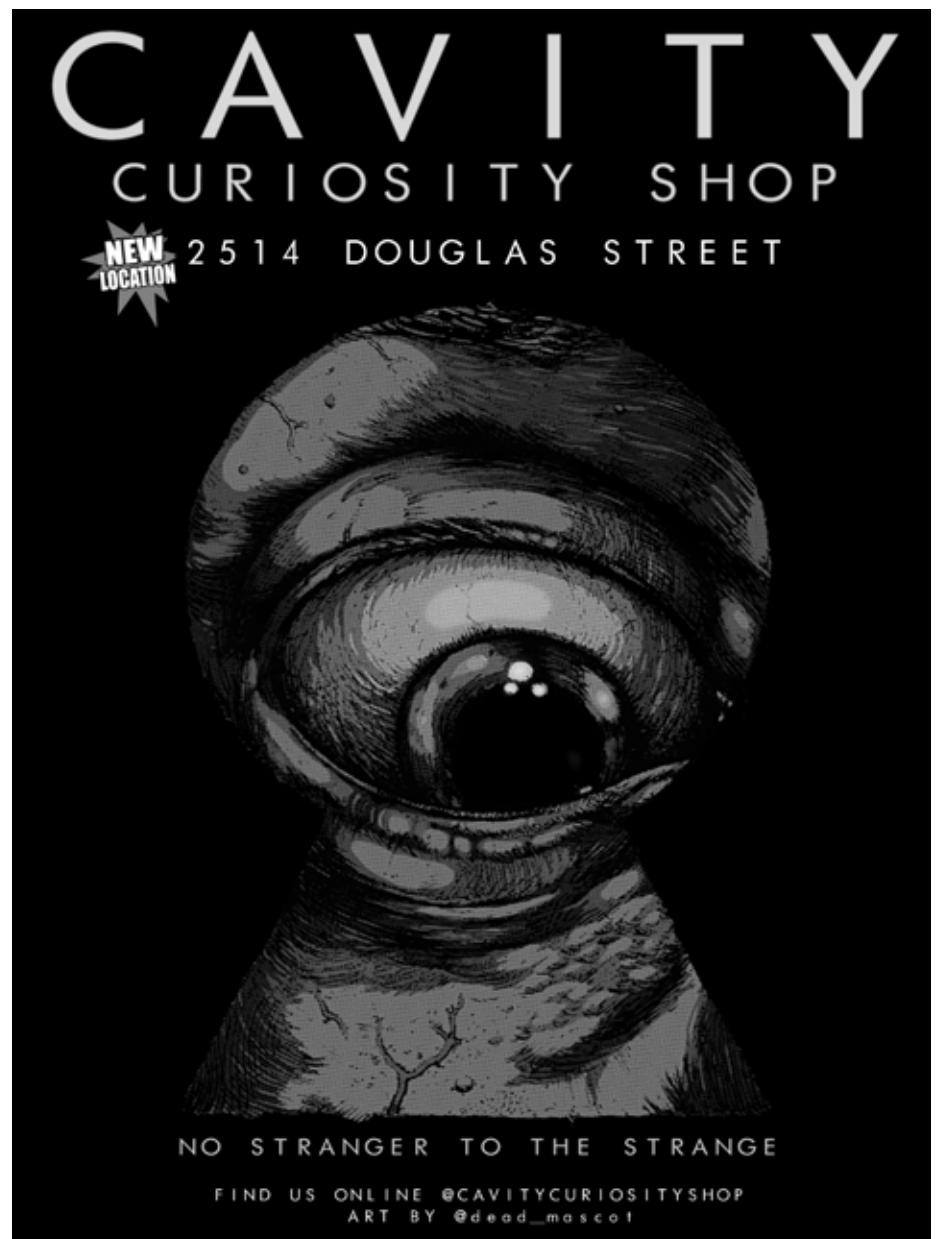
Now that he's managed to put a stranglehold on his demons, he's helping others. Not only does he offer local workshops in his hometown, but he also has a goal to tell listeners that it's okay—there's a silver lining, and they can see how others have learned to cope through his *Scream Therapy* podcast. His book is a companion piece to this audio program, and it's available to purchase through screamtherapyhq.com

JS: I've been a punk rocker since I was a teen, and I've been a journalist since then, too. The three decades spent has always been tailored towards music, especially punk rock and metal. And recently, because of my meltdown, I've moved into writing about issues in this sector. So, my book, *Scream Therapy, A Punk Journey Through Mental Health* is a conglomeration of both.

I've always been a DIY punk, and my home is in Powell River, off the Sunshine Coast of BC. *Flex Your Head Press* is my own publishing company, and I've almost sold out of the first print run! As soon as AK Press distributes it in the States, it'll be more widely available. Right now, it's way easier for me to fill orders from the basement, punk rock style, than to have it filled by some other company.

Absolute Underground: In the book, it reads like you've been with many bands, but which one is your baby?

JS: The main one that's in the book is *Pump Jams*—created by myself and a few others—where people would just show up, and get all wild, scream, and dance around. It became an extension of me; I'd bring in all kinds of people from different bands in Victoria and Nanaimo, Vancouver, and we'd all just get together on a certain night and just improv a set of noise and punk. And that kind of comes to light during the





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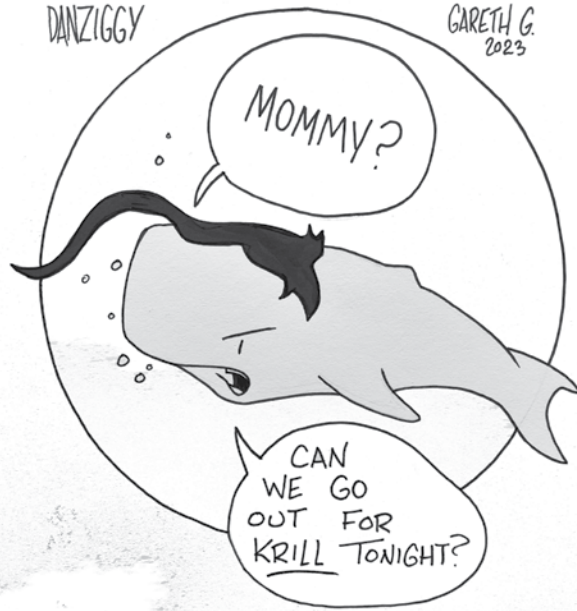
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Now that is settled, can I make you some grape drink?

-DICK KRAUF '23

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"YOU'RE NOT AS FUNNY AS YOU THINK"

CINEMA

NOW PLAYING

IT! 9PM

KILLER KLOWNS 10 PM

JOKER 11 PM

HAVE YOU NOTICED A LOT OF CLOWN-THEMED HORROR MOVIES LATELY?

YEAH. EERRRR!

HA! SCARED MUCH?

IT'S A REASONABLE FEAR! CAN YOU SERIOUSLY TELL ME IF YOU SAW SOME BUG-EYED, BLOODY LIPPED KILLER CLOWN COME OUT OF THAT ALLEY YOU WOULDN'T BE???

DID YOU SEE THAT SHADOW MOVE???

LET'S GO.

UNDEAD

DELTA TIGER

INBRED

by Raymond MacKay

MacKay '23

DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK!

SO... YOU GUYS ARE A NEW BAND... DO YOU THINK THAT METAL IS MAKING A COMEBACK?

WHAT? WHY DOES EVERYBODY KEEP SAYING THAT?

METAL NEVER WENT AWAY!!

...IT'S ALWAYS BEEN HERE!

METAL WILL NEVER DIE!

METAL RULES!

STAY TUNED NEXT WEEK FOR "PUNK WILL NEVER DIE!"

BRAN WHEEL '13

IS THERE AN ECHO IN HERE?

G	I	R	L	S	N	I	N	E	G	A	G	A
S	C	O	O	T	A	G	U	T	E	G	O	N
T	E	T	R	A	D	O	D	O	A	E	O	N
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Y	E	A	H	N	E	A	T	G	O	G	O	S

CROSSWORD NO. 92 SPRING, 2023

Absolute Album Reviews

Atrai New World Nightmare

By Devin J. Meaney

New World Nightmare by Atrai! This is a 4 track EP released directly from CDN Records! I copped this one recently for five bucks and overall I am pretty happy about this. New World Nightmare is a solid little collection of music clocking in at just over 20 minutes!



This is a piece away from my normal listening choices. When I listened to the first track I had to check the credits in the booklet to make sure the vocals were not done by Corey Taylor of Slipknot as the deeper gutturals are very much in the same vein as Corey's catalogue. When the vocals switch from gutturals to "clean" I am then reminded of bands like Three Days Grace. This might seem like a bit of a stretch—but as I said above—overall this is some pretty decent music! I will also add that there is a strong atmosphere to each track and the cover gives off similar vibes!

The production is fantastic and the instruments are done efficiently and all together this disc pairs emotion with talent in an elegant way! Although this is much different from anything else I have purchased from the label—once again CDN has made it known that they are a prime contender as an underground music label!

Lastly—if you are looking for something that is "heavy" and "pretty" at the same time—give Atria some of your time. You won't regret it!

Nonsanto Human Condition

By Devin J. Meaney

Human Condition by Nonsanto! First and foremost I need to throw it out there that the band name really amuses me.



Secondly, as a short 10 minute EP I didn't know what to expect—but this is actually really tight and the production is the perfect cross of raw and solid. By that I mean it still has all the feel of an underground grindcore EP—but everything about this screams effort!

Although this is grindcore there are a lot of slower chugs and grooves mixed in with the ping snares and the blasts—so overall there is a good mix of varied audio. The vocals are aggressive (I guess that goes without saying) and the guitars and the drums blend together to create something that is pretty great!

This band hails from Poland and the EP was a self release. As stated in the YouTube stream uploaded by the Gore Grinder account the CD/LP and MC are coming out soon on NIC Records, Retkinia Records, DIY Kolo Records, Nieroby Records, 783 Punx, 9 Lies Records, Psychocontrol Records, Raw Zine Records, Eskaramuza DIY Distro and Larmo Records!

Lamp of Murr Saturnian Bloodstorm

By Devin J. Meaney

Recently my friend Lorne sent me a YouTube link for the album Saturnian Bloodstorm by Lamp of Murr. As Lorne is a well known lover of black metal I figured that this one must be good—and just as I assumed the



tracks held within this release are nothing short of pure mastery! This album was newly released in 2023 and features cold production with a professional tone. The guitar work is as tight as Varg and Euronymous were not, the percussion is steadfast and pummeling and the vocals push forward with all the rasp that is expected from black metal legends from past to present. There are only six tracks on this release but they clock in at a full 40 minutes—so prepare yourself for an elegant blast of underground revelry!

Saturnian Bloodstorm is posted on YouTube for free but you can check out more on Instagram, Bandcamp and Metal Archives! It is also available from Argento Records, Wolves of Hades and Night of the Palemoon! I will also mention this was uploaded to YouTube by the gauntlet that is known as "Black Metal Promotion". So many good bands are uploaded to this account so I would suggest that all fans of black metal give this a go. I have yet to hear something from here that I absolutely hated and the vast majority of releases are of a really high quality! Without further rambling I will just say this album was a supreme win—and the cover is damn cool too!

Groaning Retch Blended With Bile

By Devin J. Meaney

My friend Lorne sent me a link to "Blended with Bile" by Groaning Retch! As always Lorne has a good idea of what I'm into and this has proven to be a hearty little blast of death metal! After listening to this EP I threw on a live set from the band and it is worth mentioning that I also get hardcore vibes from their performance (think of the stage presence of Jamey Jasta from Hatebreed).

When it comes to the EP the instruments are done well and the production itself is great! It is clear enough for a good listen but dirty enough to really encapsulate the sound of pulverizing death metal. The production of the vocals would be the high point of this for me though. They are recorded with a cavernous effect and it really adds to the atmosphere presented!

Clocking in at under 13 minutes Blended with Bile features five short tracks—just enough to really get your head banging! I would for sure like to hear more from these guys—and I encourage you to check out some of their live videos on YouTube as well. Groaning Retch is new to me but I am sure they will continue to produce high quality death providing they stay together as a band!

Jah Wobble - 'Dark Luminosity: The 21st Century Collection'

Cherry Red Records

Reviewed by Steve Earles



There can be few musicians as innovative as Jah Wobble, his ground-breaking work with Public Image alone would be enough to cement his reputation. But, P.I.L. represents only a small part of an enormous, uplifting and innovative body of work. This is a man who lives for the joy of creating.

His 1995 collaboration with Brain Eno, "Spinner," is one of my all-time

favourite albums, like a dub-bass infused John Carpenter soundtrack, so what's not to love!?

So, Dark Luminosity is a four CD collection of highlights of Wobble's recordings in this century, picked by the Geezer himself! I love it, and it is breathtaking to listen to such a diverse genre of music, dub, folk, rock, electronic, dance, you name it, and yet it all jells well together, it was all made with love of the music, love of collaboration, just sheer joy of creativity.

Highlights? Many! I really loved the tracks that Wobble made on Psychic Life with superb singer Julie Campbell (that record also featured the late and much-missed Keith Leven, who was in the early stages of The Clash and then Public Image Limited with Wobble and John Lydon, that's good bad company to keep!)

Overall, a marvelous uplifting collection of music!

The Crown - 'The Burning/Eternal Death'

Cherry Red Records

Reviewed by Steve Earles

There was a lot of great metal bubbling under the mainstream like some vile zombie contagion about to infect the world!



Such a band was (and thankfully still is) The Crown. The late 80's and early 90s was a fertile time for Swedish death metal bands. The Crown came out of the traps with their own fully formed identity; they did not sound like In Flames for instance, there was far more aggression (though I can hear a strong Iron Maiden influence on their leads, which is always a good thing. Up the Irons!).

The first CD in this 2CD set, 'The Burning', is an excellent slab of Swedish death metal with no weak tracks, best listened to as a body of work. This excellent reissue of 'The Burning' also includes a cover of Slayer's 'Mandatory Suicide' off the excellent 'Satanic Slaughter' compilation tribute to Slayer album. Though I'm sure you guessed that yourself!

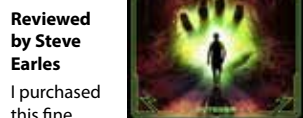
The second CD features their live album 'Eternal Death', an energizing slab of aural carnage to be sure! This CD is rounded off with an interesting cover of Sepultura's 'Arise'

Overall, an excellent collection of the early death metal from a band still delivering the goods to this day!

Night Demon Outsider

Listenable Records

Reviewed by Steve Earles



I purchased this fine album when Night Demon played a killer gig at Dolans Warehouse in Limerick City on the 12th of May. Kudos to Bad Reputation for bringing this fine band to Ireland to tour, and kudos to Night Demon for coming! I hadn't seen a gig since my Dad's death during the lock down three years ago that very week, so it was particularly meaningful for me

Night Demon play '80s style metal with much love, talent and sheer joy! The title track is as catchy as could be, and 'Outsider' holds its central concept well.

Actually, with the popularity of things like Stranger Things, now really could be Night Demon's time. They deserve it. Try and make it so!

Jade Warrior - 'Wind Borne - The Island Albums 1974-1978'

Cherry Red Records

Reviewed by Steve Earles

The original version of Jade Warrior was on the legendary Vertigo Records. They split in 1973. Two bands members, flautist Jon Field

and guitarist Tony Duhig, decided to continue under the Jade Warrior name and signed to Island Records.

From here on in, Jade Warrior would be instrumental. I was delighted to discover that Clodagh Simmons of cult Irish band Mellow Candle appears on their album 'Kite'. Some years ago in Dublin, I saw Clodagh perform with Cathedral in Dublin. It didn't surprise me as Mellow Candle are a true Lee Dorrian band (that's a compliment!) as are Jade Warrior.

So, across the four albums that make up this excellent set, 'Floating World', 'Waves', 'Kites', and 'Way of the Sun', Jade Warrior show a degree of originality in their music that is astonishing. They had no commercial pretensions at all, they simply had a goal of making the most original music possible. Frank Zappa said that was the only way to make music, and he was right.

For lovers of the strange, eclectic and beautiful, this is for you.



Eat Static - 'Science of the Gods/B World Expanded 97-98'

Cherry Red records

Reviewed by Steve Earles

Eat Static evolved in 1989 from cult band Ozric Tentacles



(somewhat in the spirit of Hawkwind!) both members of Eat Static (Joie Hinton and Merv Pepler) being members of the aforementioned band. They were both inspired by the late '80s rave scene. Eat Static's music was (and indeed still is), in the best possible way, Mad Shit! No one else really sounds like them. Eat Static also tapped into the whole U.F.O./ Ancient Aliens/Mad Shit of the era, indeed their very name is a sample from Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan. Impossible to categorize, their music is cosmic in its depths and range, as well as being Mad Shit! Today we need Eat Static more than ever, the future is arriving and they are still the soundtrack for it.

King's X - 'In The New Age - The Atlantic Recordings 1988-1995'

Cherry Red Records

Reviewed by Steve Earles

King's X (vocalist/bassist Doug Pinnick, guitarist Ty Tabor, drummer Jerry Gaskill) first came to prominence with the release of 'Out Of The Silent Planet' in 1988.

While an excellent album, and critically well-received, it did not sell well, setting a pattern for King's X's entire career. Still, their fan base slowly grew with the release of 'Gretchen Goes To Nebraska' (1988), and 'Faith Hope Love' (1990).

1994's 'Dogman; is my favourite King's X album, very heavy with a great Brendan O'Brien production. Their Atlantic years ended with

1996's 'Ear Candy', though the band is still going strong today. Overall, a collection of six fine albums crafted



with skill and love that deserve a place in the collections and hearts of anyone that loves sincerely made music.

Gang Green - 'We'll Give It To You'

Cherry Red

Reviewed by Steve Earles

Could also be known as 'The Roadrunner Years', featuring as it does the splendidly named Gang Green's fruitful and funny tenure on Roadrunner Records over four value for money and mayhem CDs.

CD one features their second album, You Got It from 1987, while CD two features 1989 follow up, the wittily titled Older...Budweiser. In case you didn't know, Gang Green wrote catchy funny hardcore songs, and also liked a drink or several!

CD three is the absolute highlight, featuring 'Can't LIVE Without It' recorded live at the legendary Marquee Club, with their cleverly titled EP '81B4U' and a cover of Led Zeppelin's 'Living Loving Maid' as brilliant bonus tracks! I love it!

This joyful set is rounded off with CD four, their compilation King of Bands which features three tracks from their debut album and two specially recorded tracks.

Gang Green were definitely not drips, they were the blokes that weren't woke, and they were fun. And we really need some fun right now. Crack open a bud and pop 'We'll Give It To You' on to play and a good time is guaranteed!



C.C. VOLTAGE - Berliner Pilsner

SNAP RECORDS

Reviewed by Dustin Jak

This is pretty much what one would expect from members of the Spitfires and the Black Halos. Slick and greasy punk and roll with great back ups and crisp production..

This time we get Chad handling lead vocals who is also known for possessing a really out front bass sound with lots of runs similar to Geezer or Happy Tom, but his vocals cut through great on this Single... Killer Axe attack from Jay and Rich as well and drums courtesy of Jay who also drums in the amazing LA Chinga.... You cannot go wrong with this if you need something to drink to..Also this was apparent supposed to be a jingle for a Beer Commercial when CC Voltage was living over there...



Golers

Die Now Pay Later

Reviewed by Heath Fenton

Vancouver's own twisted family of metal freaks are back! It's been about 10 years since a Goler record, and if you have been following along for the last 25 years, then you know exactly what to expect.

And the clan delivers on their 5th studio album! From the get go they proceed to spit on and grind your mind. Fast ferocious metal inspired punk music. Or is it punk inspired metal music? Golers have always towed the line. This album is short and sweet. It pummels in at 8 songs and just under 23 minutes of outback brutality. All the boxes are checked. Songs of humorous nature, songs about parties, and songs about

deranged situations. All delivered in whipper snap crazy style. Golers have basically had a solid core of members their whole existence. And it shows. The shreds are tight like a nun's cunt in a chastity belt. The Golers are a securely tightened bolt that has been rusting for years. This record is lit up man. Stand out tracks are album opener "Satan's Kegerator", "Over the Blades", and "198?". My only complaint is that after 10 years between records, they would have more songs on the new one. But the Golers do what they do, the way they have always done, and they keep you wanting more. 5 skulls out of 5 skulls for me!

Suzi Moon / Billy Hopeless

Love Is A Stranger / Communicado 7" Single

Yeah Right Records

Reviewed by Dustin Jak

Black Halos lead singer Billy Hopeless teams up with Suzi Moon on this rocking single from Yeah Right Records.... Side A begins with slower rocker "Love Is A Stranger," that really builds up. Hopeless does his trademark Stiv Bators drawl while Moon has a far more innocent approach, but this really starts to rock hard when these two sing together. Where you pretty much get the feel this is a full time band...the B side Communicado is a bit more up beat and pretty much the same story as above... this has super clean production and the musicianship is amazing on it...."hopefully" we get a full album or at least an EP out of these two down the road.



Blind Marc Isolated Earthlings

Reviewed by Brady Tighe

The second solo record from Blind Marc, drummer of the Dayglo Abortions. Twelve songs, all about topics close to my heart: pizza toppings, Spaceballs, and SCTV. Short, punchy tunes that seem to be the musical equivalent of someone cool at a party coming up to you, handing you a beer and a joint with a smile, talking about a movie you like for ninety seconds, and then leaving with a pleasant smile. Blind Marc played almost every instrument on this one, and does a better job of it than Prince ever did. Prince never recorded a song about Spaceballs. Blind Marc's got you covered on Isolated Earthlings though.



The Slip-Ons Heavy Metal Machinery EP

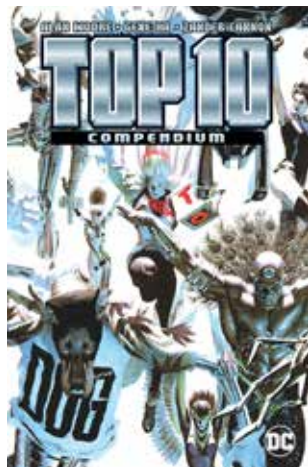
Self Released

Reviewed by Dustin Jak

This was something different for sure....At the same time this has ex-Doughboys, Mongoose, Sarah McLaughlin so you can expect a few hints of each in this EP with serious fucking musicianship. This is really clear production that helps push a style that's closer to Urge Overkill and Lemonheads at times even leaning towards Husker Du or Descendents. They have a great video out for the title track as well. I can imagine all the Doughboy fans out there are really appreciative of this release. Thanks again for sending this CC Voltage @ NoRulesPR. Hopefully we get a full length out of these guys. Can't wait to drive or skate to this!



Absolute Comic Reviews



Top Ten Omnibus Alan Moore and Gene Ha Reviewed by Hank Pattison

The Top Ten Omnibus from DC Comics collects up the entirety of the run of the "Top Ten" affiliated comics, which were created by writer Alan Moore and artist Gene Ha, with this collection including the spin-offs and sequels penned by Moore, Ha, and others.

Top Ten is a story about a team of superheroes told in the style of an ensemble cop drama, with the twist being that it takes place in a city where every citizen, from the richest to the poorest, are superhuman beings from the various sci-fi and fantasy pantheons of pop culture.

The storytelling from Moore/Ha is some of the best of either's career, winding the cast's individual journeys into an exciting superhero-style adventure with Moore's infamously mature details, from shape-shifting STD's to drug-crazed demigods. The writing is so sharp, there's even a scene of dialog seemingly replicated in the climatic scene of HBO's first season of True Detective.

Top Ten is a work of art that's worth reading. It's heartfelt, silly, and even a little sickeningly cruel from time to time, just to keep you from getting too comfortable. Anybody who loves a well-told story will find something to appreciate in its pages.



Bone Orchard: Ten Thousand Black Feathers By Jeff Lemire, Andrea Sorrentino, and Dave Stewart Reviewed by Hank Pattison

Ten Thousand Black Feathers was a five-issue comic book miniseries, now a graphic novel, from writer Jeff Lemire, artist Andrea Sorrentino, and colorist Dave Stewart. It's the second book of the Bone Orchard mythos, a collection of character-driven horror stories which are both interconnected and standalone; each are grounded, human journeys blended with elements of surrealist nightmares.

So far we're being offered a lot of mysteries, but not many answers, and being familiar with some of

Lemire's other paranormal works, such as Sweet Tooth, and especially Gideon Falls which he previous did with both Sorrentino and Stewart, we can guess that even when the final chapter of this tale has been told, some aspects will remain mysterious and ambiguous.

While you can tell Lemire knows his larger mythology, he keeps most of the details to himself, preferring to have us experience the oddities of the stories as the characters do, with a sense of almost childlike wonderment, foreboding paranoia, and a curiosity which may never be truly satisfied.

It's a dreamy trip to go on, and like a dream, offers spooky insights on the self if you're willing to brave your fears and look a little deeper.

Absolute Film Reviews



Sisu

Sisu is my new favourite film. I'm so glad I saw it on a cinema screen with an audience, which is the right way to see a film.

Sisu is as much a Western as a war film. Beautifully filmed, totally convincing. Every frame counts, and every frame is special. Every second counts.

The director, Jaimari Herlander, previously made the fantastic 'Big Game', in which a young Finn saves the U.S President from terrorists. It is another fantastic film more people should see.

Sisu is a Finnish idiom that cannot be directly translated into English, but means "guts, courage, endurance, integrity, and not giving in to evil." We all need Sisu in our lives, now more than ever.

Sisu opens with a prospector working on the Finnish taiga in 1944 with the Second World War raging in the distance. Retreating German troops rape, murder and loot. The prospector hits the mother-load, a huge haul of gold. I love this moment. After a very hard life, he finally has some triumph, some happiness.

Then, carrying the gold back to civilization on his horse with his faithful dog for company. He meets a squad of German soldiers. Real bad bastards all. They have several female prisoners for their 'amusement' in one of their trucks. They let the prospector pass, knowing that a further group of their soldiers down the road will kill him. Sure enough, the soldiers stop the prospector and discover the gold, and attempt to kill him. Instead he kills them, in wildly inventive ways. This is another of Sisu's defining traits. It's endless entertaining and inventive. Raymond Chandler wisely said, 'all good art is entertainment.

Hearing the gunfire, the other Germans investigate. They find their dead comrades and a gold nugget. From here on in, it become a battle for the prospector to keep his gold from the Germans who will do anything to get it.

I won't spoil any of the film by revealing more, but I promise you two things, You will not be bored, and you will be pleased with every frame of the film.

There is talk of a sequel which would be great. Also, all good art reflects the world around it, what you see in Sisu is happening in Ukraine, food for thought!

- Steve Earles



Cover Your Ears

When does art become obscurity? That's the question Sean Patrick Shaul asks in his excellent documentary, Cover Your Ears, which shows musicians fighting back against censorship, the moral implications, and legal proceedings that often follow when a case goes to court. The villain isn't the music industry, but is instead about those rights groups who believe they speak for the masses.

In what some see as artistic expression, other people see something else. I'm not surprised that even classical music gets an obligatory reference. Mozart and Beethoven did write questionable lyrics to a few lesser known pieces, and I'm sure there's even older works which are basically dirty sea shanties. Where do they fit in? What one can't hear isn't limited to the songs played on air. This writer/director's work is great at tracing the past and showing how song and dance has evolved to where it is now.

Groups like the Dead Kennedys and The Jesus Lizard discuss how they got caught in the crossfire, and explain what their music is really about. They say some people get empowered by it in a positive way. It's not about returning to the jungle to get primal. Ultimately, what this work nicely reveals is that the listeners generally feel better than letting baser instincts guide them. There's no solid evidence that what's heard will incite more violence. Maybe what the rights groups are worried about is their human origins—the worry upon hearing the sound of war drums. That's just my guess when considering what I've studied regarding native history and colonialism, and as for what Patrick Shaul explores is no different. Parents are worried that their kids will want to attend rallies and do violence.

What makes this documentary special is in how deep it goes into modern genres, namely hip hop, punk rock and heavy metal. The songs we hear are sometimes about exorcising the demons, and these talents are great at explaining and defending what becoming a performer means to them to find that hallelujah moment. It's good to see that they agree to having warning labels on their albums. Ultimately, what's being watched on YouTube, streamed on the cloud or heard on the radio is all about letting the buyer beware than anything else. There's no need to gate-keep.

- Ed Sum

Evil Dead: Rise

NOTE: This review contains spoilers!

Lee Cronin's Evil Dead Rise takes the Sam Raimi's franchise to all new places, and there's no rhyme or reason behind it. There's no mention of the deadites, and some new world building has me believing they've existed since time immemorial! Even though plenty of homages to the classic exist in this latest, were they really needed? In principle, Without it, the movie wouldn't be recognized as part of an ongoing series.

A certain formula has to be followed. Characters have to be introduced, the Naturom Demonto needs to be found, and the terror gets awakened. The early movies didn't go far in terms of what it means to unleash the demons in the psychological sense, but here, we're treated to a deeper story. Beth (Lily Sullivan) is pregnant, and she hopes to get some help from her sister. Ellie (Alyssa Sutherland) may well not be the right person. She's a single mother raising three kids—Danny (Morgan Davies), Bridget (Gabrielle Echols), and Kassie (Nell Fisher). She's not without her problems too; her husband left her, and if that's not enough, the L.A. apartment she lives in is condemned, and she really should move.

After an earthquake opens up a concealed chamber,

what's hidden there shouldn't have been removed! Danny doesn't know better, but yes, it's easy to blame him for the chaos that's soon to come. In fact, this movie is unrelenting in terms of wanting to make me squirm! Those types of scares are unneeded, and I was hoping this new entry would offer more backstory.

As for what gets revealed, we do hear Campbell's voice, but it's not the same character! All I can hope for is that we have more details unfold in the same vein as *Ghostbusters: Afterlife*.

Although what's presented is a different kind of demonic apocalypse without the seminal character involved (for now), will that lead to a unified front where Beth will find others who have conquered their demons, so to speak? While this work is a change of pace for the franchise, it no longer has the Campbell charm. That is, there's no sugar in that camp to make this continuation a certified hit.



Battle of the Bands - Memorial Arena - June 24th 1967 © Royal City Music Project

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Absolute Live

**The Black Dahlia Murder
Terror**

Frozen Soul

Fuming Mouth

Phobophilic

May 23, The Palace, Calgary, AB

By Ryan Dyer

The return of The Black Dahlia Murder brought a tour featuring melodic death metal, hardcore, and old fashioned death metal from a mix of exciting newcomers and old school veterans.

The passing of TBDM vocalist Trevor Strnad shocked the metal community last year. Nearly a full spin around the sun to the day of his passing, the band sought to give tribute to their fallen friend and press onward, and show that like Suicide Silence, GWAR or AC/DC: the machine that had taken so long to construct would not simply stop. This first tour being both a tribute to Strnad and celebration of the output the band has created to this point.

Phobophilic opened the show. This North Dakota-based death metal band released their debut, Enveloping Absurdity last year via Prosthetic Records. Their traditional, unrelentingly heavy approach was a good way to start the evening, and the already crowded floor got somewhat violent at the start of this long night of music.

Fuming Mouth brought a crust/hardcore inspired brand of death metal to the Palace. It

seemed folks weren't ready for the barrage of breakdowns these Massachusetts-based lads had to offer, resulting in the most enjoyable surprise of the evening.

Hellbound, in Fort Worth Texas. Make that a frozen hell, please. Frozen Soul are a band that are getting a lot of word-of-mouth support, and their middle slot on this tour has proved to be in their favor. Supporting their newly released Glacial Domination, the band brought an icy and old school approach to death metal, which had the Canadians - used to things frosty - in full support.

There have been crazy shows at the Palace before, but none really compare to the arrival of Terror and what the hardcore crowd of Calgary showcased on this night. Due to the no stage diving policy at the venue, folks had to find something else to dive off. The result: people were jumping off the barriers/large stools between the pit and the bar area. The "keepers of the faith" encouraged craziness, but discouraged fighting. The result: a hardcore set for the ages in cow-town.

The phoenix rises/Frankenstien's monster comes to life! The Black Dahlia Murder brought with them a sense of intrigue; how would they sound now without such a pivotal member? Better yet, how would the concert feel without this personality at the helm? Well,



ANGE TRASH & AARON FOSTER MEMORIAL MIXTAPE

by Dustin Jak

- 1) Zeke - Chinatown
- 2) Gwar - Love Battery

- 3) Marilyn Manson - The Beautiful People
- 4) Plasmatics - Butcher Baby
- 5) Seamen - Liquor Face
- 6) Piggy - You Use, You Lose
- 7) Motörhead - Overkill
- 8) Dwarves - Fuck 'Em All

- 9) Nashville Pussy - Kicked In The Teeth (AC/DC Cover)
- 10) Surrounded By Idiots - Wanna Fuck (Zeke Cover)
- 11) LFM - Lesbian Fist Magnet
- 12) AWT - I Shit My Cunt
- 13) Hookers - Back Alley Trash

who better to take the hard task of being the TBDM front-man than someone who helped cultivate the band with Strnad, Brian Eschbach. Vocally, he did the job. He also did well to not have any of the focus on him, instead letting the music and legacy of the band speak for itself. "Verminous," "Statutory Ape," and "Miasma" were played with heart, conviction and pinpoint accuracy. It all led to the befittingly-titled "I Will Return." No fancy encore, just a serious ass-kicking by a band showing that they are still a force to be reckoned with.

Citizen Rage

Ill Defined

Severed Arm

The Okayest

April 29, Inner City Brewing Company, Calgary AB

By Ryan Dyer

The "Walls" video premier for Citizen Rage was another chapter in the band's crusade for inclusiveness and togetherness. Held at Inner City Brewing Company, the band chose to make this event an all-ages event, meaning teenagers in corpse paint were throwing down like it was the last mosh pit of their life and babies were



on the shoulders of scene veterans - basically, it was a big, happy hardcore family at this event (which also started and ended early).

Rage invited The Okayest, Severed Arm and Ill Defined to warm up the crowd on this already quite warm spring day. The Okayest brought some crossover thrash to the crowd - being the band which mostly resembled Citizen Rage, they were well received. Severed Arm slowed shit down, playing amp-shredding sludge which wouldn't sound out of place at the next Electric Highway festival. Ill Defined, being not much older than many of the youngsters in the audience, properly engaged the brewery with explosive post-hardcore/metalcore with radio-friendly choruses.

The video premier for "Walls" was next - being a commentary on mental health, prescription drugs and the value of simply asking your homies for help. No, this wasn't just a performance video - great work from everyone involved.

Citizen Rage wasted no time in getting into their set once the video ended. The now packed venue was as unglued and

unhinged as could be as the band tore through songs like "What's It to You" and "Watch What You Say" which featured the incomparable Nate Trash making an appearance on stage with the boys just a day after his Red Deer show with Whorrihy. The power of positivity was at the forefront once again as hugs were given in between songs. The band ended the set with "Walls" as the positive aura flowed from the bar to the streets to this magazine right now - here's to a few more hugs for your homies.

Killers and Demons - Book Launch and '80s Metal Party featuring Lÿnx.

April 27, Dickens Pub, Calgary AB

By Ryan Dyer

Calgary-based author Julie Hiner unveiled a new track for readers to pop into their book collection and to accompany the release, spandex, latex, leather, hairspray and soft, vintage t-shirts were the dress code at Dickens.

That's right, the book launch as an event is being reinvented care of Killers and Demons - part book reading, part

costume party and part concert, the event was not your ordinary "listen to a chapter and then do a Q and A" type of party.

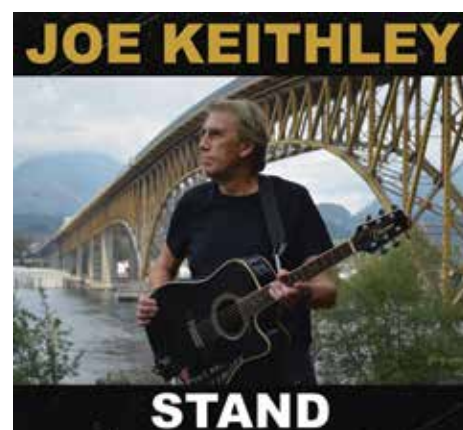
Hiner took to the stage to read from her latest novel Devil's Track (the latest in her series of rock/horror novels all united by having "track" in their titles). The story follows Detective Stella Mahoney investigating a culprit who has been burning individuals at the stake. As with all of her stories, there are various real-world rock and metal references - in this case, as it takes place in 1999, artists such as the newly solo Rob Zombie are mentioned.

Local '80s hard rock throwback band Lÿnx then brought the patrons to their feet for a celebratory set. The band graced the crowd with a new song and had the nostalgia flowing with their cover of "Paranoid." When they were through, it was then time for the spandex and hairspray to pay off with a costume contest.

For a little murder and a lot of rock and roll, check out a Julie Hiner book. Here's to several more tracks to add to the playlist.



Absolute Closer Look



Joe "Shithead" Keithley Stand

By Les Wiseman

First off, Joe can't sing. That hasn't stopped him from making some of the most inspiring music of the last 45 years. He is a compelling vocalist and has chosen to turn his larynx to social-justice songs. Not that his past music is not socially relevant. This is a guy who entered politics with Disco Sucks and decades later ran for provincial office and has been Burnaby Councilor Keithley since 2018.

Stand is Joe "Shithead" Keithley's tribute --and contribution--to those who made the real folk music, the music of the oppressed, the outraged and those increasingly empowered by anthems that gave them power in numbers. He has his Takamine guitar emblazoned with "This machine kills fascists" --a tribute

to his hero Woody Guthrie.

Stand spans genres with Stompin' Tom Connors' "19 Scarlett Roses," a rousing country memorial to the 19 workers who died during the construction of the Second Narrows Bridge (aka Ironworker's Memorial Bridge.) Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues" gets Joe's best gargle and growl treatment over a hoedown beat. He takes a plunge into blues with "There's a Man Going Around Taking Names," Leadbelly's homage to anti-socialist paranoia of the mid-1900s.

But this is no album of covers. Keithley writes the narrative of Vancouver Island labour activist Ginger Goodwin. "The Warrior Lives Again." is a revised version of D.O.A.'s "The Warrior Ain't No More," from their Murder album. Its rewrite shows Keithley's appreciation of how efforts toward reconciliation have moved forward over the last 40 years --albeit at a glacial pace, and inspired by recently unearthed grisly atrocities.

However, "Fentanyl Blues" is the real stone-cold killer on this album. What a lyric: "There ain't no coming down

from the fentanyl blues, there ain't no coming back, you don't get to choose." Joe acquits himself admirably on slide guitar. And Frazey Ford adds backups that recall Mary Clayton on "Gimme Shelter."

"People Power" is an anthem rallying all the social-justice warriors. Astonishingly enough, it is an upbeat tune that could well be a single on pop radio.

As is his trademark, our Mr. Schiesskopf tempers his outrage with his typical humour. We have "Men for All Ages," a tribute to heroes: Captain Kirk, Spock, Scotty, and Bones. Plus, "The Man with No Name" is based on Clint Eastwood's vigilante movie hero who dealt out violence with a revolver.

Stand reveals a perhaps quieter Joe Keithley, but his song-smithing is more committed than ever, his musicianship and choice of backing vocalists has moved him into a new level. And, yes, Joe's voice has never sounded better.

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Top 10 Picks from the Calgary Underground Film Festival 2023

By Ryan Dyer

Onyx the Fortuitous and the Talisman of Souls

Andrew Bowser's feature revolves around the tragic, though well-meaning Onyx - a socially inept dungeon master type who gets invited to a ritual at Bartok the Great's mansion. He, as well as the other guests, soon discover their true characters - the witch, the queen, the werewolf, the Viking and the virgin. Can you guess who the virgin is? Things are not as they seem with Bartok, though, and a fantastical horror comedy commences. For fans of *Lloyd the Conqueror*, *Beetlejuice* and *Monster Squad*.

Birth/Rebirth

The first full night of films at CUFF consisted, coincidentally, two horror films heavily inspired by the classic Frankenstein story. With *Birth/Rebirth*, director Laura Moss presents the story of two women in different medical fields - one dealing with birth and one dealing with death. They both converge over the death and subsequent reanimation of a child. The sacrifices they make to

keep her alive tests their moral boundaries...

The Angry Black Girl and Her Monster

The Frankenstein legend goes urban with *The Angry Black Girl and Her Monster*. When Vicaria discovers a cure to the disease that is named death and uses it to revive her brother, she learns that just like the OG, her Frankenstein story is not without conflict and bloodshed. Bomani J. Story's debut feature is a well-crafted and confident yarn, with a setting that evokes *Candyman* and a monster that resembles the one in that unforgettable dream sequence in *Mulholland Drive*.

Gnomes

The horror short showcase at the Calgary Underground Film Festival always features a handful of intriguing ideas, though this year one stood tall above all of them (rather ironically). The five-minute Netherlands produced short *Gnomes* (directed by Ruwan Heggelman) is about a patch of mysterious glowing mushrooms that joggers come across in the woods. Do they look nice? Fuck around and find out. Pint-sized terrors attack whoever dares to pick the shrooms and disembowel them in highly grotesque fashion. A must see for *Astron 6* or Jason Eisener fans.

Sisu

Saturday night featured a Nazi-killin' double feature with this and *The Wrath of Becky* - both films with simple plots but lots of bloodshed. It was a packed house for the highly anticipated *Sisu*, and within the first five minutes of the film, it was clear that it was well-earned. *Sisu* was a film to put hair on your chest. Like *Becky*, a simple story gives way to bloody vengeance - Nazi's come across an ex-soldier who struck rich while prospecting in northern Finland - turns out this soldier is the wrong one to fuck with. *Rambo* meets *Inglourious Basterds* with the ingenuity and resourcefulness of peak '80's Schwarzenegger.

Dad & Step Dad

"Who will you have more fun with, dad or step dad?" It's a serious question for 13-year old Branson (played by the 29 year old Brian Fiddymen). The two father figures (Colin Burgess and Anthony Oberbeck) fight for the boy's

approval while teaching him valuable life lessons regarding the birds, the bees, and sexy drawings of half-animal/half-foxes the boy has hidden in his belongings. After watching, you'll wish you had a dad or step dad like these dignified, goatee'd chaps.

Mister Organ

If you were "touched" by New Zealand director David Farrier's previous documentary *Tickled*, then you owe it to yourself to donate your eyeballs to the screen for his next film. *Mister Organ* is another mysterious character study of an individual who has negatively impacted many people's lives. Who is Michael (Mister) Organ? An energy vampire? A bad omen personified? Farrier attempts to uncover the truth in this film, which took five years to make. If you need more convincing, take it from the source: during the Q and A, Farrier said *Mister Organ* himself saw the film and enjoyed it.

Satanic Hispanics

Satanic Hispanics is an anthology movie directed by five Latin filmmakers. The wraparound story involves a character named The Traveler who is apprehended after a police raid in El Paso. During questioning, he tells the detectives about a dark force chasing him, while also spinning yarns regarding vampires, dark rituals and ghosts which all relate either to his situation or as bargains to get him out of the station before the force arrives to wreak bloody havoc. The stories here, while coming from different minds, share stylistic and thematic elements, and while some are

frightening and others are humorous, none feel out of place. For fans of *Tales From The Hood*, *The ABCs of Death*, *Tales From The Darksides*.

The Elderly

During a heat wave in Spain, an elderly woman jumps to her death from an apartment building. In the aftermath of this event, her husband Manuel's mental condition deteriorates as his

family clamors to figure out how to deal with him. Strange voices are heard coming out of the radio. Even stranger dreams are experienced by the teenage daughter in this family. Manuel seems to be under the influence of a supernatural force, and soon we find that he is not the only elderly person in Spain who is under a strange spell. *The Elderly* is a unique film which utilizes supernatural elements to confront issues relating to dealing with familial issues.

The People's Joker

The final film, and secret screening of the Calgary Underground Film Festival was the copyright crusader itself, *The People's Joker*.

The Vera Drew directed superhero/villain/parody/

queer/coming of age movie has been subject to pulled screenings and angry letters. Why so serious? Like *South Park*, this is all parody and satire, baby. The movie uses Gotham and its characters to tell a coming-of-age story of a young individual from Smallville who opens up an Anti-Comedy club with The Penguin and eventually finds his sense of identity as the Harlequin Joker. There is a lot of social commentary here to unpack, but from a production standpoint, it reminded me at times of films like *Manborg*, though set in a fever dream of a DC universe.



Mark Adams

1958 - May 23rd, 2023

By Sheldon Byer

Mark Adams, the bassist of Saint Vitus died on May 23rd 2023. Mark founded the band Tyrant, which later evolved into St. Vitus. In terms of doom metal, Saint Vitus is probably the 2nd most important band in the genre after Black Sabbath. Mark pounded the pavement until late 2016 when he had to step back due to a long battle with Parkinson's disease.

Born too late, gone too soon. Rest in power!



R.I.P. JULIAN MAY

Goodbye to an OG guitar shredding master. We went and saw Testament with Annihilator at The Paramount Theatre in New Westminster in 1989 and got in free backstage because he was pals with the bands back then. I was 19 years old, so yeah, that was a big deal for me. Both bands knew Julian. He roadied for Motörhead for fuck's sake. Unfortunately that led him down a dark path. 30 years later I'd still see him on the street shredding guitar for cash for drugs or a 2 litre of cider. I've known a tonne of great guitar players in my time but Julian was better than all of them. A diamond in the rough with a true guitar soul. Rest in Peace you champ, you destroyer of strings. You teacher, you virtuosic motherfucker that made the rest of us look like newbs. Go forth and jam with Lemmy and that dude from Steppenwolf and all of the rest of those that went before you. RIP you giant.

- Mike Selman

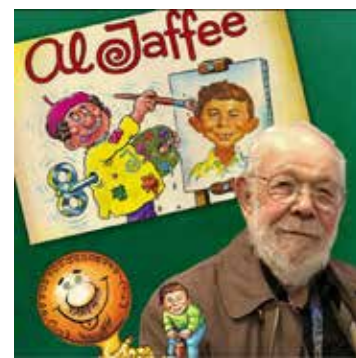


Julian was a guitar shredder from Victoria, BC. He could occasionally be seen on the streets of Victoria, busking wild heavy metal solos on his electric guitar. Julian suffered from some degree of mental illness and from our interactions, I'd say he was a gentle soul. The last time I saw him was summer of 2022, his enthusiasm for music was strong. The OG metalheads and rockers of Victoria surely remember him well. He was the real deal. My condolences to his friends and family. Victoria just lost a legend.

- Jason Flower

Gonna miss seeing my friend around town...gonna miss seeing him in the wee hours on my way home from shows. Odds are if you are a guitarist in Victoria you most likely have been directly or indirectly influenced by his talent for playing and teaching/sharing guitar. Julian had a natural gift but also applied himself to learning and even through some not so easy years always kept his guitar in arms reach. Music is magic, it holds healing and bonding powers and has no prejudice to who listens. If ever there was a "rocker" in Victoria, he was one. Much love to his family and friends and horns to the highest.

- Darren Kitson



Al Jaffee

March 13th, 1921 - April 10th, 2023

By Gareth Gaudin

Famed cartoonist Al Jaffee was happily born on March 13, 1921 but, in much worse news, he died on April 10, 2023. Despite being one hundred and two, the news still came as a horrific shock to me (and most of my

friends.) I'd never lived in a world without Al Jaffee and I doubt neither had you.

Inventor of the Mad Magazine Fold-In, Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions, and the brilliant vertical newspaper strip Tall Tales, this Guinness Book Of World Records holding cartoonist was a journeyman humorist and artist, and we should all be in mourning with his passing.

Al Jaffee died. That sucks. He was



friends with Harvey Kurtzman and Sergio Aragonés. That's enough to make me envious of a life well spent, but he was also immensely talented and awesome. His death is a gut-punch to culture. Go read and fold some of his stuff out of respect.

Please.



Algy Ward

July 11th 1959 - May 17th 2023

By Sheldon Byer

Born Alasdair Mackie Ward. From 1977 on he brought a ferocious new attitude towards punk and heavy metal. Not only blistering with performances with *The Saints & The Damned*, but by putting out the cornerstone of the NWOBHM movement

Filth Hounds Of Hades via his own band *Tank*. Algy was the original metal-punk, but much like his contemporary Lemmy, hated both those labels by just saying he had "attitude". REST IN POWER!



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Angela Dawn Morris
August 15th, 1982 - June 7th, 2023

R.I.P.

ANGE TRASH

The first time I met Ange, she was dating my bro Jay Brown. She was the sweetest li'l goth girl ever, a nursing student who only wanted to help everyone. She was a voice of reason that made Jay and I think twice about our debauchery. She made us be better people. When Jay got sick, Ange was an angel. She stood by Jay till the

bitter end and she suffered for it. Ange came from a good family where she never quite felt like she belonged, Ange longed to belong, to find her people. After Jay died, us Vic Punks tried to do right by her. Her and I started LFM with our friends Grant and Justin, later to be me, her, Grant, and Gino. We had a few drummers Ty, Nick, Paul, and Brains. We did alot and left our mark before the inevitable happened and we all went our separate ways. Ange moved to Van and was in the band Piggy with such notables as Ron Reyes and Lisa Lucifer. Killer band! My sister Ange struggled with her demons and worked so very hard to overcome them. Her recovery journey brought her around the world and she thrived! She had a rad band in Thailand whose name escapes me, but they were great! Our sister came back home and was surrounded by her chosen family but alas our current society doesn't cater to those of us that struggle with mental illness and addiction, and unfortunately she succumbed to her demons. I will never forget you Ange or your contributions! Crank some LFM and raise your glasses! It may taste like Armageddon but at least it ain't the clap. I'll miss you sis always. Rest In Fucken Punk

- Hoon Trash



Aaron Roderick Foster
June 5th, 1973 - June 7th, 2023

I lost my best friend today. I don't even know up from down. I've been sitting here trying to convince myself that it's not true, that it's just a bad dream, that it's not real, that I can just call you and talk shit. I miss you my brother. The thought of you not being here anymore absolutely destroys me. You'll always have a place in my heart and memories

-Mikey Jak



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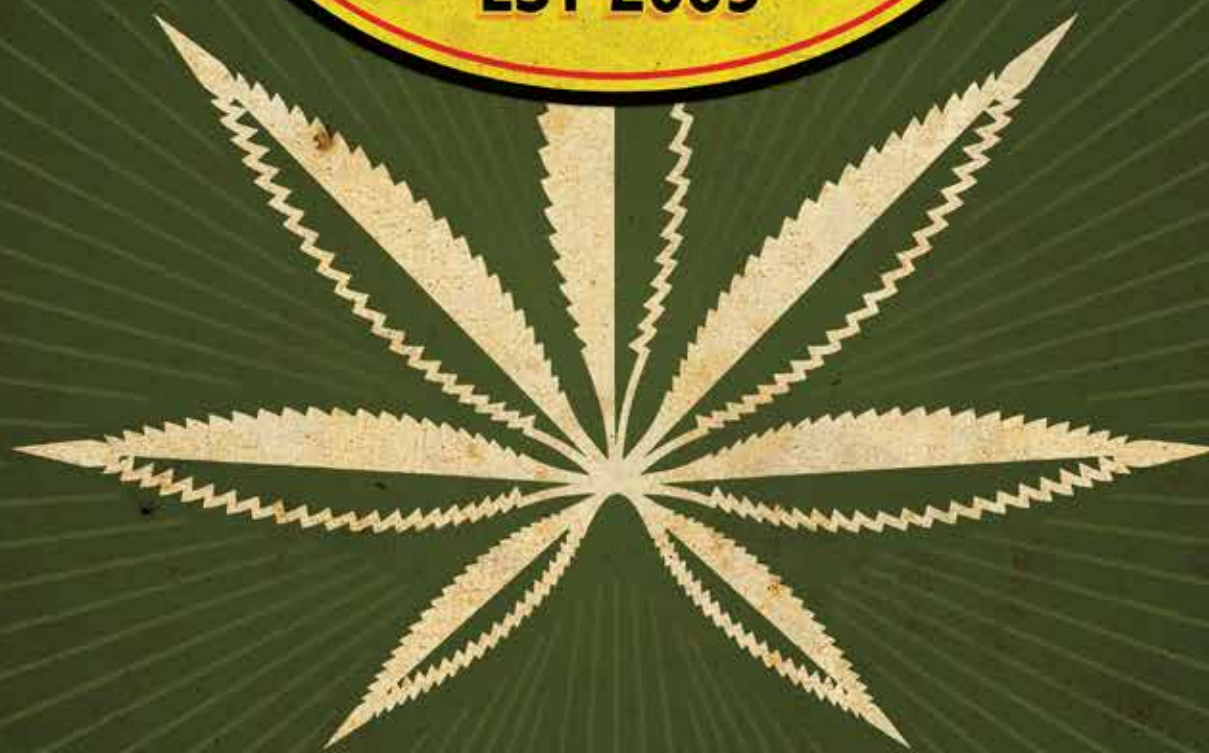


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