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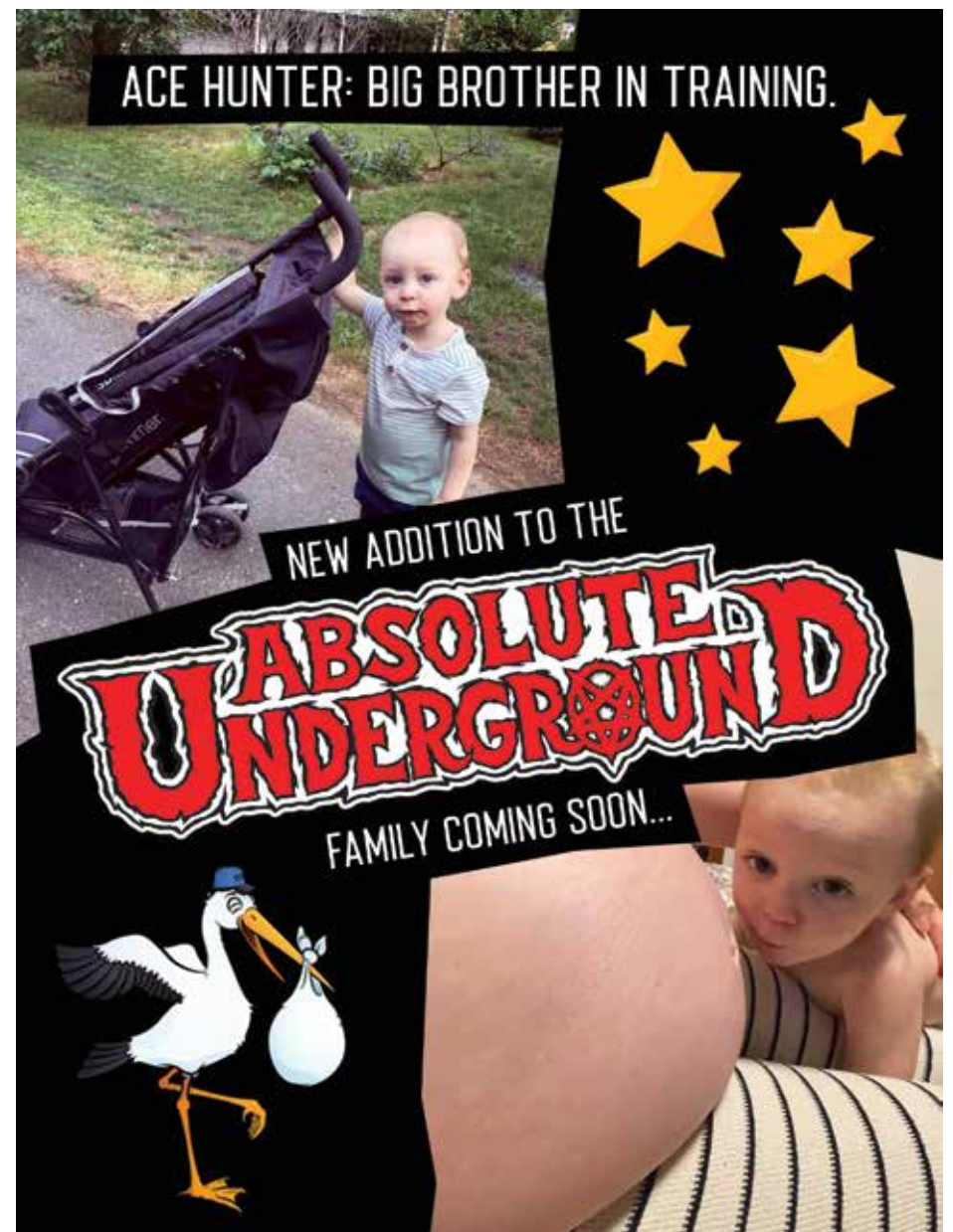
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VICTORIA'S LOCALS ONLY



LUCID KARMA

Interview by John Carlow

Photos by Finding Charlotte Photography

Absolute Underground: Introduce yourselves.

D.i.E OnE - Harsh Vocals,
Darren Strange - Lead Guitar,
Nikki NightMare - Rhythm Guitar,
Trustin Tragedy - Bass,
Chris Heretic - Drums, Clean Vocals,
Royal Savoie - Band Manager

AU: How and when did the band come together?

LK: Lucid Karma was formed mid-2022. It all started with Chris, Darren, and Nikki just having fun writing songs and playing a couple of covers every Sunday at Stefano's Art Farm. We recruited D.i.E OnE to deliver the hard-hitting filthy screams and remained a 4-piece band for quite some time, playing shows around Victoria with bass on backing tracks recorded by Chris Heretic. Trustin Tragedy was recruited in May of 2023. Trustin came to his first practice having already learned the 6 songs released on Spotify by ear and

played his first show with the band only a couple of weeks later at Lanalou's in Vancouver. Royal Savoie (Royalty Entertainment) took us on as our full-time manager in March 2023. After watching a couple of our shows, he joined the Lucid team and made connections with venues, local bands, and set up some awesome show experiences for us.

AU: What bands are similar to your style?

LK: Slipknot, Motionless In White, Alpha Wolf, and Bad Omens

AU: What is the creative process for the band?

LK: Everyone writes usually on their own time, and then we bring what we have to practice and put the pieces together. D.i.E writes most of the lyrics for the songs at practice on the spot, then later fine-tunes them on his own time. We like to use a collaborative process when writing our songs, allowing space for ideas and influences from all members to create a unique sound.

AU: You have a heavy visual presence. Talk about how that came to be.

LK: We use masked personas to portray the music we play. The masks were an idea for shock value, and we haven't seen a masked band come

out of Victoria. We loved the idea of being able to become someone else on stage while being able to constantly build on that character and give individual personalities to ourselves while on stage. We have had a lot of positive feedback on the masks, and most people we talk to after a show seem to have a favorite member for one reason or another.

AU: Regional favourite bands?

LK: Wolf Venom, Cyborg, Chasing Phantoms, LidKicker

AU: Memorable shows to date?

LK: Our first bar show was at The Phoenix Bar and Grill. Wolf Venom had called us to play due to a band dropping out due to the snow on the Malahat. We had 2 hours to round everyone up, grab our gear, and get to sound check. Turned out to be a great show! That was the first time we played for 120 people. Our latest show was (July 8th) at the Biltmore Cabaret in Vancouver. We were able to share the stage with our friends from IT'S ALIVE (Chilliwack) and Raptor ft. Lazarus. Large stage, amazing sound, very cool venue, and an awesome crowd. It was the first show we have played where we had a green room to hang out with other bands prior to hitting the stage. It was also a very cool experience to be able to play on the same stage as bands like Currents and Crystal Lake, who we went to see play at the Biltmore in 2019.

AU: Funny show stories?

LK: Our first headlining show at the Phoenix, and the crowd was absolutely insane - moshing, crowd surfing, singing along with the lyrics they knew - they brought so much energy! During a mosh, somebody had been pushed into Nikki's pedal train and hit the dial on her drop pedal, when she went to hit the pedal for Alpha & Omega, her guitar was 9 steps down from drop A - when the song called for 1 step. It was all the bass.

We played LanaLou's in Vancouver; it was our bass player Trustin's first time playing live, and he

nailed it! However, as we were getting ready to play our next song, he accidentally left his tuning pedal on, so his bass was muted for that whole song. Darren Strange's mask has a lower jaw that is attached by a string; while headbanging on stage, he was frequently hit in the nose by the jaw portion of his mask, and on more than one occasion, the lower jaw had become stuck on his mic, making it look like he was eating it, and he had to try and dislodge it while playing his parts on time, which he got pretty good at!

AU: You recorded anything?

LK: When we began releasing songs, we made a goal of releasing a song and video per month, which we have been able to achieve. So at the moment, we have 7 songs out, all with music videos that are available on all major streaming platforms, and we are in the process of recording our 8th single.

AU: Next steps for the band?

LK: Currently, we have shows booked until December throughout Vancouver Island and Vancouver - including a festival in Calgary, Alberta, in August. So, we are busy preparing for those. We are in the process of recording and releasing the other songs we have completed and are ready to go and writing new material for our second album. The songs currently released as singles will be bundled together and released as an album with Trustin recording his bass tracks - adding some variety to what is already released.

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HARDBALL

Crushing, Chaotic, and Totally Unhinged

Interview by Absolute Underground

Absolute Underground: The band just released its debut self-titled album. What can you tell us about this first offering?

Scott Budgie (Vocals, Guitars): It's a collection of ten of our songs. It's basically supposed to sound crushing, chaotic, and totally unhinged. We went for a really full wall-of-sound type of thing with huge roomy drums, but also lots of dynamic range. We threw in everything we've got, basically. We're just happy that it's out there, and people are listening to it.

AU: The band's sound has been described as 90s grunge meets 80s punk with a tinge of hardcore. Some reviews have compared your sound to Nirvana a few times. What is it from that music era that draws you to it? Who out of the 90s grunge has influenced the band the most? And if you could share the stage with one of the most influential bands from that age, who would it be?

B: Learning to play guitar as a teenager, I found Nirvana songs really easy to figure out, and that definitely shaped my style of playing and

impacted the way I write music. While I don't find myself listening to a ton of Nirvana or other '90s alternative bands these days, there's no question that they had a big impact on me.

I would love to share the stage with the Smashing Pumpkins - one of the few bands from that period that's still kicking, despite all the lineup changes over the last two decades. So if you're reading this Billy, get at your boy!

AU: Do you think there will be a grunge revival coming?

B: I don't think Grunge ever really went away. There are a ton of bands that I can think of, even in the Vancouver music scene, that could easily be categorized as grunge. Most people just avoid using that term for whatever reason. We used to avoid using it too. With it being a term that was forced onto many bands in the '90s by the media, it felt wrong to self-identify as a grunge band, so we gravitated towards terms like punk or post-hardcore. The fact that no one else is really doing it is probably why we recently decided to just own it and be the one band calling themselves grunge in 2023. Perhaps others will follow.

AU: We read it took the band a few years to put this album together, and at one point the album was about 70% done, and you made the tough decision to basically scrap it and re-track the drums for 8 of the 10 songs, and every line of vocals on the album was recorded dozens if not hundreds of times over multiple sessions. What do you find in the songwriting and recording process that is super important to make this decision? And what advice would you offer to other artists from what you learned along the way?

B: There were points in time when progress on

the album came to a standstill. We had to step away from it and come back with a clear perspective in order to say, 'scrap it all, these drums aren't crushing hard enough,' and start the entire process over.

We tracked drums in three different studios, two of which made it onto the record. First, we attempted to track them ourselves at Selkirk College in Nelson. Those are the ones we scrapped mid-development. The ones recorded at Music City in Kelowna sound super punchy and tight, and the ones recorded at Rain City in Vancouver sound huge and roomy. I like the way that worked out because some of the songs lend themselves better to one drum sound over the other.

I'm not sure what it is about this batch of songs that made it so hard to get the takes just how we wanted - the vocals especially. I'm just relieved that it's finished; it was causing me a ton of stress. I remember worrying that I could just die in my sleep at any time, and the album would remain unfinished forever.

My advice for bands looking to record is not to track your drums DIY style. Everything else, you can probably pull off by yourself. But the drums, nope, call up the pros. You'll thank me later.

AU: You're a trio that lives in different parts of BC, with 1 member in Vancouver, and 2 in the Okanagan Valley. How do you find this affects your songwriting, jamming, and touring together? What's the secret to keeping it all together?

B: It's not an ideal situation, that's for sure. New music comes together slower than it would if we all lived in the same city. The only reason we're able to pull it off is that we've all been playing music together for a very long time. We're hoping the next album won't take quite as many years as this one to complete.

If any other bands find themselves trying to do the long-distance thing, my advice is not to waste your time trying to jam over Skype or any nonsense like that. Rehearse by yourself, ideally

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

to a click, and jam in person whenever schedules align.

AU: We noticed the album cover is a simple cross with the band's name in what seems to be a cemetery. Very curious about what the album artwork means?

B: I wanted a striking image that doesn't reveal too much about the band or the album. I suppose it's somewhat open to interpretation of what it means, but I tend to think of it as being representative of what went into making this album, being finally properly documented and laid down to rest. Only now can we move on. A new era of 'ball begins now. Fun fact: I built the cross for about \$3 from stuff I picked up at Home Depot.

AU: The band is hitting the road across BC and Alberta? Where can you tell fans to check you out?

Aug 4 - Vancouver, BC - Astoria - w/ Paul Is Dead
Aug 5 - Squamish, BC - Peckinpah - w/ Last Reminisced Heroes
Aug 9 - Nelson, BC - Kootenay Co-op Radio - w/ The Tarholes
Aug 10 - Edmonton, AB - The Buckingham - w/ Take Sides and Umi Yokai
Aug 11 - Calgary, AB - Modern Love - w/ Pizza Bath
Aug 12 - Oliver, BC - Firehall Brewing - Fantastic Firehall Festival
Aug 26 - Salmo, BC - Hogkegger Fest w/ Rad Dog

AU: Anything else you would like to add for our readers?

B: Support your local scene! Probably if you're reading this, you already do, but nonetheless.

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SHR-EDMONTON



FALL OF EARTH From the Ashes Interview with Vocalist Alex Rye

Absolute Underground: For those unfamiliar with Fall of Earth, what can ya tell us about the band?

Fall Of Earth: Fall Of Earth is a bit of a unique mix of genres. We've coined the name hybrid metal. Progressive, melodic death, a bit of thrash, groove, and metalcore to name a few. The band was formed in April of 2019. Right before the music industry crashed pandemic left a lot of bands without venues to play in. It didn't stop us from getting our name out as much as possible through an online following, as well as using the hang time to write a full-length album. As soon as the doors opened we were relentlessly playing in venues. The band's name is a play on words for the way in which the world is situated. Mass extinction, climate change, mental health, and war are the elements that make up the band's message. Our music tells tales of suffering and uplifting stories. We hope to continue to remind people that the earth is our only home. We can't go to Mars just yet, otherwise, we would have called it Rise Of Mars. That's a good song name actually.

AU: You have your new album *From The Ashes* just released this past April, what can you tell us about this record? How does it compare to your first?

FOE: Some of our second album was written before our first album was even released. However, we knew we'd have to step it up and hone in on our sound. This album certainly did that. Coming from a very experimental first album,

we knew it was important to solidify a strong foundation to let listeners know what Fall Of Earth is really about. Our heavy songs got heavier, and our soft songs became more dynamic. Some might say it's comparable to trivium. This album also features longer songs, that drive the flow of the music into the listener for maximum impact. It's been received well by reviewers and we're proud to have it on the roster.

AU: The band is described as a hybrid because of so many metal elements and varying genre-fused tracks. Do you feel that it can hinder you with some fans who are

one genre specific or it opens you up to all metalheads?

FOE: Our hybrid metal nature has given us the ability to reach a vast audience and gives the listeners a taste of our individual influences. We want to be true to ourselves and the audience, giving them an unparalleled sonic experience that scratches every surface of emotion. It's certainly viewed as an advantage that allows us to play in otherwise unreachable territory.

AU: You recorded the album with Diego Fernandez of Oracle Recording Studios, well known in the Alberta scene as a producer, how was it working with him for this album?

How did you find working with someone outside the band to help shape the album was for you as an independent band?

FOE: Diego has always been a delight. His astounding production can be found on both album one, and two. He's really talented both at recording and playing music. Having an outsider of the band give advice on finding those key moments in our songs definitely made it that much better. It honestly helped to have someone who was a homie in the studio too. We made more jokes along the way than I can count. He also taught me how to make really good pasta!

AU: I enjoyed your music video for *From The Ashes*, we understand you worked with Ty Fox, the drummer from *Arrival Of Autumn* to produce it. How did that come to be, how did you decide on the video's vision?

FOE: We played with *Arrival of Autumn* in our hometown and became quite close with Ty. His music background and videography skills really stood out to us. This music video was actually filmed in 2 cities, with a different videographer in each. Ty in Grand Prairie. And Chris Wood, of Listen Media in Edmonton. The vision for the music video was inspired by the brutal lyrics written by our guitarist Brody Bauer. The song is about child abuse, escaping from the torment of a family member, and rising from the ashes of your past. I took on the role of choreographing the storyline of the video. Laying out the classic tale of father and son constantly at each other's throats.

AU: The band will be touring across Canada this summer to support the album, how does it feel to be back on the road post covid? Any cities you're looking forward to?

FOE: This will be our third tour of the year. First, we accomplished mid and mid-eastern Canada. Went on to hit BC, and now we are set to hit



almost every province in Canada. BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and lots of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Being on the road is a thriving life for the band. We love it! The best part about touring is meeting all the amazing people who come to share the experience of live music. It really is the best thing in the world. I'm looking forward to it all, but I've never been to the largest cities in Canada. That would be Toronto! We are playing during Canadian music week, for Indie Night In Canada. It's going to be a stacked bill, with tons of music industry people, talented bands, and stellar music fans. Hey, that rhymed!

AU: The band is playing Loud As Hell Festival? What can we expect from a live set from FOE? What band are you looking forward to the most to play alongside at the festival this year?

FOE: Loud As Hell has been on our radar for some time. Unfortunately, we never got a chance to apply since Covid cut us off for a while. We are definitely honoured and pumped to be playing this year. When you get asked to play a metal fest like Loud As Hell... I mean, it's in the name! We'll be playing our heaviest hits, with our hearts in our hands. Of course, the band I'm pumped to see at the festival is Jungle Rot. They're a big boy death metal band from the USA. They'll definitely be an act I won't miss!

AU: Anything else you like to add? Links, etc?

FOE: I'd like to say thank you to the fans who have given us endless support, and to all the people who are coming to meet us on our big Canadian tour! If you'd like to listen to the band or follow us on our social media pages:

linktr.ee/fallofearth

RED DEER RAMPAGE



HOOKER SPIT

Krötch Splitter Interview by AU Staff

Absolute Underground: I'm sure you get this question a lot, but why the name Hooker Spit? Did ya choose in hopes of porn surfers stumbling upon the band?

Vlad Gligor (Guitar): That is a great question! Funny enough we did try to post our stuff on the spicy websites but it seems they have upped their game in the last few years. Daniel and I discussed current pop culture and how anime keeps increasing in popularity as well as the similarities between some of that material and classic death metal artwork. So we thought it would be cool to mash those two worlds together with a nice polished look. We decided on an episodic artistic concept where every album has a different lady/mascot. The name Hooker Spit came to be by our reaction to the first rough draft of our artwork that Daniel whipped up before we sent it out to our long-time artist friend PaleaRaptor.

AU: What is Hooker Spit all about?

Vlad: Hooker Spit is all about having fun mostly. We really enjoy the music we play, and we hope that others enjoy it as well. As for the music, it's a

bit of a mash between North American death metal and the Gothenburg scene! Bands like Bloodbath, At The Gates, and early In Flames had a huge impact on what kind of music I wanted to write myself. Some of that early stuff sounded like it was written with a Metal Zone distortion pedal but it sounded so great and chunky. Then on this side of the pond, you got bands like Lamb of God, Revocation, and The

Black Dahlia Murder who have such a refined tone compared to the latter, however, both deliver the message. These are still some of my favourite bands to date.

AU: You have your new album Krötch Splitter out, what can you tell us about this debut?

Daniel White (Vocals): The album combines dark, heavy, high-energy music intertwining with lyrical themes that convey the abject cosmic horror of what it means to be human.

AU: The album artwork for Krötch Splitter has been described by some as too controversial or vulgar or sexist. What made you decide on this album cover? And have you found metal has gone soft on imagery when bands like Cannibal Corpse (The Wretched Spawn), Impaled, 'Choice Cuts', Marduk, 'F--k Me Jesus', have had way more vulgar displays?

Dan: Well, there are always going to be naysayers no matter what you do. The artwork itself is incredibly tame in relation to many death metal albums--especially the 90s. We made an intentional choice to stay within the themes of death metal while simultaneously only using implied violence. I think that's really why it ends up being so powerful to people. The violence hasn't happened yet but rather is implied. As

for vulgarity, there isn't even any nudity besides what you would see in a swimsuit. It always intrigues me what makes people get bent out of shape.

AU: Do you worry the album artwork might hinder interest in the band? Or block you from being heard and shared on social media?

Dan: It has already caused a few issues, but I think it has more to do with AI algorithms than it is outside of what is acceptable for most terms of service. I don't think that the artwork would hinder most metal fans, and our artwork is no longer being reported or taken down, so that is a good sign. I can confidently say that the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We are creating art, and that's what it's supposed to do; make you feel something. I think it would be worse if people felt no way about it at all.

AU: The band is hitting the road this summer with dates with Augurium, where are you playing? And what can fans expect live from the band?

Vlad: We strive to achieve tightness and perfection in our recordings, and luckily that translates pretty well into our live shows. You can expect to hear Krötch Splitter played in its entirety as well as maybe a cover of one of our heroes. We will be playing on the following dates:

Aug 5 - Drumheller, AB - Loud as Hell Festival **

Aug 10 - Calgary, AB - Modern Love

Aug 12 - Stirlingville, AB - Grover Fest

Aug 25 - Vancouver, BC - Astoria ++

Aug 26 - Kelowna, BC - Dunneezies Pizza++

Aug 27 - Kamloops, BC - Blue Grotto ++

Sept 15 - Medicine Hat, AB - Mainliner Pub



Sept 16 - Lethbridge, AB - The Slice

Sept 30 - Saskatoon, SK - ACT Hall

Legend: - ** Hooker Spit only, ++ Select Dates with Augurium

AU: What are you looking forward to the most playing Loud As Hell festival for the first time?

Vlad: For me personally, it is all about those sweet sweet lanyards. Jokes aside, we are very humbled to be a part of that festival. Normally newer bands such as ourselves would have to play the kickoff

party as a rite of passage, but we somehow managed to skip that altogether. All of us agree that playing an open-air festival is pretty damn cool, so that outdoor stage is something we are absolutely all hyped about!

AU: How's the metal scene in Red Deer, AB?

Dan: Red Deer has a vibrant metal and hardcore scene. There are a lot of bands, and everyone is very supportive of each other. Living in a small city, it's pretty surprising that you can go out any weekend and catch multiple shows.

AU: What's next for Hooker Spit?

Vlad: After we wrap up this tour, we will be heading back into my studio to hammer out the blueprint for album number 2. Some time off will be happening from shows; however, we do plan on doing an Eastern Canada Tour late next summer. If everything goes to schedule, we should be ready to record album 2 as soon as that tour is over.

AU: Is there anything else you would like to add for our readers?

Dan: We would love to thank every degenerate that chooses to buy our album and continues to support us. Being musicians is hard, and you put gas in our tank both literally and figuratively. hookerspitofficial.com

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TL: We both came up in Calgary. I moved away for ten years, then I just moved back a year ago. Calgary always had a handful of great bands toiling away in obscurity and geographic isolation, but holy shit, everyone upped their game while I was away. I'm like the Good Luck Chuck of hometowns.

AU: What's the most memorable gig your band has played?

TL: It's REALLY hard to answer that. The tour with KEN mode and Vile Creature was really special, especially on the last night of the tour when we all got up onstage and screamed backing vocals with KEN mode about how there's

Pride festivities, and a handsome young man in hot-pants was barfing between two parked cars as I pulled up, "Only Time" blaring. He looked up at the sound of Enya's heavenly vocals, and we made eye contact for a brief second. ...Oh wait, "weirdest" thing? Never mind, this was a "most awesome thing" story.

AU: If the Console Wars actually started today, what side would you join?

TL: PC Master Race, I'm afraid.

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

TL: Literally anyone other than myself, because I do all our art and I'm VERY tired. Can I raise Zdzislaw Bekinski from the dead? If not, Teagan White, Glyn Smyth, or Aaron Horkey.

AU: Tell us more about the tour you are about to leave for.

TL: We're doing 3 weeks around central/eastern Canada and the US. I don't know why everyone keeps commenting on how exhausting and punishing the schedule is?! In my wild youth, I did months at a time, while hungover.



MARES OF THRACE

The Exile

Interview with Vocalist/Guitarist Thérèse Lanz

By Brady "The Elton Compromise" Tighe

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

Thérèse Lanz: It's getting harder to describe, so I'm going to start calling it "blackened anarchist wizard-core." I like doom, sludge, hardcore, a bit of black metal. Casey (Casey Rogers on drums/bass) likes more proggy and techy stuff. We compromise on noise rock, grindcore, and Elton John.

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

no god.

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

TL: Brutus-Unison Life. I don't give out 10/10s lightly or often. Everything that band does is perfect.

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

TL: I had this strange craving to listen to "Only Time" by Enya the other day. (I'm not fucking sorry about it, either.) I put it on and accidentally hit repeat, and since I'm not about to drive distracted like an asshole, it was just on loop as I was driving... at high volume, with the windows down. I stopped at a stoplight next to one of Calgary's most beloved gay bars, clearly in the midst of

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THE APE-ETTES

Simply

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

The Ape-ettes: You are talking to Julie Houle, Andrée St-Onge and Melanie McDonald, aka, The Ape-ettes. We are best known for pumping out catchy pop punk garage songs, thus spreading joy to people everywhere.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band, The Ape-ettes. Who is in the band and what are you all about?

TAE: We are 3 long-time friends, Andrée on bass, Melanie on drums and Julie on guitar and vocals. We formed and still jam in Andrée's cozy basement. We believe that rock n' roll does not have to be complicated. We may not do fancy things with our instruments, but gosh darn it, we don't even want to. It's more about how the song makes you feel and our songs are speedy bangers that have good lyrics and are catchy as hell. What more does one need/want?!

Where does the name come from you ask?

We started off in 2006 as a cover band exclusively,

so that's why we called ourselves "apes", as in mimicking other people's songs, but "ettes", 'cause you know, we're girls haha! We mostly played songs from the Vancouver all-female punk band called Meow (remember Neko Case on drums?). For a few years we messed around with what kind

of sound we wanted and then eventually Julie wrote and brought songs to the group that we all carved into the sound that is now The Ape-ettes.

AU: What is the official definition of an Ape-ette?

TAE: A woman who (in no particular order) gets down, claps hands, shakes a leg, makes weird sounds, plays tunes, hugs people and animals a lot.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

TAE: There are elements of garage-rock, pop, psych and punk. The lyrics are important to us, so we like to have 'em up loud and center when we play. It's pretty unpretentious. Two out of three of us are usually nervous as hell with stage fright when we play. Let's just say, digestive issues abound on gig day.

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

TAE: We are from a northern Ontario mining town called Sudbury! It's literally a crater. There are a few cool venues with varying capacities that will accommodate any kind of music really.

The music scene is very eclectic from punk, hardcore bluegrass bands, to singer songwriters. People tend to be very supportive by going to each other's shows, even when it's not necessarily the kind of music they play or are into really. Good people, ya know!

AU: Have you released an album recently? If so, tell us about it! What can we expect to hear?

TAE: In July we released an EP entitled Simply, and it was the first time our music was put out

on vinyl, so we were beyond excited! Jamie from Reta Records reached out to us during the pandemic, proposing to put out a 7-inch, we said of course! She asked Snappy Little Numbers in the USA to hop on board and they both made it a truly delightful and smooth experience to release this EP. We are super pumped that it has been getting a lot of airplay.

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

TAE: There are 4 songs on this EP. Julie is the songwriter and so the themes explore a lot of the things she is living. Namely, attempting to keep it all together while living one's best life being a single parent, productive band-mate, kindergarten teacher and kind neighbour!

From our bio:

These songs explore the trials and tribulations of taking care of others while also trying to take care of yourself. First off, "Trampoline" is a straight up breakup song. Track 2, "Rémi", is a fun little banger about raising a son while attempting to maintain a cool mom vibe. "Inner Child" is a psychedelic



RETA RECORDS

little number about love, and most importantly, self-love. The grand finale is "Hearing Protection", a punchy tune about trying to grow old gracefully and a PSA about the very real dangers of punk rock-induced hearing loss. All in all, The Ape-ettes hope to inspire healthy habits in self-care, like brushing your teeth and protecting your hearing.

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

We love them all! But... Track 4, "Hearing Protection" has a really cool video worth checking out if you haven't seen it yet. It features a cameo by Sudbury's beloved Strange Attractor who plays the nutty professor trying to get all of the kids to wear ear plugs. The dangers of punk rock induced hearing loss are real, people! Say yes to the plug!

AU: Tell us about any previous records you've released and how do you think you have progressed between albums?

TAE: Our first album in 2017 was self-titled and came out on CD only. We regret not putting it out on vinyl. Those songs still mean a lot to us and they were our first babies, ya know?! I guess it's never too late. Maybe we could do an extra special re-release or something! (closes eyes and makes a wish)

AU: How do people find you online?

TAE: Follow us on Instagram for a link records, shows, etc...

[facebook.com/theapeettes/](https://www.facebook.com/theapeettes/)
theapeettes@gmail.com

Link Hearing Protection video:

[youtube.com/watch?v=cw3Ft_j2Xcw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cw3Ft_j2Xcw)



D.O.A. is B.A.C.K!

This fall, Canadian punk rock legends D.O.A. will be back on tour! The Men of Action are eager to get on tour again. They're starting with 6 shows in B.C. and in the next year and a half plan to tour across Canada as well as Brazil, America, Japan, Europe! Get your tickets now as there has never been a better time to be a D.O.A. fan!! They were recently named as one of Canada's top 50 bands in all genres of music by Rolling Stone. This is an unmissable opportunity!!

D.O.A. Tour dates

Thursday Sept. 7 - Blue Grotto, Kamloops, BC
 Friday Sept. 8 - Kimberley Curling Club, Kimberley, BC
 Saturday Sept. 9 - Old Jalopy Parade, Castlegar, BC
 Thursday, Sept. 14 - Clancy's Pub & Grill, Penticton, BC
 Friday Sept. 15 - Upside Cider, Kelowna, BC
 Saturday Sept. 16 - The Royal, Nelson, BC

D.O.A. Upcoming TBA dates

Alberta - October 4 - 8
 Washington and Oregon - November 1-5
 Brazil - January 26 - February 10



An evening with Joe Keithley

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 Rawkin' RoyalT

Sept 21 - WINDSOR
 Dominion House

Sept 22 - LONDON
 TapRoot (Root Cellar)

Sept 23 - HAMILTON
 Mills Hardware

www.suddendeath.com - info@suddendeath.com - @doajoe - @doapunk

And more breaking news in the Canadian punk scene is that in support of his new solo album Stand, the godfather of Canadian punk: Joey "Shithead" Keithley will be playing 5 shows in Ontario this fall!. Stand is rootsy, political and funny - all the things you would expect from Joey. Stand has been widely hailed as one of the top album's of 2023. During his tour Joe will play songs from Stand, as well as songs from D.O.A.'s catalogue and he will even tell some of his classic, riotous, to the point stories at each show. And don't leave early as there will also be a Q and A period at the end of each show.

Joe Keithley Solo Dates

Tuesday Sept. 19 - Bovine Sex Club, Toronto, ON
 Wednesday Sept. 20 - Rawkin' RoyalT, Chatham, ON
 Thursday Sept. 21 - Dominion House, Windsor, ON
 Friday Sept. 22 - The Root Cellar, London, ON
 Saturday Sept. 23 - Mills Hardware, Hamilton, ON

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DOUGLAS A. EWEN

Filmmaker and Founder of S.I.C.K.

Interview by Ira Hunter

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

DAE: Hello! My name is Douglas A. Ewen and I am a filmmaker from Ontario, Canada. I also own the Undead Kingdom Shop and the Sudbury Indie Creature Kon, a.k.a S.I.C.K.!

AU: How long have you been a filmmaker? What got you started?

DAE: I do not want to be one of those people who answer "all my life" but, I got to be one of those people. I have been making films since I was old enough to hold a camera and my friends and I would make spoofs of Seinfeld, older flicks, and any TV show you can think of. We also did a bunch of original films and shorts that I still have! I did not end up getting into film professionally until the ripe age of 30 but,



it has been in my heart since the beginning.

I would say the thing that got me started was my family's support and the fact that I loved having a separate world that I understood. I knew film was an escape but I also knew that "escaping" meant dealing with reality in a way that made sense to me. I was able to show people my feelings, my words and that made me incredibly excited to start my film journey!

AU: Tell us about the movie End Flux you directed in 2020 - What was the concept, how was it accomplished and what's it about?

DAE: End Flux (2022) has a huge story behind it: It was not directly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic but it did have hints of it in there because I wanted to deal with a much larger topic, isolation. I knew the world would understand that topic more since the lockups began. Some people have been dealing with isolation their entire life and I thought it was the perfect time to show what it is like not to have hope, love, and live in a quiet desperation where only your thoughts keep you company.

End Flux won multiple best feature awards, both internationally and nationally, it won a best acting award, best director, and so on so, I am really proud of it! A small film, made during a pandemic, made a big impact on my life and I have had many people tell me they love it! Which was a super trip! But to me, that film was about isolation and the terrors of human vs self. But, if you want the IMDb version, you got to visit the page!

AU: I heard it's the best Covid movie ever made. Is that it's own genre of films now that were created during the pandemic lockdowns?

DAE: People try to find greatness with any title they can. If I made this film at the same time a dinosaur thawed and tore down Toronto it would be "The Best Dino Eating Film Ever Made!" But, in reality, I am humbled that a lot of people

enjoyed it and thought it was great considering we made it during a pandemic but pandemic films existed before COVID-19. There have been a lot of festivals opening up just for 'lockdown films' and I think it's great because it's more about celebrating the obstacles we had to overcome and the comradery we had on set.

AU: What can you tell us about the konvention you put on called S.I.C.K. What do those letters stand for and what's the mission statement of the event?

DAE: S.I.C.K. stands for the Sudbury Indie Creature Kon. Northern Ontario's premier horror fest celebrating the most unique and SICKest minds

in indie film today! This year, September 29th to October 1st in Sudbury, On at the Place Des Arts we have an incredible lineup that gives our convention goes a little bit of everything. We have a Friday Night Fright Feature where we show Psycho Goreman and then the cast and crew come out for a Q&A. After that, we have a

second creature feature with Astonishing Tales of Rocktapussy and a live Q&A with local, national, and international shorts peppered throughout the night. Saturday is a vending day where people can visit their favourite indie distributors like Black Fawn, Troma, Raven Banner and purchase quality independent films. We then have panels including Women in Horror with Lynne Griffing (Black Christmas) Lesleh Donaldson (Curtains, Happy Birthday to Me) and Bridgette Kingsley (Rocktapussy). Steve Haining, a photographer of the stars and director, is showing his film Lianne with a free indie filmmaking workshop! We do not want to shove horror down people's throats we want to help them develop the tools they need to make their own while offering some opportunities to pick up some awesome merch!

AU: What do you have planned for this year's second annual Sudbury Indie Creature Kon?

DAE: Oh, We have a great Year!

Friday Night - September 29th, 2023 The doors open for VIP pass holders at 5:00 pm and 5:30 for ticket holders. That night will consist of 5:45 - Short Films Block, 7:30 pm Intro to PG: Psycho Goreman with director Steven Kostanski and PG himself, Matthew Ninaber followed by a live Q&A with PG cast and crew. After that at 9:15 pm - Black Fawn will introduce their 2022 film Astonishing Tales of Terror: Rocktapussy. We will be screening that at 9:30 pm followed by a live Q&A with director Andrew Cymek and star Brigitte Kingsley.

Saturday - September 30th, 2023 - 10 am - 5 pm - Vendors and Guests will be at tables. Our Guest include Lynne Griffing (Black Christmas) Lesleh Donaldson (Curtains) Alex Chung (Titans, FUBAR) Steve Haining (Lianne, World Record Photographer) Jessica Chin King (actor) James Burrell from Rue Morgue and more! The panels and workshops are amazing too with a Stunt Panel hosted by Alex Chung a Creature Panel

hosted by Steve and Matt (Psycho Goreman) a Production/Distribution Workshop hosted by Black Fawn, a Women in Horror Panel, and a Canadian Horror Film Panel! It is going to be insanely fun! And on Saturday night we have another Short Films block, a screening of 'Lianne' directed by Steve Haining with a Q&A to follow and last but not least, a special 40th-anniversary screening of Curtains hosted by Lynne Griffing, Lesleh Donaldson, and James Burrell.

October 1st is a celebrity meet and greet brunch for VIP ticket holders!

AU: How were you able to get the director and the star of the film Psycho Goreman to attend?

I know people who know people! No, well yes, but, in the end, there is always a booking agent. Working in the industry for so long you begin to go to events, meet people, and network. It is still a big thing, networking, so for all of you sitting at home making content all day do not forget to go out and shake some hands!

AU: I also see that Troma Entertainment will be there. Do you know if Lloyd Kaufman or the Toxic Avenger will be making an appearance?

DAE: We do not know! But, we are working on it. A Troma team member who runs the booth and was actually a victim in Terrifier 2 hooked that one up, but Uncle Loyd, is busy as usual! Toxy... Well, he is just unpredictable, so you will have to wait and see!

AU: You have something else listed happening at Creature Kon this year... What is Rocktapussy?

Rocktapussy is an ancient being that lives under a mining facility in Ontario, Canada. It is unleashed when a group of miners decide to drill too deep and now... It is unleashed onto the Sudbury Indie Creature Kon Saturday night!

AU: What can you tell us about your T-Shirt project Undead Kingdom that you just launched at undeadkingdomshop.ca ?

DAE: The Undead Kingdom is all original artwork done by Rob Sacchetto, a zombie portrait artist and overall amazing dude I work with on other ventures as well. He decided he wanted to zombify endangered species to show the importance and rapid pace these creatures are declining at. When I found out about his passion for the environment we decided to make it a business to support endangered species and their environments. We partnered with WWF-Canada and now 5% of all Undead Kingdom Tee sales go to WWF-Canada's essential conservation work.

AU: What's the local Sudbury music scene like these days - Any bands our readers should check out?

DAE: The music scene in Sudbury use to be huge! HUGE! But, it has slowed down a bit with all the great venues being forced to close or tighten up after the pandemic. We, the Sudbury Indie Creature Kon, are going to be working with Restored from Sudbury, a rock group that kicks major ass.

AU: Any other hidden talents?

DAE: The gift of gab. It has run in my family for generations and to this day it is what I credit the most for my success whether it be in film, business, or anything else I do. I do believe that you need to be talented in something or at least focus on the one thing you love because when you are not practicing or trying your hardest, someone else is and when you meet that person, they will beat you. That's what Muhammad Ali said, and I agree.

AU: What's the latest thing you have been working on?

DAE: Trying to keep my sanity and quit smoking which either are working out at the moment. I am also making a film called 'The Devil is Tired of Rushing Me' and S.I.C.K. is just around the corner so that takes up most of my time.

AU: Any other future film projects planned or in the works?

DAE: I do have a couple of projects, The Devil is Tired of Rushing Me, as mentioned above, is more of a passion project but we have two other titles that are going through development now and then moving into pre-production in 2024!

AU: Dream project you are still dying to do.

DAE: The Devil is Tired of Rushing Me. It was going to be made in late 2019. The money was in the bank! It was sitting there and then the pandemic hit, people pulled out and we pushed it to the back burner. Then it came up again when an actor from LA got their hands on it but, WGA and SAG strike hit so we are just waiting for the

curse to be removed from my head and then proceeding with that one!

AU: Any words of wisdom for our readers or aspiring filmmakers?

DAE: The film industry, no matter what bullshit anyone tells you, is a club. It is not like going to be a lawyer or dentist. You do not get a paper and then go make a film. Yes, 90% of it is nepotism, but that does not mean you do not have a chance. Filmmakers today need to find their own voice

in a world surrounded by copycats and AI. They need to fine-tune their craft. If you put in 8 hours for the man, you put in 8 hours for you. It is that simple, but yet that fucking hard. Like I always tell actors or crew who want to work with me but do not spend money or time on their craft: "When I grew up, in a small town up north, I watched parents spend \$20K to \$50K a year on sending their kids to hockey. Putting in the time at the rink, hours, just hoping one of those little buggers grows up to be the next Wayne Gretzky. That is the dedication it takes and if you are not willing to put in the time, or to put down something you can't afford so you can buy that ticket to go whatever festival you have to go to so you can shake some big wig's fucking hand, then you're going to find out how far you get writing scripts in between Call of Duty sessions."

AU: What else should know about you that might surprise our readers?

DAE: I am a massive Batman fan and Robocop is my favourite movie! Even though I work in Horror I rather watch Raging Bull or Videodrome before a slasher flick. Shh... Do not tell anyone!

AU: Anything else to mention or promote?

DAE: We are local, we are independent and we are here to stay! So all the love we get is always a great thing and we try to return it back whenever we

can!

AU: How do people find you online?

DAE: Let me just toss down my digits son!

sudburyindiecreaturekon.ca

undeadkingdomshop.ca

@SudburyIndieCreatureKon

@UndeadKingdomShop

And you could follow me personally! But, it will be a huge letdown because I do not engage in the social platform too much. I am like a troll who is always hidden away working in his office and when the wind blows too hard and the blinds open; the sun almost kills me. But, if you want to see the epic conclusion of me vs the blinds check out @DouglasAEwen on Instagram.

Thank you!





RED MASS

Vol 6. The Evil of Our Collective Mind

Red Mass is a gathering of musicians, agent provocateurs, and artists from around the globe. punk music incorporating techniques of automatic creation, and elements of chaos magic. The band has amassed more than 100 participating artists and musicians in its ranks. Nothing is sacred in the sweet blasphemy of art. As above so below.

In their sixth volume in a series, Montreal's *Red Mass* tackles extreme metal/punk in it's more experimental incarnation. Blasting it's way through eleven tracks, the band digs it's feet in and lets loose in the darker musical spectrum. From slowly crawling passages into relentless riffing, *Red Mass* shows no restraint.

Absolute Underground: Give us a brief history of *Red Mass*, who is in the band and what are you all about?

Red Mass: I started the project as part of the 'Free Creative Enterprise' TA DA arts collective. It happened at a time where i was trying to kick some destructive life patterns and needed to focus my energy on something else, and it slowly became the focus of my obsessions. I am the main member, and I have worked alongside a few core members (mainly Riccardo Lucchesi in the first iteration and then Hannah Lewis.) Now I am doing the project with a revolving door of musicians. It has been referred to as a collective but it's more of a collaborative entity. Members come in and out and don't contribute equally or in the same manner.

AU: Describe the sound/concept of *Red Mass* if possible.

RM: We were looking to incorporate elements of chaos magic into our creative process. We abandoned the comfort of familiarity, and embraced the confusion found in our world by having a revolving door policy, using automatic writing and sigils, and not sticking to any one approach or genre. We always change up our recording environment, using both from lo-fi to

big studios. Even in our shows we've had from 2 to 10 members playing live at a time. The means are the end and we want to create freely and often conceptually. We've been fortunate enough to have collaborated with some of our musical influences like Mike Watt and Rick Froberg (*Drive Like Jehu/Hot Snakes*), our friends, our family members and with strangers who simply want to create something subversive.

AU: You've just released a cassette called Vol 6. The Evil of Our Collective Mind. Tell us about it, what can we expect to hear?

RM: It features black Metal and black noise tracks with lo-fi and very abrasive recordings. A lot of harsh noise, black metal vocals, and some industrial elements mixed in with heavy metal guitars riffs.

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

RM: The Evil of Our Collective Mind is the sixth volume of a large-scale work entitled 111. 111 features 111 songs separated in eleven volumes released on labels from all over the world (Italy, France, Ukraine, USA, Canada). Each volume is basically an album released in a limited quantity on a physical format (EP, tape, CD, vinyl postcard) then all the separate volumes will be released digitally as the complete work. Each of the one volumes, represents one type of personality with its own artwork, themes and songs executed in one genre. The genres tackled are folk, garage punk, electro-punk, black noise, synth compositions and industrial music. In *Red Mass*' previous release *A Hopeless Noise* the main protagonist suffers from a multiple personality disorder. 111 explores the idea put forth by author Grant Morrison that instead of a single personality complex, we should adhere to a multiple personality complex allowing us to relate more to others, adapt more easily and possibly even avoid a large-scale societal psychosis.

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

RM: I'm glad how "Cult of Assassins" came out. "Mangled" features the return of Riccardo Lucchesi. I've always been a huge fan of his noise soundscapes and I started the band with him, so it's a bit of a full circle moment.

AU: Given that this is Volume Six, what can you say about previous (and future?) volumes?

RM:

Volume 1 is a garage punk album called Sweet Blasphemy, and is based on themes of decadence. Volume 2: Black Light, Black Heat, is an industrial post-punk album dealing with discouragement and nihilism. Volume 3: Memento Mori is an experimental folk album touching on themes of adaptability. Four is called Love & Magik and is garage album about worship, Volume eight, The Taste of Words, is a garage punk album about grief, and acceptance. Volume Eleven: Invitation to an Emergency was an instrumental ambient synth album about detachment and loneliness.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

RM: Be godlike by creating worlds, be angelic by soaring above the ruins, and be like a demon by seeking the immoral core of magical experiment. The means are the end in order to create freely. Nothing is sacred in the sweet blasphemy of art. We welcome all to the *Red Mass*.

AU: How do people find you online/elsewhere?

RM: You can find our previous albums on Bandcamp and most streaming services.

Some of the new albums are still available through the labels directly. The ones that are already sold out will be re-released when they are all compiled digitally as one massive album.

redmass.bandcamp.com

depressiveillusions.com

facebook.com/redmassband

bentwindowrecords.ca





KEN MODE

Upcoming Album Void

Release Day: September 22, 2023

Reowned for their unique blend of metal and hardcore-infused noise rock, KEN Mode is set to unveil their 9th full-length album, Void, as a follow-up to their 2022 release Null. The band's partnership with Artobject Records continues to yield compelling results. Having won the inaugural Juno Award for Best Heavy Metal/Hard Album in 2012 and being nominated three more times, KEN Mode's significance in the metal scene is undeniable. The band's impact spans both their powerful music and their extensive tours, often alongside iconic acts like Russian Circles, Torche, and Deafheaven.



The forthcoming album Void emerges as a companion piece to Null, created and produced

concurrently during the pandemic. It's an emotional response to the turbulent events of 2021, exploring themes of sadness, disappointment, and a desire for melody in the midst of the chaos. Recorded by Andrew Schneider in 2021, Void captures the essence of these emotions, resulting in an album that cuts through like a torrent of emotions.

KEN Mode's musical journey, rooted in industrial and noise influences, continues with Void. It encapsulates the struggles of battling mental illness amid a divided world and a global pandemic. The album's singles from Null garnered over 150K streams and were featured in prominent playlists across streaming platforms. The band's achievements include making the cover of Decibel Magazine and receiving extensive coverage from respected media outlets. KEN Mode's moniker, an abbreviation for "Kill Everyone Now mode," embodies their relentless and visceral approach to their music. The band's legacy spans two decades, marked by critical acclaim and collaboration with renowned producers. Their dedication and relentless touring schedule have solidified their place in the genre.

As the release of Void approaches, anticipation builds for another powerful offering from KEN Mode, promising a cathartic and emotional journey through their distinctive brand of noise-infused rock.



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MÖTLEY CRÜE

Celebrate The 40th Anniversary Of Band's Genre Defining Album 'Shout At The Devil' With 'Year Of The Devil'

BMG announces Year Of The Devil, a multi-configuration celebration of the 40th Anniversary of Mötley Crüe's landmark second album, Shout At The Devil. The centerpiece of Year Of The Devil is the Limited Edition Super Deluxe Box Set which features the newly remastered album on LP, CD and Cassette. Also included are reproductions of the original 7" singles of "Too Young To Fall In Love" and "Looks That Kill" alongside a Pentagram Séance Board, Devil Board w/Metal Planchette, Metal 7" Adapter, album art lithographs, tarot cards, devil candle holder and more. In addition, 7 rare demo tracks have been resurrected and are included as Shout At The Demos & Rarities. And if you pre-order now and instantly listen to the rare demo track "Black Widow". Originally released in 1983 at the height of the Satanic Panic, Shout At The Devil catapulted Mötley Crüe to superstardom. Delivering on the hype and promise of their Platinum debut, Too



Fast For Love, Mötley Crüe's second album hit the US Top 20. For many music fans, Shout At The Devil was the first time they witnessed an album with this imagery and lyrical content on mainstream retail shelves. Shout At The Devil continues to be a cornerstone of Mötley Crüe's live set, with the band playing up to four songs from this iconic album at every show of THE WORLD TOUR which is currently underway. Fittingly, the original touring cycle for this album saw Mötley Crüe jump from opening act to full on arena headliners. The ground-breaking music videos for "Looks That Kill" and "Too Young To Fall In Love" set the standard for countless MTV moments. Those two singles, combined with the sinister title track, reckless cuts like "Knock 'Em Dead, Kid", "Bastard" and "Red Hot", their frenzied take on "Helter Skelter" and the haunting nearly instrumental "God Bless The Children Of The Beast" helped create this era- and genre-defining album.

40 years later, Mötley Crüe is still going strong, bigger than ever and headlining stadiums around the world!

Their World Tour Continues:

- 8/5/23 Syracuse, New York JMA Wireless Dome
- 8/8/23 Columbus, Ohio Ohio Stadium
- 8/11/23 Fargo, North Dakota Fargodome

- 8/13/23 Omaha, Nebraska Charles Schwab Field
- 8/16/23 Tulsa, Oklahoma H.A. Chapman Stadium
- 8/18/23 El Paso, Texas Sun Bowl
- 11/3/23 Yokohama, Japan K-Arena Yokohama
- 11/4/23 Yokohama, Japan K-Arena Yokohama
- 11/8/23 Brisbane, Australia Suncorp Stadium
- 11/11/23 Sydney, Australia Sydney Showground Stadium
- 11/14/23 Docklands, Australia Docklands Stadium



ORCHID'S CURSE

The Decay

Interview by AU Staff

Absolute Underground: How's the East Coast and Halifax metal scene these days? Did some of the venues survive the Covid times?

Josh Hogan - Vocals: Venues have always come and go in this region, and with Covid, it certainly didn't help things. Luckily the live music scene is back on the upswing for the past 2 years with lots of great venues surviving and even a few new ones popping up.

AU: It's been a few years since we heard from Orchid's Curse and now the band has its sixth offering and new EP out "The Decay", what can you tell our readers about it?

Josh: The Decay is a culmination of our best efforts as a band. Most of these songs had been written pre-Covid, however with the lockdown we took extra time to revamp the songs, then

do pre-production and then record. Overall we are incredibly proud of these 5 songs and hope you enjoy hearing them as much as we do enjoy making them.

AU: What was your approach for the songs and sound you wanted on this new record compared to your previous ones? Along with it being produced in-house by your guitarist Brian Jones?

Brian Jones - Guitar/Vocals: All the songs will start with a riff and just go from there. This time around we really got to do a lot of pre-production and pick them apart and get them exactly how we wanted. Brian has always been one of the main songwriters and sort of producer anyway so it just made sense to keep it with him. We actually recorded all but drums at his place too so it made things easier when you're not paying for time in a studio.

AU: The band has been sometimes called a thrash band, groove metal, metalcore band, or

melodic death, what do you call yourself in the long list of sub-genres everyone seems to have their own name for?

Brian: It's probably really hard to actually put us into an actual sub-genre really. I mean we all collectively have different influences so we all bring something to the table. I usually just say Metal when asked.

AU: The band has been together for nearly twenty years, what would you say is the secret for a band staying and writing music together this long?

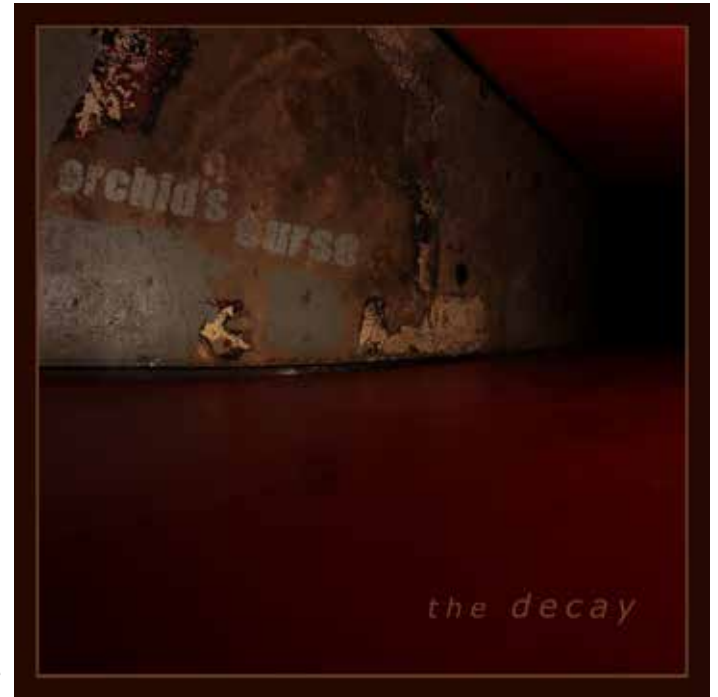
Brian: We just really always enjoy playing and creating new music. I don't think there is really a secret. Stay humble and don't expect to be a rock star I guess. As long as you're enjoying what you are doing you might as well keep it going.

AU: What have been your top 3 favourite moments as a band?

Brian: Looking back at sharing the stage with some of the bands we have is really cool. We were lucky to have shared the stage with Children of Bodom and The Black Dahlia Murder, which is an honour especially now that Alexi Laiho and Trevor Strnad are no longer with us. The maritime tour with Goatwhore and 3 Inches of Blood was also a top moment for us.

AU: Any future plans for touring the Maritimes and beyond to other parts of Canada?

Brian: There will definitely be Maritime and Eastern Canada shows.



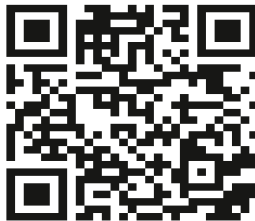
AU: Any other bands from the Maritimes that our readers should put on their radar?

Brian: There are so many amazing Maritime bands right now. And a lot of great up and coming. Too many to mention this list would be too long. But we got to give a huge shout-out to Pale Ache from Halifax. Their singer Mike Bowers was the man behind mixing and mastering "The Decay". He did an amazing job. Other bands are up and coming to mention Helsreach, Targeted Individual, Thousand Knives, and Johnny Deathwish to name a few.

orchidscurse.com
facebook.com/orchidscurse
instagram.com/orchidscurse



EVENT LISTINGS



Aug 5	Swayze with Burning Pallets and 2Divine
Aug 10	Spencer Jo with The Kingtrapper
Aug 26	Spare the Dying with Godwin
Sept 11	Breathe In with TV Casualties
Sept 21	Citizen Rage with Black Pestilence and Bone Crate
Sept 23	Bat Scratch with Me the Guts, Bitter State and Repair
Sept 29	Trashed Ambulance with Lost Planet Airmen
Oct 7	Moonbeams with The North Central Hip-Hop Experience
Oct 21	44 Slide with Softbox
Oct 28	Old Tolerated with Unrelated
Events subject to Change. Updates: https://threadbare-productions.com/events bookings@threadbare-productions.com	



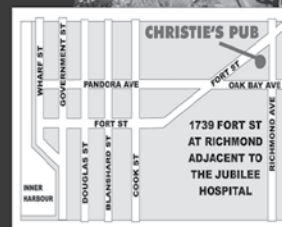
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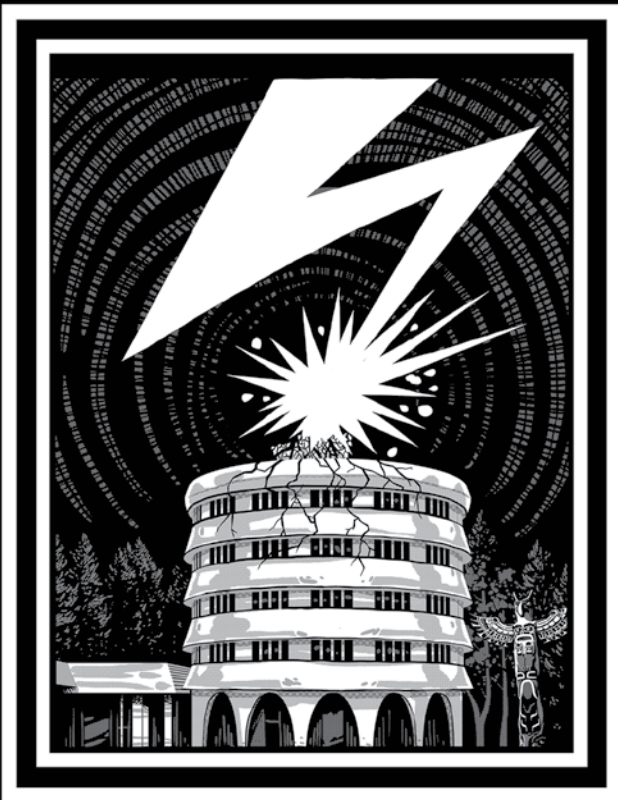


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EAST VAN RICH Local Filmmaker Crowdfunds for Debut Film in Beloved Neighborhood

Veteran Vancouver filmmaker Dale Bredeson is launching a crowdfunding campaign for his new feature film East Van Rich, a 90-minute adventure

buddy comedy set to shoot on the streets of East Vancouver in 2024. The \$15,000 campaign aims to bring the essence of East Vancouver's culture to life on the silver screen in an epic Wayne's World meets The Warriors-style comedy.

East Van Rich follows two punks on a mission to recover fragments of an alien rocket lost in the gritty streets of East Vancouver, racing against the local mob to save their beloved neighborhood and themselves. The film aims to pay homage to the spirit of East Vancouver, showcasing real-life landmarks and the community of artists, visionaries, and rebels that define the area.

Director Dale Bredeson expressed his love for the neighborhood that welcomed him over twenty years ago



and his excitement to bring its unique charm to the big screen.

The crowdfunding campaign, running until October 3rd, has a goal of \$15,000, with a stretch goal of \$30,000. Funds will cover production costs, including equipment, crew compensation, insurance, location rentals, and meals. Additional funding will enhance stunts and visual effects for improved production value.

Emslie Attisha, the producer for "East Van Rich," highlighted the project's collaborative nature, inviting the community to contribute and be part of the film that represents Vancouver's heart.

Apart from funding, the film seeks in-kind support such as Vancouver location rentals, equipment donations, and product placements

from local businesses. Contributors could even appear in the film's background scenes or get credited.

The "East Van Rich" trailer, narrated by Tommy Chong, offers a glimpse of the film's energy. To support the project, visit the crowdfunding campaign at seedandspark.com/fund/east-van-rich and be a part of celebrating East Vancouver's vibrant culture on the big screen.





DI's first gig in 30 years, August 2, 2023 at Centennial Square, Victoria

DISTORTED INFLUENCE 1990-93

Andy: Luke and I had immediate chemistry. Our first-ever jam was at his parents' house in Esquimalt. We continued jamming, alternating between his place and my parents' garage in Cordova Bay.

One day after one of our jams, probably in the spring of 1990, there was a knock at the front door of my house. I answered it, and lo and behold it was one of those long-haired, leather jacketed, badass skaters from the other end of my street. I was shocked when the dude said something like, "Hey, I'm Chris. I could hear you guys jamming. I live down the road. Can we borrow your jump ramp?"

Now that the ice was broken, Chris and I started hanging out. He mentioned that he used to jam with the guys from Atrosity (Chris was an awesome guitar player) and he was like, "Hey, I'll come and sing for you guys." Chris came out to our next jam and that was it. He was our new singer. He had these killer deep vocals. We had about three or four songs now and all we needed was a bass player.

Luke had since moved to a duplex on Quadra Street. One of his roommates was a guy named Jeff Turnbull, who was a really good bass and guitar player. We started jamming in the living room at Luke's house (much to the chagrin of his duplex neighbour). I'm not sure how it happened,

but we somehow managed to convince Jeff to play bass with us. This finalized our first lineup. We recorded our first demo at Parklands High School. Jason Flower engineered it on his Tascam 4-track and put it out on his new Break Even label. If I recall correctly, we were Break Even 001. We started to play outdoor parties and basement gigs. Our first gig was at the infamous Steele St. house in the summer of 1990. Chris was wearing a black hood and we just went for it.

The Sumas Mountain gig was the last time we played with Jeff. If I recall, he simply wasn't into it, and wanted to play guitar in another band. We parted ways amicably. Noel and I worked at Fuddrucker's together and we hung out and partied all the time. He was a phenomenal bass player but was already playing in a group called Crisis (aka Black Roses).

We recorded the Under D Influence with Jason (again at Parklands High School) but this time we brought in overdubs and a much more refined approach. The intent was to release a 7" on Jason's Break Even label, but cracks in the lineup began to form.

During winter and into spring of 1991, Noel, Chris and I were hanging out all the time with Chris' brother Pete, who had been playing in the original Malevolence lineup as well as the short-lived group Evisceration. He was making quite the name for himself as a drummer to be reckoned with.

We were listening to a lot of Accused, Cryptic

Slaughter, and COC at the time. I was also into bands like Dehumanizers and AMQA and anything from the PNW hardcore scene. Noel was really into Bay Area thrash metal and Hendrix and all sorts of other wild stuff. Meanwhile, Chris was cranking bands like Hirax, Toxic Reasons, Beyond Possession, and especially Poison Idea. I think this was the year that *Feel the Darkness* came out and that had a MASSIVE influence on us.

On top of this, we all loved local legends, Mission of Christ. All these groups began to heavily influence our musical direction, as we wanted to be faster and heavier. Chris started bringing in way more technical and heavy riffs. I remember talking to him about it one day and said, "I think we should get Pete to play with us."

The band was changing. Luke was a killer drummer, but we wanted double-kick in our songs. We were gravitating away from our earlier '82-style punk sounds. This was the beginning of the era of what I think Distorted Influence was truly about. With the new lineup intact, we continued jamming in Noel's basement. We were still playing the older stuff from the first two demos, but we were definitely leaning towards our newer, faster material. We started talking about the need for a second guitar player.

One of the things about having a really killer drummer in your band is the reality that said drummer also most likely plays in several other bands. Drummers were in high demand. Pete was also in a band called Severance. Their guitar player was a dude by the name of Kent Kynaston. Pete brought up the idea that maybe Kent would be interested in playing with us as well.

Chris: I remember one of the first things that happened when Kent joined was that it thickened up our sound – exactly what we were looking for. Kent even played Steve McBean's guitar from Mission of Christ. I remember one of the first riffs Kent played for me was the Nocturnal Serenade riff, and I knew right away he was the right fit.

Andy: In early spring 1992, with our rearranged lineup, we called up Jason Flower (again) and decided to record a whole album. We laid down tracks on a Sansui 6-track in the basement of Jason's house near the University of Victoria. This time we did songs from all eras of the band. We had such a blast recording. The fun from our live gigs really spilled over into the project. This was what would become the *Cold* album. Alas, in those days we just didn't seem to have it together enough to get from the recording stage to the



Photo Credit: Ron Millan

release stage, so the album would have to wait 31 years before seeing the light of day, haha. Jason Walton even drew our new logo and album cover design (which we are using now!).

In really early 1993, we parted ways with Kent – I have no recollection of how or why. Chris Stanley (RIP) joined the band and we played our final gig at Harpo's. We were all starting to get into new different music and going in different directions. I wasn't really putting in the required effort into the band or improving my vocals. Finally it was my turn to get canned, haha. That was around February 1993.

RIP – Chris Stanley and Aaron Clark

"Cold" line-up:

Andy Beaveridge: guitar/vox (1990-93)

Chris Locker: guitar/vox (1990-93)

Kent Kynaston: guitar/backup vox (1991-93)

Noel Tait: bass (1990-93)

Pete Locker: drums (1991-93)

Additional members:

Luke Burgess: drums (1990-91)

Jeff (Knuckles) Turnbull: bass (1990)

Chris Stanley: guitar (1993)

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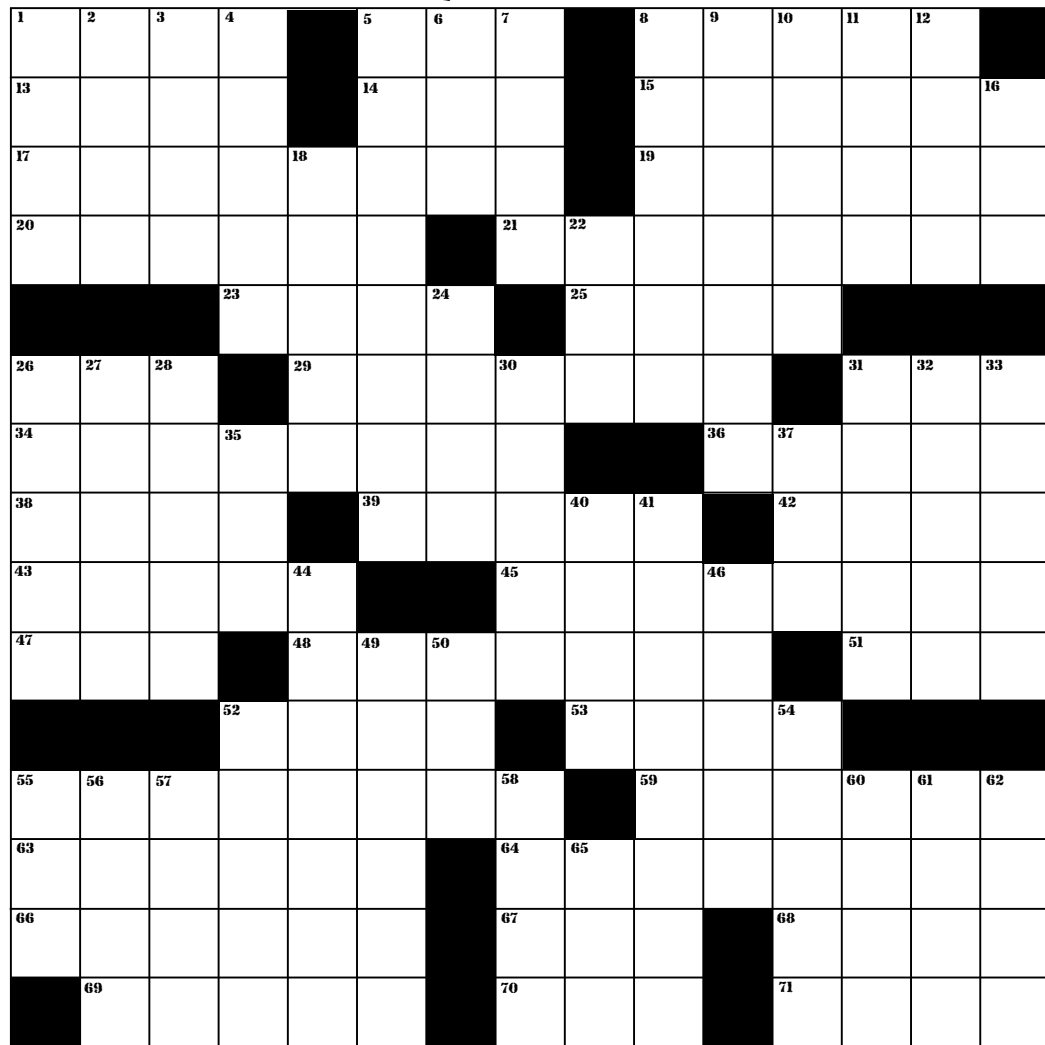
COMPILED

ACROSS

1. Create enthusiasm
5. NY museum or NY player
8. Goes off the deep-end
13. Track and field track
14. Actress Gardner
15. Sniggling
17. Part of a battery or a railroad
19. Most tables in a bistro
20. Fat compounds
21. Urban pests
23. Harvest a crop
25. Matrix hero and namesakes
26. Texas tea
29. Kindle, for example
31. 'Before' before a word
34. Waste in a reckless manner
36. Privileged white woman?
38. Word preceding 'in,' 'on' or 'to'
39. 'Cum on Feel the Noize' band
42. Stinky
43. Kids' song chorus
45. "Put a sock in it"?
47. Graphic seen behind a news anchor
48. Unfamiliar
51. 'Evil Woman' band
52. Weather _____
53. "_____ Automatic"
55. _____ dangerous
59. K-Pop comic book
63. Whisky and vermouth drink
64. Someone who drank too many 63-acrosses
66. How many travelled until 2001
67. Blood typing system
68. Actress Olin
69. Synonym for 69-across
70. Singer Kravitz, to his friends
71. Fail miserably

DOWN

1. Table d' _____
2. Designer Saint Laurent
3. Actor's aim
4. Bugs' nemesis
5. Sloping roofs
6. Wall-E's love interest
7. Baby powder
8. British couch
9. Birthplace of Punk?



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10. "And..." (Fr.)
11. Mediterranean pocket
12. Arrogant person
16. It knows where you are
18. Speedskating legend Wüst
22. Adj. for a musician or movie
24. Emma of The Avengers
26. Bone (prefix)
27. Words yelled at a boss?
28. Entices
30. You don't want to be in one
31. U2 song with brackets in the title
32. Disgust
33. January in Juárez
35. Singer DiFranco
37. Airport sect.
40. Raised platform in a hall
41. Urge a guy to do something foolish
44. System _____
46. When some Punk shows end
49. How you might travel in Tibet
50. Psychopathic chihuahua
52. Luxury mobile phone maker
54. Whoever _____ it, dealt it
55. Jackie's second
56. Circular (Fr.)
57. Pressure measure
58. Indian lentil dish
60. La _____ Tarsands
61. State of country music (abbr.)
62. State of Mt. Rushmore (abbr.)
63. Actor Vigoda

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STOMP RECORDS



K-MAN & THE 45s

Primed to Go

Interview with Guitarist/Vocalist

Kristen Daniel

By Chuck Andrews

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

K-Man & The 45s: Hey, Kristin Daniel of K-Man & The 45s here.

AU: Where are K-Man & the 45s from?

KD: Montreal, baby!

AU: How would you describe the sound of the band for the uninitiated?

KD: Everything is Ska! In all its flavors. Straight up ska, Rock and Roll Ska, Reggae Ska, Skapunk, and Acoustic Ska.

AU: Do you guys have a new record coming out?



KD: Yeah, finally! We were held up with the whole lockdown, pandemic, and vinyl pressing backlog, but our new baby "Primed To Go" is finally seeing the light of day. It will be available everywhere on Aug 18th.

AU: Any stand-out tracks on the new album you are extra excited about?

KD: It's hard to say. Kinda like which of your children do you like best, BUT of course, some children hold a special warm place in your heart. The first single is called "The Girl Likes Heavy Metal," which is a fun song written after a fun night out with one of my homies. She loves the Maiden, Pantera, and Scoobie Doo!

AU: What makes Stomp Records a unique record label in your opinion?

KD: Probably because they work with the music/bands they love. The family vibe at Stomp is something I really enjoy.

AU: Who are your biggest influences sound-wise?

KD: It's a natural mix of The Clash, The Specials, Toots, Marley, The Cramps, and the people around me jamming as I grew up.

AU: How many times have you guys toured Canada?

KD: Oh gosh... See, I feel best when I am on the road, so I try to be out there as much as humanly possible. We have gone coast to coast probably around 18-20 times... It's a bit of a blur.

AU: Do you have any upcoming tour plans anywhere?

KD: Yes, yes we do. We will be playing all over Canada to end out 2023, and we are looking to head back to Europe and the States in 2024.

AU: Is the ska scene still going strong in Montréal?

KD: Absolutely. It's funny, I always hear of waves

of Ska or ska died out or it's coming back and stuff like that while we keep doing our thing. I had the chance to see bands start and end and others starting up again. Absolutely. I mean The Planet Smashers and us never stopped and then beside that there are others that are coming along both French and English bands. It's kind of exciting.

AU: Who are your favorite new Montréal bands?

KD: Danny Rebel and The KGB, Ska Sound System, Boids, Brutal Youth.

AU: How long have K-Man & the 45s been together?

KD: Well, it started with a self-made album called Got Me Moving in 2012 and just kept running since.

AU: What's your favorite thing about Stomp Records?

KD: Probably that when one of our bands plays, we all get a chance to hang out and support each other.

AU: Thank you for speaking with us! Is there anything

additional that you would like to mention?

KD: Yeah, No Bananas!

AU: How do people find you online?

KD: Just look up K-Man & The 45s pretty much on all of your favorite platforms such as YouTube, Stomprecords.com, Spotify, Facebook, etc.



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Old Vic Town Brewing

A Thirsty History

By Daniel Van Netten

There are tall tales told over the wood, their stories easily forgotten. I remember one about a hotel that had an unlicensed brewery called "The Bucket of Blood," in the days of saloons and beer parlours. Apparently, it was quite the rowdy establishment frequented by the British Navy. The owner, John E. Day, founded Silver Spring Brewing in 1909, Coast Breweries in 1920, and went on to take over The Phoenix Brewing company before passing away in his rose garden in 1944.



Some of the other historic Victoria breweries are:

Empire/Lion Brewing

Located in Fernwood in 1885. Historically, a spring in Fernwood supplied Victoria with its water supply, making it an ideal location for a brewery. Sadly, the brewery burnt down in 1887.

Victoria Brewing Company 1858

After no success gold panning, German brewer William Steinberger felt he had no other option, so out of a log cabin at Swan Lake, any beer at the time was embraced. Eventually, he opened up on Discovery and Government. The brewery was sold and changed hands many times before being demolished and rebuilt in 1893. Victoria

Brewing company eventually partnered up with Phoenix Brewing. In 1934, General Brewing Company, in partnership with Coast Brewing, opened up Lucky Lager Brewing in the same location. It was an extension of the US brand and became a Vancouver Island solid. The brewery was eventually purchased by Labatt in 1958 and moved to Vancouver. The building was demolished in 1982 after the brand left the island... to prevent competition.

Silver Spring Brewing 1902-1959

Located at Esquimalt Rd and Catherine St, it was one of the two survivors after prohibition ended in 1919. Silver Spring was located by the E&N railway, making it a huge hit for workers transiting on the island.

Esquimalt Brewing Company

Opened in 1914 in the 800 block on Viewfield Rd. It was founded by the Fairall family, who had brewed in Ontario and England. The brewery made English style ales and during the First World War advertised that they did not employ German brewers or make any German-style beer. The brewery was only in business for two years before burning down. Strange tall tales from the wood! Always lend an ear... or have a beer.

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Ian, Mitch, Treena, and Zayne, who have immensely helped me in this venture. Also, a big thank you to James of Poor Boy Custom Repairs, who does free labor guitar setups for anyone playing at Spice Trail shows.

Sheena at Spice Trail has been so gracious and appreciative of how respectful the community is, as well as the amazing talent that has performed there.

Incidentals:

I also host a Jam night on the first Tuesday of every month. It serves as the local incubator and a place to



hang out. Local bands are forming and reforming, including the Dirty Sanchez Orchestra, TV Casualties, and Burning Pallets.

I handle bookings, run sound at shows, and try to find some time to poster.

Status Updates:

To find out about upcoming events, see my ad in this issue or visit Threadbare Productions Events.

If you have events going on in the Prince Albert area or want to book a show, contact me at bookings@threadbare-productions.com.

Conclusion:

Be the Scene!

Prince Albert Scene Report

By Clay Cott

Overview:

March 18th marked the start of the revitalization of the scene here in Prince Albert with Saskatoon's Krash and Bone Crate, and August 5th marks our 16th show. The venue is all ages, licensed, and offers some amazing cuisine. We truly lucked out.

The shows have covered a wide range, from Hardcore punk to Black metal, and anything else that struggles to find a venue to play in.

Acknowledgments:

The community here has been great. I just moved back to my hometown, and I have to give some shout-outs to Cupids Heart for suggesting I talk to Spice Trail. Special thanks to Will, Adam, Barrett,



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AUGURIUM

Unhealthy Will

Interview by Absolute Underground

AU: How's the death metal scene in Regina, SK these days?

Yianni Pantelopoulos (Vocals): Shows have mostly been held at The Exchange and Riddell Center through Zandra Productions over the last decade, but since Covid, they have not been bringing the bigger shows over here until this year. Local shows have been happening since the lock-down ended, but it's nice to see touring bands take a more prominent role in the yearly calendar of concerts.

AU: The band is hitting the road in August with Hooker Spit, Raising the Ruins, Kryotic, and Cell. Where are you guys playing?

Reid Paraszczynec (Bass, Production): We're starting off with a Western Canada run. It's mostly places we're familiar with, that we were able to set up shows with ourselves as we're local to these provinces. We're pretty stoked to finally be hitting

the road. The dates are:

w/ Hooker Spit & Raising The Ruins

Aug 25 – Vancouver, BC – Astoria

Aug 26 – Kelowna, BC – Dunneezies Pizza

Aug 27 – Kamloops, BC – Blue Grotto

w/ Kryotic

Aug 30 – Edmonton, AB – Rendezvous pub

Aug 31 – Calgary AB – Nvrland

w/ Cell and Kryotic

Sept 1 – Saskatoon, SK – Black Cat Tavern

Sept 2 – Regina, SK – The Exchange

AU: The tour is in support of your new album "Unearthly Will"; what can you tell us about it?

Yianni: We had a lot of fun making this record over the past 2 years. Musically, it is very different from Augurium's previous releases. With the new lineup also comes a new sound stylistically. Unearthly Will features more of a symphonic death metal approach with some black metal, deathcore, and grindy elements. I personally have never made an album this way before but it was a blast and the quality of the product is some of the best music I've been a part of creating, throughout years of musicianship.

AU: What do you want new and current fans of Augurium to walk away with after hearing this "Unearthly Will"?

Yianni: We want to ensure the listener hears something they can look back upon with fond memories and appreciate the different musical backgrounds we all share; from the orchestra, the wide range of riffage and drum patterns, shrieking highs to guttural low screams, and inspiration from all of our favourite artists shining through.

AU: The band has been on hiatus for a few years, how does it feel to be back with a fresh lineup and new album out?

Cejay Carnochan (Rhythm Guitars): It's honestly exhilarating. Augurium ended as everyone was burnt out and mentally exhausted. But for this new album/lineup, it was brand new as we didn't have any time constraints or deadlines. Pairing 5 fresh minds that all joined together in a similar mindset made the creation of the album pretty seamless.

AU: How was the recording of the album with (3 members in Saskatchewan – Regina, Saskatoon, and 2 members in British Columbia)? How does a band get an album done with members spread out?

Reid: It was definitely a different process than you would normally get in a more traditional band scenario. It all mostly started with Logan, who would put the orchestration together with guitars and scratch drums, then everyone would make their own individual parts and record from home. Then it all went to me to get mixed and mastered. There was lots of coordination over Facebook Messenger and video chat and frankly a lot of policing from me when people forgot to do stuff

ha-ha. Though the nice part about this work-flow was that we could get to be a bit more critical, if we didn't like something there was no time or budget constraint that prevented us from just redoing it, or doing what needed doing to get it to a place where we were happy.

AU: What do you think of the state of death metal in Canada now that Covid is over?

Reid: I think there's gonna be some really awesome releases coming in the next few years. It's exciting that shows are really starting to ramp up and I feel like here in BC we've been off to a really solid start; in the last year, I've seen 3 of my top bands already. In a way, there's a silver lining to Covid that it makes us really appreciate having live music again. I think Canadian metal is in a decent place right now and there are some awesome developments that are gonna happen in the scene as we get back to normal.

AU: Are there bands from Saskatchewan that our readers should put on their radar?

Cejay: There are many great bands that come out of our flat humble abode but to name a few - Agony Spawn, Kryotic, Wasted Heretics, Mycelia, etc.

AU: Is there anything else you would like to add for our readers?

Reid: Well, for anyone who's made it this far, thanks for reading, and give Unearthly Will a listen if it sounds like something you'd be into. And if you happen to be in one of the cities we're hitting on tour, come check us out and say hi, the shows are all gonna be a great time and we have some awesome lineups.

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VANTABLACK WARSHIP

Last of the Hardmouthed Poets

Interview with Drummer Pierre Pitre

AU: It's been a few years since we last spoke to you for the 2018 album Abrasive Pulmonic Speak. The band has a new album entitled Last of the Hardmouthed Poets on the label BAM & Co. Heavy, what can you tell us about the record musically and lyrically?

Pierre Pitre - Drums: Musically the record covers a wide array of genres. Recent reviews we've read are even struggling with the fact that can't really peg down what our style is. The album was very much inspired by our hardcore and punk roots, but the foundation is very much thrash metal. We wanted to write songs that felt good to us,

that reminded us of our teenage idols and that gave us a great vibe when performing the songs. Lyrically, "Last of the Hardmouthed Poets" covers an array of themes and sub-themes depending on how the reader wants to interpret the songs. The album is much about perseverance, finding your life purpose - and sticking to it, acknowledging your peers and elders, weeding out evil.

AU: What does the title "Last of Hardmouthed Poets" mean?

Pierre: The album title is a homage to the blacklisted authors of yesteryear and reminds us not to take for granted freedom of speech and freedom of thought. It also pays homage to the passing of generations, and in this case, bands and musicians that have inspired us over time but are no longer with us.

AU: We saw you released an AI-produced music video for "Unplug The Drug," how do you feel about using AI to produce art vs humans?

Pierre: Well, that is an interesting question. I think we all somewhat fear the big unknowns that AI might bring about. What is interesting with AI is the creative options and visions it can pull together, which in the end will never replace art produced by humans, but rather provide a new tool which if used effectively can broaden creativity and innovation in art.

AU: Vantablack Warship is considered a super-group of Quebec bands (Arseniq33, Ghoulunatics, Brutal Chérie, Foreshadow, Les Ékorchés, Buffalo Theory Mtl) what's the origin story for the band?

Pierre: We actually don't like this notion of us being called a super-group because we are not, and that sort of tag seems very pretentious. We are a super bunch of guys who enjoy playing music together and who get along great, which is probably where the super tag starts and ends.

AU: Some consider Montréal the mecca of all metal in Canada, how is its scene these days? And how was it playing Fofounes Electriques (one of Canada's most respected metal venues) 40th-anniversary show?

Pierre: We aren't sure that we can say Montréal as the Mecca of all metal in Canada because there are tons of great metal bands from sea to sea to sea. But we definitely seem to have a knack for avant-garde tech death and other types of metal. There are so many bands, it sometimes becomes challenging to follow everything going on in

MONTREAL MASSACRE



the scene. We typically like to stay connected to the scene we grew with, and that's why the show at Fofous for their 40th anniversary was so magical for us. Playing with Anonymous, B.A.R.F., Ghoulunatics, and Groovy Aardvark is always a pleasure. It was very much like attending a high school reunion of your best buddies, you can't go wrong.

AU: Any upcoming shows?

Aug 4 - St-Lin, QC -

Rockfest Pour La Santé Mentale

Aug 11 - Sherbrooke, QC - Le Magog - VomitFest w/ Genetic Error

Sept 6 - Montréal, QC - Piranha Bar w/ King Parrot

Sept 22 - Montebello, QC w/ Anonymous, B.A.R.F

Oct 14 - Granby, QC w/ Sarkasm

Oct 19 - Quebec City, QC w/ B.A.R.F

Oct 20 - Alma, QC - Café du Clocher w/ B.A.R.F.

Nov 10 - Trois-Rivières, QC - Amphithéâtre Cogeco

- Trois-Rivières Metalfest w/ Matryr, Kataklysm

AU: Anything else you would like to mention for our readers?

Pierre: We would like to congratulate Absolute Underground on your magazine. Copies are always available at Cité 2000 where we jam, and we always pick a few up to read about up-and-coming bands and what's going on out there. Thanks for the work you do promoting the underground music scene in Canada.

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Summer Horrors

By Vince D'Amato

Summertime is here again, and I have to say that this is my favourite season of the year – if only Halloween happened during the summertime, I might be in horror ecstasy – but I know, Halloween is exactly where it's supposed to be; and besides, there are TONS of Summer Horror stories to keep fans like me occupied through the sun-strewn months. There are the obvious summer horrors like *Jaws* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (incidentally both of these films showed up on Quentin Tarantino's 'perfect film' list a few months ago); with the latter film leading into a



possible deeper dive of transgressive horror that takes place over summer, like *The Hills Have Eyes*, *The Funhouse*, and *The Devil's Rejects*; and even George Romero's *Day of the Dead*, all fodder for future horror musings on the subject. But for this summer, I was excited to take a look back on a few of my favourite summer-fun horror movies...

Cheerleader Camp (1988)

Yes, I used to have a crush on Betsy Russel (*Saw, Tomboy*), and the idea that she had starred in a comedy-cheerleader-slasher movie set me on a futile hunt for this movie back in the late nineties – futile, until Anchor Bay put out a Special Edition DVD a couple of years later. The film also stars Lucinda Dickey (*Ninja III: The Domination*) and Lief Garret, to add to the cult appeal. *Cheerleader Camp* is almost as awesome as it sounds on paper. Definitely still a guilty pleasure.

Sleepaway Camp 2 (1988)

That's right, I said "2" – of course, the first one was a classic camp slasher with a crazy twist, but this sequel was really the one that did it for me; the producers took the whole camp slasher motif and shifted it over to dark comedy – and it was really, really good. The film switched the leading actress from teen star Felicia Rose to Pamela Springsteen, who did a pretty good job in rebooting the series as comedy-horror, and Renee Estevez (sister of Emilio) was a total standout as one of the dwindling number of camp counsellors stalked by the way-too-happy-for-everyone's-good Angela (Springsteen). This crazy romp ranks up there with some of my top favourite horror movie sequels of all time.

Maximum Overdrive (1986)

As any of the constant readers of this column will know, I love me some Stephen King! Originally, his one-and-only directing venture was not on this particular summer horror list, however, I

was reminded of it when I mentioned Emilio's sister Renee in *Sleepaway Camp 2*. *Maximum Overdrive* is a sun-beating-down horror-comedy that takes place at a truck stop overrun by homicidal eighteen-wheelers in the dead heat of summer. Stephen King has always had a humorous streak, but one has to wonder if all of the humour

in *Maximum Overdrive's* already-bonkers premise was completely intentional? And honestly, does it even matter, when you have trucks, steamrollers, electric knives, and hairdryers going on a kill-crazy rampage against all humans?

Friday the 13th Part 2 (1981)

Yes, it's another camp-slasher sequel. The reason I wanted to include this one on the "summer horror" list is that this chapter in the *Friday the 13th* saga was, at one point, my least favourite entry. Now it's my top favourite of the entire series. I think it took me some time to get past the very low-budget look of the film (they started to get a little slicker with *Friday the 13th 3-D*, plus that's where Jason first donned the hockey mask), and also, it took some time to get over how talky this movie is. That being said, eventually I actually really got into the admittedly fun dialogue and somewhat innocent antics of the pre-

twenties Camp Crystal Lake staff and to appreciate how good all of those young actors really were. They truly are the next cast to have populated any of the *Friday the 13th* films (with the exception of the first one – and maybe the fifth one. But that's also a conversation for another time). If you allow yourself to get invested in these young characters, when Jason actually starts to terrorize them, the movie becomes quite intense, leading to a very, very bizarre finale – the sort that was almost expressly reserved for the bloody horror films of the 1980s.

The Island (1980)

This was one of those movies, back in the 80s, whose VHS cover always attracted my eye in the video rental stores as a kid – the muscular hand poking up out of the ocean tightly gripping a hunting knife – and a dark, brooding, mysterious-looking island off in the distance. To this day I can't believe I never asked my parents to rent that one for me (they went ahead and rented *Zombie* and *Maniac* and *The Thing*, so it's not like they would've had a problem with this one!). I never saw this film until the horror label *Scream Factory* reprinted the film on Blu-ray a couple of years ago, and with them doing so, I imagined that this film might have had a bigger cult following than it actually seems to have. *The Island* was written by Peter Benchley (*Jaws*), directed by Michael Ritchie (*Fletch*, *The Bad News Bears*, *Prime Cut*), and stars Michael Caine, who plays an investigative journalist who winds up stranded, with his young son, on the island. Once there, the entire film takes a sharp left turn from the slightly odd into way-deep in weirdsville as they find themselves on the run from and facing off with the island's violent and inbred inhabitants. It's kind of a *Wicker Man* by way of *Deliverance*, which really needs to be seen to be believed.

The Lost Boys (1987)

Vampires in California in the middle of summer – this is a horror twist on Peter Pan as brought to you by the filmmakers behind *The Omen* and *Flatliners*, and was responsible for many of the cinematic vampire tropes still used in movies and stories to this day (and yet it never gets credit for this, which is a little criminal). Corey Haim stars as a comic-loving kid who moves to what is dubbed the "murder capital" of California with his older brother and recently divorced mother (Jason Patric and Diane Wiest). The movie also stars Jami Gertz as the girl who turns Jason Patric over to the youthful gang of vampires, and in doing so, cemented herself in thousands of young boys' dreams over the summer of '87. Kiefer Sutherland plays the leader of the young gang of vampires, which includes Alex Winter (Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure); the entire film is really a star-gazer's paradise of 80s Hollywood big-names. The film moves easily from teen comedy to horror-action as it ramps up into an exciting final act. And Tarantino himself stole the holy-water-loaded-water-guns idea for his own vampire movie *From Dusk till Dawn* ten years later – but like many of the modern vampire movie tropes, *The Lost Boys* did it first.

Girls with Balls (2018)

If I hadn't included this film, I could've stuck with an 80s-themed summer horror article – but alas, I betrayed myself. But despite *Girls with Balls* having a surprisingly low score on IMDb, I personally thought this movie was an absolute hoot, and I wanted to mention it here because I did not find this showing up on any other summer horror lists on the internet. Sure, it's a little low-budget, and it didn't get a huge release, but I totally enjoyed this bonkers horror-comedy



right to the end; I thought it was hilarious, with the horror gags landing squarely between bloody gore and dark comedy after a girls' volleyball team gets stranded in the middle of the woods and finds themselves having to defend themselves against a group of homicidal hunters. Good summer fun for everyone!

A Perfect Getaway (2009)



Three separate couples on vacation in a reclusive part of a Hawaiian island cross paths with each other, but one of the couples happens to be a pair of psychopaths – but which couple? David Twohy's film came out around the same time as other summer-vacation horror flicks like *Turistas* and *The Ruins*, but despite this movie being the least horror of the three, for me, it was the best one. The writing is solid and very entertaining, and the performances of the six leads more than just carry the film – they are the film, much in the same way the young cast of *Friday the 13th Part 2* was the real heart and soul of that slasher film. A *Perfect Getaway* was written for movie fans over horror fans specifically, by the same screenwriter behind *Pitch Black*, *Dark Fury*, and *The Arrival*. And I would absolutely encourage an exploration of that latter film too.

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**Darkside Releasing presents:
UK Summer Horror**

Written by Vince D'Amato

In keeping with a Summer Horror theme, there have been a couple of stellar titles – meaning stellar independent horror films – that have come through Darkside Releasing via the UK. One of these is the exciting and admittedly very nostalgic *I Scream on the Beach*, a sort of pseudo-slasher that draws more from *The Witch Who Came from the Sea* than it does any traditional American slasher/horror flick – but it does so to its own credit, creating a slightly aerial take on the traditional slasher film while retaining the nostalgic style of films like Gary Sherman's 70s horror *Raw Meat*. On the flip side of this horror aesthetic, we also have one of my all-time favourite indie films that had serendipitously



come to us in 2018, when we were just starting out as a horror distribution company, called *Lonely Hearts*. Promoted as a camp-slasher



horror movie thanks to its officially independently-commissioned poster artwork, this film was really more about the (very non-horror) participants in a reality show dating game that takes place in an nondescript section of the English countryside, and where the participants'

own anxieties, paranoia, narcissism, and psychopathy eventually end up getting the better of all of them; and all the while with nowhere for them to run and hide, both literally and metaphorically, thanks to all of the reality-TV cameras around them all. Both of these films present a uniquely not-American perspective on the tried and true summer camp slasher



sub-genre of horror, delving a little deeper into the dark psychology of the decidedly not-teenage people involved. Dark summers ahead, for those who care to explore.

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UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Interview by Jay and Olivia Flett

Absolute Underground: Who are you guys, how long have you been a band, and how would you describe your sound?

Under The Mountain: We've been a band for over a decade. Describing our sound is challenging; we're heavy and draw from various genres. Some have called us "balls to the wall rock and roll."

AU: How did you get started, and how many lineup changes has it taken to get here?

UTM: We started in 2009 and had our first show in 2011, with two lineup changes.

AU: What have your major influences been, and has that changed as the band has grown?

UTM: Initially, we were influenced by Motörhead and Clutch, basically classic rock. We still draw inspiration from bands in it for the music and who love what they do.

AU: How has the Nanaimo scene been, and has it changed since you started?

UTM: The Cambie and Terminal have been focal points for music. While some bands have come and gone, stoner rock has grown.

People have gotten older, some have kids, and attend shows less frequently, but there are always new faces, and the scene keeps evolving.

AU: You guys are based in Nanaimo; do you have a favorite show or shows you've played?

UTM: Monster Truck was pretty amazing. Shout out to Fat Greasy's Metal Lounge; that show was awesome.

AU: You have an album coming out; tell us about that process and what we can expect.

UTM: It's been a long, slow process, but highly collaborative. We've all contributed during recording sessions, providing suggestions for each other. The album's been in the works for a year and a half, aiming for a spring 2024 release date.

AU: What motivates you to continue to play?

UTM: We can't not play; we need a creative outlet

and will never be able to stop.

AU: Keith Richards or Lemmy?

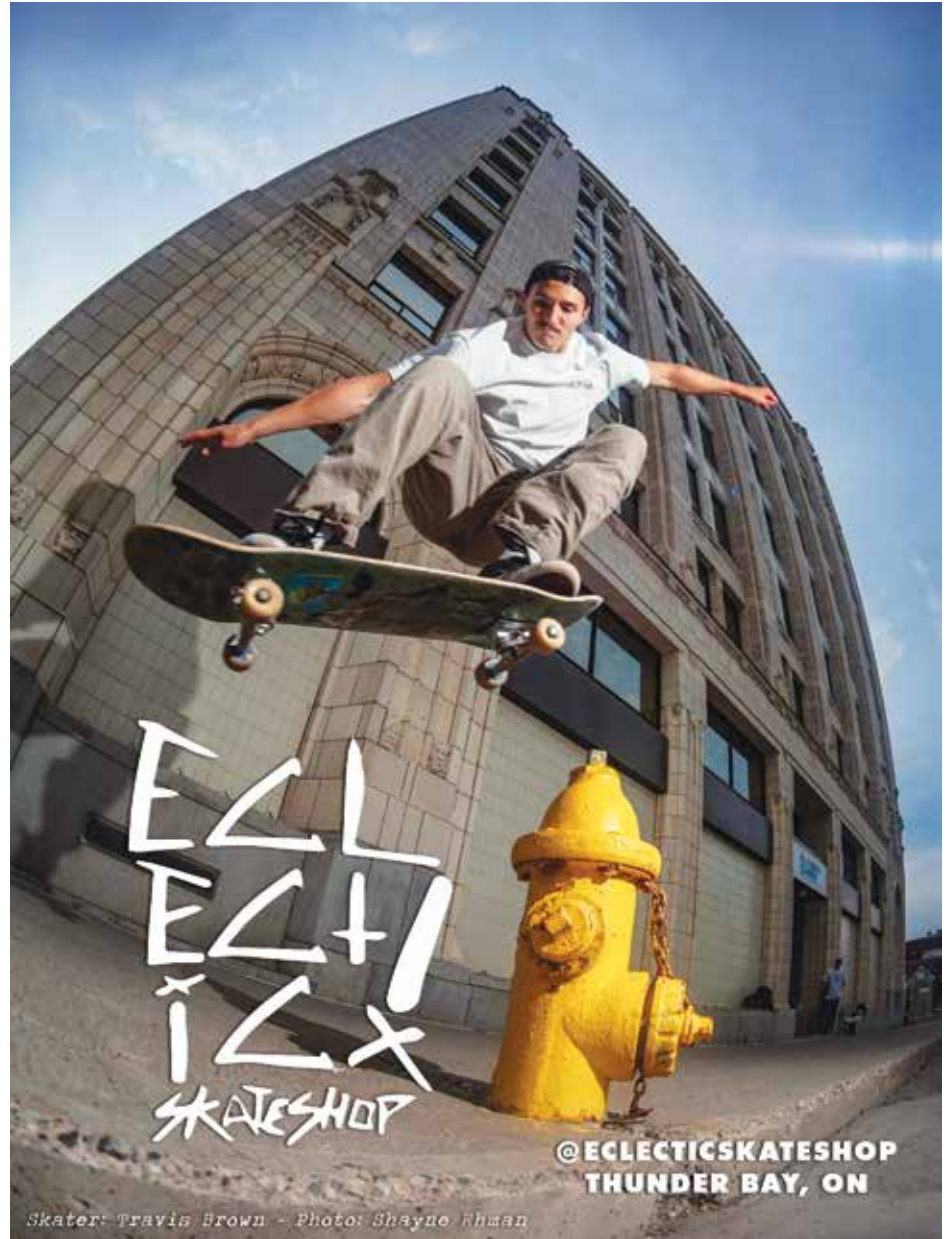
UTM: LEMMY!

AU: How are you finding attendance at shows post-Covid?

UTM: Really good; most shows have been packed. It had a slow start, but attendance has definitely picked up.

AU: What's down the road for Under the Mountain?

UTM: Releasing our album on vinyl, touring, making more videos, and promoting the album as much as we can.



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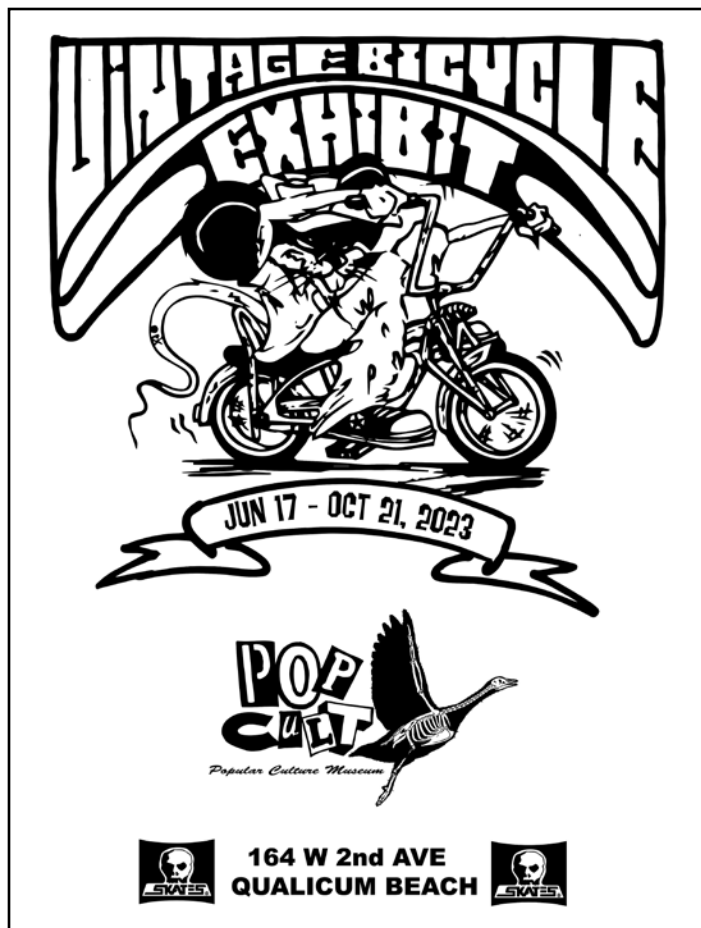
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VINTAGE BICYCLE EXHIBIT

Popular Culture Museum

June 17th – October 21st, 2023

164 W 2nd Ave – Qualicum Beach, BC

Interview with Pop Cult Museum Curator Peter Ducommun

Absolute Underground: Hi PD. I guess we should let people know there's a new location for PD's Hot Shop in Qualicum Beach on Vancouver Island and what you have been doing there.

PD: Yeah, we're coming up on about 18 months in this spot here in Qualicum. We've done quite a few things including some flea markets out front and having a band play, having a bike swap and bike cruises and longboard cruises.

AU: Tell us about the Pop Cult museum you have attached to your skate shop.

PD: So we were planning to do a couple of exhibits a year in Qualicum at our little pop culture museum. So the second one that just recently opened is the Bike Exhibit. Which will stay up until October.

AU: So it's called the Vintage Bike Exhibit?

PD: Yeah, it's definitely not a complete history of the bicycle. It's quite specific to kind of what we consider to be the RAD bicycles, you know. So sort of starting in the 1930s with balloon-tired, they called them paperboy bikes, but they were essentially just a heavy-duty balloon-tired bicycle. Single speed, coaster brake, and fat tires. Those go through the 30s, 40s, and 50s. By the 60s we get into the banana seat stuff. The 70s early motocross, including the ones with the fake plastic gas tanks and the full suspension that weighed a ton but were impossible to kill. Then those kind of transition into the early high-end BMX bicycles. Then there's a kind of hybridizing at a point where people sort of took those really fun fat balloon-tired bikes of the 30s, 40s, and 50s and started putting BMX parts on them. That sort of became the BMX cruiser or the performance beach cruiser. So we're sort of highlighting those styles of bikes as well.

AU: Did Skull Skates get into making bikes at any time?

PD: We did. In fact we've included a few of our bikes in there.

AU: Can you tell us more about the bikes that you made.

PD: The bicycles featured in the exhibit are handmade. They were made in Vancouver by a fabricator, frame builder friend of mine. We worked on them together to come up with a design. I would give most of the credit of the design to him. I just told him what I wanted and he figured out how to do it. Bike geometry is a very complicated thing, much more than you would imagine. One of the things though with these bicycles we made is that they are very balanced. When you make a skateboard or a snowboard or anything it's not just something that looks cool. It has to functionally be very balanced.

GNC BMX came out in the early 80s and for some reason we didn't think you should put Skull Skates on a bicycle. Then GNC changed to RSG BMX, which was also a BMX

that we made in the 80s. But by the 90s, we started making BMX bikes and just putting Skull Skates on them. But even those other two were really all ours. Sort of like when we did Crystal Ocean. We sort of thought, Oh shit, maybe the snowboards should have a different name. Then we kind of realized oh fuck, you could put Skull Skates on snowboards too.

AU: Skateboarding and bikes have kind of always coexisted. It's not like there was ever a war between the BMX riders and the skaters.

PD: There was a war perpetrated by one of the shitty down south magazines, I won't even mention their name. But there was a time when skateboarding was in decline and BMX was going up, and they thought that BMX was killing skateboarding, which was ridiculous. They tried

to perpetrate this sort of war, but it never really stuck. Because everybody knows it's basically the same thing. I mean, the BMX riders are doing skateboard tricks on their bicycles, you know?

AU: I had both, a Kuwahara BMX and a Skull Skates board, it didn't matter.

PD: That's right. In my personal world, I got my first bicycle when I was four. I didn't get my first skateboard till I was 12. So I've just been into bikes for a really long time. The other part of the connection with the Hot Shop, which is where Skull Skates lives, is in the late 70s and early 80s, we sold really early super high-end BMX bikes. When bicycle shops actually didn't even know

what they were yet. So for about a four-year period, we sold all this crazy shit that no one else had. Stuff like bear trap pedals and tough neck stems. A lot of people that were our customers for that stuff in those days, they became sort of the mountain bike and the BMX industry in Canada. The BMX thing, along with the snowboard thing, was part of the skateboard deal in that it was like a three-fold kind of attack. We were trying to engage people into doing rad shit on different levels.

AU: What can people expect if they come to the Vintage Bike show?

PD: The show is pretty straightforward. It's in a kind of a chronological arrangement. There are some really nice stock originals as well as some

sort of highly modified custom bicycles on exhibit. Complete bicycles as well as some really neat components and aftermarket accessories.

I don't know if you're familiar with the stick shift that used to come mounted on the top tube of banana seat bicycles. It was made to mimic a stick shift in a car. The hot rods from back in the day would have stick shifts on the floor. Well, they would start mounting these to the top tube of the bicycle. So you could be stick-shifting like your dad's hot rod or something. The only problem was it was mounted on the top tube right in front of the seat. You're on this slippery vinyl saddle, you slam the brakes or you smash into something and you slide forward and just smash your dick and balls on the shifter. It's the only bicycle component that I'm aware of that actually was outlawed. A guy named Ralph Nader, who's this safety advocate guy in the United States, had them outlawed after a couple of kids got nutted. The ban stuck. It's still an illegal bicycle part, which is pretty amazing. So there are a couple of bicycles with stick shifts on, and then there's a collection of loose stick shifts, aftermarket stick shifts. That's the kind of stuff that I trip on. Because come on man, it's an illegal bicycle part. If that's not worthy of collecting like nothing is, you know?

AU: Are the bikes from your personal collection?

PD: Yes, with the exception of four sort of early mountain bikes. Those are on loan, and then the rest, it's around 80 bikes are from my collection.

AU: What are the dates and times that people can check out the show?

PD: Shop hours are museum hours so that's 11 till 5 daily except Sundays noon till 5, and the show



runs until mid-October.

AU: Do you have something in mind for your next exhibit after the Bike Show?

PD: No, we're not sure yet. But I don't think it's going to be skateboards yet because skateboards

is a big one. We have to really organize the skateboard collection before we exhibit, and it's a handful. I'm guessing it's going to be maybe something like Japanese robots or possibly vintage Star Wars toys.

AU: Is your Pop Culture Museum a sort of learning experience, a place for people that maybe don't collect bikes, skateboards, or snowboards to go and discover stuff?

PD: Our concept is maybe even a bit broader than that. All it is, is that the stuff actually is not important. It's the feelings around the stuff that's important. So whether it's a kid who's never seen these things before and is just tripping like, Oh my God what is this. Or some old guy or gal who's

like, oh wow, that was my first bike. For a long time, I didn't realize why I was collecting all this stuff. But I think that sharing it is the way to go. People just get stoked here. I hear people walking into the space and just going like, Oh wow and just kind of losing it a little bit. So it's cool. Sort of overnight I've turned from a hoarder to a curator. Curator just sounds more fancy, and hoarder sounds a little bit like

you're going to end up on one of those reality shows. I think what it does is it justifies and gives a reason as to why to amass all this junk, and it's not to pack it away somewhere. It gives you a peek into a different time.

AU: Anything else you want to mention?

PD: Just that we've done one bike cruise in connection with the show. That happened in July, and we're thinking we might do one in late August or early September. So keep dialed to our Instagram or Facebook if you're interested in coming out to a bicycle cruise. Just riding vintage bikes around Qualicum Beach, it's good times.

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KAREN AND THE MANAGERS

A Cruel but Caring Overlord

Interview by Brady "Mom, please don't ask for the manager," Tighe

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

Karen: Playing the role of lead singer, I've also been known to dabble in some acoustic guitar, keyboards, and interpretive dance.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

Roberto: About a year ago, I found myself standing in a room filled with guitar gear and realized I'd feel less guilty about it if I was in a

band. So, I put up an ad on social media, and it wasn't long before Adam (guitar), Terry (drums), Mike (bass), and Emily (keys and backup vocals) were on board. Things were good for a while, and then Karen came along. Our cruel but caring self-proclaimed overlord is just that, and we don't question her!

AU: Who else is in the band?

Karen: The members of the band are myself, Karen Donna, on lead vocals, Emily Lutze on keyboards, percussion, and backup vocals, Adam Z. on guitar, Terry Lutze on drums, Roberto C. on guitar and effects, Mike Croy on bass guitar and backup vocals, and last but not least, Ramone Carlton from 365 pro wrestling is also our hype guy.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

Karen: We play fun, high-energy covers from a variety of genres. My goal is a packed dance floor and everyone singing along to their favorite songs.

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

ADAM: Karen and the managers hail from the garden city of Victoria, B.C., Canada, and the music scene here in Victoria is quite vibrant with a huge variety of

different musical styles and acts.

Karen: Originally I'm from Calgary, AB, and played the cover and originals scene there for the last 15 years. Calgary has a great live music scene, with some amazing venues and talents.

AU: What's the most memorable gig your band has played?

Mike: I think our last gig was so far the most memorable for me; we played the opening night headlining slot at the 39 days of July Festival in Duncan, put on by the Duncan Showroom. There was a really good turnout of people, the audience was extremely receptive to us, and there was even a dance contest during our show. Definitely lots of

fun for everyone involved!

Karen: Our first gig at the Duncan Showroom last January was my most memorable so far.

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

Emily: The cassette tape of Led Zeppelin II is always in the deck of Cornelius (My VW van) circa 1973. The van purrs as each song fills the air in perfect harmony.

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

Emily: There are two things of note, one morning my son and I were having breakfast together on our front porch, and a big black bear walked down the sidewalk; it looked at us and then continued on walking. Secondly, we live down the road from a house covered in silver sequins.

AU: If the Console Wars actually started today, what side would you join?

Mike: I'm a die-hard Super Nintendo fan as I don't think it's gotten really any better than that since then personally.

Adam: I would pick Sega Genesis because it does what Ninten-don't. Sonic can run circles around Mario, and their Mortal Kombat has blood. Fatality!

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

KATMAN: Maybe we'd have our good friend Jesse Ladret from Malcontent media do something for us? He's been our go-to guy for awesome graphic design work, and he's also done many of our concert poster designs. We love his work!

AU: Any shows or tours planned?

Terry: We have a show on August 18th in Langford at Station Ave from 4-8 pm as part of the Victoria Beer Society's Friday night markets. Probably no tours in the foreseeable future, but we could definitely be talked into playing almost anywhere.



AU: Anything else to promote?

Terry: We would like to give a massive shout out to our incredibly good friends at 365 Pro Wrestling and all the hard work they do putting on top-notch level local independent wrestling shows. We will be rocking out at one of their shows live coming up in fall/winter, and if people haven't been to a live 365 wrestling show, they are definitely missing out!

Mike: We are also working on a Karen and the Managers comic book/graphic novel project that we hope to have out in the new year sometime.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

KATMAN: Keep your eyes open for more opportunities to catch Karen and the Managers live coming up as we have lots of shows being lined up, and seeing us live is where we will melt your face and keep you entertained best!

We should also give a shout-out to Stefan, our time-traveling super fan from the 1980s, who drives a mint condition 1984 Trans AM through the space-time continuum!

AU: How do people find you online?

KATMAN: You can find us online at karenandthemanagers.com, which also has links to all our associated social media accounts such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.



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CANNABIS CORNER



BC CANNABIS INC. Interview with Founder Albert Eppinga

By Iree-I

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

Albert Eppinga: I am Albert Eppinga, founder of BC Cannabis Inc. I am the master grower and RPIC. I have been growing for over 2 decades and have spent many years learning about cannabis plants. I started by learning each step of the growing process from building underground grow shows to becoming a full-time grower. I did this by being mentored by the best legacy growers and doing it for free. I volunteered my time to learn to become a grower, understanding the process from start to finish. I first started growing independently in about 2003.

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

AE: Every strain I grow, I have pheno hunted and specifically look for THC and Terpene count. I also want each variety to have a good nose, bag



appeal, and taste. I also smoke it myself, so I am a consumer and critic. Currently, we have Chem de la Chem 27 THC and 4% terpenes, Golden Haze 28 THC and 3.6% terpenes, and Blue Berry Sweet Gas in pre-roll. Soon to market is a pheno hunted

Gorilla Grape with 27 THC and 2.5% Terpenes. These can all be found at Evergreen in Kitsilano; Mike has always been a big supporter of Legacy Growers.

AU: Why is it important to support local growers?

AE: The entire Cannabis Industry was built on Legacy growers. BC bud's reputation around the world is built from Legacy Growers. The pride I and many legacy growers bring to market the highest quality BC Bud from decades of growing in the legacy

market. The end product the consumer gets is the very essence of what BC Bud has founded on, and that is the passion and meticulous care and attention each plant receives.

AU: What makes an expert grower in your opinion?

AE: Experience, passion, love for the plant, the willingness to continue to learn. As I have been growing for over 2 decades, I continue to

learn every day and broaden my knowledge.

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

AE: Cleanliness, patience, and passion. You have to love what you do, and your love comes through in your end product.

AU: Where are your products available?

AE: BC Cannabis Inc can be found at all the BC Cannabis stores and many independent retailers in BC such as Evergreen Cannabis in Kitsilano.

Alberta Gaming Liquor and Cannabis, Quebec through Medino. Our product can be found online at ecsvan.ca; they carry all our products and deliver anywhere in the province of BC. You can check us out on Instagram at [bccannabisinc](https://www.instagram.com/bccannabisinc) or Albert Eppinga on LinkedIn for some up-to-date information. For more on BC Cannabis, you can go to our website at bccann.com or have a look at Growing Exposed episode 13 season 3 available on YouTube.



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CANNABIS CORNER



lived in Sooke his whole life and is a main staple of the community.

AU: What is Papa Joe's Organics mission statement? And what is the company's motto?

PJO: Our mission is to produce clean cannabis, grown organically, keeping things as cost-effective as possible while being hands-on every step of the way.

AU: What does Papa Joe's Organics do? Tell us about your process.

PJO: We cultivate using Hybrid greenhouses year-round, utilizing the sun when combined with organic living soil. We feed the soil, not the plants. Our process creates great terpene profiles and high THC levels, all while being energy efficient.

AU: What strains are you currently producing?

PJO: Organic Sweets, Organic Gorilla Grapes, Organic Watermelon, Nana Butter, Mango Breath, Blueberry Shizzle, Organic Mango Gold (Ross's Gold Brand), Chocolotti.

AU: What makes you different from other farms/growing operations?

PJO: Our willingness to produce a high-quality product. We aren't afraid

of hard work, doing a 21-day hang-dry cold cure, hand-trimmed flower, and selecting quality buds for our pre-rolls. From clone to stone, we are methodical.

AU: What is your catalogue like? What is available to buy, and where is it available?

PJO: We are available in any store that does direct delivery, which is approximately 25% of the registered stores. The stores that are willing to go the extra mile for their customers curate great and unique products from smaller craft growers.

AU: What makes Papa Joe's Organics different from other producers?

PJO: We are a small business and take the extra time for our flowers and customers.

AU: What makes an expert grower in your opinion?

PJO: The willingness to adapt growing styles to fit each individual cultivar and not cutting corners. Going the extra mile for the plant.

AU: Where are you located?

PJO: Sooke, B.C., on family property which is 9 acres of agricultural land backing onto DeMamiel creek.

AU: How do people find you online?

PJO: We can be found on Instagram @papajoesorganics, our website, or on Count_Canna, which is a new platform bringing growers and retailers together.



PAPA JOE'S ORGANICS

Interview by Iree-I

AU: Who are we speaking to, and what is your position at Papa Joe's Organics?

Papa Joe's Organics: Joe, Cam, Tony, and Red: We are the 4 Business Partners of Papa Joe's Organics.

AU: Tell us a little about your company's history.

PJO: Papa Joe's Organics is a family-run business with 4 partners, all legacy growers. We have a combined growing experience of over 100 years. The company was named after me, Joe, who has



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SATAN WANTS YOU

Interview with Directors Sean Horlor and Steve Adams

Interview by Ed Sum

Absolute Underground: Can we please have introductions?

SH: Hi, my name is Sean Horlor, one of the directors of Satan Wants You. We're self-taught filmmakers, and my first foray to this world was with book publishing with Made Beautiful by Use (2007), published by Signature Editions, before moving into television. I'm the co-host and creator of Don't Quit Your Gay Job. And after that, I met Steve Adams.

SA: We did a lot of video blogs for companies and about eight years ago, we caught the documentary bug. We eventually got into feature films, namely with Someone Like Me, a feature for the National Film Board of Canada. That debuted in 2021, and we began working on Satan Wants You afterwards.

AU: What made you decide to focus specifically on the book Michelle Remembers and how it started the Satanic Panic?

SH: I grew up in Victoria, BC, right after that got published. Growing up here meant hearing all the talk. At one point, they lived 10 minutes down the road from where I lived, and it wasn't until 30 years later when we started looking at it again.

That's when I realized Michelle and Larry's book ended up touching the lives of millions and millions of people around the world.

The Satanic Panic was global, especially across the Western World. I've read that there's close to twelve thousand cases in the USA alone—the biggest trials were there, and they were the most expensive in history. I could find cases

everywhere. They spanned from Australia to New Zealand, to Norway, to South Africa—if there's an English country that had Christian roots, there's a case!

After all the research Steve and I did, we noticed no one explored this story in a proper documentary format, despite all the hundreds of newspaper

articles and 40 Years of people pointing a finger at it. We were excited to dig deep into the subject.

SA: When the book first came across our plate again, it was 2018 and Pizzagate was in full effect. What we really saw are the similarities between what was happening with the satanic panic and what was happening at the current time, which I think is still ongoing. And when we saw that connection, we thought it was really important to tell this story.

AU: Was it difficult to find something new to add to the discourse?

SH: There are a ton of podcasts that have been done to death and everybody seemed to regurgitate the same thing. The thing that we brought in is that we actually talked to the family; nobody had really approached Marilyn, who is Larry's ex-wife, or Theresa (Larry's daughter) to hear their side of the story. And for us to reach out and shed light on what was actually happening behind the scenes is brand new.

SA: I don't think many people realize that Michelle and Larry continued to take part in the hysteria. To connect them to the McMartin preschool trial where they traveled to LA to

speak to the children and meet with the families affected, that is something most people didn't know.

Also, what we found through our research is that Larry was consulted and quoted in multiple newspapers to say there are thousands of Satanic ritual child abuse cases. So saying that they were the authors of this book is one thing, but to

connect them to the broader picture and show what they did is another.

AU: Before the publication of this book, fingers were pointed at films and music as being just as contributory. How would you respond to that?

SH: I think Michelle Remembers took bits and pieces from these different things that were in pop culture and repackaged them into one book that set fire to the rest of the 80s. There are other influences like the movie Rosemary's Baby that debuted around then, and a lot of other things too, but the impact was different.

SA: Our research started really in the mid-80s right around the same time as the McMartin trial, where people got really concerned about their children and worrying over what satanists are going to do. For us, it was fascinating to build this timeline. I mean, Michelle Remembers was published in 1980. Sarah Marshall, the podcaster of "You're Wrong About..." in the film, says that Michelle was patient zero.

These things that followed were based on things that happened in the book, including the influence of Dungeons and Dragons, and this fear with heavy metal music. Ozzy Osbourne isn't channeling the devil.

AU: I agree. I think all that stuff is a stage show and is not meant to be taken seriously. Even after this wave, I seem to recall the city of Victoria was widely regarded as a hotspot. What was your experience when you still lived here?

SH: I remember all of it. Even at Ross Bay Cemetery, someone would break in and in the days following, the claim of finding pentagrams all over the graves... People would get all riled up and it's unending. For Michelle, that's where it happened!

AU: And in later years, much of her claims about where it happened were heavily questioned. Some of it was even debunked. To prove and disprove what is real to imagine, how did you want to tell that story when those facts emerged?

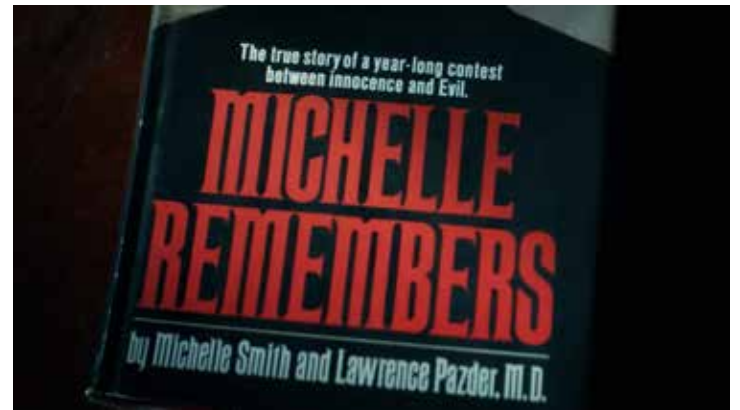
SA: We wanted Satan Wants You to unfold as people experienced it in the 1980s. People believed it was true, and it didn't matter if there was a journalist or two saying it's fake news. There's a definite turning point in our work to reveal what people saw in the media to what was actually happening behind the scenes.

AU: Why do you think the focus is always on children being the target for these cults?



SA: Nobody wants to see kids get hurt. I think that's one of the easiest scapegoats that people can place, and I don't think it's only about saying that kids are getting hurt. It's about tar and feathers—and saying that there's someone hurting our children. And as soon as we hear something like that, you're horrified.

The Kelly Michaels case where she was accused of doing horrendous stuff to two kids at where she was teaching and ruined her life. She's never recovered. It's just one of those things that really sticks with people.



AU: How would you compare it to say the Salem Witch Trials or even, to a lesser degree, McCarthyism?

SA: It's all about scapegoating. People are afraid of other people who are not part of the mainstream or a little different. It was the same with the blood libel, if you're familiar with that. That goes all the way back to Roman times when they accused Christians of sacrificing babies, drinking blood, having rituals, etc.,

Today, it's hard to wrap your head around modern Satanism. There are different sects as well. The former High Priestess that we interviewed in the film of the Church of Satan, Blanche Barton, said that Satanism is a celebration of differences, not intolerance, and that really resonated with me.

AU: After this work's theatrical run at the Fantasia Film Festival and in theaters, where can people find your documentary?

SH: You'll be able to catch it on CBC dot channel, starting around Oct 1, Later on, it'll be on CBC Gem and their main channel. We'll have an announcement after Fantasia where to see it elsewhere.

AU: Do you have any final words?

SH: Because you're from Victoria, and I'm from Victoria, and your readers are most likely based on Victoria too. If you do not know this story, you need to come see this movie. You will not look at Victoria the same way after watching Satan Wants You.



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LIAM VS THE WORLD

Liam vs. The World: Das Vulf, The Hellcat y la Trokitá

By Liam Crocker

Amongst artists of all mediums, there is a desire for authenticity - the idea that if one makes art involving a certain topic, they themselves should have some experience in that world. Often criticized are rappers who talk a big game of spending money they don't have, killing people that don't exist, and having cars they certainly can't afford but will rent for a day to shoot a music video. Metal musicians will belt out operatic tales of anachronistic triumphs in battle or put themselves in the shoes of some mythical beast. Pop musicians write love songs with three divorces under their belt - and the person who actually wrote the song is probably an intern who's never met them. Personally, if a song is good, to me, it's good. But there are some genres of music, some artists within those genres, who truly walk the walk. They murder, rob, or pal around with those who do - and sometimes die by the proverbial sword. There is a certain aura, a sonic miasma, produced by music made by those who have killed, who have lived dangerously, who have suffered. Their art transcends itself to become something more disturbing, intimidating, and often beautiful.

Metal is a genre that frequently uses violence as a motif - but how many Metalheads have actually killed someone with a blade? We all know one! I am, of course, speaking of Varg Vikernes of Swedish black Metal band Burzum. The themes of black metal revolve around the darkest aspects

of the human psyche - blood lust, psychopathic rage, crippling despair. It is impossible to listen to Burzum and not feel you are seeing into the mind of a man who does truly embody the themes his music explores. Varg also put his money where his mouth is when it comes to black metal's anti-Christian themes and burned down churches. There are other black metal musicians



who have committed even more heinous crimes. Faust of the band Emperor stabbed a gay man 37 times for supposedly hitting on him. Two members of the German band Absurd killed a teenager, apparently commanded by voices. Many other famous black metallers have committed crimes, lived lives wrought with pain and death, and

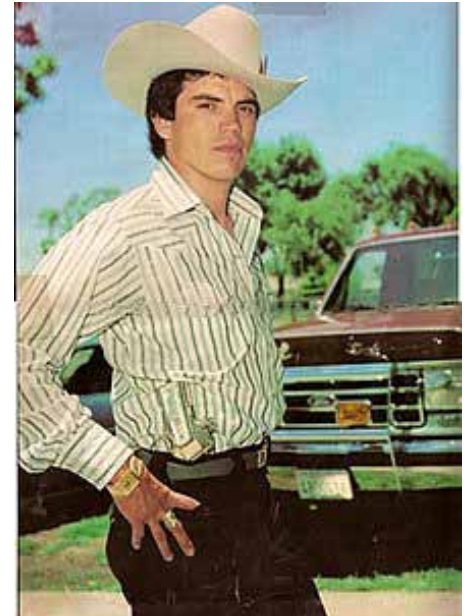
generally embodied the screaming horror their music exudes. There is something sinister to black metal, attracting truly disturbed and evil people. I enjoy it myself sometimes, but I find if I listen too much, it begins to work its evil magic on me, and I become filled with dread.

Far exceeding the body count of the black metallers, the true maniacs of the music world are undoubtedly artists associated with a style of rap called drill. Originating in Chicago, it has become extremely popular and has not slowed down the violence despite the limelight. Many drill musicians are convicted murderers or gang members - they mostly reside from very poor, rough neighborhoods such as the famous "O block," the birthplace of Chief Keef,



Lil Durk, and more. Most famously, rapper King Von was recently shot to death. Many drill rappers have met the same fate. Some say Von is rap's first serial killer, though the true number of his victims is unknown. Drill rappers are famous for telling on themselves in lyrics, telling wild but often true tales of their gangland exploits. Some have even had their lyrics used as evidence against them in court. With the chest-puffing quality of popular rap, it is powerful to listen to Drill and know that these rappers really are suffering in poverty, doing drive-by shootings and racketeering. Some British Drill rappers have even gone as far as mocking the families of victims of their shootings. Record companies will often exploit these young men by giving them predatory record deals with the allure of quick cash - hard to refuse if all you have known is poverty. However, I view this music as the modern-day equivalent of outlaw country. These stories will happen regardless of them being rapped about, and it is valuable for those stories to be told despite their darkness.

Finally, a genre I have recently begun to explore is Narcocorridos music from Mexico. These are folk tales spun into songs about the exploits of the Cartels. Often, Cartel bosses will pay these bands to write songs about their real exploits. Famously, musician Chalino Sanchez was performing on stage and received a note from an audience member in the middle of his performance. No doubt the news was grim. In the video of the concert, we can see that Chalino's face turns grave, yet he finishes the song. Two days later, he was found dead with two bullets in his head. Though the Cartels are indeed brutal and often uniquely cruel entities,



their tales and exploits make fantastic fodder for songs and are not so different from the lyrics of Johnny Cash or Marty Robbins. Art borne of the ugliest parts of life is often powerful. Many artists deal with themes of loss, mental illness, and death. But there is something compelling about experiencing the work of the darkest individuals among us. The murderers, the criminals, the murderously psychopathic. For some, it is a celebration of the blackness of the evil deed. For others, it is a chance to gloat of their domination of others. Sometimes it is just the heartfelt reflection of a reality that they cannot change and choose to express with music. All people have the ability to express themselves, no matter how terrible they may be. The chance to understand them is invaluable.



HARDBALL

SUMMER OF BALL 2023

08.04 VANCOUVER, BC	NEW VENUE TBA w/ PAUL IS DEAD AND GUESTS
08.05 SQUAMISH, BC JUST ADDED!	PECKINPAH w/ GUESTS TBA
08.06 NEW W SHOW, CANCELED! SORRY!	DULLY'S w/ GUESTS
08.09 NELSON, BC LOW TICKETS!	KOOTENAY CO-OP RADIO ALL AGES w/ THE TARDIQUES
08.10 EDMONTON, AB	THE BUCKINGHAM w/ UMI YONAL PIZZA BATH AND TAKE SIDES
08.11 CALGARY, AB	MODERN LOVE w/ PIZZA BATH, COPE AND WALLPAPER
08.12 OLIVER, BC MAY SELL OUT	FIREHALL BREWING w/ THE CAVERNAGE, DESERT ARMS AND GUESTS
08.26 SALMO, BC	HOGKEGGER FEST w/ RAD DOG AND GUESTS

HOOKER SPIT

KROCH SPLINTER WESTERN CANADA TOUR



WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

EDMONTON, AB JULY 21 TEMPLE HOOP

RED BEEF, AB JULY 26 THE VAT PUB

DRUMHELLER, AB AUG 05 LOO AS HELL

CALGARY, AB AUG 10 MODERN LOVE

STIRLINGVILLE, AB AUG 17 GROVER FEST

VANCOUVER, BC AUG 25 ASTORIA**

KELOWNA, BC AUG 28 DUNKENZIES PIZZA**

KARLBORPS, BC AUG 27 BLUE GROTTO**

~~EDMONTON, AB SEPT 09 REDD FOOT~~

MEDICINE HAT, AB SEPT 15 MAINLINER PUB

LETHBRIDGE, AB SEPT 18 THE SLICE

SASKATOON, SK SEPT 30 ACT HALL

AUGUST 29* The Arena VANCOUVER, BC

AUGUST 26* Venue TBD KELOWNA, BC

AUGUST 27* The Blue Grille KAMLOOPS, BC

AUGUST 30* Henderson Pub EDMONTON, AB

AUGUST 31* NWLAND CALGARY, AB

SEPTEMBER 1 The Black Cat Tavern SASKATOON, SK

SEPTEMBER 2 The Exchange REGINA, SK

*Dates w/ Hooker Spit & Heavy The Show, No Mystic Girl, No Gid



POWDER SEEKERS



SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE PART 2: POWDER SEEKING AN ENDLESS WINTER

From Santiago to Pucón
By Brydo "Amigo" Parker

So where was I when I left off? Oh ya. Me, Ira, and the Snow Ninja rented a piece of shit station wagon and left the civilization of Santiago in Chile around dusk headed to Pucón in Patagonia on an expected 12 hour road trip. The Ninja who has been to Chile before made a cryptic statement "We've got to stay awake for the driver because the roads are really crazy here." We snowboarded all day at Valle Nevado, packed up our gear and split. The boys were supposed to keep me awake. Around hour six

I was struggling to see because the headlights were crossed like a Siamese cat's eyes and all of a sudden we hit a coffin and bodies and heads were everywhere. Braking hard, I swerved right, hit the gas and we hit something that was being shredded under the overloaded car. I swerve left. I hit more bodies. The boys are awake now. The Ninja yells "Brydo pin it!" as we see what's happening, it's a B train truck with a rear wheel that was coming off and the truck was spilling 4x4ft crates of cabbage and another one is coming off the back of the truck and about to crush us like coleslaw doing 90 kms an hour. Dodging the cabbage crate we drove up beside the cab



and attempted to flag the oblivious driver to no avail. I was rocking a coleslaw joke and trying to light a huge joint while driving down the one way highway when another semi truck carrying pigs was headed right for us. I dodged to the outside lane. I was just getting that joint relit when four cop cars went whizzing by. I still to this day wonder if there was a pulled pork pile up on that highway that night. Ignorance is bliss.

We were gassing up and we got some epic truck stop food. Up North when you get a hamburger you get mustard, ketchup and mayo. But down South you get two more options: guacamole and salsa. Fully stacked guacamole hotdog in hand, Ira was in his happy spot, right up to the point when the bouncing google ball on the map chirped and the map disappeared. Thank god the piece of shit rental car came with paper maps. They were in Spanish but still got us through the mountain passes of the Andes. We hit a pack of rabbits around 4 am and Ira was awake and is still scarred by the sound of them hitting the tires and underside of the car. I remember him saying to me, "You didn't even try to brake." I replied "We are on a cliff edge gravel road bro, it's us or the rabbits."

We rolled into Pucón around six am and there were volcano lava evacuation signs all around. "Hmmm" I am thinking. We get to Ronal Girardo's huge log mansion and there is a fellow outside smoking who looks up and comments "I have not seen the Volcano glowing like that before." I look up and sure enough there is the almost full moon and a large red glowing and spewing volcano top in the not too far distance. I parked the car for a quick getaway and vowed not to take off my socks. Oh sweet sleep.



Wake up, make a huge breakfast and sandwiches and set off to snowboard an active volcano. This is definitely on my bucket list. The drive up through the old lava chutes and jungles of tall grass and lava rocks was spectacular. We got up the German looking resort and up the mountain to ride the most incredible terrain. We are way above the jungle line and the lava sculpted terrain beneath the snow made for an incredible natural snow

park the likes of which I have never seen before or since. Cliff drops into perfect landings and right down to a patio for cold beers where the after ski lounging is taken to a high art form.

I would highly recommend a trip to Pucón if you are down South. The snow is great, the people are awesome, and even the volcanoes are friendly.

Next issue: The secret to a long healthy life, more adventures, and a wrap-up to South America.

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RIPCORDZ TOUR TIPS

As we've been driving back and forth across Canada for more than three decades, we've come up with some guidelines that help us on the road. Figured we'd share.

They're tips, not rules. Everyone has their own way of touring, but some of these may help younger bands on their way.

PART THREE

TOUR TIP NUMBER 13



NEVER REMOVE YOUR SHOES IN THE VAN

Foot odour is the number one cause of band breakups on the road.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 14



THE 'WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS' IS THE RIGHT PLACE TO BE

TOUR TIP NUMBER 15



TAKE THAT PHOTO OP

Punk will take you places you never thought you'd see. Take a second to enjoy them.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 16



SHOW A LITTLE LOVE FOR SHOW PROMOTERS

Without them, there is no tour.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 17



NO DRINKS ON THE MERCH TABLE

They will be spilled.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 18



NO OPEN BEERS IN THE VAN

A beer will always get spilled and the van will smell like poop for the rest of tour. Party in the parking lot instead.

Find more tips and other stuff on our facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/ripcordzpunk> and instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/ripcordz.punk>



JEFF ANDREW

Blood Moon

Interview by Aeryn Shrapnel

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

Jeff Andrew: Jeff Andrew. I don't know what I'm known for anymore! It's been a while since I've been out in the world. I made some DIY albums about ten years ago about the traveling world and about ghosts and old buildings, and people who don't fit very well into the big machine and

got chewed up or spat out by the gears. I did a hitchhiking tour across Canada, with *Ghosts of the Highway*. I toured a lot on my own, played the festivals, hid out in the woods when I wasn't doing that. I also played fiddle in the *Joey Only Outlaw Band*, and I wrote a song with *The Rebel Spell* on their last album and did shows with them.

AU: What genre would you say your music is?

JA: I've been telling people that it's "an electrified patchwork of folk, rock and post-punk, with echoes of old-time fiddle tunes and 80's horror movie soundtracks." There's some goth to it as well. I have all these songs about monsters

and demons and darkness. I'll say "punk-inspired songs" sometimes, 'cause I've been around the punk world a lot and it's where my heart is (and DIY culture in general), but I don't really sound like what gets called "folk-punk."

AU: What are your biggest influences?

JA: Tom Waits, Ani DiFranco, Nick Cave, Neko Case, *The Rebel Spell*. All the old folk and blues songs and fiddle tunes from before the music industry really existed. Also, 80's sci-fi and horror movie soundtracks, analog synth sounds, composers like *Vangelis* who did the *Blade Runner* soundtrack. *Godspeed You! Black Emperor* - how they

work with drones and soundscapes and turn these little whispers and echoes into huge, raging walls of sound.

AU: You've got a new album coming out, can you tell us about that?

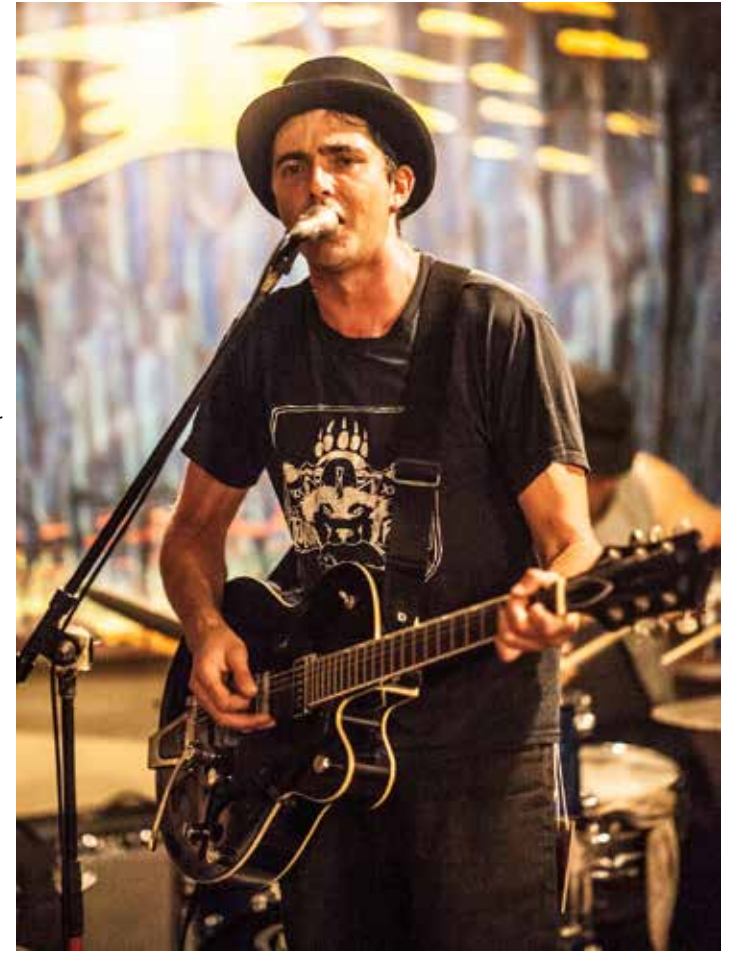
JA: It's called *Blood Moon*. We recorded it in Cumberland with Corwin Fox, and the band was Kenan Zeigler-Sungur, Adam Farnsworth and Denver Venoit. A lot of old friends did guest spots on it. A fantastic artist named Miccaotli did a painting for the cover (he also did the cover art for the last two *Rebel Spell* albums). Everyone involved are people I have huge respect for as artists, who've been inspirations to me over the years we've been playing together, and I'm really thankful they wanted to be part of it! We started recording it in March 2020, the week everything went on lock-down. So, it took a while to finish it. Some of the songs date back to more than a decade ago, so it's like a compilation of my life and the music I've listened to and written for the last ten years.

AU: What sets it apart from your previous work?

JA: It's a lot more arranged, and a lot noisier! Most of my older stuff was acoustic. This album has string and horn arrangements, big drums and power chords, organ and synthesizer solos, harmonized lead guitar, lots of backup vocals...I was listening to *The Cure* and Nick Cave a lot when I was figuring out how to play the songs, so there's an early 80's feel to it (at least that's what I was trying for).

AU: You've played with *The Rebel Spell* before and even wrote a song with the late Todd Serious. How'd you meet?

JA: We met around 2009 in Vancouver. I lived with Joey Only and Todd would come over, stand in the basement doorway and talk intensely about politics. The Olympics were coming up, then there was the G20 and Occupy, a lot was going on. We really liked each other's music, and I got to open some shows for them, and became friends with the band. He wanted to write a song together for *Last Run*, and having grown up in Williams Lake he knew the story of the Tsilhqot'in War, so we did some research and wrote that song. It's still the only song writing collaboration I've ever done. There was an incredible community around *The Rebel Spell*. He pushed a lot of people, me included, to try and be their best selves, and that gave people a reason to keep going through



dark times. You wanted to live up to the person Todd seemed to think you were. To believe that trusting in yourself and not giving into apathy was an act of resistance in itself. When he died, it was devastating. It was also a really transformative time, and the way that community came together: 200 punks traveling up to Williams Lake for his memorial, all the shows and barrel-fire sing-alongs, all the support people gave each other - it showed what grieving and healing really are and could be for everyone if our society weren't so divorced from death.

AU: The song you wrote together is about Indigenous resistance, will there be any other songs with political themes?

JA: It's in there, though not as overt as in some of my older songs. There is one called "Murderers" that mentions Ken Saro-Wiwa, an Ogoni writer and activist who was hanged in Nigeria in 1994, basically at the request of Shell Oil, for organizing against their destruction of his homeland. The main album themes are fantasy, escape and survival - breaking the chains we put on ourselves and finding trust in yourself and your community as the world (maybe) collapses.

AU: When and where will *Blood Moon* be released?

JA: June 9! Get it from Bandcamp on vinyl or digital, stream it wherever, come to a show.

AU: Famous last words?

JA: Support your local DIY culture!

jeffandrew.ca

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09/16 - VERN'S, CALGARY
09/17 - TBD, PENTICTON



THE RESIDENTS

Anonymous Eyeballs

Interview by Ira Hunter and Jason Flower

AU: Who are we talking to today?

HF: My name is Homer Flynn. I am the President of The Cryptic Corporation. The Cryptic Corporation is the managers of public relations interface and babysitters for The Residents. The Residents are a music and performance group from San Francisco that had been struggling, stumbling, and fumbling around for 50 years now.

AU: So are you also a part of the band or can you not reveal that?

HF: Well, The Residents don't like revealing who may or may not be a part of the band. I am their primary visual person in terms of graphics and promo pictures and I've art directed or directed on their music videos too.

AU: You said San Francisco but weren't they in Louisiana at the beginning?

HF: They originally came from Louisiana, yeah. They were kind of a loose group of friends back there. There was no band or group formally. They kind of straggled out one at a time, but then reconnected once they once they got out here.

AU: What would it have been like in Louisiana in the 60s when they were starting out?

HF: Well, those were George Wallace times and if you know anything about American politics around that era, George Wallace was sort of the original Donald Trump. The Residents, as well as myself, felt like the South was a place to escape from back in the late 60s.

AU: Why did the band decide early on to be anonymous?

HF: For several reasons. One was that they are very anti-celebrity. They would read Rolling Stone and see how Mick Jagger couldn't go out and buy a pizza without 1000 people wanting him to sign their menu or whatever. They felt like well if we ever get any level of notoriety whatsoever, we don't want that. We want

The Residents to be over here and want our personal lives to be over there. Another reason was that they were trying to avoid ego conflicts. They would see how so many people got into disputes about who got credited for this or that. They felt like it was best to have all the credit kind of organically filter its way down to a blanket identity. Also the fact that they couldn't play when they started and knew they couldn't play, so they thought, this gives us something to hide behind.

AU: Did you have anything to do with coming up with the iconic eyeball masks?

HF: Yeah I did. Their original idea was that they wanted a completely different anonymous kind of image for each new release as they came out, or each new project. By the time

it got to Eskimo they wanted something really different. There were a lot of discussions back and forth. The original idea was to do a silver globe like a giant Christmas ornament with a top hat on it. It was my job to figure out how to realize that. So I went down to LA to talk to costume manufacturers and everybody said, no that'll never work. It'll just fog up on the inside, nobody can see and you can't breathe out of it. So I went back and talked to them and then the idea came up of not a globe

but an eyeball. It's almost as bad as the silver globe. It has a tiny little port hole that you can sort of see out of, you can sort of breathe and sort of hear. But yeah, I was the one that actually went down to LA and found some costume makers to put those together. The guy who was doing it is named Mark Seigel, who was at the time building Cylon warriors for Battlestar Galactica.

AU: There is a skateboard gang started in San Francisco called the JAKS and their mascot is an eyeball as well. I don't know if there is any correlation?

HF: Not that I know of. There have been other things, I think there was a Grateful Dead eyeball head image at one time. So the eyeball head is not necessarily that unique or original. We just put a top hat on it and then it becomes The Residents.

AU: How would you describe The Residents sound?

HF: The Residents in a way sort of masquerade as a rock band. But in reality, they're not really a rock band. At best, they are a very sort of left field kind of avant-garde rock band. But they are really more conceptual than anything else. They do music, they do video, they do performance and the boundaries between those things really are very fluid.

AU: Can you tell us about Ralph Records, how that started and some of the bands that they put out?

HF: Nobody was interested in putting out The Residents records when they started. They were labelled as so completely and totally non-commercial. So they ultimately decided, okay nobody wants to put them out, we'll put them out ourselves. So they're the ones that came up with the idea of Ralph Records. Then the Cryptic Corporation took over Ralph Records

and started running it for The Residents in 1976. Our idea as The Cryptic Corporation was that we liked what The Residents did and we did not want them to try to be more commercial. We wanted them to keep doing what they were doing. We then started signing other groups that we felt were more commercial, in order to make a profit and make money so that we could support The Residents to continue doing

what they were doing. The first act that we signed was Snakefinger with Philip Lithman. Who was an amazing guitar player. We signed other acts, a group called MX-80 Sound. They were kind of a very intellectual punk sound in a way. We signed Tuxedomoon. We did an album it was kind of a sampler of groups in San Francisco at that time. We had a group called Chrome and there were several more acts as well.

AU: How did you discover Renaldo and the Loaf?

HF: Oh yeah of course, actually one of my favourites. Renaldo and the Loaf, or Brian and Dave, they just kind of showed up at our door one time with tapes. Back at that time, we got so many tapes. Honestly, only a small percentage of them ever got listened to. Why I



happened to put on a Renaldo and the Loaf tape at this point, I have no idea. But ultimately I was crazy about their stuff and was very much their advocate in terms of putting out their albums.

AU: So with The Residents trying to avoid popularity, did they accidentally get any hits songs along the way in the past 50 years?

HF: I guess only on a kind of an underground hit level. They did actually one of the first punk songs ever, which was The Residents version of Satisfaction. That came out in about '76-'77 and that sold quite well at the time. They also took a sample of Michael Jackson's Billie Jean and they reworked that sample into a Hank Williams song called Kaw-Liga. But because it had this really catchy Michael Jackson thing as the beat underneath it it actually kind of caught on as like a dance club hit back in the 80s. That's probably their biggest hit.

AU: Does the current line-up of members have stage names?

HF: This group doesn't. Some of the ones in the past have. There was Randy, Chuck and Bob. They were kind of promoted as the world's greatest Residents cover band.

AU: What can you tell us about the 50th anniversary of The Residents and anything special that's been happening?

HF: There were a couple of things in terms of live events. The Residents have recently made an interesting contact with a guy named Edwin Outwater. Edwin is the music director for the San Francisco Conservatory and he's a big Residents fan so he got in touch because he was very interested in doing a collaboration with The Residents and that's kind of a work in progress. But he also was very interested in doing a 50th anniversary live performance, which happened at the conservatory early in January, which was great. It was half The Residents band playing songs from over the years. But then another half of it was various collaborators that came in to play The Residents songs. A lot of it was really fascinating. Hearing these other people interpret Residents music. That got recorded as a live album and that will be coming out.

AU: How did The Residents start working with Cherry Red Records? Can you tell us about the two Residents releases they are put out in July, Eskimo and The Commercial Album.

HF: I had a partner that I worked with for over 40 years. He and I were co-owners of The Cryptic Corporation. He was The Residents sound engineer and producer for the majority of their material. He announced unexpectedly that he wanted to retire around the end of 2015. So I spent most of 2016 trying to figure out how to enable his retirement and my ongoing career with The Residents. At the end of that year, I actually found two new partners and one was Cherry Red Records in London. The other is MVD Music Video Distributors on the East Coast. Each of them bought half of Hardy's half of The Cryptic Corporation and Cherry Red then embarked upon a very ambitious re-release series.

They have re-released at this point 15 to 20 Residents albums. They were originally releasing all of these as multiple box sets of CDs. Now vinyl has become so popular again that now they're re-releasing them on vinyl.

AU: Tell us about the newspaper outfits that were worn in their video for the song The Third Reich 'n Roll. What was it like making that video?

HF: Kind of wacky. This was back in their first studio, which was at 20 Sycamore Street. They recorded I think, Meet The Residents and The Third Reich 'n Roll there and maybe Fingerprince. But they also built sets and shot a lot of the Vileness Fats material there. The story I heard, I think they were hanging out one weekend and kind of went, Well, let's make a movie. They really wanted it to feel very alien like it was kind of an alien landscape. Of course, they didn't really have the money to build an exotic set and costumes. But there was one of them at that time, who was a complete and total newspaper addict. He had

a deck chair with stacks of newspapers three feet high on each side of it.

So ultimately they wound up building a set and costumes out of the newspapers and filming one weekend. Then they wound up shooting a second weekend and that's when they have the tinfoil man that breaks through the newspaper. A year or two went by and ultimately they decided to shoot one more time and they shot all this stop motion stuff. They had one character in a newspaper suit and then two or three different things and then a bunch of props from Vileness Fats and then shot the ending in a way that kind of ties things together. At that point is when they edited that with the other original material and made The Third Reich 'n Roll music video out of it.

AU: Was Snakefinger revealing himself as a member problematic for a band focused on anonymity?

HF: Well, from The Residents point of view and I think from Philip's point of view too, he never was a member. He was purely a sideman, a guest artist, but he was never really a member. I don't think he considered himself one.

AU: A favourite

album is The Commercial Album due to the songs being so short. What can you tell us about the concept for that record?

HF: Well, The Commercial Album in a lot of ways was a reaction to Eskimo. The thing was, it took The Residents four years to make Eskimo. I suspect this is fairly common with artists where they come up with ideas where they feel like they can see something out there but they can't quite figure out how to get to it. They had this idea of Eskimo and they did a lot of experiments with nothing really was coming together. I think the whole idea that brought it together was the idea of the stories, the Eskimo stories. Once they had that then they were able to go back and take a lot of the experiments that they had done earlier and work those into the stories. But once they had finished that and put four years into it, they felt kind of burned out. It's like okay the next thing we want to do as fast as we possibly can. Instead of the pieces being really long, they're going to be really short. Ultimately, that was The Commercial Album.

AU: Have The Residents done any soundtrack work for TV or Film?

HF: They have done soundtrack work for Discovery Channel. There was a documentary program, I think called "Hunters", it was animals eating animals. The people that were the producers were big Residents fans. The Residents have also done other things too. Nothing that got that much attention or that much notoriety. But they scored several movies and also did some stuff for MTV.

AU: Were you the involved in making the documentary Theory of Obscurity: A Film About he Residents or the new movie Triple Trouble?

HF: I was the director of Triple Trouble. But Triple Trouble is a feature. Theory of Obscurity was a documentary directed by Don Hardy a well established documentary filmmaker.

AU: What else do you do that's not Residents related?

HF: That's pretty much all I do. Once you get like 50 or 60 albums, there's so much material that's been created and things keep coming out. There are about a half a dozen different labels that we work with at this point but I'm the one that kind of manages all this stuff.

AU: Final words about The Residents and their legacy.

HF: The only real final words and I say this for myself as well as the Residents. We are after 50 years extremely grateful to be able to continue doing what it is that we do. Here's hoping for 50 more.

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COMING SOON - TURNTABLES & AUDIO EQUIPMENT



THROW THE FIGHT

Strangeworld

Interview with Guitarist Ryan Baustert

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

RB: This is Ryan Baustert, guitars, and background vocals for Throw The Fight.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

RB: I started the band in 2003 in college, and we cut our teeth playing bars and clubs all over Minnesota and Wisconsin. This year marks our 20th anniversary, so we've been doing our thing for a while now. Our 5th album, Strangeworld, drops June 30, and we've also released a ton of singles and EPs over the years. We've done a bunch of touring and worked with some amazing

producers, so it's been a great run. We're still having a ton of fun and are lucky to be in a place where we can continue to do this on our terms now that we're all in our 40s and have families.

AU: Who else is in the band?

RB:

Kade Kastelitz - Vocals

Kris Weiser - Guitars

Jeff Baustert - Drums

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

RB: Hook-driven, hard rock, and alternative metal music. We like big riffs and catchy choruses.

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

RB: Minneapolis, MN, and the scene here is awesome. We have a ton of great venues, and no matter what type of music you're into, you'll find a lot of artists here doing it.

AU: Your new album is out at the end of the month, what's it called, and why are you stoked for it?

RB: The new record is called "Strangeworld," and we're stoked about it because it is full of bangers! We didn't go into it with an agenda other than to write strong songs to the best of our ability. We experimented with some new tunings on a lot of the tracks. Some songs are in A# and A, so they are much heavier than previous material.

AU: Have you ever played a gig like the one in the music video for "Obey?"

RB: Yeah, all the time when we first started. All bands start playing shows like that in the beginning.

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

RB: It's a tie between the latest Story of the Year and For the Fallen Dreams releases. Both are amazing records.

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

RB: Art Chantry. His poster designs got me interested in graphic design as a teenager.

AU: Any shows or tours planned?

RB: Yes! The following dates are on sale now:

June 25 - Clear Lake, IA w/ Candlebox

June 30 - St. Paul, MN - Album Release Show

July 1 - Sioux Falls, SD

July 2 - Council Bluffs, IA

July 7 - Des Moines, IA

July 8 - Janesville, WI w/ Gemini Syndrome

July 9 - Madison, WI

Tickets are at: ThrowTheFight.com/tickets

We are constantly adding new dates and tours, so track us here if you want a notification when we're in your area.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

RB: Thanks so much for having me and checking out the band! We appreciate the support.

AU: How do people find you online?

RB: Hit up ThrowTheFight.com for all things TTF and search "Throw The Fight" on Spotify, Apple, or anywhere you listen to music to find us.

Photo Credit: Graham Fielder

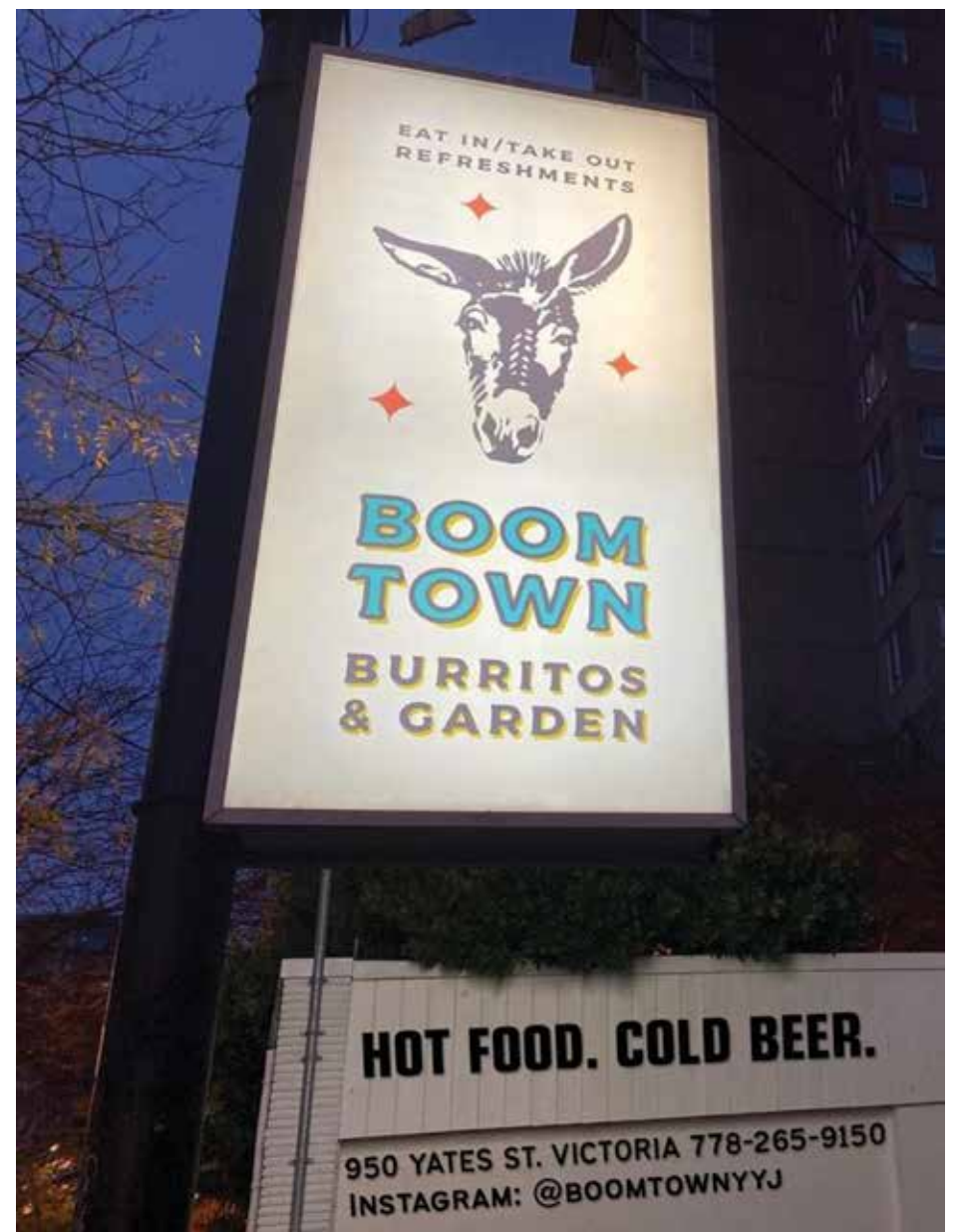


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WOLF EDWARDS

Vol. 1: Outer Planes

Interview by Mal Content

AU: Who are you talking to and what is your hidden talent?

Wolf Edwards: You're speaking with Wolf Edwards. I write, perform and teach music.

AU: What was your first introduction to music?

W: My earliest musical memory was of my mother playing "Now That the Buffalo is Gone" by *Buffy St. Marie*.

AU: What bands have you been involved with in the past?

I was involved with *Contempt* (1986-1991), *Black Kronstadt* (1991-1997), *Detestation* (1996), *Iskra* (2001-2017), and *Knacker's Yard* (2013-2017). *Contempt* started in Ucluelet and ended in Victoria, *Detestation* was based in Portland

Oregon. The others were based out of Victoria from start to finish. The first three were punk bands of varying styles, *Iskra* was a Metal band that performed mainly in the international anarchist punk scene, but also in the metal scene here and there. *Knacker's Yard* performed Irish, Scottish, and English folk music.

AU: What are your latest projects?

Right now I'm playing in a Folk group called *The Hounds of Cuchulain*, I run War On Music (an online vinyl shop specializing in Metal and Punk), and write "classical" music. That is I write scores for classical musicians to play, from solo to full orchestra. I'm also a session professor of composition and theory for the music department at UVIC.

AU: Are there pivotal moments in your musical history that you feel significantly lead to your latest album?

Yes, to many to discuss thoroughly. But here are a few:

Stealing a *Sex Pistols* cassette from my sister (she'd stolen a *Doors* one from me). Absolutely pivotal. This was my first introduction to punk rock, and anti-authoritarian politics all in one incredible package. Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols is to this day an amazing album. It made me want to play in a band.

Hearing *Black Flag* in 1986, or '85. I wanted to play guitar but the classic rock and metal stuff I'd been listening to sounded untouchable, with high production and technical playing. You know Jimmy Page, Hendrix, *Slayer*, *Metallica* and the like. I'd read about this group *Black Flag*, the legendary Los Angeles based hardcore band from the late '70s but, being from Ucluelet at the time, I couldn't find any of their releases. My French class took a trip to Paris (my one and only big high school trip) and that's where I found some *Black*

Flag albums on cassette tape. I loved the brutality and rawness of the sound. I thought Greg Ginn couldn't play guitar and yet here he was putting out records! Later on I realized that he was in fact an incredible musician. In any case I figured I could play like him, so I picked up a guitar as soon as I got back home, taught myself to play, and put together my first group: *Contempt*. I lost my art scholarship when we performed our song "Fuck the Pigs" at the end of year high school concert – so that defined my trajectory from visual artist to full time punk rocker.

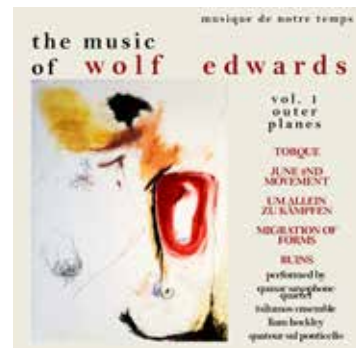
Producing the first concert I ever played. A great moment. There were no promoters in Ucluelet or Tofino to put on a Punk Rock show. So we rented the legion (in Tofino) and put on the very first show we ever played. About 150 people showed up. There was a grand circle pit. We had the best time of our lives that night. I ended up producing underground Punk and Metal shows, off and on, for the next 25 years or so. Its very powerful when the youth take culture into their own hands. Do-it-yourself praxis builds skill, communication and cultural understanding. I highly recommend it.

When I got kicked off of social assistance in '93 during the Harcourt years. This event pushed me deeper into music, although I didn't know it at the time. He, Harcourt, (the premier of BC) made everyone on social assistance line up at the welfare office to get their cheques (instead of mailing them out). This was done to embarrass and humiliate the poor. People would drive by yelling at us to get a job, calling us "bums" and so on. One day someone brought Harcourt masks for everyone in the line up, which was great. We all wore them and the trend spread through out BC. Anyway, I was one of the people scheduled to get kicked off during the great welfare purge of '93-'95. It was around this time I found out about student loans. None of my family went to post

secondary, so I didn't know about these things. I applied for one and then enrolled at the Victoria Conservatory of Music, when it was located near Beacon Hill Park. Unlike the University and College, they didn't require any prerequisites, so I could get in. I took classical guitar, music history, theory, and composition.

When my classical guitar teacher (Alexander Dunn) introduced me to the music of Brian Ferneyhough and Roger Reynolds, two awesome late 20th Century composers. This was in '94 or '95. Upon hearing this more esoteric art music, I decided to pursue serious studies in music composition. I dropped the Conservatory and headed to the University, which was much more progressive at the time. I ended up studying composition for the next eight years. I learned a BA and MA at the University of Victoria, I studied at the Schloss Solitude in Germany, Acanthes summer academy in France, and a couple of years with Gilles Tremblay in Quebec, and Chaya Czernowin from Israel.

All of this lead to the current album, which took three years to put together. There are five pieces on the album ranging



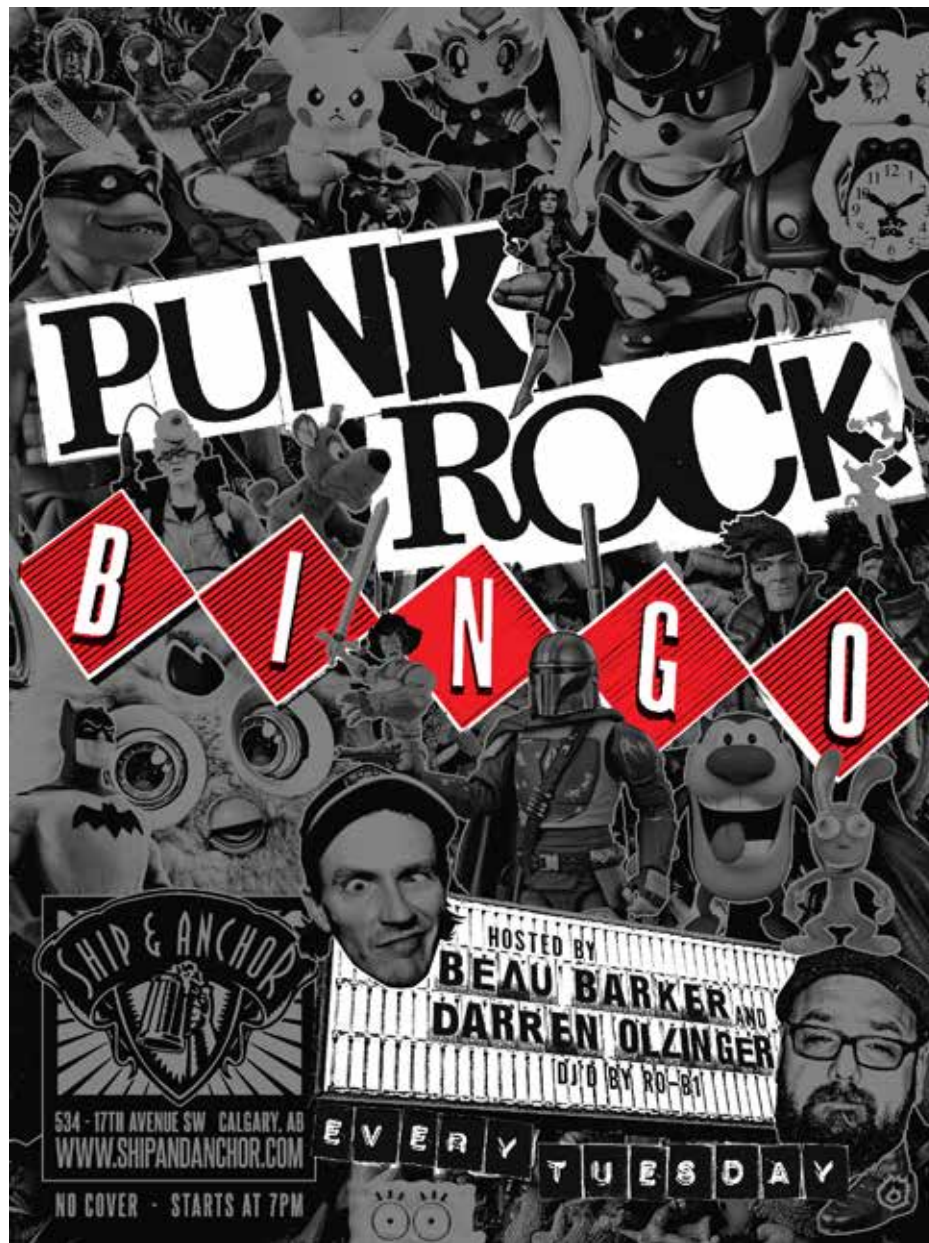
from 2009-2022.

AU: What can people expect to hear when they listen to the music of Wolf Edwards: Vol. 1 Outer Planes?

W: You can expect to hear music that connected to the French and German traditions of the Avant-Garde, especially the period between 1920-1985. So if you know the classic composers like Edgard Varese, Iannis Xenakis, Helmut Lachenmann etc, then you will have an idea of what I'm doing. The music is also very much inspired by the Avant-Garde Jazz greats like Sun Ra, Miles Davis, Albert Ayler, Sunny Sharock and the likes. For me that era (circa 1920s to 1980) was one of the most interesting, progressive, and open periods for music in general.

The album is diverse in instrumentation. It





includes a quartet for saxophones, a quartet for violoncellos, a mixed ensemble, a solo for amplified and distorted bass clarinet, and a trio for percussion and two saxophones.

AU: Who else helped you with the project?

W: Many people helped, but the album would not have been possible without the support of Ajtony Csaba, the Hungarian composer and conductor. He arranged a festival around my the pieces on the album here in Victoria, thus enabling me to record the works. The album includes top notch modern performers like the Quasar Saxophone Quartet of Montreal, Liam Hockley (bass clarinet), the Tsilumos Ensemble, the Quatuor Ponticello from Montreal, and premier percussionist David Shively. The album is adorned with a very nice piece of art from the Ontario based visual artist Nicole Depuis, who is a friend of mine. The Canada Council for the Arts paid for the album, but it was self released. Unfortunately, these days, record labels expect you to pay for everything, so why would I bother putting in out on their label. They say distribution but the classical music distribution is poor. So I just put it out DIY style, like the Punk records.

AU: Do you feel like each member brings something unique to the table? How so?

W: For the classical album (Outer Planes: The Music of Wolf Edwards Vol. I) I would say that the performers are the heart of it. They are the ones who put much time and effort into realizing the music. And believe me, its not easy music to play. They are difficult works, requiring a plethora of strange techniques and insane energy. The pieces also allow for some improvisational ideas, i.e, the free choosing of sounds, choices involving how



certain sounds are produced, or the free choice of sound objects etc. So the individual choices made by each musician helps to sculpt the sound world of each piece.

AU: What is your most memorable concert/tour story?

W: Having toured for over 20 years, and visiting around 38 or so countries, its hard to remember. Touring the anarchist centers of Europe was probably the most interesting. East European countries, especially Serbia and Croatia was pretty awesome. The "Three Days of Freedom" festival in Greece (we were the only international act to have played it up to that point) was incredible. Also festivals in Croatia, and Italy, as well as "Play Fast or Don't" in Poland, were great experiences.

AU: What are some of the inspirations you draw on while writing your music?

W: When writing classical music, I would say that the sounds of everyday are very important. The sounds around us have their own rhythm and pitch complexes from which a composer can draw from. I like how the soundscape of

everyday life, if you will, is never repeating, its always moving and always full of energy. This is what I try to bring to the writing: energy, non-repetitive structures, broken forms. You can read about this in more depth in the liner notes of the album.

AU: Who are your strongest musical influences?

W: I listed some in the questions below. For punk it was *Black Flag, Crass, Conflict, Dead Kennedys, Sisters of Mercy, The Cramps, Circle Jerks, Discharge, Nausea, Amebix*. For Metal it was always the Thrash and Black Metal classics: *Destruction, Sodom, Sarcophago, Marduk, Immortal, Emperor* etc.

For Folk music: *The Dubliners, The Pogues, Planxty, Wolfe Tones, Cheiftens*, Bob Dylan, John Prine, Hank Williams etc. For Classical: Xenakis, Cage, Lachenmann, Ligeti, Bartok, Schoenberg, Webern, Gerard Grisey, Galina Ustvolskay, the Romanian Spectral composers like Ana Marie Avram and many more. And of course all of the awesome Avant-Garde and free jazz greats.

AU: Tell us about your Celtic band Hounds of Cuchulain.

W: The Hounds are a four piece ensemble that plays: fiddle, tin whistle, Irish harp, guitar, vocals, and Irish tenor banjo. We have a couple of pick up musicians as well adding mandolin and 5-string banjo. We specialize in Irish folk music but also play a good assortment of English and Scottish traditional. I also write some original in the style. The band has been around for a little over a year and half and have played about 150 shows. We've released one album thus far entitled *Rebels, Rogues & Roustabouts*, with another on the way entitled *Here's the Grog*.

AU: Any big shows coming up for the Hounds of Cuchulain?

W: Big shows? Well, we have a lot of shows. Check out our site and socials for details. We just played the Highland Games & Celtic Festival, we will be performing at the upcoming Islands Folk Festival, the Classic Boat Festival (we play on a boat), The Port McNeil Music Fest, and much more. We travel up and down the island performing pretty much everywhere. It's awesome.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

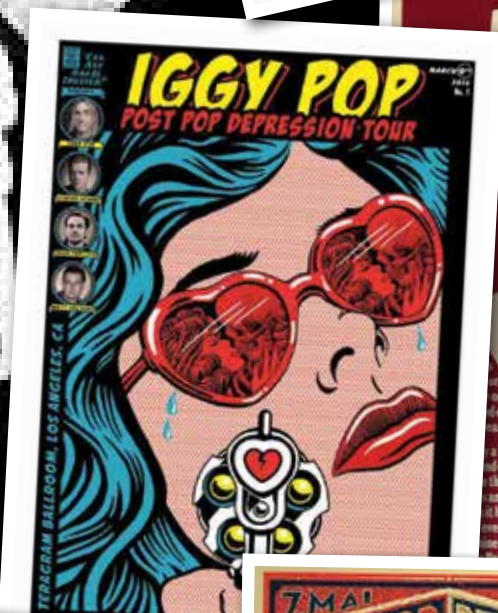
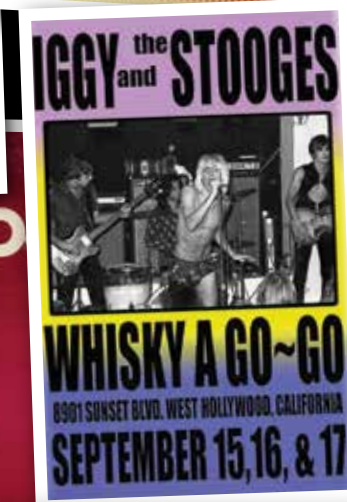
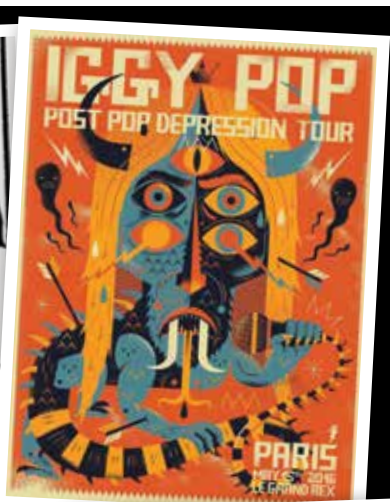
W: This interview was probably a little confusing as I am involved in many different musical worlds but, when you check out the sites, I hope things will become more clear. Thanks for the interview Ira. Thanks to everyone working to keep culture alive. Special thanks to everyone who has supported my work over the years and to the many friends I've made, and people I've worked with. Onwards.

AU: How do people find you online?

Wolfedwards.com
wolfedwards.bandcamp.com/album/outer-planes
iskracrust.bandcamp.com/
houndsofcuchulain.bandcamp.com/album/rebels-rogues-roustabouts
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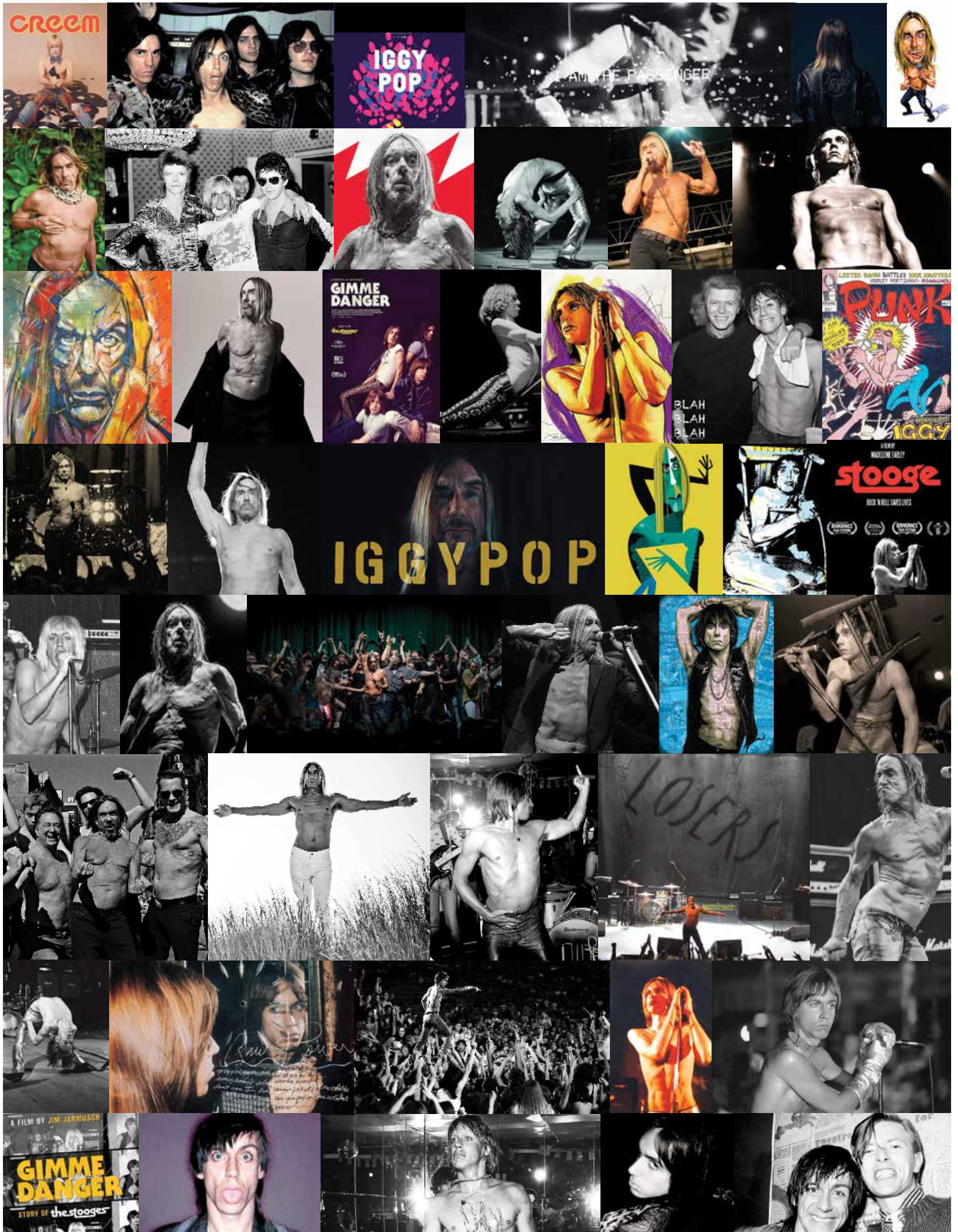


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HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU

Do the Pop!

by Billy hopeless

I remember when this other local musician accused me of jockin' my amigo Howard Rix's shtick and much to Howard's amusement and agreement I spat out "None of us are stealing no one's shtick, we were all spawned from Iggy's lightning rod so like the naughty little dog father sang "Get off my dick. I'm building this brick by brick." That self quote about Mr. Pop (not to be confused with the Canadian Frank Soda) still holds as true and thus when I was asked to write about him for this issue I said, OK, let's see what all the other neighborhood threats and lucky monkeys have to say about the chairman of the board. Let the testimonials begin!



David Bowie: I've got to appreciate him as one of the great lyricists in America. I think he's poignant, dangerous and hostile. I think he contains a

wealth of expression in the way he puts words together.

Johnny Depp: Iggy pop calling me a little turd was one of the best moments of my life

Josh Homme: Lemmy is gone.



Bowie is gone. He's the last of the one and only. It took balls to be him, a little guy with a big dick scarring

people in Detroit.

Anthony Bourdain: When I was young this man was a role model, an idea, a



roadmap for bad behavior. His music it turned out was the soundtrack for most of my life.



Debbie Harry: Mr. Pop is passionate. It's pretty

obvious that he's kid of a wild guy but he has standards, he has controlled madness and this is what it's really about.



Henry Rollins: I have always maintained Iggy pop is the heavyweight champion of rock and roll.



Miley Cyrus: People ask who I've studied for my movement. I always say Iggy Pop.

Cone McCaslin (Sum41): I've been asked

often about career highlights but the one that always comes to mind is recording a song with Iggy Pop and also playing in a live band with him repeatedly. Iggy is the most genuine and real musician I've met and being able to create something with him and hang with him is something I'll never forget. He is the godfather of punk for a reason and if Iggy never did what he did, punk as we know it would not be the same today.



Chrissie Hynde: Iggy could arguably be my #1 hero.

Blind Marc (Dayglo Abortions): We opened for Iggy back in 2017 at the Montebello Rock Fest in Quebec. It was awesome, he played all the hits! He's still rocking it out for a 75 year old grandpa.



Andrew Molloy (Budukon): It's crazy to think that the first time I saw Iggy (underage at the Commodore February 83 with D.O.A opening) one of my main concerns was that he might not be around much longer. If you had told 18 year old me that he'd be back headlining a festival here in Victoria forty years in the future I wouldn't have believed it. I'm so glad that's happening and I'm so glad he's still raging against the pricks.



Bev Davies: I like a guy in eyeliner.

Chris Walter: Would any of us even be here without Iggy Pop? Without Iggy, I'd probably still be listening to Uriah Heep in my bellbottoms. Iggy changed the fucking world.



Dustin Jak (Fully Crazy/Keg Killers): 1978 - Still in elementary school my mom took out a library book titled the Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock. It had a picture of Iggy with a caption that read "on the verge of doing something naughty." Fast forward to junior high... My friends are buying Raw Power on cassette. When I got the debut Stooges in grade 11, I couldn't tell what speed to play it on, but I figured it out as we all did. With a solo catalogue going back to 1976, this wired man from Ann Arbor has shown no signs of slowing down and we are thankful.



Michael Monroe: Iggy Pop is one of the most important people in Rock'n'Roll and one of the few artists I consider "Holy".

I got into the "Raw Power" and "Funhouse" albums first but also love "Kill City" and most of his stuff over the years. He's always had THE attitude and the sense of danger in his performance that belongs in Rock'n'Roll.



I had been into Stiv Bators before Iggy and copped some of Stiv's stage moves, like swinging

the mic chord around my neck, but then later saw Iggy do some of those moves on some old videos and realized that Stiv had been very much influenced by Iggy, which Stiv later confirmed to me, when we became best friends. So it's all about passing on the Rock'n'Roll legacy...

So yeah, thank God for Iggy Pop. Without him the world of Rock'n'Roll would be much more boring. He's been a great inspiration and a lot of fun to enjoy throughout the years.

Truly a legend and an icon whom everybody admires and respects for a very good reason.

Joey Shithead/D.O.A.: The first time I ever heard of Iggy Pop I was a teenager. Wimpy, Dimwit and myself were in a corner store and there was copy of Kerrang magazine. On the cover was Iggy, the caption read: Iggy Pop: Man or Worm?

We all thought, who the fuck is this guy? We soon found out how great and influential he was. A few years later D.O.A. had the honour of opening for Iggy two nights in a row at the Commodore Ballroom. He watched our set and said he liked it, he is good guy and a great talent. All hail the Godfather of Punk !!!



Ken Mochikoshi-Horne (The Bronx): Fuck geriatrics listen to Iggy Pop!

Hedwig and the Angry Inch: Mister Little started



something huge - Iggy Pop Iggy Stooge

Iggy Pop: The thing about punk rock is that there has to be a sense of Hopelessness about it.



Testimonial Photo Credits: Pablo Uceda, Laura Levine, Bob Gruen, Larry Busacca, Ron O. Vermeulen, Christophe D'Yvoire, Andreas Neumann, Steve Ritchie



PURE PUNK



to this day) while smearing his chest with peanut butter and broken glass. He'd dance, sway, twirl, and writhe across the stage and into the audience, channeling his idols Jim Morrison and James Brown with a demented twist.

After The Stooges broke up due to infighting and Pop's addiction issues, he would be championed and guided by David Bowie. The iconic singer produced his first solo albums, *The Idiot* and *Lust for Life*, while the two guided one another in their goals for sobriety. Both released in 1977, the two LPs are now considered landmark releases and feature many of Pop's most recognizable songs.

settled into a soft yet raspy baritone, his once chiseled physique gnarled and wrinkled with time. However, despite it being over half a century since The Stooges originally shocked curious music fans with their transgressive brand of rock, Pop is just now putting out some of the best work of his career. *Post Pop Depression* (2016), a collaboration with members of Queens of the Stone Age and Arctic Monkeys earned Pop a Billboard top 20 album, while 2019's *Free* marked a pivot into ambient jazz. His latest record from this year, *Every Loser*, acts as a grab-bag of previous Pop styles; there's introspective folk rock, stomping rock, and raw punk that makes his original Stooges cuts seem tame by comparison. As if his list of cross-generational all-star collaborators wasn't long enough, the record features members of Red Hot Chili Peppers, Jane's Addiction, Blink 182, and Foo Fighters across its tracklist. He's also recently worked with Eurovision sleazeballs Maneskin, experimental hardcore group (and fellow Detroiters) The Armed, and avant-garde electronic producer Oneohtrix Point Never, showing that no artist or genre is off limits.

As for *Rifflandia*, attendees should expect a mix of old and new. We'll likely get some stuff off his new record. He'll rip into a bunch of Stooges tunes. He'll play "Lust for Life" and "The Passenger." He probably won't play anything off the ambient jazz album, but if he does, that'll be awesome too. Whatever he ends up doing, there is one thing that is guaranteed: it will be legendary. That's what legends do.

IGGY POP

By Michael Luis

The word "legend" gets thrown around a lot.

That local band who played three rowdy basement shows and broke up? Legends. That bachelor party in Whistler? A legendary weekend. Mark. You know, Mark from work? That guy's an absolute legend. However, in the case of Iggy Pop, the word is apt. If you broke his career into decades, each individual decade would be worthy of legendary status alone. And he's not done. Not even close.

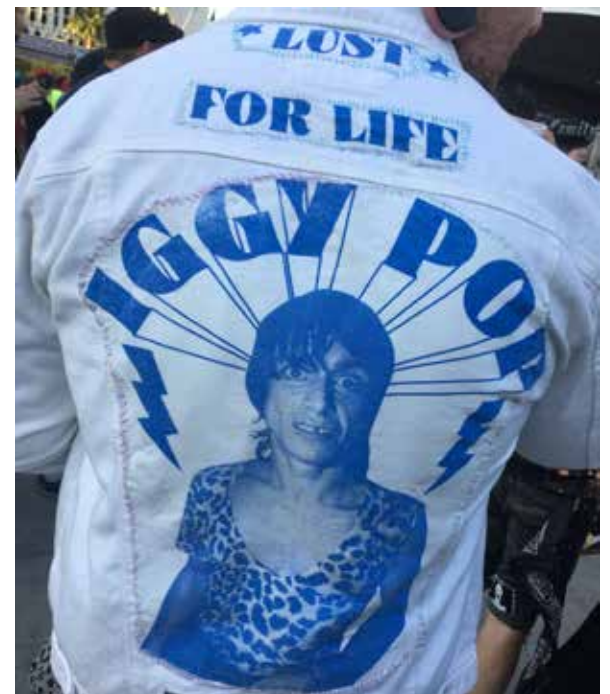
Born James Newell Osterberg Jr and nicknamed "Iggy" from his time drumming in his high school band, The Iguanas, Pop's career can be marked by several distinct eras. His first notable era was his early 20s fronting The Stooges, a band

that played confrontational, dangerous rock almost a full decade before the word "punk rock" entered the common lexicon. The sinewy Pop would perform shirtless (a tradition he continues

Pop's 80s output was marked by breakneck turns in genre experimentation. *Zombie Birdhouse* (1982) featured experimental electronics, worldbeat rhythms, and rambling poetry, whereas its follow-up, *Blah-Blah-Blah* (1986), is a commercially conscious new wave record spurred by a reunion with Bowie that yielded his biggest smash hit to date, the dance-pop strutter, "Real Wild One (Wild One)". Further records throughout the 80s and 90s ran from swaggering heavy metal to alt-rock, grunge, and the grimy proto-punk he originally pioneered with The Stooges decades before. That's not to mention his detours into film and television, both as a composer/musician and as an occasional actor. He even had a Super Mario character named after him.

After "Lust For Life" got a boost in popularity from its inclusion in the 1996 film *Trainspotting*, Iggy's early solo material started to get discovered by a new generation. Over 25 years into his career, the 90s and 2000s were marked by high-profile collaborations with the next wave of musical iconoclasts, whether it be the snotty pop-punk of Green Day and Sum 41, the angular post-hardcore of At the Drive-In, the driving industrial metal of White Zombie or the provocative pop of Madonna. He also reunited with the surviving members of The Stooges, touring and recording with them for an additional decade alongside with his myriad solo pursuits.

Now in his 70s, Pop's once-ferocious yelp has



iggypop.com

rifflandia.com

(This article originally appeared in *Rifflandia Magazine*)

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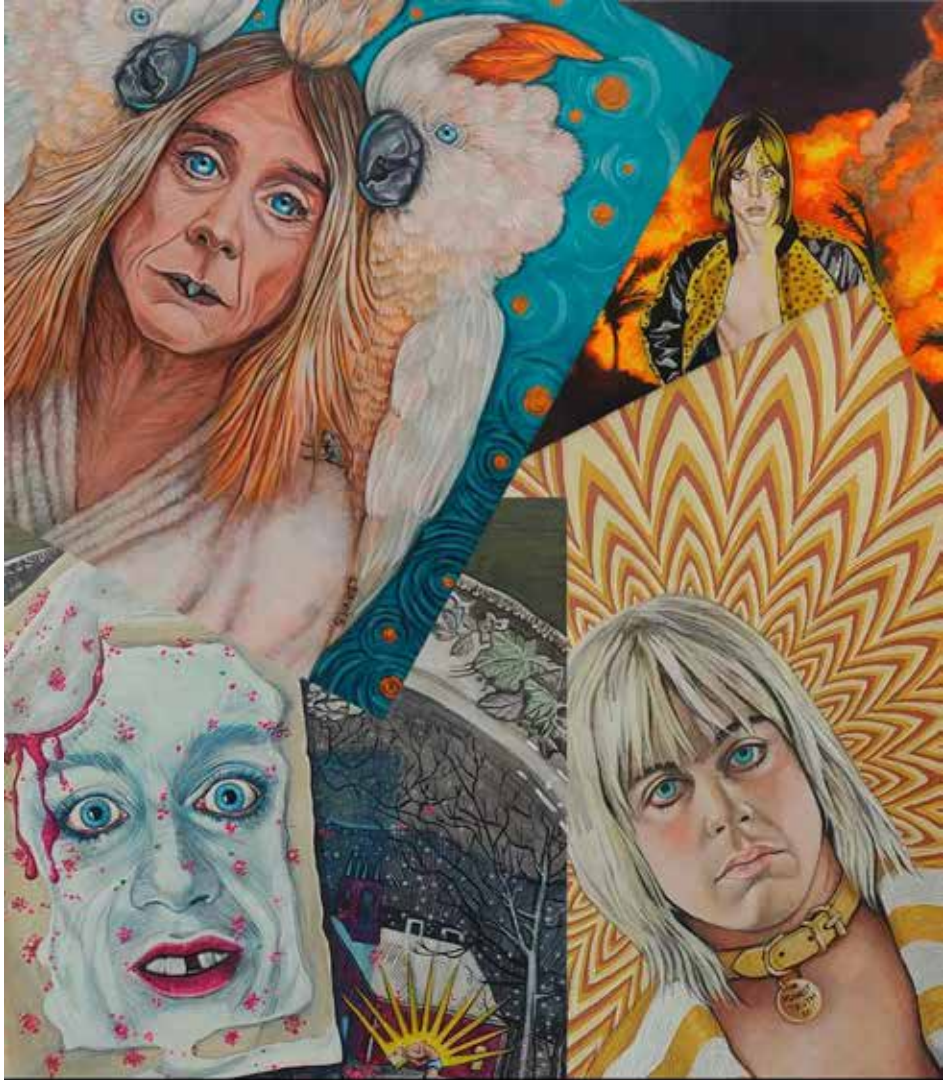


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IGGY POP ART BY LEANNE DAVIES
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Iggy with skin flayed from his body.
Wm Stout 2011

IGGY POP

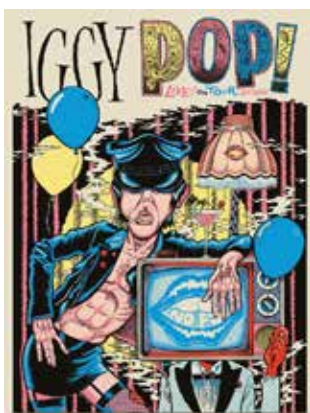
An open letter to the uninitiated:

by **Tweet Reid**

If Lemmy Kilmister is the God of fast, hard rock and roll, Iggy Pop is the antichrist.

Born of blues and jazz, The Stooges' raw, unhinged garage rock gave birth to punk while co-founding both hard rock and heavy metal before Iggy's own sound was reborn as a collection of poetic Bowie-infused alt-rock anthems. Everything punk is Iggy. All of it. Every goddamn punk song ever played.

Countless well-known stars have called him the greatest frontman of all time. He is every musician's sneer and swagger you've seen on the stage. Forever an infectious spectacle of pure attitude, jumping, screaming and

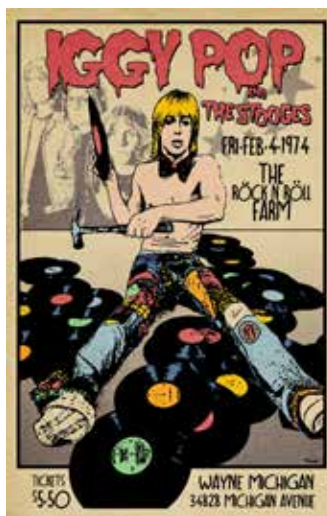


dancing his way into the counterculture subconscious of the past seven decades, Iggy is a majestic wonder from the gods for us commoners to behold.

He wasn't just the first punk, he is punk. The first to stage dive. The first to crowd surf. The first to truly say Fuck YOU! to the establishment and conformity. You could compare him to James Brown, Elvis or any forerunning music icon you can name. He is Prometheus. He is Odin. Exposing you to the harsh reality of what is, the knowledge of what could be and the inspiration to be much more, he is Satan himself without a shirt, eternally gyrating above the masses who worship at the feet of rock and roll.

In an unceasing existence 20 years ahead of his time, Iggy spent the late 60's and 1970's living in the future. From trailer park punk kid to pioneer to rock star to poet and philosopher, he has influenced literally innumerable acts from the sounds we know and love to the mainstream of Top 40 pop and beyond.

The Ramones bonded and formed a band because of their mutual love of The Stooges. Sex Pistol guitarist Steve Jones learned to play listening to their albums and the rest of the band took their cues while trying to match their sound and attitude. If it wasn't for Iggy and the Stooges, punk music of any and all form,



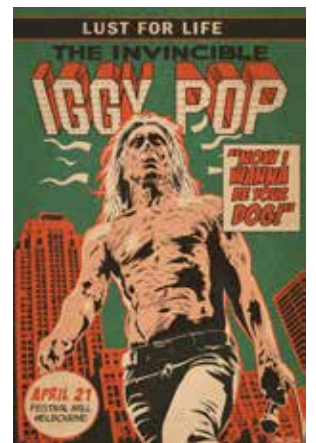
genre and subgenre moving into grunge, post-punk and far beyond, along with the entire alt/indie rock movement, would not exist as you know them. You can hear Iggy and the Stooges' direct influence in monumental acts like Nirvana, Guns N' Roses and virtually every band with an attitude and a penchant for getting out of control on stage and off.

During my time, I have easily heard more live covers of Iggy/Stooges songs by major artists than any other. He has been covered not only by well-known punk and metal acts but by artistic indie legends and multi-millionaire radio

stalwarts. Not counting the live covers from Metallica and the like, there are actual recordings and album releases by those aforementioned Guns, David Bowie, Tina Turner, Blondie, Boy George, Grace Jones, Duran Duran, Tom Jones, Red Hot Chili Peppers, R.E.M. and The Cars just to name a few.

How many times have people had their minds blown when they realize Iggy and the Stooges wrote and recorded those tracks before the words punk, hard rock or heavy metal even existed together in a sentence? In my lifetime, I have never been in the presence of a first-time listener to that

group or Iggy's first decade of solo work that was not wildly impressed. And when they always ask why it's not played on the radio more often, his mysterious legend just grows wider and wider. Everyone has heard of him and still, many have yet to hear him.



I could go on to tell you stories about his life and history but it's better if you hear it from the man directly and those who were there. Watch GIMME DANGER by Jim Jarmusch and the first couple episodes of the docu-series PUNK (2019), produced by Iggy himself.

He is our first, our unholy punk Elvis. Forever denied his true status by mainstream media as they and the society they feed and cater toward are the perpetual targets of his howl and thrusts.

Listen to Iggy. Listen to The Stooges. Be yourself. Go have fun. Be a freak and burn like hell.

The Stooges. Be yourself. Go have fun. Be a freak and burn like hell.

(Tweet Reid has been a punk since the 1970s. He once snuck backstage at an Iggy Pop show, later to be tossed out on his drunk ass by some very angry security. The man would have been proud.)





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IN ONE EAR

Back From Everywhere

If it could be done, Iggy Pop did it. Now he's clean, cool and cookin' again. By Les Wiseman

Iggy Pop sees clearly now through the blue-plastic-framed spectacles that he makes a show of putting on and then soberly, professorially staring through. James Newell Osterberg, favorite son of Ypsilanti, Michigan, is 40 and sports a few crow's-feet and the reformed wastrel's gaunt cheeks. Under his chic, unconstructed blazer and white shirt, that indestructible body is all Saran Wrap and buggy whips, not an ounce of paunch. The pearlies flash constantly, indicative of a three-year, dry-and-clean lifestyle, and in anticipation of the presentation of his first gold album, for Blah, Blah, Blah, later this March afternoon.

He is healthier and more successful than at any time in his 18-year career. In bygone days he has been a cult god of dissipation, renowned as the patriarch of stage-diving, the diva of self-laceration and the mini-skirted displayer of reputedly groupiedom's most venerated wazoo. Pop has been known to take a sniff, a shot, or a sip of most any sophistication reducing substance, with results that legends are made on. With surprisingly few apparent cosmetic and psychic scars, he recently resculpted himself to become the most urbane and positive of gentlemen.

Tugging on a Perrier and sparingly dragging on a Winston, Pop is expansive on the past. "The fulcrum of the most popular galaxy of myths about me just perpetuates that my function as a performer has been to act out people's sickest, most destructive fantasies for them. People would come to my shows primarily to see in what new way Iggy was going to screw himself up," he laughs. "But I never felt that was the crux of what I did."

Perhaps not, but while it drew the elite audience, the legendary behavior alienated the biz cogs who gain artists tidy incomes, and for all Pop's critical kudos and Olympian status, his finances and career plans were a tangled skein. To an extent, Pop's reformation was spawned by a Berlin sojourn with David Bowie, where both men went to master drugless finesse on matters of paying rent, buying groceries, paying bills, sleeping at night, and rising in the morning. Pop's abandonment of a priapic history of promiscuity in favor of his beautiful Japanese wife, Suchi, also contributed.

The capper, though, was a modest passel of shekels he received in royalties from David Bowie's 1984 hit recording of Pop's tune, China Girl. With these beans he resolved some outstanding debts, set up a mortgage on an NYC condo, and began, soberly, to work on what would be his return, after four years, to the wax-vending fray. This time, though, he was going to let no cards fall where they may.

"I got to the point where I was in my late 30s and I was thinking about things like this, 'It's Wednesday-boy, I hope by Friday I can score some coke and another gorgeous chick,' he chuckles. "There was a period of about a year between '80 and '81 when I realized all the points I had lost in my music because I had never faced up to some of the tedious business you have to do to protect your art.

"I decided not to be a knave. I couldn't look in the mirror and respect myself being some jive-ass guy who didn't know whether to piss or get off the pot.

"What happens to people like me who get into a creative field and get a bit of notoriety, is that you get to the point where you will attract only people to whom you are the be-all and end-all, and you can't say or do anything wrong. You know, if Iggy Pop takes a shit on the rug, that's great art. But my landlady did not care Iggy Pop from Iggy Shnop. It's more like, 'You know, my daughter's getting married; you could sing at the wedding.' Or it gets down to a lawyer looking over 11 years of work, maybe six of my albums that I consider to be brilliant, and he just looks at the numbers and goes, 'All that time and still no success...' Not everybody's so impressed with Iggy Pop."

Handily, Pretenders leader Chrissie Hynde...

THE REST OF THIS 1987 IGGY INTERVIEW IS LOST

... so this is as far as my 1987 interview with Iggy Pop goes. Many people have tried to find that issue of Vancouver magazine for this publication and have failed. However, let me ramble on about my life with Jim Osterberg. Ending that first page would be, "...Hynde, after announcing how honoured she was to have had Iggy perform before her at the Vancouver Coliseum, bent over and kissed the stage." So, it was one of those weird big gigs. Twas one of many great Iggy shows.

Earlier that day, I was sipping champagne with A&M Records for its presentation of Iggy's first (Canadian) gold album. A bunch of us were slotted to interview Ig. Present were Buck Cherry (who wanted a drink in the Four Seasons suite); the vile, stupid and ignorant John Mackie from one of the local cage liners. And me. We had a nice conversation and we had to go to another room for Alex Waterhouse-Hayward (my photographer) to shoot The Ig. Thus, we got the suit and glasses "straight" Iggy of 1987.

When the gold record was awarded to Ig, --likely by A&M Records James Monaco-- we were all in a sparsely attended ballroom. Iggy was pleased as punch. Buck was rambling and trying to get Iggy's attention, but I asked Iggy, "WTF, you've quit drinking and yet you're now drinking champagne ...?" Ig replied "That is a very good question," and we grabbed two bottles of champagne and went into a corner to talk and drain them. Meanwhile, Iggy had to tell Buck Cherry to go away as we were talking about something important.

Twas there, where a bit of a friendship of sorts was formed. I've seen Iggy maybe a dozen times including his last two shows in Seattle. That he is showing in Rifflandia, downtown Victoria, is a fkn mindfull for a new generation.

I hitchhiked from Port Alberni to see Iggy and The Stooges in 1973 at the Pender Ballroom in Vancouver. The rarely seen Raw Power Tour. It took a long time --past midnight, the blow was needed--for The Stooges, with James Williamson in batwings, red eye-shadow and a proto-Keef short spikey haircut, to appear. And then it was ... fkn history.

The top portion of this article originally appeared in the May, 1987 issue of Vancouver Magazine.



Pop: "I decided not to be a knave. I couldn't look in the mirror and respect myself..."



Photo Credits: Alex Waterhouse Hayward (Iggy) and James Dittiger (Iggy and Les)

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RETRO IGGY POP LIVE REVIEW

50 Years Ago!!!

RAW POWER TOUR

A Platter Of Raw Iggy To Go

Aug 10th & 11th, 1973

Pender Auditorium, Vancouver, BC

by David Matychuk

In August of 1973, the Stooges crossed the border into Canada, and played in Vancouver. Vancouver was one of the only Canadian dates the Stooges played in the early 70s.

On the first night Iggy was dressed in a loincloth with one legging that looked sheer and glittery. The second night the legging was more tattered.

He wore black zippered leather boots with the zipper broken on one of them; it was held together with gaffer's tape. On the second night we were waiting lined up on the stairs to enter the second floor auditorium (more like a small school gymnasium with a 4 foot high stage at one end) and Iggy walked by us on his way in. He was shirtless and wearing blue jeans with a hairbrush jammed into a back pocket.

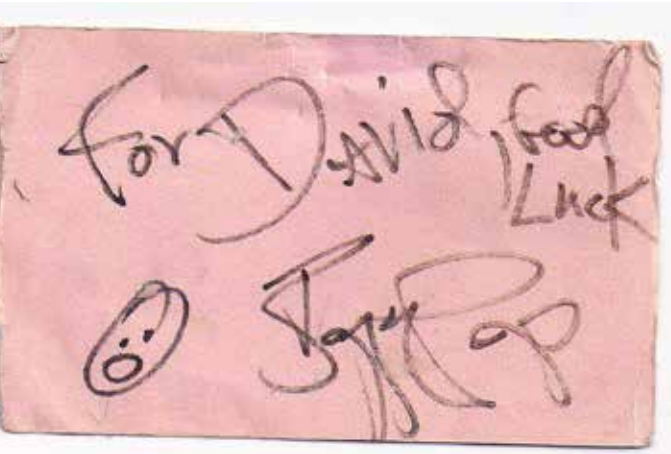
James Williamson was very glammed up, with a Jobriath style silver glitter and black body suit with triangle shapes, and lots of eyeliner. His guitar playing was sharp and focused. We were right at the front of the stage both nights, and at one point he stuck the neck of his guitar out over my head, and I could feel the ends of his strings raking my hair.

Iggy kept taking his microphone off the mike stand and giving it a spin, so the stand would careen in unpredictable fashion. My friend kept it from hitting me in the back of the head once when I was looking to the right at James Williamson. There was a large silver tank of something, oxygen maybe, under the large and mostly inaudible piano and Iggy kept taking pulls through a mask attached to the tank.

Scott Thurston played the piano, and he also came out and played harmonica on a couple of songs, most notable among them being "Open Up And Bleed", which was the sensational and previously unheard closing number.

Ron Asheton was all in black, Maltese Cross around his neck, and

he just stood there playing very dynamic bass, very reminiscent of John Entwistle to me. And Scott Asheton, who Iggy only referred to as "Rock Action" which was news to me and it looked to him maybe too, played tough basic beats on his small drum kit. The band really sounded fantastic, peak hard rock with a glam edge, and led by a supreme front man who might do, say, or sing anything.



"Head On", "I've Got My Cock In My Pocket", and "Rich Bitch" were new songs in the mix with mostly "Raw Power" material.

Iggy jumped into the small crowd at stage front both nights, and he never hit the floor.

My friend and I felt compelled to come back the next night. We were both 18, but nobody was checking ID. They may not even have had a bar, though people had beer. The first night Iggy was delayed at the border, so

the opening act, a mediocre local blues group called the Danny Tripper Band, played a couple of unwanted extra sets to increasing hostility from the bored, restless crowd. Neither night was all that well attended, you could easily get right up in front of the stage, but I later became friends with some of the strangers who were there that night. It was inevitable, I guess.

My friend and I were already playing rock music, mostly together, and within a year we had become the band that I still play in 50 years later. We called ourselves NO FUN. Like I say, it was life changing.

In 1987, opening for the Pretenders, Iggy kept being told about my group, so he told the record company rep who was chauffeuring him around town to give him something to write on for a note to me. This is the photo of what he wrote on the back of a ticket stub:

I was used to Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin, Yes, Jethro Tull, and other such 70's hard rock masters, and I must say that Iggy and the Stooges sounded great by any standard. They also made the other bands I mentioned seem safe as milk.



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POSTER BY:
TAYLOR BOURQUE



SELFIST

A Better World Rejected

Interview with Vocalist Stepan Soroka
By Brady Tighe

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

S: You are speaking with Stepan Soroka, vocalist for Vancouver-based melodic hardcore band *Selfist*. Rest assured, no one is paying any bills with this band.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

S: *Selfist* started jamming in 2011, dropping a demo in 2012 and an EP in 2015. We're finally releasing our debut full-length on June 10th of this year. Better late than never, right? Over the years, we've shared the stage with a ton of bands

big and small, including some of our all-time favourites like *The Rebel Spell*, *Strung Out*, and *Choke*. We've played every venue from your neighbor's living room to the big stage, and we love it all. Our passion for aggressive music has kept us going for over a decade, and we do this because we can't live without it.

AU: Who else is in the band?

S: Kieran Glennon is on guitar, Jerome Tovillo is on drums, and Eric Morrison handles bass.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

S: It's a challenge to describe your own band, but we've been told we sound like a mix between *Sinking Ships* and *Propagandhi*, and that sits just fine with me. We do our best to keep things interesting and leave the listener guessing about what's coming around the corner. Our mission

is to let each member of the band shine without imposing any restrictions dictated by genre tropes.

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

S: Some years ago, we played a show in Valican, BC, at a place called Metal Church. Calling Valican a town is a stretch, but it was awesome to play in the middle of the woods in the Slokan Valley to a group of punks that seemed to literally emerge from the thickets. Shout out to the gracious folks who run the Metal Church, and to *Total Isolation* for inviting us to come play.

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

S: Our guitarist drives a pretty sweet Sprinter van and will come and change your hot water tank for the appropriate fee.

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

S: We all come from slightly different points of musical obsession, but two bands we can unanimously agree on are *Propagandhi* and *Choke*, so anything by them. Let's say *Supporting Caste* and *Slow Fade*, respectively. Kieran loves pop punk, Jerome is big on math rock, Eric is a full-on metalhead, and I love all types of hardcore. Eric would like to add "Where Owls Know My Name" by *Rivers of Nihil*, and I have to agree with that one too.

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

S: I consistently feel like the weirdest thing in public every time I go outside. Outside of that, anytime I see someone riding a Onewheel, it looks hella weird. Get a bicycle, you fucking dork.

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

S: I'm going to go with "Dharma and the Bomb" by *Bad Religion*. I guess when you put out 17 albums, there's bound to be a couple stinkers in there. They've got a couple of full dud albums too, but the good stuff makes up for it.

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

S: I would ask Chi Pig to doodle it on a napkin for five dollars at Pub 340, contingent on having a time machine. Rest in peace to a true legend.

AU: Anything else to promote?

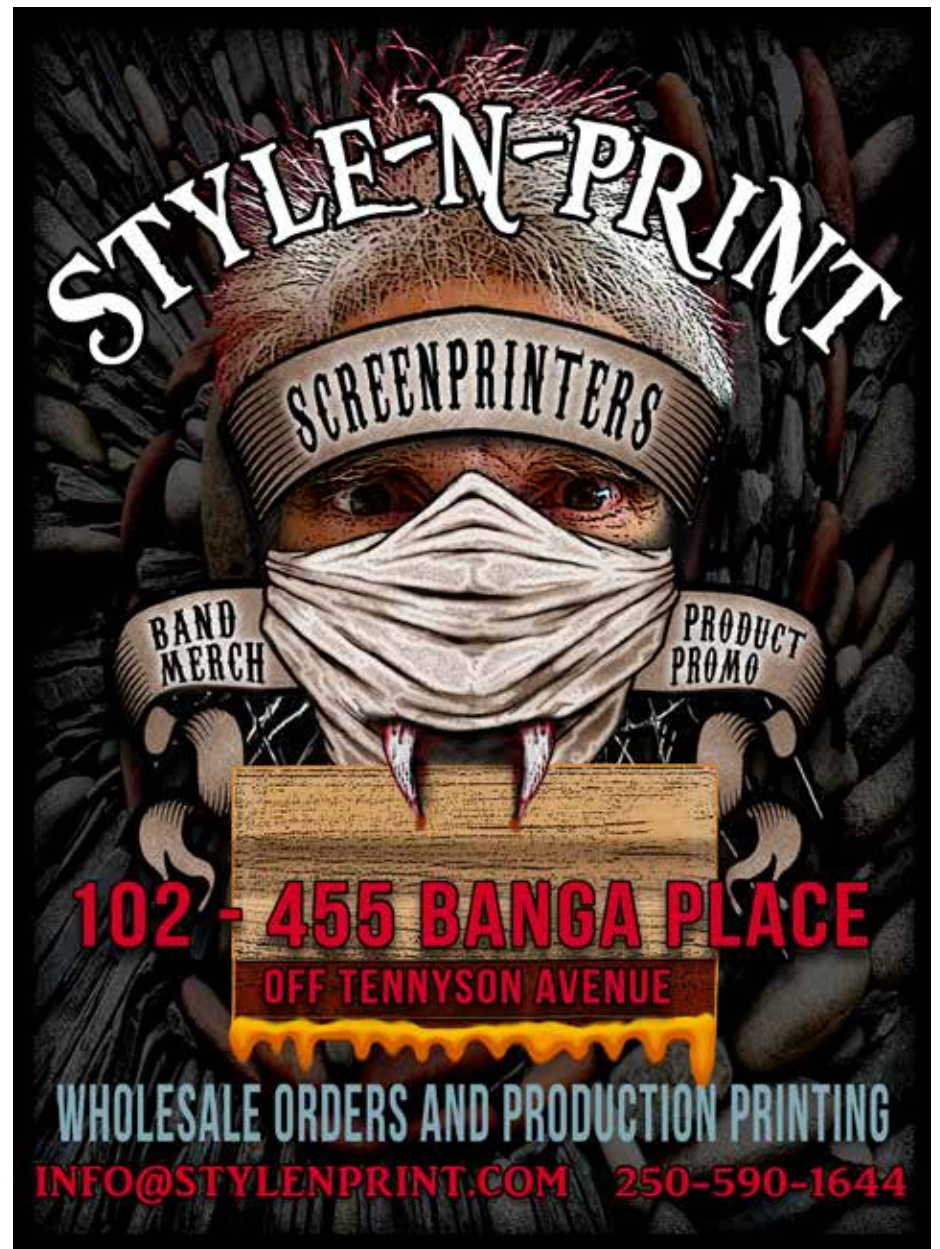
S: The main thing we would like to promote is our LP dropping on June 10th. It's called "A Better World Rejected" and was engineered by the very talented Jesse Gander. Mastering was handled by Alan Douches, who has worked on some of the most important records in hardcore, from *Converge* to *Deadguy*. It took us about six years to write the damn thing, and we're extremely proud of it. A lot of bands pop up for a couple of years and disappear, and although our output hasn't been prolific, we're still here, and we're still doing this for the same reasons as when we started.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

S: The reason we started this band is because it is more rewarding to be a participant rather than a spectator. If you feel a passion for something, get involved, get creative, and water the garden that you want to grow. If you love music, start a band or a fanzine. Get a camera and shoot some photos. Help your friend who is organizing a show. Buy some merch from a touring band. Say hello to the awkward loner at the edge of the crowd. It's easy to take this shit for granted, but it can only happen if people make the effort to keep the fire burning.

AU: How do people find you online?

S: You can find us on Instagram, Facebook, Spotify, YouTube, Bandcamp and abetterworldrejected.com.



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Cone McCaslin

Interview By Matthew Rooney

Cone is a musician, producer, and DJ who is best known as the bassist of Canadian punk icons *Sum 41* and as the host of Cone's Cave on Oshawa's CKGE-FM (94.9 The Rock).

NOTE: This interview was conducted prior to the news of Sum 41's pending disbanding.

Absolute Underground: How have you felt about mainstream return of pop-punk and emo over the last couple of years and are there any records from this new wave that have stood out to you and what has it been like to become kind of an elder statesman of sorts in the genre?

Cone McCaslin: It's always kind of a shock to me, but I think it really shows that music goes in cycles. Obviously, when we came out in 2001 it was a hot time for that style of music, and I credit our success back then to catchy songs and good timing. That's why it blew up so big. Obviously, we felt the pain of it going away too. There were no radio stations that wanted to play us in the

late 2000s, that style of music was gone. They wouldn't even listen to the songs, they would just say, "we are not playing that band right now". I think nowadays, people go look back and maybe, if they were a hater of that style of music, they look at music that's been happening in the last 5 or 6 years and go maybe that wasn't so bad. \

AU: *Sum 41* has always stood apart from many contemporaries with the fusion of pop punk with heavy metal and as you guys have aged the heavy metal has become more front and centre. How have you found the reactions from the metal community towards what you do? I recall you mentioning on Cone's Cave that you'd feel kind of out of place on a Knotfest stage.

CM: I think a lot of the big metal bands have always embraced us, because we always had a nod to them in

our music. I remember the *Iron Maiden* guys came to our show in 2002 and brought their kids. We've been in contact with *Metallica* quite a bit, and we did a thing with Rob Halford in 2001. The whole genre thing we never really cared about. The term pop punk was something that got put on us. We're a strange band, in that we can play, (not so much Knotfest because that's pretty metal,) but we've played stuff in the U.S. and even Europe. There's a festival in Europe called Graspop Metal Meeting, I was a little terrified to play it cause even the sound of it sounds very metal, but it was fine.

AU: The next *Sum 41* album is said to be half pop punk and half metal. What's it been like to look back but also keep going forward?

CM: The thing about the new album is there's the one side that you could say is the pop-punk stuff and the other that's more metal. But none of the stuff on the pop-punk side, to me, sounds like All Killer No Filler. It's just like it could have come out in that era but it doesn't really sound like anything we've done before. There's no song that sounds

like "In Too Deep," and there's no song that sounds like "Motivation," but the songs on the Heaven side lean more to that style. We never set out to make a record just like All Killer No Filler. Deryck (Whibley) started writing these songs during the pandemic and started sending them to us. It was around 20 songs, and they were all very different. Once we recorded them all, we all really liked them. We went "you can't make a record where that song is next to that song." So then came the idea to do the double record.

AU: For a while now, you've been doing Cone's Cave on 94.9 The Rock (CKGE-FM) in Oshawa. How did that come about? Why radio over say podcasting?

CM: There was this guy in Toronto on *102.1 The Edge* named Dave Bookman (Bookie). He used to bring me on his show when he was the afternoon guy. After a while he said "you should come on my show for like half an hour every couple of weeks and do Cone's Corner" and I was like "oh yea that's cool" but in 2005 we were so busy. Chuck had come out and we were touring, I just didn't have time. Then when he passed away, I got sentimental about it and felt I should really revisit this and also the pandemic was there so I had some time and I started making these demos of what I thought the radio show should be and I thought the Oshawa station, 94.9 The Rock, was a good fit because we grew up in Ajax which is 10 minutes down the road. There were so many people telling me "you should do a podcast" but when I started researching stuff I realized you can't play the songs and I wanted my show to be about songs.

AU: On the show you play a lot of standard radio stuff but you also play a fair amount of lost classics, deep cuts, and underground records. What is the track selection process like for you when it comes to those songs?

CM: The idea for the show was to play songs that aren't on commercial radio. I know there's Sirius XM and they have their punk station and metal station but on commercial radio I didn't really hear too many of these programs happening. A band like *NOFX* or *Pennywise* or *The Sonics* from the 60's, you never hear these bands on the radio on a daily basis. The was the idea. The song selection every week is whatever guests I have on. I kind of try to gear it towards the guest a little bit. I have this massive list of bands and I'll go "I haven't played them yet so I'll play them".

AU: Is there a way emerging underground bands can submit music for the show?

CM: I do a segment on the show called "Found in the Underground" and every week I play a band you probably haven't heard of. You'd have to be going to the small club and seeing bands that are playing in front of ten people I've played a band like *No Bro* on my first week, who can now play in front of hundreds of people, who at the time were pretty underground. Get me on Instagram at @officialconemccaslin or I have a website conemccaslin.com and you can submit a song there.

AU: The Rock is based in Oshawa and *Sum 41* is from Ajax. Was joining The Rock a kind of homecoming for you or have keep tabs on

what's been going on in Durham with regards to rock music? If so any artists in recent years you've dug from the area?

CM: I lived downtown Toronto for 23 years, but I just moved back to Durham Region in October. Since I moved back, I started to realize there are bands like the *Anti-Queens*, who I've known for a while, live around here and they're good. I think a lot of those bands are starting to submit to my show cause they get The Rock actually on the radio, instead of having to stream it. So I'm getting a lot of submissions from Durham Region bands now which is cool.

AU: A few weeks ago you premiered some stuff by Todd Morse, your partner in *Operation M.D.* It's been a while since you guys dropped a record. Anything in the works on that front? I think you guys are touring together this summer.

CM: We are, he plays bass for *The Offspring* and we're doing a tour in August of the US. We've talked about it. I don't foresee us doing a whole album again.

AU: How does making an alt-country record compare to a heavy metal or punk one?

CM: It's a lot harder. In *The Strumbellas* and *Sun K*, both in that same zone, they have a lot more instruments going on. *Strumbellas* were a seven-piece when I did it and they had a fiddle and they had a banjo and they had keys and they had a lot of harmonies and it was just a lot. I was a little overwhelmed but it was their first record so we kind of worked together on it. With *The Strumbellas* that took months and months and months, same with *Sun K* it took forever. They wanted to put layers and layers of shit on the songs which turned out great it's just that was kind of new for me.

AU: On social media, you regularly show off what you're spinning. Are there any record shops in Toronto or Durham that you love?

CM: Yea there's a place in Oshawa called Kops. I was blown away at how good that store was. I know it's kind of a chain but they do these bargain bin things too that you could get records for like four bucks, so that was cool. And there's a place in Toronto that I go to quite regularly, just off College Street in Little Italy, called Neurotica. The dude that owns it is so cool, he's really friendly.

AU: If you had to erase all of *Sum 41*'s music from existence with the exception of one album, what album would you keep and why?

CM: Does This Look Infected has always been my all-time favourite record. We were teetering into more metal, and we wanted to be edgier. There was support from the label but you know there were people at the label who were like "we could have sold so many more millions of albums" but I'm very proud we didn't because, when I look back on it now, it made people more serious about the band. I just love the songs on it, I love the lyrical content that Deryck came up with. I like that record front to back and I'm proud that we were able to do a record like that coming off the huge heels of this more poppy album.

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HOG MEETS FROG

Interview with bassman and storyteller Peter 'PETZ' Schwabl by Asher Thrasher

AU: For those unfamiliar with Hog Meets Frog, who are you and what do you do?

PETZ: Hello! So... HOG MEETS FROG is an internationally mixed power trio, based in Vienna, Austria – but !!BEWARE!! it's not the Austr[al]ia with the kangaroos but the Austria with Mozart... hahaha.

What we do - we like to call it SQUEAQUACKmusic - is some kind of weird metal-funk or progressive-rock-metal-jazz-punk-funk. And... during the last weeks, we learned that the world looks at our music more as some kind of progressive music.

AU: Hog Meets Frog, is quite a unique band name, what's its origin story?

PETZ: Actually, it was the result of a joke I made about the band 'Dog eat Dog'.

But as soon as the name was spoken - HOG MEETS FROG - I had a story in my head about a pig and a frog having fun with each other (which by the way can also be understood as a kind of anti-racism message) and the band name was born - or better - it happened.

AU: Listening to this album, and reading about this record, you guys play off a silly funk prog metal band or "avant-garde funk", but if you dig deep your songs have some very serious observations, what would you like fans to discover from Hog Meets Frog and your new EP 'humANIMALization'?

PETZ: Let me put it this way: we are of course very happy when the listeners dig so deep into the music of HOG MEETS FROG that they recognize the messages we want to get across. We try to inspire people to think about this and that, and maybe take a different perspective than they have before. But it is not a must.

So, if just sliding along the waves of music is what one discovers - while listening to HOG MEETS FROG - it's great for us as well.

But getting back to the 'message', the title of our EP 'humANIMALization' is in itself part of it.

'humANIMALization' describes the question of whether the animal lives in the human being or perhaps only the human being lives in the animal - in other words, how far away we are from our animal roots. If one looks at world events in this way, then it is sometimes difficult to recognize the 'homo sapiens'.

These reflections are visualized in many of our songs through the narrative form of the fable.

This type of story has the advantage that you can tell funny, ironic, sarcastic or even deadly serious content very multifaceted without superficially stepping on someone's toes. Because in the first place, one smiles about 'oh these animals' and only one step further some, which want to go this, see the actually addressed topic. And just this easy access on the first level is a good basis to reach people.

AU: What does 'humANIMALization' mean to you?

PETZ: If you mean the title: for me, it means

a good symbiosis of content, question, and explanation of the songs of the EP.

If you mean the word itself: it is for me the symbolization of current, not necessarily beneficial, social streams.

If you mean the EP: it is a part of the experience of each member of HOG MEETS FROG and therefore a piece of history of personal truth from the deepest soul.

AU: Your song titles are very creative and I find it makes you look twice to read them. How do you come up with such titles?

PETZ: In terms of song titles, there are two things that are important to me: one is that they reflect the content of the songs (unless I don't want exactly that for once). And the other is the flow in pronunciation which is very important to me.

I guess - what's the point of a good title if everyone breaks their tongues pronouncing it? Well... unless that's exactly what I'm trying to accomplish.

Maybe that's already the right recipe for a creative title... but maybe it's just luck.

AU: How is the music scene in Vienna, Austria these days?

PETZ: We have a very big Metal-/Rockszen here in Vienna (and also Austria), so many interesting and outstanding bands, and a great and loyal fanbase but sadly no real media support for it. Okay, Austria is a pop music country and not only the big but also the smaller labels are hardly not interested in metal. This is also because Austria is a small country and most A&Rs don't want to do anything new here. This is also very clear from the fact that most of the famous Austrian bands (and also composers like Mozart or Haydn) were only

played here in Austria by the media after they became famous abroad.

The few exceptions that exist are simply not enough to give the metal fanbase what it would like.

AU: Will Hog Meets Frog be touring Canada or Europe in the coming year?

PETZ: We would love to tour Canada and/or Europe. Unfortunately, we are not the most talented bookers ourselves. So maybe you know someone reliable who can help us with that? **AU: The album reminds me of Primus and Les Claypool playing and humour, if you were stuck in an elevator in 5 to 10 words how would you tell him to check out your album?**

PETZ: 'If you wanna listen to it, check it out!'

I would fiddle with the CD in front of his face, he would take the CD and after looking at the artwork and the title he would listen to it - I guess.

AU: What are Hog Meets Frog's plans for more music?

PETZ: Well, due to the feedback that we're getting on our EP, we're already planning more recordings. There are plenty of ideas to fill an album. The question now is how we are going to finance this. But I'm sure we will find a way.

AU: Anything else you would like to add?

PETZ: Have fun listening to HOG MEETS FROGS music and 'ROCK, FUNK, METAL or whatever ON!!!'

Hogmeetsfrog.com

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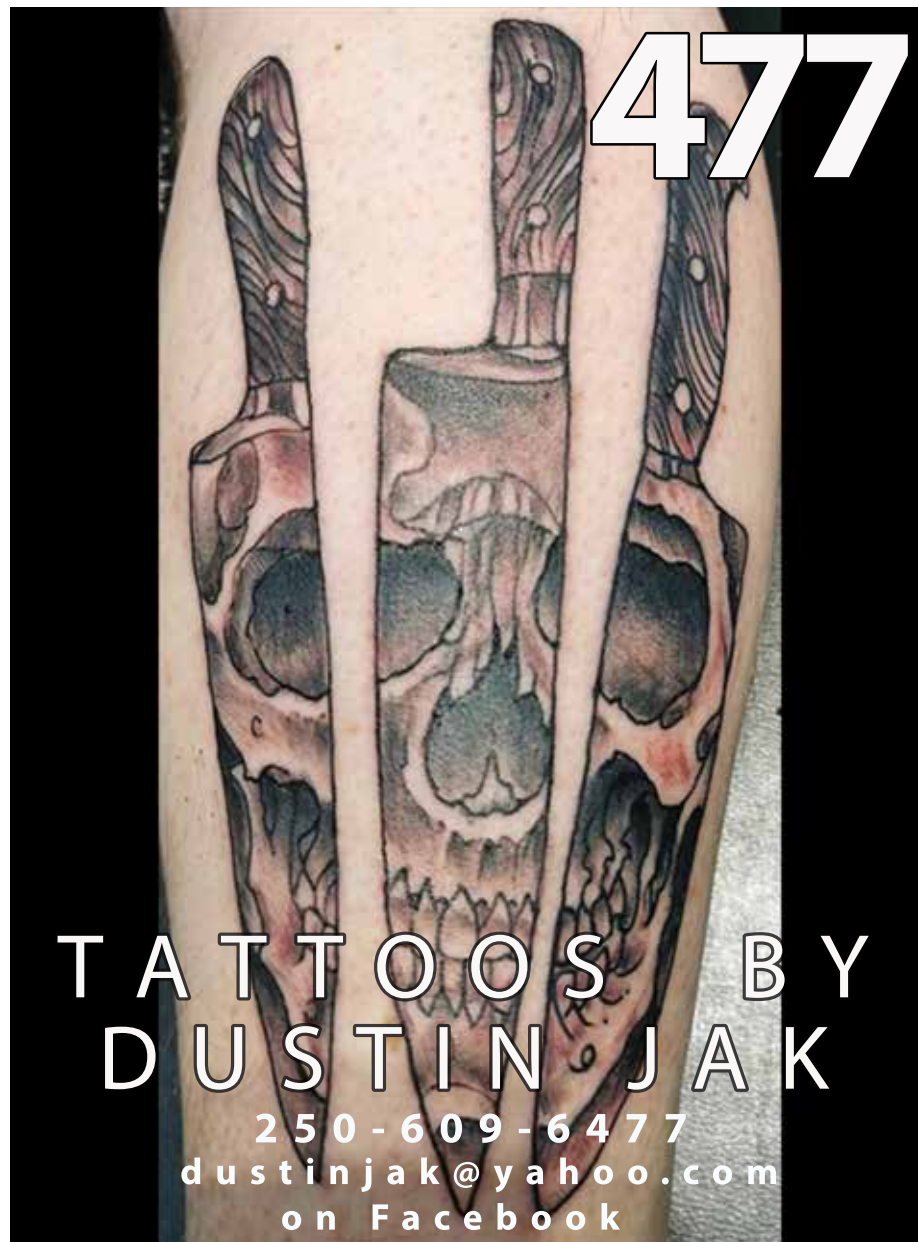
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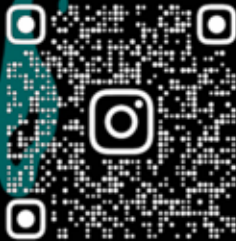
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IRON BUDDHA

Raze/Repose

Interview by Brady "Iron Kitten" Tighe

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

Iron Buddha: Iron Buddha started as a two-piece band in 2016 because Jihad (drummer) and I (Emilio) wanted to play more shows. We played in a band together before, so we knew we had the chemistry, but I only did vocals then - I wasn't a guitarist by any stretch of the imagination. We had no clue what we were doing, but we had this sort of ambition to do whatever was necessary to get gigs. We wore masks, and I had a cape sometimes - it didn't really make much sense at first. We genre-hopped and did this *Melvins* worship sound for a little bit, playing any and every gig that came our way - we even played a show with that one puppet guy from Tim and Eric. But all in all, it was honestly rad, and we only cared about slinging the fuzziest stoner riffs possible at maximum volume. We took a little break before the pandemic, as we wanted to rethink our sound and rediscover what we wanted to do with music. Because of quarantine, that "short break" turned into a long one.

Then in late 2021, Jihad and I got back together to

work on music we had written during lockdown. It was way heavier and more aggressive, taking inspiration from nasty Florida bands like *Ether Coven* and *Yashira*. We still needed that low end, though, so our friend, David, helped us with bass, and it just clicked right away - he totally brought what we were missing

to the mix, and the chemistry was instant.

AU: Who else is in the band?

IB: There is Jihad on drums, David on bass and vocals, and me, Emilio, on guitar and vocals.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

IB: We're a bit of an oddball band in our local scene. I've always wanted music that sounds like that scene in *Fantasia* where the shit hits the fan, all the dinosaurs are dying, and the Earth starts crumbling in on itself. I think we nail that sound sometimes, but we've got a little bit of that groove in us, too - that Barry Manilow "Whose Been Sleeping in My Bed?" funk.

AU: You've just released a new EP. How did that come together?

IB: Jihad and I got back together after lockdown and put some songs together. They felt "mostly good," but David helped tie everything together with bass. He's got an insane amount of talent, and it helped the vision come to life.

We produced the EP with Jonathan Nunez from the Miami sludge band *Torche*. Jon also has a fantastic ear for creating massive sounds. He helped shape the songs even further into what they are now. He helped develop layers and

advised us on making the songs "build" in specific ways.

The end result is our best work to date, and we're stoked about how the process played out.

AU: What have you been listening to recently?

IB: Each of us is into different things. I've been listening to quite a bit of noise, sludge, and hardcore, but I've also been on a Toby Fox kick - I love video game music and electronic genres like House and Nu-Disco. Jihad is also into electronic, drum-and-bass style music, French house, etc.,. Although he ultimately returns to musicians like Mark Guiliana and the like. I don't know what he's been jamming recently, but David is generally into acts like *The Cure*, *Depeche Mode*, *Cannibal Corpse*, *Chat Pile*, etc.

AU: Which weighs more, an Iron Maiden or an Iron Buddha?

IB: I'm pretty sure the drummer of *Iron Maiden* lives near us, so we'll say *Iron Buddha* weighs more to start some beef - we might get banned from his restaurant, Rock-n-Roll Ribs, though.

AU: Who's the strangest person you've bummed a light off of?

IB: Hard to say! We generally don't smoke unless we've been drinking - even then, it's pretty infrequent. We hung out with a guy named Old School at a Taco Bell parking lot in Tampa, though. Also, I met a Rod Stewart impersonator when I was, like, ten. If I were a cooler ten-year-old, I probably would have smoked a Camel Crush with him back then, but everything is 20/20 in hindsight.

AU: Does your band have a vehicle? If so, does it have a name? A wicked decal? A tape deck?

IB: David is our car guy. He has a van he used as a band van for many years, but we've got to get it up and running again. Maybe we'll install a Slurpee machine or pay Billy Crystal to voice our GPS if that time comes.

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

IB: There's been a few! But I think the one I still have on a pretty consistent rotation is *Loved* by Canadian noise band *KEN Mode*. It has become

a running joke in the band because I've sent the record to Jihad and David about a million times. It's just such an excellent record front to back that I was beyond excited to share it.

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

IB: Jihad runs a smoke shop, and as you can imagine, you get some wild characters - we live in South Florida, so there is an endless supply of romper room fuckery. A customer tried setting his store on fire in the dead of the night. She was unsuccessful but tried coming into the store a few days later in disguise. It didn't quite fool anyone, but Dana Carvey seemed impressed.

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

IB: Maybe "Invisible Touch" by *Genesis*. I think the majority of *Iron Buddha* prefers Peter Gabriel on vocals era *Genesis*, and they still had plenty of awesome music after his departure. But "Invisible Touch," irks me, personally. The instrumental sounds like Wii Sports music or, like, background music for a VHS that will teach you how to take your sales to the next level. Not

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

IB: Probably Skinner or John Baizley from *Baroness*. There are tons of good artists out there. Putra, who did our art of *Raze//Repose* and *Mara//Tongues*, is also extremely talented.

AU: Anything else to promote?

IB: Jihad runs a YouTube channel called Church of Riffs. It primarily showcases South Florida bands playing live. David is in a band called *Ljesus*, and they're rad. I'm doing vocals in a band called *Culture of Conflict*, and we're also looking to put out an EP pretty soon.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

IB: Be cool, Be kind, and keep worshipping riffs.

AU: How do people find you online?

IB: We're on all streaming platforms and socials. Our Instagram is "iron_buddha_band." The best way to support is through Bandcamp.

ironbuddha.bandcamp.com/album/raze-repose



AU: The band has had a few delays (pandemic, cancer) before it saw its light of day, how were those challenges and what encouraged the band to keep going?

The pandemic kicked us hard in the guts. And it just kept kicking but the one positive thing that came out of our pandemic experience was that all four of us woodshedded on our own, to keep busy and stay sane. And we ended up with a complete third album's worth of new

PHAETON

Between Two Worlds

Interview with Ferdy Belland (Bass)

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

We are an all-instrumental prog-metal quartet from Cranbrook, British Columbia! Kevin Thiessen on lead and rhythm guitars. Daniel Airth on lead and rhythm guitars. Colin Righton on drums and percussion. And Yours Truly, Ferdy Belland on electric and fretless bass. We've been together since early 2017 and we push ourselves musically to test our limits, technically and compositionally, by combining our favorite elements of heavy metal and progressive rock. We have a hell of a lot of fun, even if we're running the risk of severe repetitive-motion injuries (laughs).

AU: The band has a new album *Between Two Worlds* coming out on April 21st. What can you say about this record in comparison to your first?

We came out of writing and recording the debut album and just sort of blinked at each other, ears ringing and fingers aching, smoke curling from the control board, incredulous and stunned, and said: 'Holy shit, did WE just create all that?' We immediately got back to it and kept the creative flames burning hot. And boy howdy, did we pull it off. Suddenly we're writing faster, punchier, more eye-crossingly melodic riffs, we're jumbling together even more adventurous arrangements than the first round of tunes, and before we knew it we'd finished another album. That debut album was the best thing musically that any of the four of us had ever done up to that point, so we were determined to create something just as strong. The challenge now was to see just how shit-hot we really were. Could we make an ever better album and raise the bar? Answer: YES! Amazing what you can still accomplish with the standard-issue quartet format of drums, bass, and two guitars.

AU: What drew the band to be a dynamic instrumental prog group?

It's all Colin's fault. He'd played in previous bands with us three at different times. Kevin had been composing a lot of very cool trippy, psychedelic ambient prog under the Aszension monicker, and Colin played drums on most of it. Colin and Daniel had played death-metal together in Chaos Logic, which was the best British Columbia band you've never heard of. Colin and I had been friends for over fifteen years - he spent years out in Ontario playing in death-metal outfits and I was in Vancouver playing in proggy power-pop bands and hard rock bands and Queen tributes and shit - and our musical paths finally crossed in 2013 when we joined forces playing bluesy roots-rock in the Bison Brothers, of all things. And when that band fell apart acrimoniously, Colin was looking for a rebound band where he could toss aside the blues shuffles and get blastbeating again in 7/8 and 9/4 time at 225bpm. So in the Spring of 2017 he gathered the three of us together at Kevin's amazing home studio to see what would happen. And POW!

and strong material.

Colin's bout with cancer was another horrible blow, and the wind was once again knocked out of our sails. We were all scared for him - but Colin amazed everybody by beating his cancer with power and style. He kept his determination and positivity strong all throughout that long ordeal. To see someone like Colin, who possesses such an awe-inspiring preternatural gift behind the drumkit, being robbed of his physical talents by the viciousness of the chemotherapy series... it broke my heart to see him like that. I mean, he needs to be the cover story in Modern Drummer magazine, for fuck's sake. He'd still try to play his drums even when he was aching and exhausted and in severe agony, and I gave him royal shit several times for not just resting up and letting everything take its natural course, but I respected his stubbornness. He wasn't going to give in. He wasn't going to roll over and die. His bullheadedness is what helped him survive. And he did it.

AU: Will we be seeing Phaeton live in BC and beyond?

Yes, you will! Now that the pandemic's fading into a bitter memory and Colin's right as rain, we no longer have any miserable excuses to lapse into lazy complacency. We've already started our rehearsal schedule where we're dusting off the tunes and scraping off the rust. It'll take us a few months to get to where we're confident about our tightness, but we'll get there. Live shows for us were few and far between before the lockdowns, and we were wanting to up our live-performance frequency before the shutdowns dropped on us. It's true: you don't know what you've got until it's gone. So as far as I'm concerned, we're going to sharpen ourselves into a strong live unit so we can cross everyone's eyes from Victoria to Saskatoon and back! I'd love to take Phaeton's live show everywhere and anywhere we can. Give us a shout!

AU: You are a journeyman carpenter with Red Seal certification. Could you build the ultimate galactic bass for yourself?

I've often joked about glue-laminating a bunch of four-foot maple 2x4s together and building my own headless multiscale 5-string bass. It'd probably be cheaper for me to build my own triple-necked Chris Squire contraption than to buy one.

AU: Anything else you would like to add?

As the poets said: Rage against the dying of the light. Strive to be happy. Make the best of what's still around. We find all sorts of lasagna-layer depths of inspiration, purpose, meaning, satisfaction, and joy in what we do in Phaeton - gathering together as friends, shoulder-to-shoulder in the cramped control room of Kevin's studio, laughing over beers and doobies, lost in the wonder of music. Eternal Youth via overdriven Schecters. And we want to share that joy with the world.

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GUBBLE

Interview by Scarlett Rose

AU: Who Are We Talking To?

Hunter Steele: Hunter Steele, I make all the Gubble Noises.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

HS: I wanted to start a band, and everyone else in my area wanted to smoke weed instead, so I said fuck it! I'm starting one anyway, luckily I already had the ego of four musicians combined so I ended up being the whole band, all thanks to the power of inflated self worth! After writing and recording a few albums in my basement, I recruited a couple of guys whose egos are almost as big as mine. (yeah, I couldn't believe it either) And we go around and play shows and piss off bar owners. I still write all the songs and manage all the band stuff, but I got some top notch real deal musicians now to back me up, we're hip!

AU: Does your band have a specific message?

HS: I have a simple message to the world, listen to our shit you bozo, it's real simple, keep music weird, spread chaos, sneeze on babies in public and tell them Gubby sent you.

AU: Describe your sound if possible.

HS: I like to call Gubble "Danger Jazz" because the erroneous public perception that Jazz is lame-o

elevator music for the elderly, But Jazz can be Dangerous, and Exuberant, and in its roots, the most rebellious genre. I doubt anybody living in the real world unlike me would lump me in with the Jazz world, and I usually play shows with metal bands, but I don't care if I call it Jazz and that's that.

AU: What's your creative process like?

HS: My two biggest Inspirations are upsetting news headlines on TV and roadkill that was run over and contorted in fun ways. I don't smoke, drink, or do drugs, so I pretty much got fuck all to do other than write my dumb little songs, I try to write a song everyday, because in addition to being one of the most genius and prolific musicians of all time, I'm a Workaholic, yeah, no big deal. Usually when I tap into the ever-flowing chalice of infinite wisdom to create yet another song about how I'm not taking my meds, I don't eat or use the washroom until the song is both written and recorded, I'm serious about this music stuff.

AU: Have you released any albums lately?

HS: I've got an album out that's sure to go down in the history books, It's called 'Mama Your Son's a Musician' and I think it's stone cold, and I hope the ear-having populace would agree. Killer tunes within.



AU: In your opinion what's wrong with the current music scene?

HS: Punks bein' Cops man, Punks tellin' other Punks how to be punk, what you can and can't wear, what bands you are and aren't allowed to listen to and all that other malarkey they'll try to hand you. What ever happened to don't tell me what to wear, don't tell me what to do? Now there are strictly enforced guidelines on how to rebel, and dissidents will be shunned. Don't get me wrong, I know tons of Punks who aren't like

that, it's mostly the older Punks who think they've got it all figured out, make way, I see you getting caught under the wheels of time, pal.

AU: What are some of the things your band does to give back to the community?

HS: Uuhhh... we play in your dumb little community instead of moving to tinseltown and makin' millions, nah, just kidding. I'd say I probably haven't profited off being a big deal musician since I became one, I sell all my merch at a loss so more people can afford it, most of it our keyboardist gave away for free (whatta guy) and I try to play shows with smaller door covers, so more people can come and freak out with us. I dunno, I wouldn't say Gubble is some band of saints, we don't have a stray cat sanctuary or anything, we just give back by letting locals come watch us smash a bunch of Fischer Price toys on stage.

AU: What are some of your best songs about?

HS: Depends on which album we are talking about, Each one is a story, and each song tells a fraction of it. All my albums tell a connecting story, I like sitting in my little room and driving myself insane, pacing back and forth thinking of all this shit, the first album is called 'You're Always So Dark' is about a fellow named Gene Sandwich, he's a plastic bag specialist, and he ended up taking his own life, the next album 'Jazz' tells you that Gene is in purgatory and so is the listener as long as you're listening to Gubble after that I made an album of nonsense that corresponds with nothings I just made it cuz I got carried away dickin' around on my keyboard instead of my bass.

AU: Describe your bands live show verbally.

HS: I like to break stuff, I like to yell and scream. I've seen too many bands who choose a spot on the stage and it would only take hurricane level high speed winds to remove them from that spot because they're dead-set and standing there and staring at their feet the whole set, I personally do not jive with that, when I play a SHOW I aim to put on a SHOW, because if the freaks who come to our shows wanted to hear my tunes exactly how they are on my albums, they'd just listen to my albums,



but they came to SEE us, so I try to make each show exciting, and I try to push each performance further each time, I've cut a keyboard in half with a reciprocating saw, my keyboardist threw a trombone into traffic, and we even smashed a GOURD! What? Yeah a Gourd! Can you believe it? Crazy.

AU: What's the metal scene like in Toronto nowadays?

HS: Gettin' weirder. Metal is gettin' wacky 'round these parts and I'm so in for it, sorta hoping for a wacky band revolution, makin' it so no bar is safe from tomfoolery.

AU: Any shows or tours planned?

HS: Always playin' shows, I try to stagger our performances because we have such an intense and in your face set, that too much of it could become stale, plus it gives me time to think of new ways to step up the madness, always trying to push it each time we play, it's difficult to think of something new each time, but no task a genius like myself cannot handle.

AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?

HS: I have an average sized penis.

AU: Where can we find your music online?

HS: If I haven't scared you away, and you actually wanna hear my tunes, we are on bandcamp, and most streaming platforms, listen to the song about the Horse Funeral (It's my favorite). God bless, and good night.

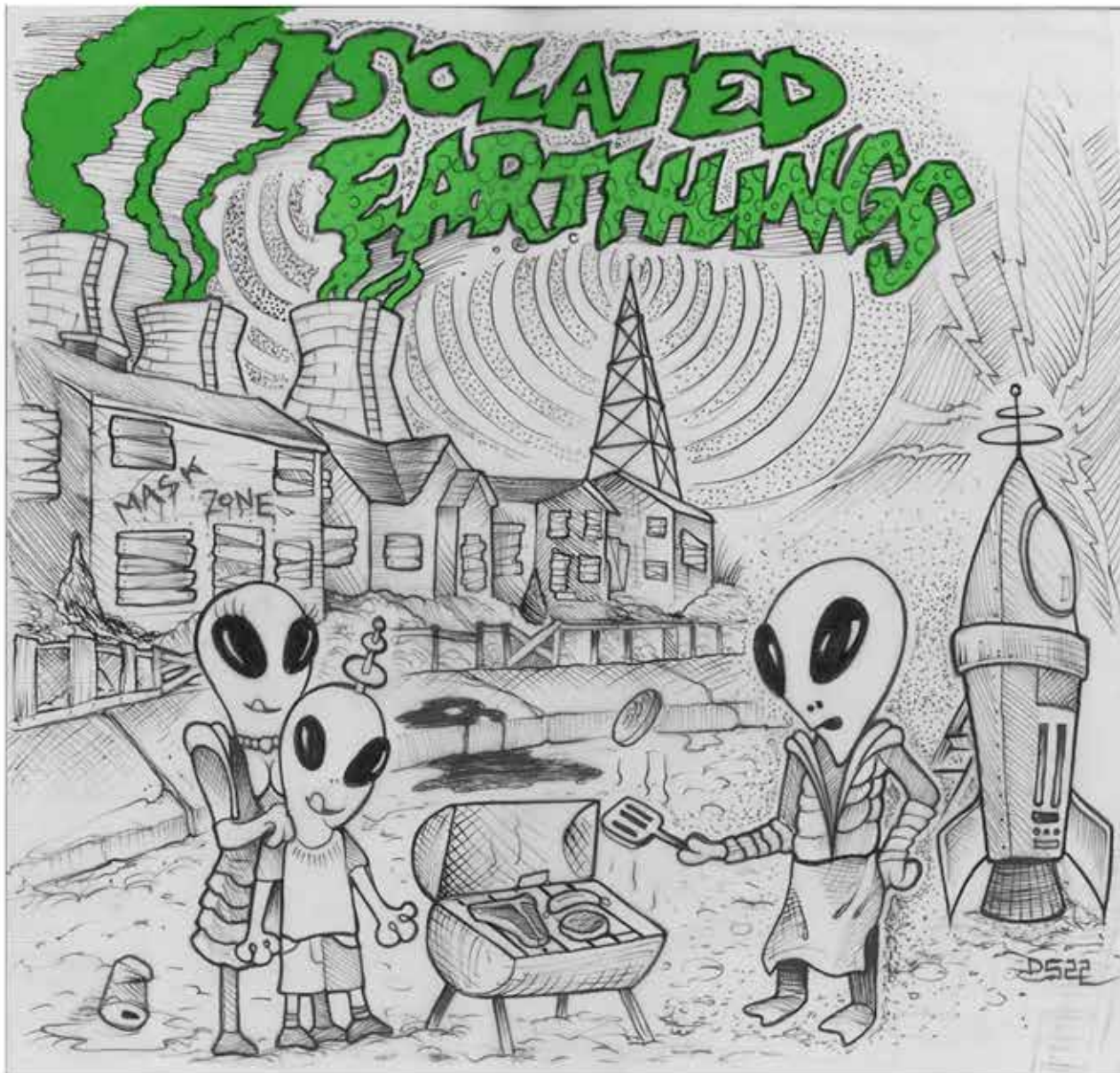
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Interview with Filmmaker Leif Langvand

By Ira Hunter

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

L: Leif Langvand: My name is Leif Langvand, and I'm best known for my documentary: Shekinah. It's a film about a care giving society in Victoria that runs a community of family-model group homes for developmentally disabled adults. I'm an associate member in The Director's Guild of Canada, and on films I work primarily in the locations department.

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

L: I attended theatre school at The Ailanthus Centre of Performing Arts while I was growing up in Vancouver. It was there that I was introduced to the fundamentals of photography and visual storytelling. In 2009, I graduated from Victoria Motion Picture School with a certificate in film and television production. Unfortunately, the school doesn't actually exist anymore. I did a lot of videography and also worked on independent films for many years. In 2017 I got my first job as a production assistant on season two of Chesapeake Shores. After that, I worked almost



continuously on productions up until the pandemic hit and shut everything down.



AU: What sort of things have you done and for what projects?

L: I've worn many hats on many projects, big and small. I've location managed several short films such as: *Closing Walls*, and *Going Home*. I also recently screened a short film that I made with Tarak Kjartanson at The 29 Take's Festival. It's a comedy called *The Roommate*, directed by Tarak.

I did the lighting and camera work, and also operated the camera. I've worked on numerous films and television series as a production assistant, primarily as an Onset Key PA.

AU: Why did you want to start working on your own movies?

L: Frustration basically. Becoming fed up with waiting on everyone's schedules to line up. Tired of a lot of people making empty promises. People with the best intentions just spinning their wheels and blowing smoke about projects that will never happen or that will take far too long to come to fruition. Of course aside from that, inspiration. I'm inspired to tell the stories that have lived in my head for years. At this point in my life I'm very motivated by the stark realization that I have a finite amount of time to accomplish my goals. Lastly, the democratization of film-making. Equipment that was primarily made

for you tube influencer can now be utilized by to tell their stories as well.

AU: What made you decide to make a documentary on Logan's Pub in Victoria?

L: A collective sense of loss in the community at large. I was constantly hearing how much Logan's was missed. I also knew first hand how much it meant to me, and how much of a cultural

cornerstone it was in the community. I was determined to not let it be forgotten. It was basically the CBGBs of Victoria.

AU: What do you know of the history of the Logan's Pub and what was your association with the venue?

L: My history with Logan's goes back to when it was still Thursdays. I discovered it when I met my wife. She was a regular that took me there. As soon as I walked through the doors I knew I had found a place where I belonged. It was a friendly and welcoming pub, with a brilliant and eclectic music scene. As far as my knowledge of Logan's history, I wasn't aware of the entire story until I started researching for the documentary. My association has always been as a patron.

AU: What made it unique? And also important enough to make a documentary about?

L: Well there was no other venue like it. There still isn't. It was a welcoming establishment that fostered a sense of community and inclusion for everyone. So many bands got their start there. So many events were held there. Wakes, weddings, burlesque shows, comedy nights. It was an integral part of many people's lives in Victoria. Making this doc gives Logan's a fighting chance at being remembered for the important part it played in music and culture in our city.

AU: Fondest memories?

L: The Hootenanny, Stan's hugs, Halloween, comedy nights, *Dick Dale*, Dixie's Death Pool, *Daddy's Hands*, AK-47, Hanson Brothers.

AU: What do you hope will happen in the future with regards to the space?

L: Well I've heard a lot of rumours about it opening again as event room. The bar and stage are still there. They just built the liquor store in



front of it. If I was to dream out loud, my hope would be that someone else buys the building and develops the space into a new venue in the spirit of Logan's.

AU: Who do you plan to interview for inclusion in this documentary?

L: Ideally I would like to interview the majority of the bands that regularly played at Logan's. The staff would be integral to interview as well. The Logan's, and of course, the patrons. They were the lifeblood of that place. But seriously, anyone and everyone who will talk to me.

AU: What is the plan for the finished film?

L: Initially I will be submitting it to festivals. Then I will be working on distributing it independently. At which time I would like to screen it locally. Make it an event.

AU: How can people contact you to share their stories about Logan's and what it meant to them?

L: If anyone wants to contact me about contributing to the documentary they can find me on Facebook or email me at:

leiflangvand@gmail.com



Maceration

Interview with Director Clay Holmes

By Ira Hunter

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

This is Clay and I make weird films that don't pay the billz which is why I'm a bartender.

AU: What film projects have you worked on in the past?

Clay Holmes: A feature called *Breakup.com* about a guy who dumps women for profit, a web series called *The Wise* and lots of short films.

AU: Tell us about EarGoggles.

CH: EarGoggles was a DVD 'zine that ran seven issues and covered all the bands who played at the Cobalt, circa 2007-2009. I set up my video camera in a custom made, shitwater resistant box, recorded the bands and tended bar all night. There was a skateboard section, a short film section, some funny commercials and a music video or two but it was mostly a love letter to the Cobalt which, for me at the time, was the greatest fucking place in the world. You can still see most of it at [YouTube.com/@eargogglr](https://www.youtube.com/@eargogglr).

AU: What were your inspirations for your newest film project called *Maceration*?

CH: To make something totally ridiculous without the slightest regard for common sense.

AU: How did you come up with the weird idea for the movie?

CH: Melody Mangler texted me during Covid and said that she was itching to do something creative. I had a rough idea about a campy horror

thing and it turned into *Maceration* because I was studying wine in my umpteenth attempt to obtain a respectable career. The sommelier dream is probably dead but at least it gave birth to *Maceration*.

AU: What's the elevator pitch for *Maceration*?

CH: *Sideways* meets *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*

AU: What genre would you say *Maceration* lands in?

CH: Full body horror.

AU: Which actors were involved and what did each of them bring to the table?

CH: Trey (Ashtrey) Helten and Melody Mangler were the two people that I knew would be okay with gratuitous, full frontal nudity. Boom! Primary casting done. When I approached Seth Little about the film, he said he would do it only if I wrote his character as a 40 year old woman. Every actor in *Maceration* knocked it out of the park as far as I'm concerned.

AU: How did you approach making this short-film?

CH: Hectically! I work at a great bar called the Wise Hall and when Covid forced it to shut down, I realized that I had a golden opportunity to use it as my own personal film location. I built the

entire set there in two months and shot it in eleven days (over a period of three weeks) all the while knowing that if we got the green light to re-open, *Maceration* would be toast.

AU: What sorts of warnings for children should be included with your film?

CH: I have a ten year old niece and thought she would be able to handle *Maceration* because it's really just a silly movie at the end of the day. I mean, compared to the torture porn stuff these days, this film should be rated G. That said, my niece was ultimately not allowed to watch it.

AU: How was it filming with so much female nudity and male dudeity?

CH: We had a biblical amount of fruit flies at the Cobalt one weekend and I brought in one of those electrified tennis rackets to thin the herd. Within the first ten minutes, Ashtrey took his pants off and started zapping his penis with it. Melody Mangler used to perform burlesque at the Cobalt in those days so she'd be doing a strip tease onstage while Ashtrey was zapping his penis on the dance floor. I'm pretty used to seeing them both naked.

AU: Who worked on the soundtrack?

CH: That would be Jason Zumpano, another bartender at the Wise and a filmmaker/musician in his own right.

AU: Describe your filmmaking process.

CH: Write a script, overthink pre production, have a breakdown, steel myself through production, have another breakdown, then crack a beer and settle in for a long post-production.

AU: What location did you use for filming *Maceration*?

CH: The Wise Hall is an institution in east Vancouver. There's an old-school lounge downstairs with pool and darts and a giant hall upstairs with live music two to five nights a week. Most people who work/frequent there are artists/musicians. We're all broke, but that's okay because we keep the prices low. I've been there for thirteen years and have shot ten projects there.

AU: Are there any Easter eggs in this film you'd like to point out?

CH: You can spot a road sign/logo for my band, *Digression*, that made its way into the film because we were jamming there throughout the pandemic.

AU: What do you think are the most important elements of film-making?

CH: I think they're all important but only in the sense that they elevate the source material. I'm never going to watch a film just for the cinematography or the soundtrack or the special effects. I watch films for the script. Every other element needs to work together to do that script justice. It's crucial to recognize when to nix a shot that's cool in itself but distracting to the film as a whole.

AU: What do you think are the most important skills for a film crew to have?

CH: Roll with the punches and approach everything with a sense of humour.

AU: How did you fund your film?

CH: I really only spent around a thousand bucks on this film, mostly on wood for the barrels and food for the cast / crew. I've been working with most of these people for years and there's a long standing deal that we help each other out with our creative ventures.

AU: Do you have any plans for a sequel/spin-off/franchise?

CH: If another pandemic strikes, I'll be sure to write *Maceration 2 - Josephine's Revenge*

AU: What's the ultimate goal for *Maceration*?

CH: To make people laugh uncomfortably and say "what the fucking fuck!"

AU: Any advice for young filmmakers?

CH: Write around what you have access to.

AU: How do people check out more of your movies online?

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THE CIMMERIAN

Sword and Sorcery Vol. 1

Interview with Nicholas Rocha

By Thoth-Amon

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

The Cimmerian: Hello and thanks for having us! Nicolas Rocha here, I play bass and provide vocals for *The Cimmerian*

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

C: In 2021, guitarist David Gein and I had the bright idea of starting up a new musical monster. We'd been recording music for a previous project, *Septik Onslaught*, sort of a Satanic panic crossover thrash band. We decided to venture into some more of our musical and lyrical influences and thus, *The Cimmerian* came to be.

AU: Who else is in the band?

C: As mentioned, we've got David Gein on all guitar duties. Drums and percussion are covered by David Morales.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

C: We like to call ourselves doom thrash which sounds like it might be that and only that. We like to think that doom and thrash are the two book ends and that get the liberty to venture into anything that falls between those bookends.

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

C: Well, the idea came about because as it might be obvious, the genre of fiction known as sword and sorcery is something we're fans of. We decided to start a series of releases borrowing the genre name to give tribute to subjects that would be covered in the writings of said genre. This can be specific books, a certain character or belief structure. This particular release focuses on a prayer to the warlord Crom, long worshiped by the legendary Conan. The second track focuses on the mystical goddess Inanna, who was then also known as Ishtar or Astarte by other cultures.

AU: What is best in life?

C: If you're asking me, music is. It's something that speaks to so many on so many different levels. It's always interesting to know that two people can listen to the same exact thing and gain different perspectives on it. Plus, as many others might say, it's one of the universal languages.

AU: What have you been listening to recently?

C: I try to keep up with as much music as possible but of course, there is so much, it's sometimes impossible. Recently, I've had *Motörhead's* Another Perfect Day which is such a great album. Others have been the new *Oblivion Throne* EP, the new album by *Kruelty*, and the latest by local friends *Behold! The Monolith*. Also, *Tangerine Dream* is one band that never leaves my musical rotation.

AU: Favourite scene in Conan the Barbarian?

C: It's a tough choice honestly because the 1982 movie is one giant slab of greatness. If I had to narrow it down, it would be when Conan finds the Atlantean sword in the crypt. The pacing, the lighting and atmosphere is perfect sword and sorcery. It feels like there's something else down there

with him and it makes sense since that scene is influenced by the story "The Thing In the Crypt". The other is the battle of the mounds where Conan, Subotai and Akiro face off against Thulsa Doom's minions. The sword fight between Conan and Rexor, right after Thorgrim is disposed, with the music swells and Valeria coming back from the dead to save Conan? Chills.

AU: If you had to recommend one Robert E. Howard/Fantasy story or book to start with which would it be?

C: There's two of them, start with the *Phoenix On the Sword*, the first Conan story. The other is the *Hour of the Dragon*, which is the most epic Conan story that Howard wrote. It's also his only novel he got to finish.

AU: What's the worst pronunciation of the band's name you've heard?

C: I've heard Key-mmerian, Sigh-mmmerian, and the funniest one was The Cimmer Man. I try to not be too harsh about it but the pronunciation that's worked for me, and I believe to be universally accepted, is The Sih-Mare-ian.

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

C: I think it would have to be *Yob's* Our Raw Heart. Everything that band does is golden, and that album has the perfect amount of everything in it. The tones, the production, and the emotion in it cannot be rivaled.

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

C: I'm sure I have plenty of songs to complain about but instead, let's just enjoy the ones we do.

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

C: I would definitely have asked the mighty Frank Frazetta but since he has passed, I'd be super into the idea of working with Boris Vallejo, John Buscema, Rob de la Torre, Becky Cloonan, John Baizley, Pushead, Michael W. Kaluta. Those would all be great I think, we're incredibly fortunate to be working with Bob Sterns, who did both our EP and recently released single. He's great and captures exactly the mood we've wanted to convey.

AU: Anything else to promote?

C: As mentioned, *Sword & Sorcery* is going to be an ongoing series from us. At any point, we'll go back into the studio and record two more songs for the next entry. Folks should be aware, we've also got an entire album's worth of music that is ready to go. Aside from that, we're planning on maybe working with some friends on a cool split release at some point soon.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

C: Firstly, thanks to anybody that would take the time to listen to our music. We're not shy about our influences but I think we bring enough of ourselves to it that makes it worthwhile. Take care of yourselves and take care of one another. Music rules, read a book.

AU: How do people find you online?

**thecimmerian.bandcamp.com
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Porn, Poison Ivy and Lemmy Conversations with former music journalist Michael Wilder

By John Carlow

Photos courtesy of Michael Wilder

Some time back I remember tracking down a photographer about a particular image I liked. It was a picture of *The Cramps* they had taken back in their day. Since finding him, we've talked quite a bit about his prior profession. His career had exposed him to some of the biggest names in music and publishing back then. This is part one of a series of conversations I had with Michael Wilder.

AU: Where and when was your first exposure to music photography?

Michael Wilder:

Growing up in Los Angeles in the 70's gave me plenty of opportunities to see live music. As a teenager, I would go to West LA, Hollywood, and Chinatown to see punk bands like the *Germes*, *X*, *The Gun Club*, and many others. Later in college I saw many bands live like the *Cramps*, the *Minutemen*, *Motörhead*, and the *Ramones* at places like the Whiskey a Go Go, the Palladium, and Club Lingerie. It was just a great time and place to see live music, and I often brought my camera with me. In those days, you took photos with film, and it was hit or miss. Most places wouldn't let you take photos unless you were a big-name record company photographer (which I wasn't). I used an old Leica until it got stolen. Although I've taken thousands of photos and made audio and video recordings of hundreds of performances, I wouldn't call myself a "commercial" concert photographer. Professionally, I was a music journalist. I'm a photographer and videographer for fun. Later, I got into the "taper" culture photographing bands and recording music performances.

AU: Your actual profession was music journalism. How did that all start?

MW: I started UCLA in 1978 as a Journalism major. Once I graduated, I constantly combed the LA Times classifieds looking for a job. My first job out of college sucked, but it gave me access to copy machines. I started mass producing resumes and shot gunning them to any ad that looked enticing. One ad caught my eye. The classified ad was nondescript, seeking a copy editor to

work for a publishing company called LFP. Little did I know at the time that my second job out of college launched a career in porn and music journalism: working for Larry Flynt and Hustler.

I spent the first year or so reading articles and other magazine text for errors in spelling and punctuation. We had to use a special style guide to be consistent with certain terms. Is "cunt lips" one word or two? Hyphenated? What about "tittie-fuck?" I learned a lot on the job that they didn't teach me back in college.

After a while I realized that I could probably write as good if not better than most of the writers I had been copy editing, especially in terms of music. My first published article for Flynt was an interview with the *Mentors*. Eldon Hoke ("El Duce") was perfect for LFP readers. He was irreverent, horribly sexist, and funny as shit.

Soon after the *Mentors* interview, I got a job as an associate editor of one of Hustler's sister publications, *Chic*. *Chic* was very similar in format to Hustler: photos of sexy, naked women sandwiched by articles about drugs, porn stories, music, and politics. My job was to assign the articles to other journalists and make sure they arrived on time. I also wrote porn stories, drug articles, and stuff like "girl copy." Did you know that the bio text ("girl copy") that accompanies photos of naked ladies is almost never written by the girl? My second music interview for Flynt

was with my favorite band in the world: *The Cramps*. I got to meet them several times at tiki bars in LA, and I had dinner with them at their Hollywood home. Once you meet your favorite rock gods in person, realize that they are just like you, trying to make a living like everyone else, you realize that the sky is your limit. Nothing can hold you back.

AU: Where else have you worked?

MW: While I worked at *Chic*, I also started writing music content for Hustler. This was mostly music reviews and upcoming albums announcements for

popular bands, but often these included scandal and rumor stories about the music world. This put me in touch with many other press agents, rock journalists and photographers in Los Angeles.

About this time, Larry Flynt Publications was diversifying. Porn was politically unpopular, so they tried branching out into many other areas, including music. Following a rocky start with an earlier music publication, the editors asked me if I wanted to give it a go.

In the mid-80s, *Creem* and *Hit Parader* were looking long in the tooth. I read those as a young teenager, and the music format seemed pretty cliched by then. *Spin* (launched about the same time) was too east-coast snobby. I proposed a music magazine that captured the crossover of punk and metal (mostly speed metal) while maintaining the same irreverent style championed by Hustler. Hence *Rip* magazine was born in December 1986.

The original team was a staff of two: myself as executive editor (planning the content, assigning and writing the articles, gathering photos) and Craig Jones, managing art director. Everyone else was the same staff as Hustler. Later, LA music DJ/rock goddess Stella Voce joined the team.

One of my favorite achievements was getting Ed "Big Daddy" Roth to draw cartoons for *Rip*. I had been a big *Rat Fink* fan since childhood, and Roth was (and still is) legendary. I got to visit him at his home studio, and he even mentioned me in his biography (as a "Rat Fink fiend"). I also got Ted Nugent's mother to write an advice column for us call "Ask Ma Nuge."

I stayed with *Rip* for the first year. During that time, I got to interview *Suicidal Tendencies*, *Nick Cave*, *Ozzy Osbourne*, *Kiss*, *Steven Tyler*, *Anthrax*, *Lemmy of Motörhead*, and many more. I still have the audio recordings of many of these.

AU: I'm sure that you have many but, what's a funny story?

MW: Toward the end of my *Rip* days, I started to get jaded. The publishers were pushing for more *Bon Jovi*, while I wanted more *Black Flag*. One day, I was invited to meet an "upcoming" band at their house for an interview. When I got there, I encountered the epitome of what I hated about the music industry at the time: Really ugly guys teasing their bleached hair, putting on makeup,

and prancing around rather than practicing their music and being real. When I left, they gave me their demo tape on cassette. As I drove away, I listened to a few songs, ejected the tape, then threw it out the window. I felt dirty and wanted to vomit. The band was named *Poison*.

AU: With all your exposure, what's your opinion of the music industry?

MW: Back in the 80's I learned that commercial music was a dirty business full of liars and backstabbers. It's a world of hype and image, not necessarily talent, skill, or musicianship. Porn was much more honest.

I also learned that you can't live life hanging on to a zeitgeist. Popular music changes with the hype or the mood of the times. Trying to hold on to a specific musical time frame (like heavy metal) is impossible. See "The Decline of Western Civilization: Part III."

AU: What are you doing now?

MW: Since those days, I got into education. I currently have a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and work remotely as management for a University in Washington state. My specialty is online education.

Photos courtesy of Michael Wilder





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SEVENDUST

Truth Killer

Interview with guitarist Clint Lowery
By Erik Lindholm

Absolute Underground: Hello sir, how are you? Where are you now, set the scene for the reader!

Clint Lowery: I'm sitting at my kitchen island finishing lunch. My daughter is playing a video game close to me. I am ready to dive into these questions.

AU: With the band being formed in Atlanta, what has this given your sound? Who is a band from Atlanta you want to make known?

CL: I think many things can contribute to our sound. Starting with us collectively and individually. We all have a certain ingredient we add to the soup. Regardless of who writes a song in the band, the filter it goes through when everyone performs it creates our sound. We covered "The Day I Tried to Live" by Soundgarden and it sounds like Sevendust.

As far as a band from Atlanta to make known? I haven't lived there for over 15 years. I'm kind of out of the loop.

AU: New album "Truth Killer" is on the streets end of July 2023. For you, how does this album stand out in the Sevendust catalog? What separates it for you? What are the main themes you pick up on? What do you want fans to know about the record?

CL: I think it's a natural evolution for us. We have always been influenced by current bands and it would be a lie to say we didn't incorporate modern sounds into our writing. This record - for me - was a very focused effort. I had a lot of time to write songs. A few songs were written as a band, but most of the framework to the songs were started by myself, Morgan, or John. Then the rest of the guys come in for its completion. The theme is more of a sonic one. We tried to incorporate a lot of programming. It was the first record I did a lot of that programming myself which was a fun process. Morgan and John and I had a few extra days before we started the record to refine those elements and combine our ideas on that front.

AU: "Seasons" as a running/fitness album... It's the best for distance running to tune out to. What do you do for fitness these days? What routines, habits, or rituals speak to you?

CL: Seasons? Really? Okay, fitness is my second

passion after music. I do a little bit of everything. I run, lift, row, cycle, cross train, heavy bag, you name it. I don't want to be a one trick fitness pony. I like to work all the different stimulus training I can because that translates into life more than say just marathon training or just lifting.

AU: What piece of gear has been helpful or surprising for you on this tour? Could be anything - guitar wise, or kit wise - let's share the wisdom.

CL: My Kemper is the core of my sound. I'm not a gear nerd, I use equipment as a tool not an

obsession. It's just not interesting to me to spend hours chasing tones and discussing pickups or pedals, it's cool but it's not something that holds my attention. Recording software, plug-ins, songwriting, that's my passion.

AU: There has always been a beauty and a darkness in the lyrics that Lajon sings, a lot of personal introspection, emotions, moods, dare I say vulnerability. It makes your band so unique, to discuss these topics - when so much of metal is trapped in a Dungeons and Dragons fantasy, or warlike Satanic mindset. Have you ever got flak for the topics you touch on from tough guy bands? If so, how did you handle it?

CL: I write a lot of lyrics for Sevendust and love telling stories, blending the topic with the vibe of the music, expressing struggles and pain, to get it out. Even touching on positive subjects here and there. I always feel like I can dig deeper lyrically but sometimes my focus can be more on melody than lyrics. I'll add lyrics after I write a melody.

AU: In your time playing live, is there a bill that stands out, a group of bands you thought wouldn't work - but it did? What is that show?

CL: Over the past 25 years we have been on all types of bills. Some better than others. We did a tour called "Tattoo the Earth" where we were sandwiched in between Sepultura, Slayer, and Slipknot. I've never felt more unheavy in my life.

AU: You guys did USO tours back in the day, for US and allied troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. What do you remember from those shows? Are

you still working with USO? Would you go out again?

CL: Those were tough, but fulfilling. The travel was brutal, but the payoff was tremendous. They were very thankful for the escape in music. We played some grueling places that were unforgiving. To be able to provide them some hometown love and support meant a lot. We haven't done any in years, but always down to support our military men and women when they are in the trenches.

AU: You've been playing music live for a long time. What's a ground rule you stand by and will not break?

CL: Do it for the love of the process. Do not write or perform for the attention, money, or fame. In my older years, the money does matter because it's how I support my wife and kids. It's got to be a focus, but that's reality

ABSOLUTE METAL

for me. I've proved my passion for the game already because I ate shit for years early on and could have cared less about money or who liked it. I just love writing music. If you're new and want a career, I hope that it's an obsession for you, because if it isn't - save yourself the time and energy.

AU: Thank you for your time. It's been an honor. Last words to the Canadians out there reading this in the heat of summer:

CL: I love Canada, always have. Great people, great

cities, some great music comes from there. And oddly clean everywhere, I'm a clean freak and Canada is well kept.



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THE INCITERS

Bring Back the Weekend

Interview with Trumpet Player Rick Kendrick

By Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Who am I speaking with?
RK: Rick Kendrick.

AU: Where are The Inciters from?
RK: Santa Cruz, Ca.

AU: How would you describe the sound of the band?
RK: Northern soul influenced with our own flavor/edge. We all come from mod, punk, Oi, ska and even psychobilly backgrounds in one way or another and I think these styles come through.

AU: How many people are in The Inciters?
RK: 10, but on occasion 11.

AU: How did you guys come to be on Pirates Press Records?

RK: I've always teased them about taking us (a soul band) on, when we sent the new stuff to them, I guess we finally did something to perk up their ears. We finally nailed our sound down on this one.

AU: Tell us about any new releases you have coming out?
RK: We have a single coming out any day now, along with a video. Then we have the full length coming out afterwards which will support our European tour in late October.

AU: Any new stand-out tracks you are extra stoked on?
RK: I love them all to be honest! But, "Boot-n-Soul," is the chosen single. It's powerful



PIRATES PRESS RECORDS

and fast. I also really love, "Bring Back The Weekend."

AU: Are Pirates Press Records reissuing any of your previous records?
RK: We haven't got that far. Don't know if they're interested in that. Maybe with some remixing or re-recording or something.

AU: What Inciters releases can we specifically expect to see in the near future?
RK: The single, "Boot-n-Soul," and the LP, titled Bring Back The Weekend.

AU: What other bands do you guys all presently play in?
RK: Our drummer Matty occasionally plays in Hayride To Hell. And Sabi has done a one-off show with Custom Fit that may turn into something new.

AU: Sabi was previously in Custom Fit, correct?
RK: Yep. Her and one of our guitar players started Custom Fit to fill their Oi needs. Haha. One or two of our new songs, I'd say we're definitely influenced by their experience in Custom Fit.



AU: How's the scene in Santa Cruz?
RK: Punk or soul? The punk scene has always been big here. The soul scene not so much. It's okay but not big. It's growing though. We do great with live shows though. Santa Cruz has always had a

great "scene". It just comes and goes in size.

AU: Who are some of your favorite local groups?
RK: If you mean Santa Cruz bands, then Seized Up, Slugger, Good Riddance and The Swingin' Utters. All good friends. But there are a ton of California bands. These are just my personal choices but, The Untouchables, Aggrolites, and Capsouls. Way too many great California bands to mention.

AU: Thanks for taking the time to answer these! Anything else you would like to add?
RK: We are so proud and excited to be the first soul band on Pirates Press. We want to make them proud in return! And I know soul is not easy to dance to for a lot of people, but we don't care, step up front and give it your best shot. Start a soul out if you need to!

AU: How do people find you online?
RK: Facebook and Instagram will have all the links. We will step it up and get better at online promotions. But google The Inciters and it's everywhere.

@theinciters

BLAST FROM THE PAST

A timeline rewind to 1983 Vancouver, B.C.

By Clark 'Super' Mantei

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Ahmet Ertegun. The Co-Founder and president of Atlantic Records 1923 to 2006. July 31st marked his 100th birthday.

And also to my best friend Memphis Daniel C. Schneider who passed away this summer. R.I.Peace.

Hello again past blasters.

Welcome to my discovery of the holy house of Led Zeppelin's music and the experience of Hendrix to the debut concerts at Vancouver's B.C. Place Stadium and also the Worldwide/First Choice TV. filming of David Bowie's Serious Moonlight performance. All encapsulated in 1983.

Let's start with a quote from Paul Stanley of the rock band KISS, who as a teenager in the late 60's saw many acts including Jimi Hendrix and Sly and the Family Stone among them. Yet he's quoted about seeing Led Zeppelin live in concert in NYC in the summer of 1969. He said "I saw them play for under 2000 people. They were the embodiment of the essence of rock and roll. Knowing that a band could raise the bar that high was like a religious experience. I might never get that good, but it's what I wanted to strive for."

Dateline 1968. September 7th. Jimi Hendrix performs in Vancouver at the P.N.E. Coliseum. He returns to his ole hometown and even his grandmother, a local resident attends the show. Jimi is interviewed by Terry David Mulligan and the local news interviews his grandma too. It's all on YouTube now thankfully. The same evening in Scandinavia showcased the debut performance of the 'New Yardbirds' A reinvented Yardbirds fronted by Jimmy Page on guitar with newcomers Robert Plant on vocals and John Bonham on drums. John Paul Jones played bass and keyboards. In December 1968 this band came to Vancouver and backed up Vanilla Fudge, the same band that backed up Jimi. Hendrix. Ahmet Ertegun signed this new band to Atlantic Records and in January 1969 their debut LP was released. Only they had a new name. They were now called Led Zeppelin. For the next 5 years they toured and recorded 5 records and on July 18th, 1973 they appeared in Vancouver on their Houses of the Holy tour. The concert was cut short due to Robert being dosed with something and after only 90 minutes the announcer said Robert was on his way to the hospital. My friend Dan was there in the front at only 16 and he says it was still a great show up until that moment. On July 27, 28 and 29, 1973 they ended their tour at Madison Square Gardens and all 3 nights were filmed and recorded for the 1976 release of 'The Song Remains the Same' The film played in theaters and the live album was released. The film finally came out on DVD in 2007. Led Zeppelin also reunited for one special concert in December of 2007 in honor of the memory of the late Ahmet Ertegun and the late drummer's son Jason Bonham



filled in for his father and it was a magical evening after 37 years of not performing as Led Zeppelin. The band has never played since then and it was a fitting ending. Quite poetic in fact!

Dateline fall 1982. It all started that day a green mysterious milk-crate of vinyl albums appeared at my buddy Kevin's house. His father had gifted him with a collection of late 60's to present day records. For many evenings we played them and 2 records stood out initially. One was Robert Plant with 'Pictures at Eleven' and the other was Led Zeppelin. Only both LP's had the same singer? After this I spent the winter listening to Led

Zeppelin and started to buy their records. One in particular was a double live LP called 'The Song Remains the Same' which was a soundtrack to the film. In January 1983. I was living in Victoria on Vancouver Island and a local theatre called The Town Cinema was showing a midnight feature film. It was 'The Song Remains the Same'. So my buddy Clayton and I went to see it. It was a magical movie indeed. After the film we walked home through the night and Clay had carried a ghetto blaster with him so we had music

for the long journey home. He put in a cassette of Jimi Hendrix and my mind was blown. I later went back to the milk-crate and found 'Are You Experienced?' by Jimi Hendrix. I was hooked on these albums.

It was during this time that I realized Led Zeppelin had lost their drummer in late 1980 and that is why Robert Plant was now a solo artist. Also in spring of 1983 a new friend from England showed up at my school. He was Adam and he introduced me to the music of The Police and also Frank Zappa. So much music to discover. We hit it off and by summer Robert Plant had a 2nd LP out and was going to tour. Also I was happy to be able to actually

move to Vancouver in July for 2 weeks to Kevin's dad's place where I discovered Supertramp and Neil Young in his record collection. He had way more LP's than just the magic milk-crate he left in Victoria. Upon staying in Vancouver I saw the first CD player and I was confused. Let's leave that one alone. Vinyl was my addiction as were the upcoming concerts I yearned to see. I remember the TV news showing Mick Jagger was now 40. Now he's 80! Awesome Mick.

The next month was August and I was back on Vancouver Island at a lake with the family only wanting to see the first concert in B.C. Place as David Bowie was playing with The Tubes and Peter Gabriel. 54000 people attended and I wasn't one of them. However, on August 31st The Police played the Pacific Coliseum and they were at the top of the charts. Little did anyone know they would retire shortly after. In 1983 MTV was playing videos and Bowie and Robert Plant were among the top videos of the day. It was an exciting time. I was now 16 and I managed to take a ferry to Vancouver with my buddy Kevin to see Supertramp on Sept 3rd at B.C. Place with local acts the Payolas and Bryan Adams. That concert had 56,000 in attendance and during the show band member

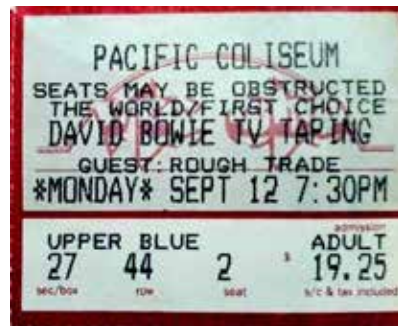
Roger Hodgson announced that after the tour he was leaving Supertramp. He never returned. Upon arriving home I started school when it was announced that David Bowie was filming 2 shows for an upcoming film called 'Serious Moonlight' I had to go. Only the shows were at the Coliseum in Vancouver on Sept 11th and 12th. My buddy Adam said if I could go he'd go with me as his mom said it was O.K. On Monday the 12th we left school at noon and ran to my house. I asked my grandfather "If my mom lets us go, can you drive us to the ferry please and we can go to see Bowie?" He said sure. I ran upstairs and we both asked mom and we inhaled our lunch. She said "No, you go to school. You've been to enough shows and that is final!" We ran downstairs and told grandpa she said yes. He drove us to the ferry. Mom was chasing the car and grandpa laughed. "She said no, huh?" Yes indeed she did.

We made it to the venue and spent hours there before the crowds arrived. I only knew of David Bowie's LP from 1983 and was in for a surprise. The opening act was local band Rough Trade and they were great. Then for the big event local V.J. Terry David Mulligan was introduced and he was to explain what will happen during the filming and he instantly tripped and all we heard was a thud and his mic bouncing on the floor. Ouch. He was okay and received a round of applause.

The filming of this show started and for a few hours I was in a state of pure bliss and Bowie and his band performed an incredible visual extravaganza of theatrical performances to all his songs. The songs 'Let's Dance' and 'Fame' and 'Space Oddity' along with so many others made me spellbound indeed. An incredible show. My world was ch-ch-changing fast. At the end of the show that night there was a massive crescent shaped golden moon that burst into the audience showering everyone with mini gold and silver balloons that floated down on the crowd. You can see this in the official video of 'Modern Love'. It was such a great time. I managed to get a balloon and still have it to this very day. After the show we walked from the Coliseum to downtown at



Main and Hastings where I saw a poster for the event we just were a part of. I took it home. Actually the bus driver said if we stay on the bus he will drive us to the ferry after. What a great guy he was and we made the 7 am ferry home. About 10 am I arrived at home and saw mom standing there and she wasn't smiling at all. In fact she was furious and I can't say she was wrong. She had one thing to say and that was "Well Clark, I'm grounding you for a month for scaring me all night. You didn't even call." Grandpa was silent. I asked if it is still okay to attend Robert Plant on Saturday October 1st please? No no and no! I went off to school and did my paper route after and for the next 3 weeks plotted a way to convince mom to let me and Kevin go see Robert Plant in Vancouver. I had to go. It was now my mission. By the way, the concert film was released on DVD in 2006. I even found myself in the film.



Dateline 2023. July 5th, 2023. KISS perform at the O2 Arena for their farewell tour which ends this December at Madison Square Gardens. Before the show began, Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin showed up backstage and hung out with Paul Stanley. That's actually pretty cool as it was the same venue Led Zeppelin reformed to honor

the late Ahmet Ertegun. After all that Paul has said about seeing Led Zeppelin in the summer of 1969 in New York City it's only fitting that they are friends these days.

As for Jimi Hendrix, his old residence in Vancouver is now a museum and his grandmother's house has been restored and has a plaque stating all she did for Vancouver in her long life.

It is a great life, this life of music.

At that I'll bring this issue to a close and wish you all a great healthy happy summer.

In the next issue I hope to let you know that I managed to see Robert Plant on October 1st.

Until then I'll only say this...

Rock out and Rrrrrrrrll on.

Peace





THE SICKNESS

Interview with writer Jenna Cha and artist Lonnie Nadler.

Interview by Hank Pattison

The *Sickness* is a 14-part comic book series set in the small-town America of the 1940's and 50's, concerning an illness which causes its victims to experience hallucinations, violent outbursts, and the persistent presence of a haunting figure. Created by artist Jenna Cha & writer Lonnie Nadler, who previously worked together on the mystical-horror comic book, *Black Stars Above*, this new series explores the themes of festering diseases that spread throughout the body, the mind, and society itself.

Absolute Underground spoke with Jenna & Lonnie at Vancouver's Trout Lake Park, discussing the horrors of comic books and marketing, as children frolicked and screamed in the background.

AU: You've both explored themes of physical and mental illness with past projects; what keeps drawing you back to these disquieting themes?

LN: It's not a deliberate choice of mine to explore mental illness with my work; it might stem from the fact that another recurring theme in my work and sort of in the work we've done together as well, is characters who are caught in these liminal spaces - in spaces between, divided between two worlds, and often that comes out as a division between the outer world, in which the characters find themselves in, and the inner world which they experience on their own, and how those two things combat and inform one another, and I think there's just some natural connection between that and mental illness which is bound to come out.

JC: We write about what we know. In some cases we write about what we're trying to figure out. I kind of like using horror in particular as a space to try and understand what I'm going through, whether or not I get answers by the end of writing

a story; I don't always get answers, but at the very least, I have some semblance of an understanding of things I've gone through in the past, and the process in writing these stories can take years of incubation, which I've completely put my trust into at this point. When I want to make a story, I don't expect to fully flesh it out until several years down the road. I think it's a form of catharsis too; horror is like, I'm like a very scared person, so unfortunately, being scared is something I understand very well, and to kind of put my fears into a body with a face, and a personality and a story, I can kind of sit down with it, and understand it better, and sometimes understand myself better.

LN: In relation to *The Sickness*, it's interesting, in interviews we've done, it continually comes up that it's a book about mental illness-

JC: It's not.

LN: and when Jenna and I first saw that we were like, "is it?"

JC: It's not.

LN: And then we went back and read the first half we were like, "oooooh!" We didn't mean for it, but we totally understand why people would think that.

JC: We didn't mean for it.

LN: But at the same time, Daniel, the main character, was designed to be anxious. So it's like, it's there, but it wasn't like, "let's make a story about mental illness."

AU: When telling stories about historical time periods you didn't experience, how do you still make your story a personal exploration?

LN: I think the reality of the sickness, and our past work like *Black Stars Above*, and my past work with *Undone By Blood*, it's like, as soon as you begin researching the eras, the more evident it becomes that absolutely nothing has changed.

JC: Yeah.

LN: And you realize just how awful things were, and then you're like, but we still haven't really done very well to remedy these things, to make up for them, to better ourselves, our societies, our communities... so in a sense, it's not that hard - it's hard to do well, I guess - but I just mean, when you're reading and doing the historical research, you can't help but see yourself and put yourself in that position because you're always comparing it to your own experience in the present.

JC: When you start reading into history in a really deep way, you kind of just start to get emotional about it. Whether or not that's you projecting your own feelings onto what you're reading, or you can't help but imagine how people were feeling back then; I try to research as much as I can with texts that have to do with personal

accounts on certain events. I try to find texts about the kind of mundane daily life experiences of people because everything you read is just about dates and the logistics of what happened in certain time periods, the very strict series of events of certain decades, but you never really read about the individual experience of certain time periods; it's infuriatingly difficult to find texts like that. Especially when it comes to marginalized people. Not only is it hard to find texts like that, but texts that do touch upon that, you can't find them because there are paywalls. It's infuriatingly hard to research some stuff sometimes. That's something we actually put in the book, that one of the characters, a trait about him is that he's obsessed with collecting newspapers because he's obsessed with information, and I think part of that came out of my frustration with not being able to find information about certain time periods.

LN: There's also a side of it that Jenna and I often research separately and it's almost every day one of us will go into the other's office and go, "oh my god, I was reading about this thing in the forties, did you know about this?" And it's like "No, really? That's awful! We should probably put that in the book." It lends itself well to horror, unfortunately. You know, good for the book, but bad for humanity. But we just find these atrocities, big or small, historically, and they're often so poignant or so eerily similar to something we were already putting in the book, that we have to twist a scene slightly to make it very historically accurate when before it was fiction. And I guess you just have to open yourself up to that sort of research, and a willingness to be exposed to it, and react to it in the work. History is scary - that's the theme of the book.

JC: You don't need to make up horrors, you can just read a history book; that's kind of passé to say, but it's true.

AU: How do you balance marketability with your own storytelling desires? Does "market research" ever factor into your creative process?

JC: Man, I'm so ignorant about stuff. I didn't know that people were excited that the book [*The Sickness* #1] sold out; I didn't know the book sold out, and I didn't know that people were excited about it. I am problematically divorced from the other side of publishing. I'm buried in my own simian self-righteous inward concentration on the making-of side of publishing that I'm like "market research? What?"

LN: That's why I get stuck with it.

JC: I have moments when I go to Lonnie and I'm like, "Oh my god, nobody's going to get this, it's going to come off badly," or "oh my god, everybody's doing this, it's either sink or swim, blah blah blah," but I feel like those moments don't last very long for me because I just want to draw the fucking comic.

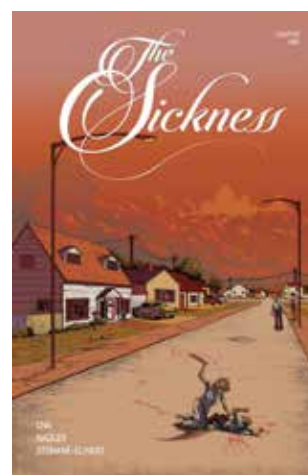
LN: Yeah, I was taught very early on in my career that you have to be aware of that stuff, very sadly. There's no such thing as pure creation when you're putting something out for release, there's no art for art's sake anymore. That only exists if you don't try to release it into the world. I could talk for hours on this, and I have much to Jenna's chagrin, but I think there's a divorce between what publishers think readers want, and what readers actually want. I don't know who it was, some filmmaker, maybe Kubrick, said, "People, readers, audiences have no idea what they want, and if they did, they'd make it themselves."

AU: That's [Alan] Moore. "It's not the job of the artist to give the audience what the audience wants. If the audience knew what they needed, they would not be the audience. They would be the artist. It is the job of the artist to give the audience what they need."

JC: There you go.

LN: That's fitting, the two people I quote are

Kubrick and Moore. The same I think goes for many publishers. They're running a business; they're not running an art frenzy, so their concerns are, "how do I make something that taps into something that's already popular so it can guarantee I'll make some money; not just break even, but how do I make some fucking money?" That's publishers, regardless of how much they tell you they want to make good comics, the bottom line is that they need to make money, and that does not allow them to take risks, it does not allow them to publish things solely based on their artistic merit, not that the two things can't coincide, but it also leads to a fear of what they're going to put out because if it is too far off from what is already currently being published and perceived as hot, it is too much of a risk, and they worry it won't make any money, and that's something we ran into on *The Sickness*, it's



something I ran into on past books; the only way through it is for you to believe in the thing you want to make, to believe in it whole-heartedly, and do your best to communicate that vision, and why it has value, to the publisher, in terms they're going to understand. The only reason *The Sickness* has worked out this way is because *Uncivilized* is a small enough publisher that a risk for them is not as big a risk as it is at other publishers, and Tom [Kaczynski], who runs *Uncivilized*, does actually want to make good comics. He makes comics himself, and I think what separates him from

other publishers is that Tom knows what it takes to make a book, what it takes to make a successful book, how to market a book, and how to make it break even in a publishing world where you don't have to sell a hundred thousand copies to make something a success. And he doesn't care about adaptations and selling the rights; he doesn't take them, that's fully left to the creators, and surprise, what happens when you don't care about selling it? You're actually able to care about the book itself, and marketing the book, and make your product something valuable that is standout, and is an artifact in and of itself. You consider the small audiences you're trying to reach. I have very complex feelings towards it.

AU: Read any cool comics lately?

LN: I just read Brubaker's *Friday*; it's like, when is Brubaker not good? It's obvious to say. Didn't I just buy something? *Puma Blues*.

AU: So the most recent thing you've read is from the nineteen-eighties?

JC: (laughs) Shut-up!

LN: I don't read new comics! That's not true - I read my friends' comics.

JC: Mini-comics. Independent comics.

LN: Dennis Camp's *Twentieth Century Men*, Alex Paknadel and Casper Wijngaard's *All Against All*. Stuff my friends send me, and old stuff where I'm like, "how is nobody talking about this?" like *Puma Blues*.

JC: And *Little Nemo*. (laughs) The oldest shit possible.

LN: I started reading *Little Nemo* because it was relevant for something I was working on, and almost immediately I was like, "this is the best fucking comic I ever read."

JC: "They don't make 'em like they used to."

AU: When *The Sickness* blows up and gets its own ice cream flavor, what will that flavor be?

LN: Atomic blast.

JC: Like radiation. Like lime green radiation.

LN: And it comes pre-melted.

AU: Have you guys seen the Grimace Shake Meme?

LN: Unfortunately yes.

HALLOWEEN NEWS FROM A DARK HORSE

By Ed Sum

Anyone starting to prepare for Halloween now will be in for a proper treat! In the past, Dark Horse Comics have published small forays to celebrate the season with one-shots from titles that are adapted from television series or otherwise. From Star Wars to Stranger Things, they were minor successes, but to truly celebrate the season requires something original! I'm happy to say that they got something ghoulish to love come October 23, 2023!

From the Press Release:

Boils, ghouls, vampires, monsters, and creatures of all kinds, welcome. Take a seat, go on, fill the aisles, relax your fangs, and sit with us for a while. Follow a macabre and magical journey through all the haunts and spooks that keep you up at night. Here you'll revel in darkness for a chilling, nay PETRIFYING experience as the Headless Horseman presents a collection of five terrifying tales to warm up your cold soul. Hurry up now, you won't want to keep them waiting...

This Halloween the headless haunt, our Dark Equestrian, saddles up for a one-shot gathering creepy tales perfect for a night of nightmares. The Headless Horseman Halloween Annual is a new Halloween anthology from Dark Horse Comics and contains macabre merriment from a host of haunting creators, including: Angela Slatter (Castle Full of Blackbirds), Lukas Ketner (Count Crowley: Reluctant Midnight Monster Hunter), Olivia Stephens (Darlin' and Her Other Names),



Phillip Sevy (Tomb Raider, The House), Christie Porter, Leah Kilpatrick, David Dastmalchian (Count Crowley), Valeria Burzo (Castle Full of Blackbirds), Tyler Crook (Harrow County), Frank Cvetkovic (The House), and more. These five stories are presented by creators who share a love of shudder-inducing, spine-tingling imagery and spooky tales!

"Doing a Halloween-themed anthology has always been a dream of mine, and we were able to assemble a fantastic crew of creators to help carry out that vision. The book is full of fun, creepy, and iconic stories that will scare and delight readers, I can't wait for everyone to get their hands on it!" said editor Megan Walker.

"Being able to write Horror House with David was such a gift to my spooky heart and seeing Tyler's beautiful artwork

bring it all to life was something truly special." said writer Leah Kilpatrick. "It's such a treat to be able to be a part of an anthology series and when that series is about Halloween what more can you want!"

"There is a controlled kind of magic in one-shot, anthological storytelling that follows a tradition of EC Comics, short films and even well-crafted jokes. Getting to collaborate with the amazing Leah Kilpatrick and one of my favourite artists, Tyler Crook, under Megan Walker's guidance has been the perfect laboratory to cook up a twisted Halloween tale!" said writer David Dastmalchian.

If you've ever gotten lost while trick-or-treating, if writer's block gives you a disproportionate sense of dread, if you won't walk past that certain house down the road... just in case, if you have ever wondered why the new kid came to town or

what could possibly make those spooky horror games even scarier, and especially if you think nothing can frighten you, this anthology is for you.



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BACKSTAGE PASS - VENUE PROFILE



Army, Navy, & Air-force Veterans Club #293 Ucluelet, BC

Interview by John Carlow

Photos courtesy of Kaila Marie Mack

AU: Introduce yourself and the venue

ANAVC: My name is Bronwyn Kelleher. I am the President of Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada Unit 293. It is a Veterans support club at its core but has had somewhat of a civilian takeover, running as a live music venue among other things. We are run 95% by volunteers.

AU: Tell us a bit about the building

ANAVC: The building itself is an old mess hall from WWII that was moved to the site to become the clubhouse for the Army & Navy. Local legend has it that it was cut in half to be moved and is held together with a wire and pulley system that needs to be tightened annually. It hasn't been tightened in years. You can really tell when the crowd gets jumping and the building starts swaying. She is held up on old dock pilings so you can't really blame the old girl!

AU: When did you get involved in hosting shows there?

ANAVC: I have been involved with booking shows

at the hall for almost a decade and took over that position completely about three years ago.

AU: How is the building supported?

ANAVC: The club is a "by the people for the people" kind of affair. Everyone working the shows is a volunteer, from the girl at the door to the bartender mixing your drink. (Everything is \$6.25 unless you are a member of the club; then it's a

dollar cheaper). Membership is \$40 annually and gives you all kinds of perks, even a free birthday party! We truly are member run. We are here to support live music. Local bands like Downtown Brown & The Hitch or TV Dead love to play the hall they drink in, to a crowd of people that are their friends, neighbors, ex-girlfriends, and that asshole from work.

AU: Do you get out of towners?

ANAVC: When out of towners do happen to find their way into the club, they get to experience a slice of the true heart of Ucluelet. A small-town vibe of authentic community; something that is becoming harder and harder to find nowadays. We are a dying breed. To be thriving and growing right now is a testament to our amazing volunteers, the support of the west coast, and all musicians that are willing to make the trek over the mountains to this stage by the sea.

AU: What kind of shows have occupied the stage?

ANAVC: We host live music every Friday and Saturday in the summer and once a week in the off-season. Karaoke and games night are weekly as well as monthly meat bingo sponsored by the local Co-op Butcher department. We bring in

stand-up comedy, burlesque, paint night, pole dancers, fashion shows, and anything you can think of. Battle of the Bands this spring was a massive success. We offer the venue to nonprofit societies for free for meetings and are happy to partner with them for fundraisers. The club has seen everyone from D.O.A. and the Dayglo's to C. R. Avery and Petunia and the Vipers. We have some kids from Nanaimo coming up next month called Danger Box. Lothar Myck, a recent graduate of the local high school and an excellent musician in his own right hosted an all-ages show at the club last week which included an all-female teenage band called Amaryllis.

Summer months are in high gear because everyone on tour wants to make it out to the coast even just to dip their toes in the ocean. So free accommodation, playing a show in a gorgeous venue to an adoring crowd, and having gas money covered makes it more than worth your while.

AU: Tell us what a band should expect when setting up a show

ANAVC: We are a 100 person capacity venue and charge \$15 at the door. All the money made at the door goes to the band. All the money made at the bar goes to the club. We don't have a guarantee. We have an internal poster making person unless you have a premade poster you prefer. Volunteers put up hard copies of posters around town weekly. We have a dedicated social media person to promote all events online, as well as free promotion from Tuff City Radio. We don't do presale tickets for the most part. There are some party lights and colored stage lights that are permanently installed. We have an 18-channel mixer, pa, bass amp, 2 mics, 2 LXR chords, and a piano. There's an 8x16 stage with a back recessed

10x8 part that has curtains. The Green room has a pocket door onto the stage. Being a DIY setup, when you arrive in town for a show you will have the code to the front door. Load in, do your own sound check and go explore town! Volunteer staff will show up half an hour before the doors open. We might even feed you corn dogs at 2 am!

Paused in 1982, the Army & Navy is like a cross between your grandfather's favorite drinking hole and the living room of your childhood. Wood paneling and old framed photos? We got it. Couches to get comfy on and watch the show? Hell yeah! Those couches, by the way, are also hide-a-beds! These and a regular couch are your free accommodation for the night. Bring your own bedding you heathens! We ain't your mother.

AU: Memorable shows?

ANAVC: I think one of the most memorable shows was Blackberry Wood, who are a gypsy folk Klezmer band. They have a song about riding a bicycle that had the entire audience lying on their backs

on the dance floor pedaling their legs in the air. DOA a few years ago was also an epic moment in British Columbia musical history. We have the last poster from that tour framed for our wall, which features Margaret Trudeau's vagina. We would like to say that we have the hole that our prime minister came out of displayed at the clubhouse!

AU: How do bands contact you to set up a show?

Please text Bronwyn at **250-266-5914**
 Facebook under **Bronwyn Kelleher**
bronwynkelleher@hotmail.com.



VOICE OF THE STREETS



NO HEART

Interview with lead vocalist and guitarist Mike Underwood

Interview by Little Barbershop of Horrors & Big Chuckster

Absolute Underground: Finally got the chance to sit down with Victoria's local oi! band No Heart. Who are we speaking with currently?

Mike: I play lead guitar and do lead vocals. MJ does rhythm guitar, Jord bass and backups, Will drums and backups/some less vocals. We started gigging and recording in 2016.

AU: Nice to see you guys are active again and were well missed, Since the split up in 2019 what have you boys been up to?

Mike: Band wise, we had a couple of short-lived projects called The Choice Few (pub rock) and Split Arrows (post-punk/mod revival mix). Nothing exciting apart from that, going about our

business.

AU: Why did you guys split, and what brought the band back together?

Mike: We didn't split so much as went on a hiatus - we were kind of burned out in hindsight, we played locally way, way too much and were cranking out almost TOO much material - and with some of us having very young children at the time, we couldn't take advantage of offers to play further afield than Vancouver. We needed a break, and it happened to coincide with Covid, so it worked out well. We brought the band back as our other projects fell apart due to personal differences with members not related to the No Heart crew - it felt right,

we missed it, and we also missed having MJ on board so we all chatted and decided to stick with what works. It's been more fun than before honestly, we are all close



friends and came together through the Oi! scene, so it's nice to be back where we belong, playing Oi! and street rock n roll.

AU: Coming in strong with a new LP and live EP. How has the new music been received?

Mike: The new record from Insurgence has gone down well; we actually recorded it in 2019 - the live recording too is actually from 2018. We

are proud of both releases, hit up Insurgence Records or Longshot if you need them.

AU: We saw you guys played in Winnipeg with Black Dogs, how did the show go? Everyone make it out alive?

Mike: Winnipeg was amazing, all the bands we played with were great, especially Black Dogs and Pure Impact. It was a wild weekend; we couldn't recommend playing there enough - we've become close friends with a lot of their crew since, WCSP hospitality was unreal, and we can't wait to go back. You can catch us and the bands mentioned playing together in Edmonton on September 2nd.

AU: Not many known oi! / skinhead bands in Victoria these days. How's the scene? Any bands we should look out for, in your opinion?

Mike: The scene is pretty good in Vic. Not huge, but all quality. A lot of older skins end up migrating out here; that's actually how the band formed when Will moved over just as I moved back. There are regular soul and reggae DJ nights, some organized by skins, some by mod/scooter types that are all fun. For Oi related bands, check out Neurospazm (old school punks from Betty Ford, if you like 90s North American Oi, you will love it) and IQ78 (melodic punk with nods to Oi, featuring a few skins) as well as Concrete Grave (straight boot boy stuff).

AU: When not making noise and cracking jokes, what do you guys do for fun? Favorite local spots 'n dives?

Mike: When we get the chance to get out, you can find us at a handful of pubs. Big up View Street Social Club, that's our main spot or Cafe Fantastico amongst others.

AU: We saw you guys played Have A Good Laugh Festival in Vancouver recently which we just covered in our last interview with the good ol Vancouver punks. How did that go? What bands stuck out for you guys?

Mike: We have played HAGL a few times over the years; it's always great, and their crew is professional and punk as fuck at the same time. As usual, it was loads of fun; we finished our set with Nick Wasko (Emergency) joining us for a few covers which was great. MESS was the standout for me personally, Concrete Bollox was fun too.

AU: What's next for the No Heart Boys any more out of town gigs coming out?

Mike: We just played with Bishops Green here the other night, and we are taking part in a weekender in Edmonton on Labor Day weekend, which will be awesome. That'll be it for the year, but 2024 will see plenty of out-of-province (and likely out of country) gigs.

AU: Little bird told us there might be some new material coming out, is there a new album possibly in the works?

Mike: We just finished recording for a split 12" with Claimed Choice from France, which will be out in I think October. We also have two tracks coming out on different compilations later in the year.

AU: Where can we get your records old and new? And where can Non-vinyl listeners hear the goods?

Mike: You can hit up Longshot/LSM or Insurgence in North America. Rebellion, PST, and BDS records have all done past releases in Europe. Otherwise, it's all on Spotify and Bandcamp. Our next release will be out on Longshot/Rebellion.

AU: Thanks for the interview and keeping this scene alive. Any last words or shout-outs?

Mike: Cheers for the interview, boys. Big shout-outs to the whole VCS crew, Vancouver skins, HAGL crew, WCSP, AB/SK skins, all the labels, and all our friends elsewhere in the world/country, our families for putting up with us doing this shit, and anyone who's taken an interest in the band.





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HARSH

Making Weird Art with Friends

Interview by Aeryn Shrapnel

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

HARSH:

Cam: I play bass in *HARSH*, Ref in *The Hockey Fight*, and host *The Good Medicine Show* on CJSW 90.9FM.

Megan: Drums and merch-maker extraordinaire.

Jamie: I sing, and I love naps and animals.

Sydney: Probably most known for being a local-queer-scumbag with a heart of bronze. I also play the gee-tar and occasionally yell in *HARSH*. I was lead singer and guitarist for *Copsickle* too. R.I.P.

AU: I've heard that *HARSH* was born out of screaming misheard *Menzingers* lyrics in your kitchen. Can you tell us about that?

C: Very close. Much like the gospels, I'm sure you'll get four different stories. But the correct story is that *HARSH* was born one shitty winter night after like two cases of the cheapest beer. Sydney and I decided to jam. Megan walked by and in what I am sure is only the politest fashion I suggested she go drum. Then I texted Jamie and said that they were going to sing for the band. We just started writing dumb stuff and yelling misheard lyrics at each other. It was and still is just a fun time making weird art with out friends. And a good way to see our favorite bands on a budget.

AU: Your music is reminiscent of 90's Riot Grrrl, with super punchy lyrics that are often feminist and political in nature. What are some of your biggest influences in your music both lyrically and musically?

M: Having members who are very visibly queer is political. Our existence is political especially in the current climate. We are here, we exist. Even if we weren't wanting to write political minded lyrics, we are still political. We write what we experience and that is a lot of frustration and

anger with the system. But we also have fun and write dumb songs about not having pockets. *War on Women*, *Bomb the Music Industry*, and *Metz*. The stuff I listen to changes all the time too. We don't try to be anything though. We just slap shit together and make fun fucking music.

AU: Your new single "Garbage" is a little teaser for your EP coming this fall. Can you tell us what to expect from the EP?

C: The finest production values and a quality you are unlikely to hear replicated live. For real, Casey at Echo Base killed it!

M: We just finished recording the third song which is a four-minute jam. So, like double the length we are used to playing. We've got some fun 90s sounds coming at you. It's a mixed bag of "What the fuck is this?" and, "I dig it."

AU: What's your song writing process look like?

S: Sometimes, amazing songs appear in my dreams. Sometimes, God guides my fingers to write some of the most amazing, shredding riffs to bless the listeners' ear-holes. Ergo, *HARSH* exudes efficacious song writing synergy, that is multifarious and dare I claim, postmodern?

AU: Any plans for the future?

M: We've got so much on our plate! It's exciting. This summer we are playing Sled Island in Calgary, some fun shit in August I can't talk about yet, and then a little tour out to North Pender Island for Outhouse Fest in September. I do believe we've got some stops planned in Vancouver and the surrounding area as well, so keep your eyes peeled for more details.

AU: Famous last words?

J: Nap time!

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harshtheband.bandcamp.com

Photo by Jesse G

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I'm more interested in affordable housing.

Damn. Good point. With aliens moving here the housing market will certainly skyrocket further.

-DICK KAUF '23

PEANUTS

by NICK BLINKO

OH, NO.... NOT AGAIN!

HERE WE GO CHARLIE BROWN. I'LL HOLD THE BALL, AND YOU COME RUNNING UP AND KICK IT.

OKAY LUCY.. HERE I COME!

AAUGH!

GOOD GRIEF. CHARLIE BROWN, YOU BLOCKHEAD!

WUMPH!

DANZIGGY

by gareth gaudin

PFFT!

YEAH, WELL, I HAVE A "JUST FOR LIFE" TOO Y'KNOW

AND I WAS A "PASSENGER" ON A BUS JUST THIS MORNING.

AND WHAT KIND OF NAME IS "IGGY"?

HE'S JUST JEALOUS.

Crossword Answers

TRIPRODZ COMPILED

H	Y	P	E	M	E	T	S	N	A	P	S		
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CROSSWORD NO. 94 SUMMER, 2023

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I MEAN COCK DOCK!

ARE YOU A WEENY WHO'S A MONKEY? OR A MONKEY WHO'S A WEENY?

I'M ACTUALLY A RAINBOW TROUPE. HE JUST MAKES ME WEAR THIS COSTUME FOR THE FUN.

YOU LOOK LIKE A MYSTERY-HUN IN THE BEST OF A MUSHROOM!

CAN WE ASSIST YOU IN YOUR QUEST FOR JUSTICE?

The Sickness by Jenna Cha and Lonnie Madler

CRIPES, DANNY REAR IT IN!

HEY!

JESUS, DAN!

S-SORRY, MESS-UP-ING ME--

OH, NO, YOU STILL COMING OVER TO LISTEN TO THE ROCK GAME TOMORROW?

Y-YEAH, S-SURE...

WHY, ALASAND THERE HE GOES.

OH, DANNY BO-OODOO!

OH, DANNY BO-OODOO!

THE PIPES, THE PIPES ARE CALLING!

Absolute Book Reviews



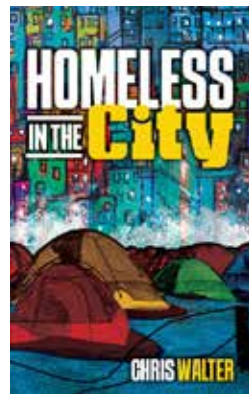
King of the Road By William S Hayes

Jak's Skate team has been around since the late 70s when it started in California... It moved next to Washington and Oregon then to BC in the early 80s...They are international now, with about 13 divisions worldwide...One thing for certain they have remained more or less out of the spotlight, opting out of interviews with some bug magazines over the years... Early Thrasher printed the odd article, but not too many more as Phelps wasn't a fan. This book is a perfect glance

into this world of Skateboard gangs: heavy drinking, sex, punk rock bands, drug use, violence, skate hockey, crime, And pretty much anything else you aren't allowed to do that's fun that the JAKS do during their notorious July 1st-4th Reunion. Held every year since 1987(NOFX played at it) in a different city. This is a first hand account from someone new on the team going down south for their first time, hitchhiking across 2 state lines. I was in the same boat as this was my second reunion as a Jaks so I myself had a great visit down memory lane. This was a book that was hard to

put down. Lots of people in this book are deceased and Hayes does an exceptional job of introducing some of these beautiful and fucking funny characters to us years after they have been deceased. You will read about Robin Hood, T.A, Danny Lucky, or Slim, Hobbit, Penguin, all who are no longer with us. Lots of live music coverage and great descriptions of one the coolest cities in North America. This is even a fun read if you don't participate in any of this stuff, so try to track down a copy, and be sure to read his first book "Concrete Burden" which is a little more rough and tumble.

- Dustin Jak



Homeless in the City By Chris Walter

Chris Walter's "Homeless in the City" is a poignant and gripping novel that delves into the lives of three individuals facing homelessness and unemployment. Gavin, Erika, and Barney, with their diverse backgrounds, form an interesting narrative that sheds light on the harsh realities of the housing crisis.

Walter's personal experiences influence the book, lending authenticity to the characters and their struggles. The prose evokes a sense of desolation and desperation, immersing readers in the characters' gritty world.

With "Homeless In The City," Walter moves from being an underground "punk" author that writes about the ugly side of life to a modern Hemingway. He writes about what he's seen and what he knows.

Despite its weighty subject matter, the novel leaves readers with empathy and a call to action. It prompts reflection on societal flaws contributing to homelessness and urges us to seek solutions prioritizing human dignity.

-Michael Essington

Absolute Film Reviews



Hundreds of Beavers

Ryland B. Cole Tews and Mike Cheslik certainly made a name for themselves with the craziness that is Lake Michigan Monster (2018). It's known amongst B-movie aficionados as Cthulhu meets Monty Python, and their latest, Hundreds of Beavers, is slightly different. This time, this duo brings the love for Silent Films (especially Mack Sennett's work), early Looney Tunes, Benny Hill and Tex Avery to the fore. However, the list doesn't end there. I'm sure this duo wanted to toss in everything including the kitchen sink to this madcap romp.

Now to keep that going in a full length 108-min film is tough. I was left wondering when it'll end and fortunately there are moments to take breathers to process all that's gone on before the next set piece goes all out bonkers.

In this tale, a drunk applejack salesman Jean Kayak (played by Tews) finds his home and business destroyed. I guess it's because of those darn beavers, but to deal with them is the least of his worries. There's also a rascally rabbit that torments this hunter. Although he doesn't have a shotgun, what he does to deal with this threat is classic.

What we're watching is a very extended Wile E. Coyote cartoon! It's almost complete with all those prerequisite ACME moments where he's using some crazy gadget to catch them all. But here, these rodents aren't like Pokémon. They don't want to be captured! Instead, Kayak has to come up with other inventive ways to take down as many of them as possible in a short amount of time.

In some ways, I'm also reminded of Banana Splits. The reason is not because of the costumes used. Instead, it's evident that there's only so much space to chase and constrain these beavers! Ultimately, this film focuses on who can outsmart whom. What I liked the most is that these animals are well aware of what this lumberjack is up to! To see them unite makes sense, and Kayak better look out! If a truce can be struck between this individual versus the fauna of The Great White North, then there's no need to say who wins. In the grandest of cartoon traditions, it isn't over until the fat lady sings, and I'm waiting for Hundreds of Beavers

to become a musical!
4 Stars out of 5

- Ed Sum

Screened at Fantasia Film Festival



Onyx the Fortuitous and the Talisman of Souls

Real life YouTube occult celebrity Onyx the Fortuitous has a movie, and the brilliant mind behind this horror comedy is Andrew Bowser. To see this character in a movie with the additional tagline of "And The Talisman of Souls," take his schtick on the way he talks, walks and runs away from terror to new levels. Here, what's presented may well be an evolution of his internet show, but I think not. There's a distinction between what he comically riffs on with his YouTube channel videos to becoming a person who can handle being in Scooby Doo style situations. Here, he must confront his demons!

Because of his obsessive interest in Bartok's (Jeffrey Combs) occult teachings, he's more or less doomed himself. Because of how life has handed him a lot of lemons, he thinks turning to evil can help him turn things around. Even then, he still needs to prove himself to this overlord in order to curse those who treated him wrong. However, when his naivety shows he has no place in this world, what he must become is something better.

It's hilarious to see how he manages to survive in this cult, and here Coombs is as delightfully sinister. Although I can't shake the fact he's basically using his Weyoun (Star Trek: DS9) persona, the performance works! As for whom he must sacrifice to attain immortality, maybe he should have thought twice about whom he chose to be his *ahem* inner circle. In addition to Onyx, there is also Jesminder (Melanie Chandra), Mr. Duke (Terence Carson), Marsha (Donna Pieroni) and Mack (Rivkah Reyes).

In the story construction front, they have pasts which are similar to those from the Canadian black comedy hit, Todd and the Book of Pure Evil. Although this movie isn't necessarily about stealing this tome away from the necromancer, what's familiar is with the tone to which the comedy is at. We're dealing with just how gonzo Onyx's life has become, and for him to embrace the role he's always said he'll become requires

multiple twists in the narrative to have me grinning.

As for whether Bowser can top the first film with a sequel, I'll just have to wait. The post credits sequence suggests the fight with Bartok isn't over, and just where it goes from here simply requires this film to blow the box office out of the water for midnight movie madness appeal.

- Ed Sum

Screened at Fantasia Film Festival 2023 on Aug 5



Site 13

Site 13 is a rather unusual movie. What was filmed back in 2003 was more of a theatrical experiment than anything else, and what's layered on top, recorded more than a decade later for a 2023 release is a story that brings Nathan Marsh's (played by Nathan Faudree) story full circle. This archaeologist is well versed in occult lore and his obsession with all things round has led him to believe they are portals to some netherworld.

To say director Tony Urban had a solid idea back then really depends on whom you ask. Between him and the cast he rounded up, they weren't presented with a lot of narrative material from this director to work from to churn out a story. That is, it didn't have Faudree's story idea on top.

It's tough to improvise an interesting story when you don't have all the elements in place. I've attended enough live improv shows to know that at least four (random) ideas—usually as a macguffin, a situation, a name, and a placeholder—must be presented. The troupe then uses them to play out a scene. Maybe Urban did not offer enough ideas for the performers to work with. Perhaps he didn't get the ending he wanted, and that's why that version got shelved.

But for Nathan Faudree, whatever made him think about revisiting this project might have been a lightbulb moment for him and maybe an oh no from Tony. His willingness to finish what this director started is very evident and what he put on as icing on the cake made this baked product look fresh.

Here, the character has been in a coma and by the time he awakens,

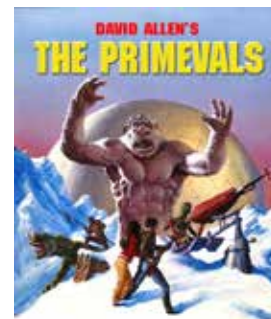
he's wondering what happened? What he finds in recovery (that expedition he led was committed to tape) is scary. Apparently, he disappeared from reality and when he reappeared, he was not himself and committed some grisly murders!

When watching the old material, it's easy to recognize the flaws in Urban's design, and thankfully Faudree could fix it. What he fills in makes this film an enjoyable romp about a man who needs to figure out his life. As for what he must do to save his sanity and himself in classic H.P. Lovecraft fashion, that's best to explore for yourself, as it's now available on VOD and other streaming platforms!

- Ed Sum

The Primevals

The Primevals is more than a love letter to the pulps of yesteryears. Here, the long production history must be noted before I can go into the review. Back in the late 60s, David Allen (who did the animation in Young Sherlock Holmes and Ghostbusters II) came up with the idea, and this stop-motion animator turned filmmaker had a lot of



wonderful ideas which were ahead of its time. Sadly, to get this movie made back then was tough. That was partially due to how the studio system worked and other politics that held this project back.

Thankfully, his work with Chris Endicott, Charles Band and Full Moon Studios meant that everything that was done got carefully warehoused. It wasn't until 2018 that the team decided to seek crowdfunding in order to finish this project.

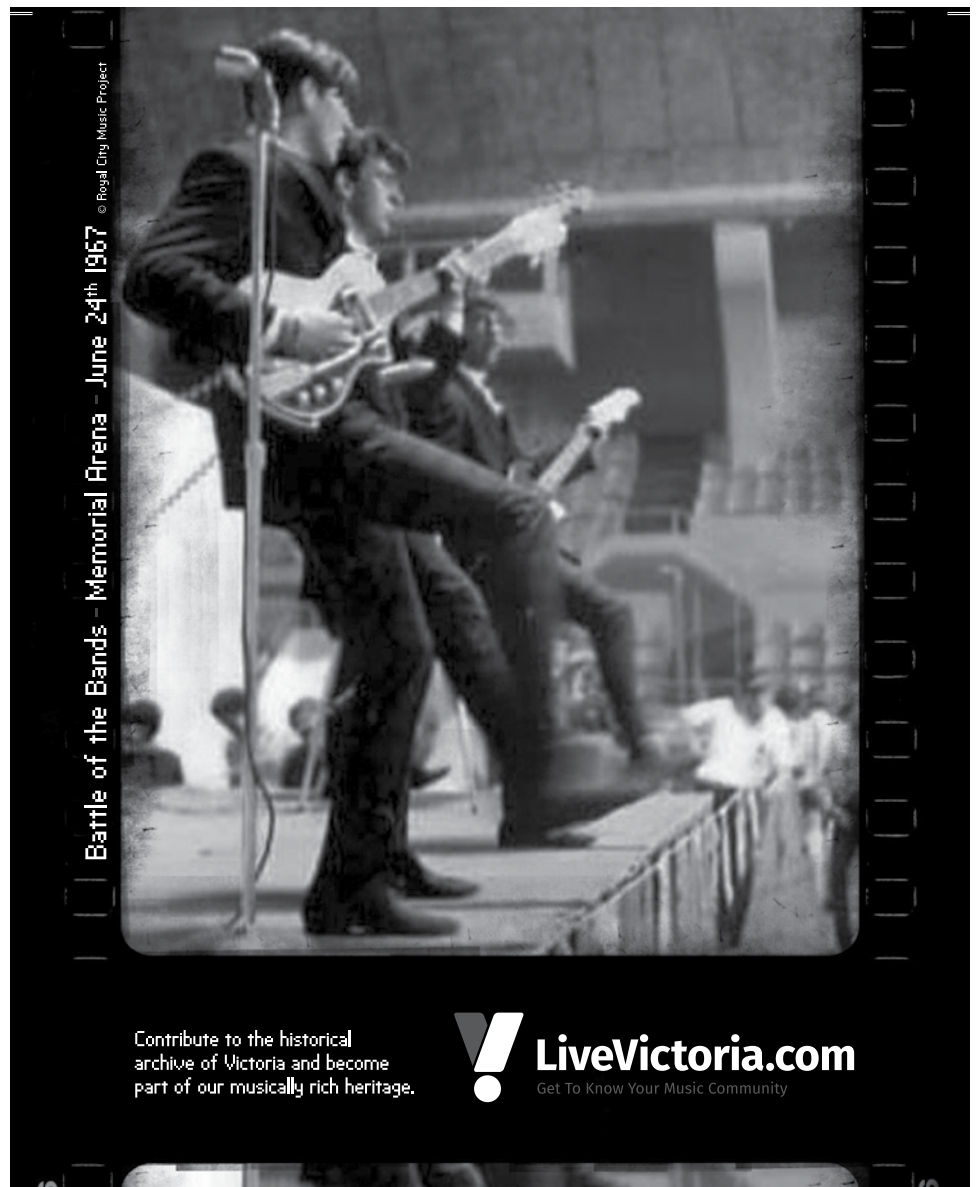
As it predates Stargate the Movie and even The Mummy, the set pieces are more familiar than not.

Here, we have a tale about Claire Collier (Juliet Mills) wanting to prove that there are still Yeti lurking high amongst the Himalayas. The corpse that got smuggled to America to put on display isn't enough, and she fears they may go extinct! She recruits a very dashing Matthew Connor (Richard Joseph Paul) and hires two Sherpa-Siker (Tai Thai) and Kathleen (Walker Brandt)—to locate their home. The threat comes from what they discover instead of with their own kind, intent on hunting the last of the Bigfoot down.

What's presented is like The Lost World (1925) meets Journey to the Centre of the Earth (1959), with a bit of Beneath the Planet of the Apes (1970) tossed in for good measure. Between the reptoids and apes, the fight for power is real, and as for where the human heroes fit into this conflict is like that of an intrepid investigative team who don't realise they're entering a hornet's nest. It's classic B-Movie style action all the way and it'll be playing in as many film festivals as possible to spread the love.

4 Stars out of 5

- Ed Sum



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Dead Quiet

Dead Quiet Mares of Thrace Geoff

June 9, The Palomino, Calgary AB

To mark the release of Dead Quiet IV, Vancouver-based stoner/doom cult legends Dead Quiet took it upon themselves to dust off that van for an eight-date trek across Western Canada, making their way all the way to Winnipeg before coming back around to perform a final date in their hometown. Along the way, though, they joined with Calgary's Mares of Thrace, who were starting an extensive tour which would see them going across Canada and the US.

The first date for the Mares tour, featuring Dead Quiet and Geoff was this date at the Palomino in Calgary. The venue is a favorite of Mares, with shows supporting KEN Mode and Conan happening in the past year there.

Openers Geoff could be called the opposite of dead quiet - being loud as fuck. The locals were given a generous amount of time to show their stuff - engaging the crowd with a blend of noise rock with thick, funky bass lines and lyrics that sound like bizarro fiction put to music.

Though this was the third time I've seen Mares in the better part

of a year, I am still finding new things to appreciate about the band each time they play. They have certainly amped up their game for this tour, and during this show the more harmonious attributes of the band were noticed. Not only do the two play their individual instruments

together like a conjoined twin (or mare), on this night their voices became one as well. Crowd participation was also more noticeable for this show, with the hometown crowd trying to make sure they were at least a memorable one for the band.

Dead Quiet have a sound that could be enjoyed by prog rock fans, stoner fans, doom fans and even folks who simply enjoy listening to a Black Sabbath song when it comes on the radio in their car - and the crowd demonstrated this, with folks of differing ages and styles assembling in the space in front of the stage. The band were keyboard-less for this show, making the Dead Quiet live sound noticeably different from the studio one. The result was a slightly more sinister-sounding, witchier, chuggier Dead Quiet with more emphasis on the riffs than the distinct '70s-esque textures found on record. Songs from the new disc were tested to great success, with favorites like "Dear Demon" showcasing the band at their best - finely crafted songs that can be sung along to, moshed along to, and if the venues in Canada allowed it, smoked along to.

-Ryan Dyer



Dreamsonic 2023: Dream Theater

Devin Townsend
Animals As Leaders

July 18, Grey Eagle Resort & Casino, Calgary, AB

The legendary Dream Theater brought out two of the most interesting and exciting prog rock acts out for Dreamsonic 2023. If prog could be divided into three - Animals as Leaders represented prog as controlled chaos - Devin Townsend represented prog as a tool for creative catharsis and Dream Theater represented prog used as a conceptual tool.

The ghost of Steve Jobs, according to Animals as Leaders guitarist Tosin Abasi, caused some technical difficulties to AAL's set, causing them to ditch the first song "Ectogenesis" halfway through and then start again. Once they did get going, though, the band delivered with tracks like "The Woven Web" showcasing the band's djent-y/jazzy side. Tosin told the crowd that this was one of the only shows on the tour that didn't have seats. Standing near the front with the rest of the general audience, the thought of people sitting down for this made my head hurt. AAL are a great band musically, and perfect for opening slots on these major tours (I am reminded of their opening stint for Meshuggah, years ago), though due to the exempt lyricism, their songs lack the emotional impact of the other bands on the bill, most

notably, the "most powerful Canadian of all time" Devin Townsend.

There was no more trying to win over the Dream Theater audience for Devin Townsend as he came onto the stage with a hero's welcome from his home-country crowd. Townsend, for

the last couple of years, hadn't played Canada much so the feeling on stage as Townsend went into his first couple of songs, "Lightworker" and "Kingdom" was as comfortable as telling a round of jokes or stories at grandma's house. Devin asked who the youngest person was in the audience and then dedicated the theremin-accompanied "Dimensions" to the little chap who cheered on top of shoulders. The set was not changed for the Canadian stint, with the expected songs "Deadhead" and the Ziltoid-classic "By Your Command" showing Devin's powerful voice and creative flair. He knew the songs, we knew the songs, and when meeting together, the homecoming was of warmth and happy tears.

The curators of the Dreamsonic festival, Dream Theater, capped off the night with a slightly bigger stage presentation than the previous bands and an aura that commanded respect. After Devin Townsend displayed a myriad of emotions on stage, Dream Theater felt more singular in their emotional effect - that of admiration on the musicality and concepts they have brought to the table for several decades. "The Alien" started off the set, going into "Sleeping Giant" and "Caught in a Web." If Dream Theater ever had a hit, it might be "Pull Me Under," which felt like the peak of the performance. On video screens, images were shown which I can only say were dream-like, but I never remember my dreams so these were also not remembered. They did add to the trip, and the "When You Wish Upon a Star" ditty before the encore mirrored this dream-like sentiment.

The members of Animals and Leaders and Devin Townsend joined Dream Theater for the final song, "The Spirit Carries On" and seeing Devin sing another band's song onstage without a guitar reminded me of his Steve Vai days. Perhaps more true collaborations could be in his future.

-Ryan Dyer

name, but had a hardcore spirit felt throughout. This was seen in opening acts Gates to Hell and Vomit Forth. Kentucky's Gates to Hell. The band has gone out with Sanguisugabogg so much you could say both bands were going steady. Supporting their self-titled debut, they mixed death metal and hardcore in such a way that you have to wonder why the first waves of metalcore and deathcore couldn't discover this sound.

Connecticut's Vomit Forth followed the spark lit by Gates to Hell. Century Media label mates to Sanguisugabogg, their approach was more death than core and there was a call for action in the pit, which was widened like an arena for those who wanted to throw down. The people did, but like in a marathon, saved their breath for the big bands coming up.

It's always special when a Japanese band gets to tour North America, and Krueley being a part of this tour added a sense of novelty to it - like, you'd better come see Krueley because you never know when they'll ever be back. This band has also impressed in hardcore circles with their brand of core-infused death metal. The banter between



Berserker

the beatings stated that they traveled a long way to be here in Canada and that we'd better make it count. I was upfront so I witnessed the band unleash hell, though behind me I felt the heat as Dickens started to turn into a bar found in the underworld. Soon, when Sanguisugabogg got onto the stage, it would turn into Dante's Inferno.

Sanguisugabogg were set on seeing people get carted out of the bar in stretchers as they took their

positions on stage. Their songwriting style - a focus on being brutal, with simplified, minimized song titles and riffs that are heavy and catchy is somewhat of a contradiction to their name, which is complicated and hard to pronounce the first few times. And I guess that



Sanguisugabogg

Sanguisugabogg Krueley

Vomit Forth
Gates to Hell

July 23, Dickens, Calgary AB

In the midst of their US tour, Ohio's Sanguisugabogg made a short, four date journey north of the border starting in Winnipeg and ending in Calgary. The band are currently on an upswing, supporting their second full-length effort on Century Media, Homicidal Ecstasy. The release has put them in a coveted position, as far as death metal bands are concerned, as one not to miss live and one that in the future, could be the next torchbearers of the genre when acts like Cannibal Corpse finally call it quits. Did they deliver this night at Dickens? Let's find out. The show was death metal in

will go on to bigger stages. The smaller shows like this, then, will become legendary.

-Ryan Dyer

Owls & Eagles

Iron Tusk
Buffalo Bud Buster
Berserker
Mixed Blame

August 4, Dickens, Calgary AB

While most of the metal heads in Calgary were out in Drumheller for the Loud As Hell festival, the few who stayed behind would be found at Dickens for what I'd like to call the Loud As Heck festival - the Moments Fest fundraiser starring Owls & Eagles, along with four other bands, a few of which will be at the Moments Fest in September.

High River's Mixed Blame took the stage first. With one member dressed in black metal makeup, but playing punk songs, I received mixed signals from Mixed Blame, though the main signal here was of energetic fun.

Lethbridge's sexiest band, Berserker, were up next. The lads brought a sound out of the early '90s, being reminiscent of Unsane or Refused, though updated. Their three-guitar

assault was enough to consider going to Lethbridge to catch one of their local shows. Or you know, maybe not...that's too far. Keep coming back, Berserker!

Buffalo Bud Buster performed all their hits this night, except that one song...their hit. They promised they would play it next time, though. Still, songs about mix tapes and cheap tents never sounded so fuzzed out and heavy and along with the buds busted before and after their set, butts were sure busted during.

Iron Tusk I last saw as a part of Electric Highway, and at that festival I found them to be among the heavier acts. Compared to No More Moments, the musicianship of Iron Tusk is more on display, with Carlin Black Rabbit focusing on the grooves while wielding his own tusk-like drumsticks.

Owls & Eagles are a band on the rise, and a few years from now once they're headlining stoner rock fests around the world, we will remember where they came from. The two-man group has found some secret formula - the sound that they have found is unlike any other stoner or doom group. At this show they performed Patience Vol 1 (available at this show on vinyl) in its entirety, with a special punk epilogue at the end of the tale. Listening to the album is one thing - seeing the bird boys perform it is next-level shit. I guess what they're doing now can only be matched with Vol 2, of which they are sprinkling into the live sets slowly via intros. When will that be out? Patience, son.

-Ryan Dyer

is the beauty of it - "Face Ripped Off" - it's a simple thing to do, yet the pain that comes from it is pretty damn complex. The band seemed to also be influenced by the hardcore scene - demanding stage diving, and the crowd did so over and over again. This made the bar a war-field where injury could come from anywhere.

The sense of danger was increased when the band launched a football into the crowd, saying that the person who is holding the ball at the end of the song would get a free t-shirt. Well, congratulations to whichever corpse had a shirt pulled onto its stiff body.

When all was said and done and the audience got their wits together, there was a feeling of survival when thinking of this Sanguisugabogg show. They were the real deal and



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Sled Island Top Ten of 2023

Another year in the can. To make a silly sled analogy, going to this festival means riding your sled from the top of a mountain in its own unique path. Others will ride it on a different route - no one will see the exact same artists. Here are ten that made an impression at the 2023 festival.

BIG/BRAVE (Dickens)

Day one of the festival started out with a few of the loudest bands booked. From Montreal, BIG/BRAVE tested the limits of audio levels at Dickens, with a drone-y, thunderous set that felt like SUNN O))) meets Portishead.

Liturgy (Dickens)

Liturgy is a band that people have tried to classify, but they can't be put into a little black box. Sure, they have elements of black metal (mainly the wailed vocals), though their set showed traces of Meshuggah-like djent that had the crowd slamming hard. Extreme and impressive.

Feeding (Sloth Records)

Thursday's Sloth Records showcase saw four heavy-as-fuck bands giving folks the excuse to check out the store itself and some uncompromising metal - pretty good deal if you ask me. Edmonton's Feeding were the final band to play the record store and showcased some bestial devastation.

Bat Scratch (Pin Bar)

Usually, a few of the more interesting metal and punk acts will perform at the Pin Bar. This year, seven-year-old (or is it now eight or nine?) Robbie, along with dad and the rest of Bat Scratch, showed that you're never too young to sing hardcore punk/grindcore. I'm anxious to see how this young vocalist evolves.

Tebby and the Heavy (The Palace)

Fresh off of the Electric Highway festival, Edmonton's Tebby and the Heavy brought a jacked-up set to the Palace to open the show for the legendary Osees. The acid-drenched surf rock band likely gained a bunch of new fans at this pivotal performance.

Osees (The Palace)

John Dwyer's Osees previously performed at the 2011 version of Sled Island, and for this year's event, received proper top-billing for their highly-anticipated Palace show. Their eclectic mix of psych/stoner/metal/rock/punk and whatever other genre you'd like to describe them as inspired the most amount of crowd surfing I'd seen in a while. Surf Island, indeed.

Scalding (Modern Love)

Broken City was a venue with a lot of Sled Island memories attached to it. With it closing and Modern Love taking its place, a new legacy is born. Scalding, along with three other bands, played the Absolute Underground showcase at the new venue, and almost devastated it

upon arrival.

Grey Light District (The Palomino)

Skot Hamilton might as well be the ambassador for heavy music in Saskatchewan. As part of the Saskatoon showcase at the Palomino (it's always surreal to see such abrasive bands in the early day - this started at 2PM), his presence was felt in Grey Light District and Soul Mates. Grey Light District, like his Adolyn, showcased his vocal ability along with some catchy, though gnarly riffs.

Uncanny Valley (The Palomino)

Perturbator's The Uncanny Valley is one of my favorite synthwave albums - so I knew I'd like this band based on the name alone. Vocalist Alicia Palmer brought goth club dance moves to the band's synth-laden form of post-punk. Those attending in veils and leather danced in a trance in the darkened downstairs venue while the summer sun sizzled outside.

SUMAC (Dickens)

Baptists, Russian Circles, These Arms Are Snakes, Old Man Gloom, Isis - members of these bands came together to create a simplified explosion of heaviness in SUMAC. The most anticipated heavy band at the festival followed in the footsteps of bands like Melvins and Sleep adding their name to the legendary heavy sets in the annals of Sled Island's history.

- Ryan Dyer



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BLACKTHRONE ASCENSION

The Great Game

AU: Who are we talking to?

Dayton: Hey! My name is Dayton! I play lead guitar for the band Blackthrone Ascension!

Daniel: And I'm Daniel. I do the vocals.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

Dayton: Blackthrone Ascension started around February of 2022 after we renamed ourselves from a previous band called Panolith which was formed in 2018. Most of the original members were gone and the new line up was basically a new dynamic and a totally different sound so that is why we decided to rename ourselves.

Daniel: I think the most notable thing we have done so far together was play Winterfest 2023. The majority of our time has been spent on writing, recording, and refining our current songs. Since we wanted to do things right with the new band, we made initial goals to write and release music as soon as possible instead of playing 100 shows with no recordings like we have done in past bands. Lyrically, our EP is about the Warhammer Fantasy universe so each song was written to thematically fit the vibes of certain characters or themes.

AU: Who else is in the band?

Dayton: Besides Daniel Clark (ex-Obsidian) and I, our rhythm guitarist is James Hague (who is an original member of Panolith as well as myself), our bassist is Zac Andow and our drummer is Carsen Viau

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

Dayton: Our band's sound has a lot of elements of deathcore,

death metal, slam, symphonic metal. I was really inspired by Shadow of Intent and Fleshgod Apocalypse while writing our debut EP "The Great Game".

Daniel: If anyone listens to our stuff, they may notice these influences which is why we say we are "symphonic deathcore", but we did end up committing the sin of adding clean vocals in one song. At this point I personally like to say we are symphonic/melodic death metal heavily influenced by deathcore. Most of our songs (currently 4/5) have breakdowns because of it. I would like our band to be malleable between the metal and hardcore/deathcore.

AU: You have a new album out, how did that come together?

Dayton: Yea! We have our new debut EP "The Great Game" coming out on June 17th, 2023! This record has been a really fun but slow process as we really didn't want to rush it. I think we went a little overboard on nitpicking everything, but we really wanted to have a debut record that we were proud of, and we are so excited to finally share it with all of you!

Daniel: There were some nights where Dayton and I would stay up until 4:00am writing parts,

shifting the structure around, and coming up with the stupidest breakdowns we could conceive to the best of our current abilities. Every part is written with intent, and with the help of Dayton's little brother, those two reinforced almost everything with symphony and piano parts. For "Indulgence", we worked with our good friend Jessie Grace (Kosm, Fullmetal Jessie) to come up with the clean vocal parts and went to her place to record with her. After everything was recorded, our friend Connor Gordon (Crown of Madness) offered to mix the EP for free which was a blessing.

AU: How good does it feel to be back?

Dayton: It's been such a great year with Blackthrone Ascension after Panolith was absent for quite some time. I've been happy to be back playing shows and writing new music!

Daniel: If we're talking about how COVID affected the music scene, then it was beautiful to see how powerfully Vancouver's music scene exploded when shows came back. For example, our first show was on a Wednesday, and it had a way bigger turnout than any of us expected. Being on stage again has been undeniably cathartic.

AU: What have you been listening to recently?

Dayton: I've been listening to the new Cattle Decapitation album and early Black Dahlia Murder. I also listen to Brand of Sacrifice daily!

Daniel: Besides Sleep Token and Lorna Shore, I actually started getting into this Japanese rock band called Yorusshika (it's a guilty pleasure). I also really enjoyed Devin Townsend's latest album

AU: What's the last perfect record you heard?

Dayton: In my opinion the new Brand of Sacrifice was perfect to me! Anything those guys make I just love with a passion!

Daniel: Fit For An Autopsy's latest album *Oh What the Future Holds*. It's all banger, no filler.

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

Dayton: I went to karaoke in Mission, B.C. one time - the only reason I went was because my dad runs the karaoke and asked me to come out (I usually don't) but anyways this random dude showed up with a nacho libre mask and it wasn't

even October! And he nailed this Elvis Presley impression which made this all that much better.

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

Daniel: Blowing into the bottom of an N64 game cartridge and watching my uncle play classic RPGs on PC (Baldur's Gate).

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

Daniel: Allow me to go further and say I don't like ANY song by Type O Negative but I'm pretty sure Dayton was conceived while his parents were listening to them.

AU: Who's the sketchiest person you've bummed a cigarette or a light off of?

Carsen: One time I bummed a light off a guy and he asked if I knew Jesus, and then asked if I would like to meet Jesus. Long story short. I didn't stick around to meet Jesus...

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

Dayton: Doccygore did our album art and I think it turned out amazing! So, if you are needing an album cover check that guy out!

Daniel: Out of all the amazing artists, my personal favorites are Eliran Kantor (Archspire, Fleshgod Apocalypse, Thy Art is Murder) and Caelan Stokkermans (Lorna Shore, Enterprise Earth). I believe their styles can capture the vision I have with our current themes. However, Doccygore has many affordable options and if you get good at Photoshop you can make your entire album layout, saving yourselves money.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

Daniel: Learn about your local Indigenous histories. We work, live, and breathe on the unceded territory of the nations many people in this country look unfavorably upon without any knowledge or understanding of the tragedies and betrayals their ancestors faced due to colonial legislation which made it illegal to be who they were. Be compassionate and understanding.

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Armstrong Metal Fest // July 14-15, 2023

Armstrong, British Columbia

By Erik Lindholm of Camp Spicy Ham

It's a Canadian metal festival when you hit GPS leaving Vancouver and it says "slight right on Exit 399 in 341 kilometers"... This ain't Europe baby, this is British Columbia and we got highways. Ran the Coquihalla and farmland wavy gravel roads, arrived at charming Armstrong. Its known for cheese. AMF is hosted at Interior Provincial Exhibition and Stampede, an outdoor rodeo grounds. It's been dealing with champion animals for over a hundred years and thus is prepared for rad death metal fans. Got our passes, quick briefing from organizers, and set up camp! Place your tent almost anywhere, RVs in a certain section. As per festival etiquette; hang your flags, crack a brew, eat chips, see who's around you. Immediately sensation of open-minded, relaxed crews around. Made contact with nearby Camp Xul, found out where to buy cheeseburgers from the volunteer charity Lions Club ("Ten BUCKS best burgers in town! We got onions! And a Pepsi!") Now to the task at hand: shredding. Two days;



28 bands. The important logistics here. First, it was printing 35c with a smoke warning from fires. Lucky, bands play in a hockey arena which had ace PA sound and kept heshers cool. Beer gardens in the back. And you can drink in the penalty box. It's a five minute dusty parking lot walk from camp to show. That's close. Beer store couldn't be ten minutes from camp, and a walk in cooler. It's paradise on rodeo grounds, AMF makes it easy.

In-between socializing, drinking, eating, 100 man beer shotguns, throwing frisbees, slow-motion sun stroke walking, and hanging at late night Camp Awesome for tiki outfit party and generous spin-the-wheel of drinks – you have to find some time to go see the bands! First day highlights were thrash band Padova, from Kamloops, BC with no-nonsense approach to crisp riffs! Nomad was kicking it with a haunting, yet prog/death edge – loved the time changes. Truent from Vancouver ripping it tech-wise, sharp. Missed doomy/stoner Empress due to trapped in beer/time/pizza continuum – my mistake. Gomers with the fast raw punk/crossover. The Zenith Passage, very tight tech, challenging to listen to. Fallujah... Holy shit. Went in

cold – transfixed. Blend of tech and melody was perfect for my ears that night. Talking to locals... say they dread the cowboys at local festivals for the drunk driving and fights, but somehow the metalheads are polite and clean up their garbage. You could throw a rock and hit a



church here, so its high praise. Day two showed up with eggs and ham frying pan, and Param-Nesia. They had us lie down on the show floor and jump up on the break... killer tunes and energy! More beers till Bogue Brigade, bringing killer crossover Jaks energy to the otherwise very techy festival. Vancouver Island's own Liminal Shroud delivered a wave of atmospheric black metal – on point 100%. Somewhere in the timeline, parking lot pro-wrestling happened with Thrash Wrestling and it was maximum rad. Seeing the heels work the metalhead crowd, the top rope dives, the skilled punishment – great show!



Big shout out to Interior Health nurses for putting on a clinic with drug awareness, harm reduction and handing out nalaxone kits. We must collectively fight the opioid and fentanyl scourge. Thank you.

Greyhawk threw a change up pitch with positive power metal. Their song "Steelbound" moved the crowd fully! POUND was mixed too loud for the room, killer groove though. Wormwitch with that black metal attack! Warbringer brought a close with



modern thrash attack... tales of war, in times of war... We returned to our camps with smiles. Go to this awesome fest and support it! There is no better value out there for bands, and what a good atmosphere and crew. Fully recognize this review is more atmosphere than bands; community matters.

I'll miss you Cayle. Thank you AMF and all the bands – see you next year.

PS: "What do you think about Judas Priest?"





Mitch Clem

Interview by Aeryn Shrapnel

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

MC: My name is Mitch Clem. I am a cartoonist. I am most known for *Nothing Nice 2 Say* and probably second most known for *My Stupid Life* - now in print.

AU: What was your first comic as a kid?

MC: I think the first comic, besides like *Mad* and *Cracked Magazine* - I think *Tales from the Crypt* was technically my first.

AU: How did you get into drawing comics?

MC: I mean, I always drew since I was a little kid, and I liked newspaper comics. At the time it was like *Calvin and Hobbes* and *The Far Side*.

AU: What's your writing process?

MC: Well, it's always writing first. I can't draw without knowing what to draw, it's a problem. I wanna do art that's a part of music somehow. I like to be a part of that community, but the only way I'm really able to contribute is with art. I always wanna make t-shirt designs and stuff, and I can never do it if I don't have a script.

AU: I've enjoyed the work that you've done for Nardwuar. How did you meet?

MC: I had been a fan of Nardwuar since like high school age. They would publish some of his interviews in *Flipside*, which was how I had heard of him in the States, and I always thought his interviews were just so funny. So, when I started illustrating for *Razorcake*, one of the first assignments I was given was to illustrate Nardwuar's interviews. That was just dumb luck, I guess, because then he ended up liking my stuff and kept asking me for things outside of *Razorcake*. So, to be a part of the Nardwuar family, that's very fun for me.

AU: My Stupid Life is autobiographical in nature. Is it all true?

MC: That thing is full of lies. There are a few different kinds of strips - there's some that are straight up verbatim, and then there are some that are inspired by some real thing that really happened, but then I'll take it to whatever insane extreme I can come up with. Like, I don't actually hang out with Noam Chomsky or

anything.

AU: The collection gets into everything from the mundane to the vulnerable. How did it feel to share your insecurities with the world?

MC: A lot of the really vulnerable stuff all went directly to print, so that eliminated the sort of immediacy of internet feedback that you would get from doing a web comic. That made it a lot easier to open up, you know, because people on the internet are kind of dicks.

AU: There's a whole chapter that you referred to as your descent into alcoholism. How did you get out?

MC: You know, you have like a series of rock bottoms, or live your life at rock bottom for some obscene amount of time, and what can you do but be like "Here's this thing that's clearly posing a negative influence in my life. Like, what if I fucking cut that out?" And the answer it turns out is, you're not as fun to be around, but you're happier. So that's something.

AU: Do you feel that punk rock has a drinking problem?

MC: Oh hell yeah. Big time. It's like THE thing to do at shows. I don't know that I would consider

myself under the influence of song lyrics about drinking necessarily, but I mean, it certainly normalizes it, right? I don't know that everybody needs to quit drinking or anything, but it's a lot easier to tell yourself, "What are you talking about? Everybody here's fucking drunk! There's nothing weird about that." I felt like one of the things that would help perpetuate my habits was seeing it normalized. Like if you're like watching a movie or something and people are just casually drinking, you see that and sort of latch onto that for some reason, like it's not a big deal.

AU: What do you do outside of cartooning?

MC: I've got a family, so I do that stuff. I go to shows sometimes, but honestly, most of my free time is spent drawing. I try not to be fully absentee in my entire life, but I definitely am just drawing a lot.

AU: What have you been listening to lately?

MC: Well, speaking of Canadian content, I've been listening to the newest *Alvvays* album on repeat. They do such bizarre stuff in the production that it was a little bit more of a grower for me than their other stuff normally is, and now I'm obsessed with it.

AU: Where can we purchase My Stupid Life?

MC: Well, whatever the big bookstore is, or preferably the small bookstore or comic bookstore, or online at *Silver Sprocket*.

AU: Do you have any plans for the future?

MC: I am currently working very hard on a graphic novel. I have the first 250 pages or so done and inked. Not coloured yet, but inked, and so there's



only like another a hundred to go or something and it'll be done.

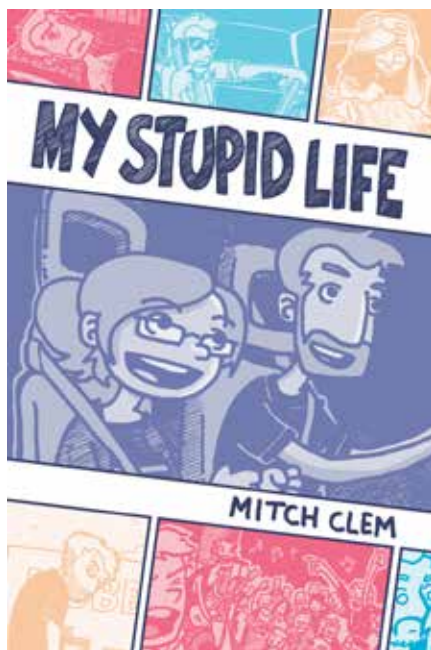
AU: What advice would you give to an emerging cartoonist?

MC: I think the biggest thing is to always be creating and always be practicing and exercising those muscles and constantly be making comics because I think that that's the best way to learn. You also have to be actively looking to improve your stuff, like within your capability. I see people stagnate as artists a lot. They give up at an early stage and it's like, you could work on that.

AU: Famous last words?

MC: Uhh... up the punx.

store.silversprocket.net/products/my-stupid-life-by-mitch-clem



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COVER YOUR EARS

A New Documentary on Censorship in Music

From Director Sean Patrick Shaul

From poignant protest songs to fluffy Top 40 hits, music has always defined our culture. With such a powerful influence on all aspects of society, the messages and themes portrayed by musicians have long been considered dangerous to some. This documentary looks at how the censorship of music has shaped not only how we view art and how it's made but who we are as consumers and free-thinkers.

Music is possibly the most ubiquitous art form in existence and is the borderless language of the world. Even before recorded music, the powers that be have always sought to control this language. How we talk, how we dress, even how we think is all influenced by music and the people who create it, making it a powerful and concerning art form. Whenever there is a clear movement bubbling up in the music industry, whether it be the rise of jazz in the 1920s, the

Satanic Panic of the 1980s or explicit hip-hop of today, we can always see a public outcry questioning the influence these musicians have. Since the inception of recorded music, artists who were deemed raunchy or taboo have faced suppression from censors while label profits continued to grow. Now with new streaming platforms and direct to consumer outlets dominating the sales, the discussion of what is appropriate for the public consumption is as relevant as ever.

Cover Your Ears examines the cause and effect of regulation and suppression in the music industry and how that correlates to society in general. More often than not, three main issues are at the core of what is considered problematic: Race, religion and politics. While on its surface this film is an engaging study of music history and an introspective look at how we view art and artists, *Cover Your Ears* is as much about divisiveness vs. tolerance, judgment vs. acceptance and moral boundaries as it is about the music industry.

Told through the words of authors, journalists, professors and people on both sides of the arguments, *Cover Your Ears* blends a wealth of archival and never-before-seen footage and intimate interviews with some of the biggest names in music who were pivotal figures in the history of music censorship. Legends like Woodstock alum Country Joe MacDonald, hip-hop pioneer Chuck D of Public Enemy and the ever-outspoken Murray Acton of Canada's punk icons Dayglo Abortions and many more give thoughtful and in-depth perspective to this important issue. Punk stalwarts Ian MacKaye and Jello Biafra are joined by rock mainstay Dee Snider and underground hip-hop star Tiny Doo to give first hand viewpoints of how censorship has affected their lives. In total a diverse cast of over 20 interviewees from all sides of the discussion elevate this first ever feature length documentary on music censorship to more than a linear recounting of facts and raises as many questions as it does answers.

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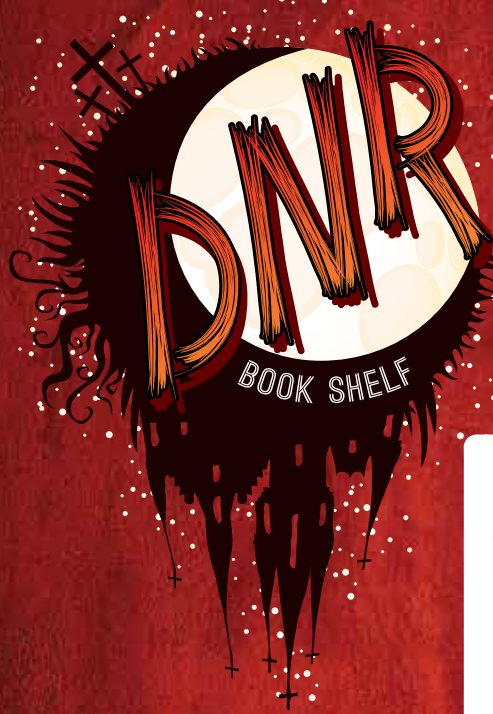
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MOTHERTHING



Ainslie Hogarth
Vintage Books
September 27th 2022

Abigail Lamb and her husband Ralph are facing a tragedy when his mother, long struggling with mental illness, dies in the home

they share with her. Though Ralph begins to slowly come apart at the seams, Abby sees an opportunity. What if now they can finally start the life and family they always hoped for? What if they can be free of Laura's vicious and smothering control? As Abby fantasizes about a non-existent pregnancy and makes horrifying aspic concoctions for her coworkers, Ralph descends into possible madness, convinced that his mother is not dead after all, that she has somehow returned to care for her baby boy. While Abby attempts to navigate Ralph's strange new reality, she begins her own spiral of memory, delusion, and that ever-present spectre of hope. With her life threatening to crumble, she discovers that the only way to save her marriage is to out-mother her ghostly mother-in-law and cook Ralph a perfect and idyllic comfort meal to prove her ultimate devotion.

I am not sure what word can better describe this novel than "bizarre", just as I am not sure what story the genre of "domestic horror" could better encompass than this one. A curiosity to the very last page, I was consistently confounded as to what I should expect to happen next. Abby herself is a deeply discomfiting narrator, and following the twists and turns of her story fill the reader with a growing sense of unease that borders at times on revulsion. As the story approached its zenith, I found it impossibly captivating despite my own distaste—perhaps you will too.

Enjoy the jellied salmon.

Laura Phaneuf

AND THE DEVIL CRIED



Kristopher Triana
Stygian Sky Media
October 28, 2021

A bleak gangster novel without the glorifying hero-worship/good times montage that usually goes into these kinds of books.

Triana really knows how to build a character

with the signature darkness we come to recognize in his works.

Jackie, a shell shocked war veteran, is fresh out of a 6 year stint in the joint and is picking up right where he left off. Pino the crime boss gets him back to work immediately, starting small and getting him setup comfortably at the butcher shop and back into the swing of things.

Pino's only son is hit and killed by a drunk driver and naturally is seeing red. He hires Jackie for the ultimate eye for an eye job. Get the daughter of the drunk driver. Jackie can barely contain his excitement upon seeing the young girl, Seri. Like a wolf seeing a lamb... The story twists and turns and we learn about Jackie's history and how he became the psychopath we see before us giving us full understanding of why he is how he is. Quite a shocking and unpleasant path we venture down with a very exciting and sometimes tough story to take. Notes of paedophilia, domestic violence, sodomy and terror keep our mouths dry as we venture through the intense tale.

The best part about this book is by far the ending. Just when you are ready with a heavy exhale, you won't even see it coming.

Demonika

COME MY FANATICS: A JOURNEY INTO THE WORLD OF ELECTRIC WIZARD



Dan Franklin
White Rabbit/Orion
January 9, 2024

I have reviewed a great many books in my time as a writer.

I have always been fair, but sometimes it has been a hard slog to get to the end of a poorly-written passionless tome.

Which is why reading Dan Franklin's excellent 'Come My Fanatics: A Journey Into The World Of Electric Wizard' has been such a pleasure. It's great to read a book written by a kindred spirit. I dig the Wizard and so does Dan.

Dan writes that everyone finds their own way into the Witchcult, their own portal to the Wizard's world. 'Come My Fanatics' is an eloquent in-depth telling of the Wizard's tales (weird tales to be sure, which is as it should be!).

I'll let Dan's fine text speak for itself, for instance he writes of the influence of the H.P. Lovecraft story 'The Outsider', on the Electric Wizard song of the same name. This is a tale in which the narrator of the story is revealed to a group of revelers as a leering abhorrent travesty of the human shape.

Dan's understanding of the both the song and its inspiration is succinct. I quote from his excellent text here. "Electric Wizard were trapped in a nightmarish castle of their own making. The leaden downwards trudge of 'The Outsider' simulates the journey of this 'unholy abomination'. Once 'free', they dragged their mouldering corpse to look upon their half-remembered former glories.

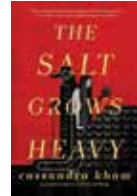
The song's free-form soloing, relentless repetitive drum breaks and bass excavations sometimes sound like a band satirizing itself-baulking in horror at their own, inexplicably fast deterioration. But even when Electric Wizard sound like they are running out of ideas they lather them in lysergic ointments that preserve the songs and keep them moving forward."

Moreover, and this is what gives his book an added dimension, and makes it a keeper for your library, Dan delves greatly into the music, book and films that make the Wizard's world what it is!

Like 'Come My Fanatics', that's a trip worth taking!

Steve Earles

THE SALT GROWS HEAVY



Cassandra Khaw
Tor Nightfire
May 2nd 2023

"Mermaids...leave nothing to waste."

Mermaids have always had a strong hold on the popular consciousness and Cassandra Khaw's interpretation of the classic myth brings a fresh violence to the "Little Mermaid" story we all think we know. Reimagining classic stories and fairy tales is a constant and often tired theme in contemporary literature, so it is refreshing when a retelling turns out distinctly unique in spite of its borrowed facets.

With her previous novellas, including "Nothing But Blackened Teeth", the author has firmly established her voice in fantasy and horror fiction. "The Salt Grows Heavy" furthers that reputation and deepens Khaw's already expansive talent for florid descriptions and nauseating viscera.

This story is a tale told over the events of three nights, a play in three acts. Our mermaid was captured by the prince and after the birth of her daughters, and the fall of her husband's kingdom, she must forge her own blood-stained path forward with the help of a plague doctor companion. Despite the condensed length of the novella format, we are offered a discerning look at human (and inhuman) nature, wrapped up in a neatly stitched bow of flesh and memory.

Laura Phaneuf

SOURCE MAGIC: THE ORIGIN OF ART, SCIENCE AND CULTURE



Carl Abrahamsson
Simon Schuster/ Inner Traditions
April 4th 2023

One thing that binds all humanity together is our endless search for the meaning of life. Indeed, as has memorably been said, we are 'pattern-seeking animals.'

In 'Source Magic', Carl Abrahamsson explores magical history, searching for the Source Magic that binds us all.

I quote this valuable piece of knowledge the book: 'Occultist Aleister Crowley's main philosophical dictums. "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law" and "Love is the law, love under will," were parts of an ambitious system of religious adherence and magical technologies called "Thelema" (Greek for will). But the key Thelemic theme was essentially always philosophical: the inviolable freedom of the individual.

There's something very useful for all of us to take on board!

This fine book explores a wide range of magical practices, past and present.

I feel it's a book that the open-minded reader will get much from, perhaps awakening their own inner magic and thus seeing the magic in the world that surrounds us.

Steve Earles

LEMONS



C. Clark
Cursed Rabbit Comics
June 15, 2023

Lemons, the first installment by Moose Jaw Saskatchewan's multi talented Charlene Clark. Clark is first and foremost a

tattoo artist who is really flexing her artistic muscles to create this horror themed comic. The amount of work she has done is actually staggering considering it's all hand painted. Mostly black and white, with nothing but a kick of red as the chosen frenzy throughout. The cover is so captivating and really gives you a glimmer into the passage we are about to take.

Like all art, Lemons could be interpreted many different ways considering its enigmatic allegory. We meet Adriel, awoke from a nightmare in her family cabin or home which happens to be in a perfectly macabre forest on a lake. She cannot find anyone and proceeds to go to the lake for a swim. Something inside keeps pulling at her and we are swept into a fever dream sequence where the lines of reality and visions blur. Rushing through the forest soaked from the lake she battles internally with what may be alluring her coming face to face with foreboding apparitions and then finally face to face with Thelonious. Drug further into this electrifying phantasm she awakes just as we begin leaving us ready for the second installment of this sensational start.

Lots of provocative visuals and your imagination runs amok with a story you can interpret for yourself. My only comment is that the caption is not laid out very well and it's a little distracting, but on the whole, an impressive first go for Clark.

Demonika

'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:
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EUGENE ROBINSON

Author and Musician

A Walk Across Dirty Water and Straight into Murderer's Row

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

ER: I wanted to die. But wanted to have people not wonder why. So, I hit on this idea of making a record that would explain it all. About how the human condition is one where you're routinely fucked over, and fucked out of all of everything that might make life worth living and just in case no one noticed at least I was noticing that we were all doomed I was just the first to act on it post-realization. So a record, then a bullet.

But as luck would have it the fact that the record Fuckfest (Whipping Boy) resonated with people served to let me know that maybe I was not so correct and at the very least I needed to see London before I died.

So, first the idea, then the project and recording, then possibilities to extend ourselves into the future and then the band.

After that? After that a pursuit of a singular idea possibly involving the inescapable inevitability of death and failure.

AU: What's the most memorable gig you have played?

ER: The London Jazz Festival with Barry Adamson. The show was at the Royal Albert Hall, it was sold out and I shared a stage with Nick Cave while singing a Tom Waits song. It really doesn't get any better than

that.

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

ER: OXBOW's Love's Holiday. Seems obvious but not really. I didn't get to hear it until after it was all over. Or rather I chose not to hear it until then. I wanted to be able to listen to, as I describe it, with the ears of the street. Fresh ears. I am useless on the production side anyway. So I hear the final product around the same time everyone else does.

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

ER: A blind guy with a white cane running to catch a bus. It seemed to be an analog for my life. Though in his case he actually caught the bus.

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

ER: Rolling Stones: Dead Flowers.

AU: You also recently completed a memoir, how did that come about?

ER: You live. Others notice that you have done so. They also notice that as you've done so, you've

also managed to do so in a daring or at least compelling fashion...Then they ask you to write about it. Assuaging your concerns over privacy and penis issues. At least that's how it came about in my sense. The memoir was preceded by a few other books I've written, so it wasn't a reach or a tough ask. I'm proud of Feral for insisting. And I owe them a debt of gratitude as well.

AU: What do you enjoy most about writing?

ER: Everything. The words, what they mean, how they're used, the story, the story behind the story and the story underneath the story. I find it all liberating and if I could do nothing else in this life this would be it.

AU: How do you feel the creative act of writing compares to that of making music?

ER: Writing is wonderfully, blessedly solitary. Music is painfully collaborative.

AU: Do you plan on writing more?

ER: Can't stop. Won't stop.

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

ER: Saul Bass.

AU: Any shows or tours planned?

double album release from BUNUEL in May, and book events and band shows until I leave America in December 2024 and move to Spain...Where as soon as I unpack my things it will continue until every book and record is sold. In other words: until I am dead.

OXBOW

Sep. 1, 2023 / GLASGOW, UK / Broadcast

Sep. 2, 2023 / BIRMINGHAM, UK / Supersonic festival

Sep. 3, 2023 / LEEDS, UK / Brudenell Social Club

Sep. 4, 2023 / BRISTOL, UK / Exchange

Sep. 5, 2023 / LONDON, UK / Studio 9294

Sep. 6, 2023 / KORTRIJK, BE / Wilde Westen

Sep. 7, 2023 / BRUSSELS, BE / Botanique

Sep. 8, 2023 / NIJMEGEN, NL / Merleyn

Sep. 9, 2023 / TÉTANGE, LUX / Human's World Festival - FREE SHOW

Sep. 10, 2023 / BOCHUM, DE / Die Trompete

Sep. 11, 2023 / VIENNA, AT / Volkstheater Rote Bar

Sep. 12, 2023 / WROCLAW PL / Liverpool

Sep. 13, 2023 / WARSAW, PL / Hydrozagadka

Sep. 14, 2023 / BERLIN, DE / Roadrunners Paradise

Sep. 15, 2023 / HAMBURG, DE / Hafenklang

Sep. 16, 2023 / AALBORG, DK / Lasher fest

Oct. 20, 2023 / PHILADELPHIA, PA / PhilaMoca

Oct. 21, 2023 / PORTLAND, ME / SPACE

Oct. 22, 2023 / BROOKLYN, NY / Elsewhere

Nov. 9, 2023 / SAN FRANCISCO, CA / Great American Music Hall

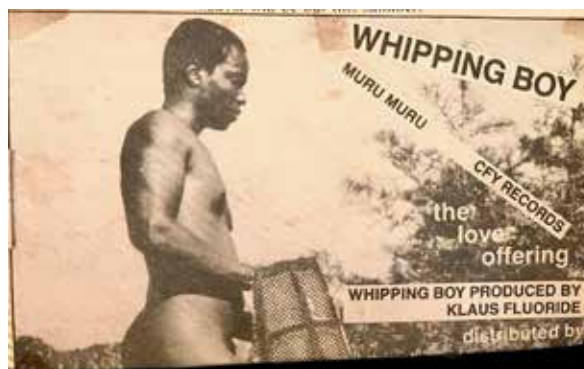
Nov. 10, 2023 / LOS ANGELES, CA / Regent Theatre

Nov. 11, 2023 / SCOTTSDALE, AZ / Pub Rock

AU: Anything else to promote?

Everyone should subscribe and read my Substack, Look What You Made Me Do...A title I used well before Taylor Swift.

eugenesorobinson.substack.com/



ER: OXBOW shows in Europe from Sept 1 to the 16th...Then in the US all during October and November. Book shows where possible. Then a

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HOW TO GET FROM THIS... TO THIS

A WALK ACROSS DIRTY WATER AND STRAIGHT INTO MURDERER'S ROW
 A MEMOIR BY EUGENE S. ROBINSON

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“Clearly, one of the Blackest people in the room and, as such, perhaps one of the most dangerous people alive. *Dirty Water* joins a canon of works like Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, Baldwin’s *Another Country* and Rux’s *Pagan Operetta* as an earnest dispatch from the front: the DuBoisian Doo-Wop origin story of every Black Man I know.”
 —jimi izrael

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Written by Ed Sum

MaiiZ is the home to more than just tortillas. Located in Chinatown, this operation makes a lot of delicious lunches and dinners to go, and as everything is made fresh and in-house, it's hard not to be drawn into this diner! When considering they have weekly specials and other delights to add to your home meals, this operation is not your typical diner!

Here, they serve all the basics of Mexican food—tamales, tacos, and quesadillas. I visited one week for their mushroom tacos, another

for their huitlacoques (corn smut), and finally grasshoppers! Regarding the former, these shrooms were slow-cooked and basted in a special recipe to bring out the extra flavour. One layer of the flat-bread isn't enough to hold this hefty meal. Two were used to keep everything from sagging, and the woody scents of various fungi were perfect. In the middle were a wonderful mix of fresh cilantro, cabbage, and pickled red onion. The salsa was very mild, and I'm sure I could've asked for hotter, but that's okay. I prefer to have the flavours stand out than the heat.

As for the latter, I was hopping! Grasshoppers aren't an ingredient commonly listed in menus, and while this offering is a seasonal treat, I hope it'll return once in a while! When they are dried up, spiced up, and even given an appropriate garnish to deliver the right amount of softness (of the avocado) and crunch, I'm all over them like an ant eater to a nest to this other edible

delight!

Chef Israel Alvarez Molina is brilliant for bringing the authentic flavours of his home to Victoria, and I can't wait to see what's next. Anyone stopping by can also sample their in-house-made ice cream and custom drinks. I'm glad that what's offered here is also sold at grocery stores, since I can't stop raving about the tortilla. One won't be enough to satisfy my appetite!

5 Stars out of 5



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D.O.A.

BACK ON THE ROAD THIS FALL




SUDDEN DEATH RECORDS

CANADA
 Sept. 7 - Blue Grotto, Kamloops, BC
 Sept. 8 - Kimberley Curling Arena, Kimberley, BC
 Sept. 9th - Old Jalopy Parade, Castlegar, BC - All ages
 Sept. 14 - Clancy's Pub and Grill, Penticton, BC
 Sept. 15 - Upside Cider, Kelowna, BC
 Sept. 16th - The Royal, Nelson, BC

ALBERTA - OCT 2023
 NORTHWEST U.S.A. - NOV 2023
 BRAZIL / SOUTH AMERICAN TOUR - JAN 2024
 CANADA - USA - JAPAN - EUROPE - SPRING/SUMMER 2024

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SUE JOHANSON July 29, 1930 - June 28, 2023



Canadian sexual health education pioneer / birth control advocate / nurse / mother / wife / member of the Order of Canada

AU remembers the friendly, funny and honest voice of sexual education in Canada. She fielded sex questions by telephone on her show that educated the nation, eventually – the world. In the time before the Internet – the sexual information source was Sue on Sundays. We will miss her strong energy! Rest in peace, thank you Sue.

“sex will be sweeter, if you wrap your peter”

- closing words on #175, the last hour long episode of “Sunday Night Sex Show”

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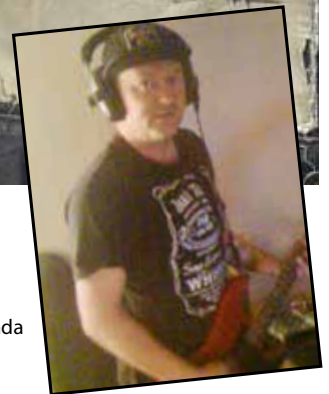
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BUG HUGGER



TATTOO

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**Matt “Muddy Jak” Towsley
1974 -2023**


It is with a heavy heart that Absolute Underground announces the passing of local musician Matt Towsley. Matt was born on April 20th, 1974 in Ann Arbor Michigan. In August of 1974 he immigrated to Canada and grew up in Hamilton, Ontario where he attended Peace Memorial and Conley Elementary, along with Barton High School. Matt’s family moved West in 1990, where he would then attend Stelly’s high-school in Central Saanich. He then also completed his Bridgwatch rating at the Western Maritime Institute. Matt was heavily involved in the music scene on the West Coast and across Canada, including playing in bands: Keg Killers, The Sweathogz, The Beaumonts, WizeGuyZ, Humming Aunt Ruby and The Lugans. Many of us thought of him as a “jack of all trades.” Matt was a very passionate person, with many interests. His smile and laugh were contagious and they’ll be fondly remembered by the hundreds of people that considered him a close and dear friend. There are many legendary tales of Matt’s exploits and adventures, and he will be sorely missed by everyone in the community. Matt leaves behind his sister Sarah, and his son Isaac.

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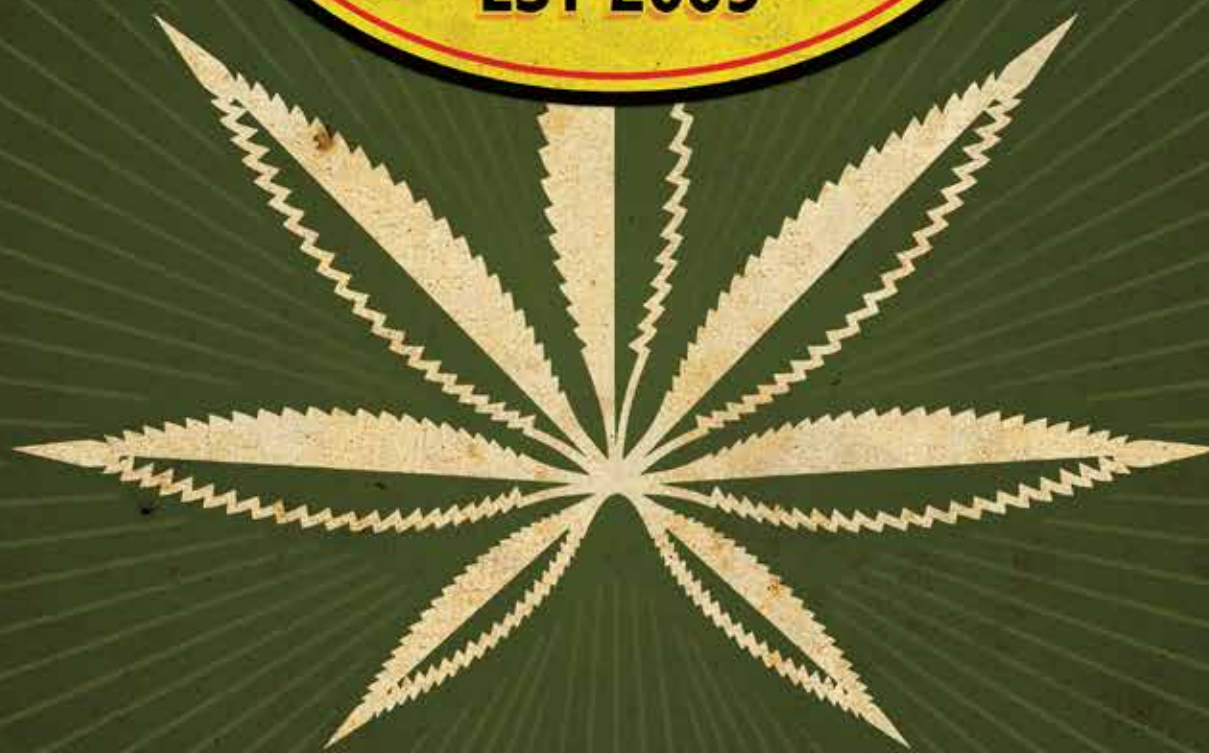
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