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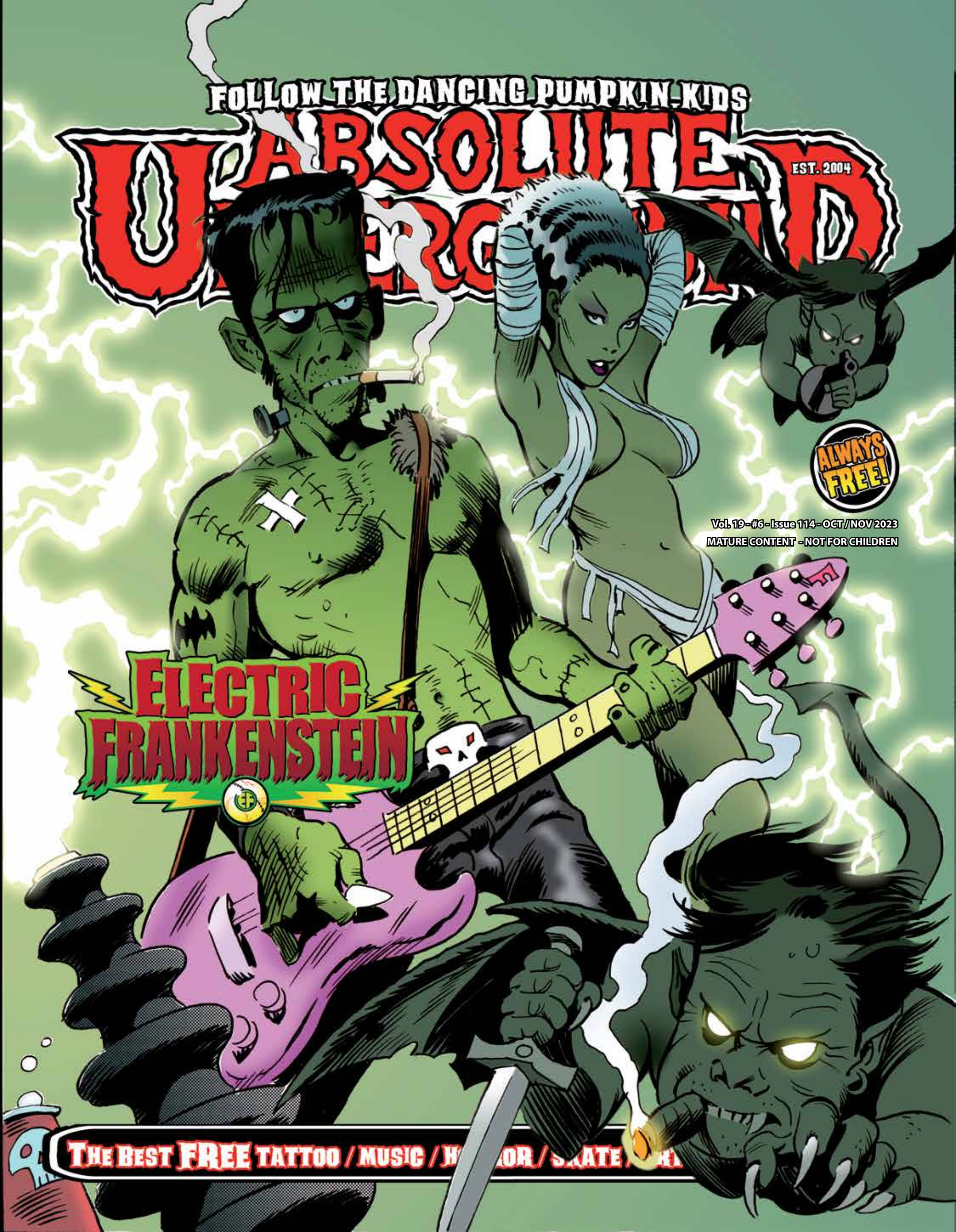
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Published by Ira Hunter

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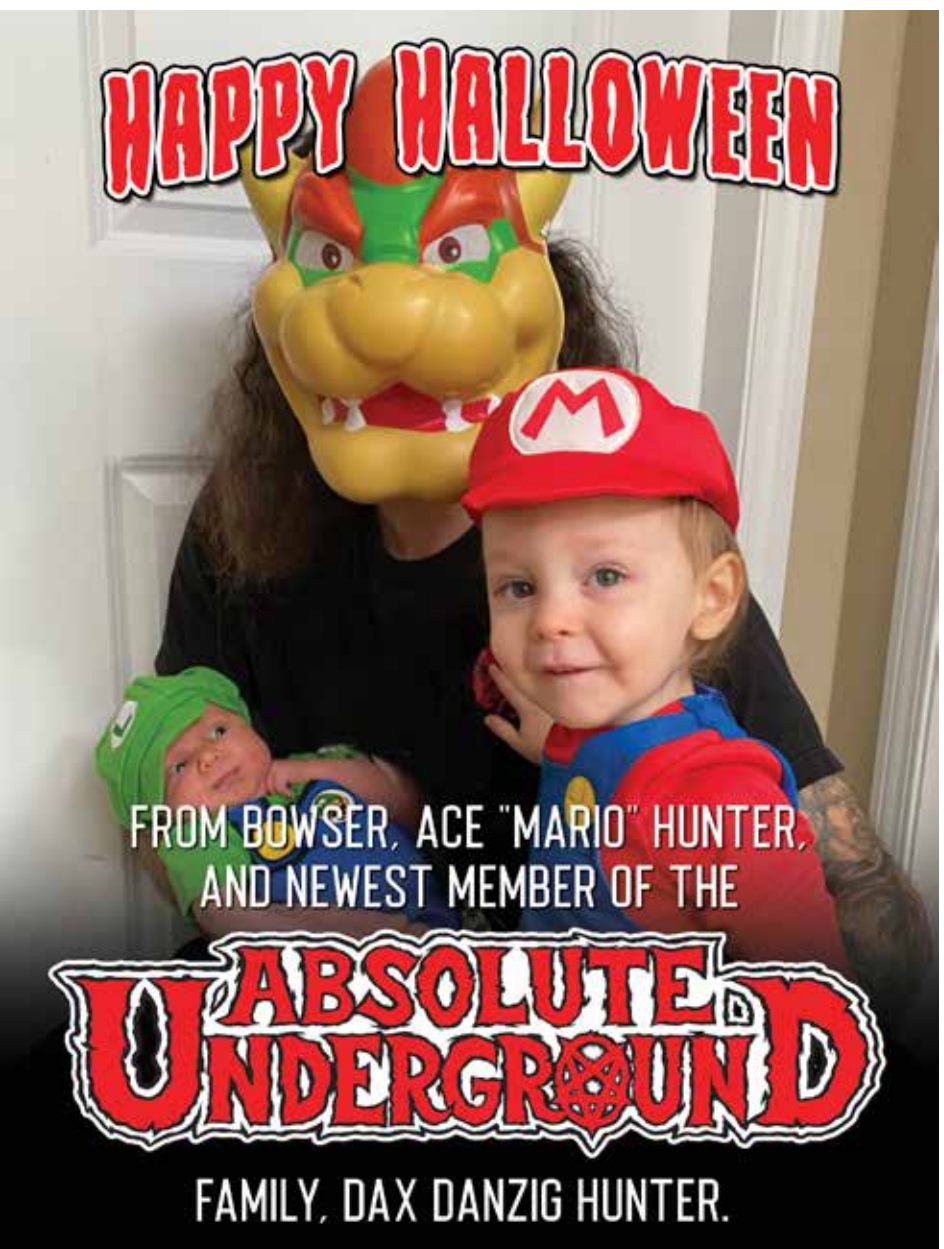
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VICTORIAS LOCALS ONLY



SHE Danzig-Era Tunes Only!

Interview by John Carlow

AU: Introduce yourselves.

SHE:
Katezig- vocals (Pepper Spray; Adicted (which is an Adicts cover band))

Benny Only - bass

Doyle Wolfgang von Trenton - guitar (Listening Party, ex-Cyanide Monks, ex-Meditationers, ex-Pleasure Drop)

The Crimson Dave- drums (ex-Mother Died Today, ex-Regulator)

AU: When was SHE put together?

SHE: SHE started jamming in the summer of 2022, and played our first show on Halloween of that year.

AU: How did it come about?

SHE: Kate was always shouting "YAMS" in a Danzig voice so I asked her if she would sing in a Danzig era-only Misfits cover band in which I would play drums poorly. She said "I guess so." Then we needed a bass player so I asked my pal who had touched a bass like 3 times in his life, and he also reluctantly agreed. Then we needed at least one member who could actually play their instrument and hold our collective shit together, so we asked Trenton to help us out.

AU: How many shows have you done?

SHE: SHE has played five shows in the last 10 months. We had only planned on doing one Halloween show each year so we have no idea what we're doing.

AU: How did you come up with your set list of Misfits material?

SHE: It was pretty easy. Everything the Misfits did post-Danzig is piss so that was all off the table

immediately. Most of the Danzig stuff is rad so we just said stuff like "Come Back stinks, let's skip that one" and learned the rest.

AU: Anything funny / unusual happens at any of your shows to date?

SHE: Whenever anyone yells for us to play "Dig Up Her Bones," or "Scream," at shows, Kate shoves them and shouts "fuck YOU, motherfucker," and then gets knocked the fuck out by the affronted fan, in true classic Danzig fashion.

AU: Any other Misfits tribute bands you like that are out there?

SHE: I don't know of ANY other active Misfits cover bands but by golly, I'd be pumped to see one so I could just enjoy the songs without setting up drums and sweating my ass off. Back in the 90's there was a Misfits cover band in Vic called The Astrozombies. They were great, look up their live videos on YouTube.

AU: Have you checked out any other female fronted Misfits tribute bands out there?

SHE: Great question. There's only one other female-fronted Misfits cover band I have heard of, they were from the Czech Republic or something, and they were called the MisTits. The woman singing had pipes and personality, I liked it.

AU: Are there tribute bands out there for other bands you like?

SHE: We recently played a show with Party Animals, who are a Turbonegro cover band,

they were great. Benny Only and I are huge fans of the first four Danzig albums so of course we are happy with what Danezig is doing. And we are all banging Paul, the drummer in The Angry Snowmen, so you could say we're big fans of his balls then. We hope to play a Xmas show with them in December so watch for that.

AU: Tell us what would happen in a Katezig / Danezig cage match?

SHE: Katezig does to Danezig what that dude did to Danzig in that backstage video, we all know the one. No contest.

AU: What are plans looking ahead for this band?

SHE: Just keep playing shows as long as we like it and people give a shit.



AU: Where can people find/ contact you?

SHE: SHE - Misfits Cover Band on Facebook

AU: Any gigs for the calendar?

SHE: We're playing on Friday November 3rd at Lucky Bar with The Ramores, and The Chain. It's an early show, doors at 7:00 pm. \$16 advance, \$20 at the door.

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HYPERIA

The Serpent's Cycle

Interview with Guitarist Colin Ryley

Absolute Underground: For those unfamiliar with Hyperia who are you, and what do you do?

Hyperia: Happy to be back! I'm Colin and I play guitar in Hyperia, a melodic thrash metal band in Vancouver, BC.

AU: It's been a year since you released the *Silhouettes Of Horror*, a very personal lyrical album by vocalist Marlee Ryley. Now your new album, *The Serpent's Cycle*, is out on November 17th, what can you tell us about its concept compared to its predecessor?

H: This was the first album we wrote that didn't intentionally have a concept like the two before - however looking back at the album now there are some pretty common themes among the songs lyrically. A lot of these concepts revolved around Marlee's personal life and things she was going through over the past couple years. A lot of the themes are fairly similar to our old albums, things like psychology and human nature as well partying and having a good time

AU: What was the inspiration for the album's artwork?

H: This is our first full-length with a different artist as well. We asked our good friend Caitlin Delaplace to design the cover for us based on Marlee's ideas for the cover and she did an amazing job turning our thoughts into a killer artwork. You can get as metaphorical as you want with the artwork and album title, considering this is a new era for the band as we have almost a completely new line up. The album title is a concept about death and rebirth.

AU: You have a new members in the band: Jon Power - Bass and Ryan Idris - Drums, how has it been adding them to the lineup and new record?

H: Ryan Idris was just a session drummer for the album, due to some tight time constraints we unfortunately weren't able to use our new drummer who joined shortly after the album was recorded. Ryan had played multiple shows with us in the past and knew the album so he was the right fit at the time.

Jon, on the other hand, is a full-time member and we couldn't be happier to have him in the band. He has brought a spark of energy towards the songs and a heavy bass tone that fits our



style well. It also helps that he knows how to play his instrument very well. Along with our new drummer, we also have recently been rehearsing with a new second guitar player, both of whom will be announced very soon!

AU: This album deals with different lyrical ideas such as the human condition, philosophy, psychology, and partying, what draws you to these topics?

H: Marlee draws a lot of these lyrics from her personal life. She grew up in a fairly religious household that she never felt she fit into, which forced her to look elsewhere for meaning in life through things like philosophy and psychology. A lot of the lyrics on this album also deal with some personal drama in her life and certain people that have crossed her or betrayed her in some way or another. Aside from that, the party songs are always a fun touch that we add to an album since it's a big part of our life - we love to sit back and enjoy some drinks with our good friends often and it only makes sense to write music about it.

AU: We loved your music video "Automatic Thrash Machine," how was putting that video together? How did you come up with its concept?

H: Thanks! It was a super fun one to make. We've had the idea for many years about putting together a fun party video in the vein of some of our favourite party thrash bands (Municipal Waste, Tankard etc.). Although we all take music very seriously, we also love to have fun and show that side of the band

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

as well.

AU: How is the dynamic between vocalist Marlee Ryley and yourself, being the married couple in the band?

H: I think it works great, both of us get along super well and rarely butt-heads over certain things, and when we do we both are able to put aside our egos and decide what serves the band first and foremost. Any personal issues we have we always leave outside the jam space and the shows and try our best not to include the other members with anything non-band related.

AU: This is the Halloween issue for *Absolute Underground* Mag? What does the band do for trick or treating?

H: This year we are going to be opening up a wicked show at the Red Room in Vancouver with Exciter, Lich King and Bloodstar! In the past we've played a few Halloween shows before, but otherwise we typically just have some friends over and put on some music.

AU: Do you have any upcoming shows or touring plans for the band?

October 28 - *Underground Wasteland Festival* - Clancy's (Penticton, BC)

October 31 - *Exciter, Lich King, Bloodstar, Hyperia* - Red Room (Vancouver, BC)

December - TBA - *The Serpent's Cycle* Album Release Show

Other than that, next year we plan to hit the road and play some shows in Europe and the U.S!

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

H: Thanks for taking the time to check us out and support us! We hope to play a show near you someday soon!

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DISPLAY OF DECAY

Vitriol

Interview with Sean Watson

Absolute Underground: For those unfamiliar with Display of Decay who are you, and what do you do?

Display of Decay: Thanks very much. We're a death metal band from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada formed in 2007. Our style of sound is groovy, old-school death metal hellbent on breaking necks.

AU: It's been five years since 2018's *Art in Mutilation*, what can you tell us about your fifth full-length album *Vitriol*, out on Gore House Productions on October 20th?

DOD: A lot of adversities were conquered in the making of this record. In a short amount of time, a lineup was put together to tour through Canada and the United States and then to go right into the writing process. Initially, we had planned on an EP but when the world shut down for a couple years, there really wasn't much to do other than write more music, and thus *Vitriol* was born. I think people will be pleasantly surprised by the diversity of the eight tracks on here and how they all offer something different.

AU: How was it having the Midas touch mixed and mastered by Cryptopsy's Christian Donaldson?

DOD: We worked with Christian on the last record, *Art in Mutilation*, and right away knew he was the right guy for the job. His resume is second

to none and for what we've tried to capture sonically he's been able to exceed all expectations.

AU: You're quoted as *Vitriol*, was born of rage and spite fueled further by the chaos and uncertainty felt worldwide over the last few years; what more in-depth can you tell fans about this ideal?

DOD: I was at a point after the *Art in Mutilation* record where I had considered hanging it up for good and giving up on music. There was a pretty big falling out that had sent me spiraling for a number of months. I hadn't even touched nor thought about a guitar during that period of time. Eventually after some lineup changes, I started to use that anger and frustration as fuel to not only set out on the biggest tour *Display of Decay* had ever done but to also channel it into the writing process. Throughout the process of making *Vitriol*, we each individually faced many setbacks in our personal lives that we had to really push through to persevere, and somehow, somehow, we made it to today. As much as I hate clichés, it is a reminder to keep going and keep pushing no matter how bleak things can look.

AU: Death Metal can sometimes be a stalemate. How do find your way to stand out from the herd with your take on it?

DOD: We've always had a unique sound that has stayed true to its origin and people know if *Display of Decay* is pumping out new material, it's going to deliver. It's trickier now compared to 10 years ago because social media has blown up so much and it's a much bigger ocean of artists out there but it's also an advantage because even the silliest of memes with our music attached to it

can get people going, "OK, that was funny, but what the hell was that song?" and you've just connected with a new audience.

AU: It's Halloween time, are the any bludgeoning horror tracks on the album, that fans should check out?

DOD: They've all got their own uniquely murderous elements but "*Malicious Motorcide*," stands out to me the most when it comes to savagery. The theme of a person mowing people down with their vehicle only to go to war with the police after is pretty damn savage.

AU: Do you have any upcoming shows or touring plans for the band?

DOD: We've got a few dates here around Alberta for the release. Nov 10th at Dickens Pub in Calgary, Nov 11th at the Starlite Room in Edmonton, and November 17th at Cheers Pub in Lloydminster. Next year we're looking at a return to Western Canada and making our way to Europe for a string of shows.

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

DOD: Be sure to check out *Vitriol*, it's out October 20th through GoreHouse Productions and will be on all the platforms. Those who've checked us out whether it was live or through streaming, thank you for the support!

displayofdecay.ca/

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displayofdecay.bandcamp.com

NOTORIOUS NELSON



weaponized lab rat. When we came to, we were transformed into the Kill Rats. It's been our mission to spread a message of destruction and chaos ever since!!

AU: Describe your sound for someone who has not heard you yet.

KR: We sound like all the things that influenced us growing up. Old school punk, horror movies, cartoons, skateboarding and comics. Sneak our record into the Misfits section at the record store if you want to do us a favor!

KILL RATS

Plague Punk for the Masses

Interview by Absolute Underground

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

Kill Rats: We are the Kill Rats from the sewers of Nelson, BC Canada. We are most infamous for our bad looks and infecting all that get in our way with our blistering brand of plague punk!

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

KR: We are three punk rockers that broke into an animal testing and were attacked by a



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

KR: Most of our songs are about cults, killers, and horror movies. Sometimes shit goes down in our world that we have to sing about, but we try to keep it trashy for the most part. Low hanging fruit is the easiest to eat!!

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

KR: We just finished doing some shows in BC and Alberta and have since crawled back into the shadows to plan our next assault on society. We're hoping to do more recording and shows early

in the new year, with more serious touring in the spring and summer.

AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?

KR: We released our debut album last year to widespread uncritical acclaim. It is full of backward messages, evil spells, and our favorite recipes. It also has cool album art by Tom Bagley!!

AU: Any final words for our readers?

KR: Even if you win the rat race, you're still just a rat.



AU: Where do we find you online?

KR: thekillrats.com and we are @thekillratsband on Instagram and Facebook. Our music is available digitally everywhere and our album can be bought at our website.

Photo credit: Marlin Olynyk

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BUFFALO BUD BUSTER

Interview with Rog Reuz (vocals)

By Ryan Dyer

Where the buffalo roam - down the Electric Highway, migrating towards Vantopia, and then finally settling down in a cheap tent with a donkey named Lucky. Calgary's Buffalo Bud Buster disclose dirty stoner rock stories - like audio books dragged through the mud - a thick pile of mud that someone dropped a weed brownie in. I speak with Rog Reuz, spinner of yarns, about furry North American animals, how the band gets such a beastly live sound, and of course, bustin' buds.

AU: How did BBB come to be?

BBB: Buffalo Bud Buster was formed on New Year's Eve 2001, by myself and guitarist Big Dan Freezin. That is the easy answer, and the one we often tell. However, after much thought, BBB came into formation because Pantera played the Stampede Corral in Calgary, on July 29th 2001. At that show I ran into a fella by the name of Chad Wick Shep Dog, and Chad told me Dan was looking for someone to move into his place. That event was the most pivotal in the creation of BBB, because I called Dan and moved in, and we formed BBB and a lifelong friendship. Crazy heh?!

AU: Your style and storytelling method reminds me of older Clutch with heavier grooves. I imagine they are an influence - who is a less noticeable one?

BBB: During the last five years I have found myself being influenced by old Rolling Stones b-side songs, and outlaw country music. Rob Stooze, our drummer, draws from what the kids call "punk

rock," but also draws a lot of drum influence from drummers like Abe Cunningham and Brant Bjork. Dan Freezin loves the heavy stuff, but notes Scott Ian as a guitar influence. Brent sees Geezer Butler (Sabbath) and Rob DeLeo (STP), for their melodic playing and innovation to bass in the role of a hard rock band as major influences.

AU: You have one of the best live sounds I've heard in a band. What's the secret formula to it?

BBB: That is a sweet compliment Ryan, and collectively our favourite to hear. There are a couple of secrets I can share about developing an awesome live sound/band...

1. Have Brent as your bass player
2. Have Rob as your drummer
3. Have Dan as your guitar player
4. Reuz!

AU: I'd like to ask about the meaning to a few of your more lyrically vivid songs (at least to me):

"Cecil Hotel Blues"

BBB: "Cecil Hotel Blues" is about 20 years old now, and was a tongue in cheek look at the subculture of peeps hanging around Calgary's infamous Cecil Hotel...it has since been bulldozed.

"Cheap Tent"

BBB: "Cheap Tent" was perhaps my best attempt at saying a lot with very little. It revolves around a woman who is questioning her direction that has led her to the gear head/racing community in Tennessee. She struggles with the idea of leaving and starting fresh. I always found it ironic that "quitting" some things is often seen as the "easy" way out, but in reality it can also be a very hard thing to do. And thus both decisions, "staying" or "going" can be seen as "folding like a cheap tent." *"Mix Tape"*

BBB: "Mix Tape" is a collection of memories from our youth, and a nod to the lost art of making a mix tape. It really was a form of communication for us in the '80s and early '90s. People who grew up in those times may also remember parents warning them about bad kids at the arcade that would attempt to sell you drugs...never happened to me once. I'm not sure if I went to bad arcades or if we had lousy drug dealers, maybe both.

"Two Days Shy"

BBB: "Two Days Shy" is a collection of perspectives wrapped in strong personalities and sprinkled with irony. Taylor Swift may have said it best when she said: "Stop calling me! I have never heard of Buffalo Bud Buster, I've never heard "Two Days Shy" and I hate your guts."

"A Donkey Named Lucky"

BBB: "A Donkey Named Lucky" is another tune pushing 20-years-old. Just a pretty little jam about a guy smuggling narcotics in the hollowed-out wooden leg of his donkey.

AU: You have a lot of hits, but which song is your greatest hit?

BBB: I'm not sure if you attended our last show, but I announced every song as "our big hit!" And honestly it's a great way to look at it. Approach each song with that big hit energy, and deliver it the same way!

AU: As someone who has never been to Vantopia, could you tell me about your experience playing it? Does BBB have a van with a big, mystic buffalo spray painted on it?

BBB: Vantopia is exactly what is hyped up to be: The Party Of The Year! Vandits Van Club puts on an amazing festival and you will definitely need at least one full day of recovery after it's over. We have been honored to take the stage there multiple times! One time in Edmonton, maybe a little tipsy, I seem to recall attempting to spray paint a rad buffalo on the side of a police van... I'm a bad artist and the finished product was a

crudely drawn penis. Apologies to Edmonton... and penises.

AU: You played with Bison before - two huge, hairy animals making slow, loud noises. But which animal would win in a real fight, the bison or buffalo?

BBB: Great question! Well Ryan, Cape Buffalo are responsible for an estimated 200 human deaths a year, and I believe bison have only been credited with three deaths ever. In short, I guess I would bet on the buffalo, but cheer for the bison! I would note that the "buffalo" in our name is referring to a North American bison, so I guess we are all on the same team.

AU: You also have had the honor of opening for Church of Misery. Are you influenced at all by their true crime lyrical style?

BBB: We have had the honour of playing with so many great bands Ryan, and Church of Misery is another one! Dan Freezin absolutely loves those guys! I'm just racking my brain here, trying to think of true crime references in my lyrics. I have a Unabomber reference in "Two Days Shy" but I would have to say I use more historical atrocities in my lyrics as opposed to individual killers. Oh and kittens! I love kittens!

AU: You just released a four-track EP and a live session from CJSW. What is next for BBB?

BBB: We are so excited for the immediate future man. We are Blessed Beyond Belief (see what I did there?) to have our original bass player, and friend Brent back on bass! With Brent on bass and Rob on drums this rhythm section is firing on all cylinders and we plan on heading back into the studio in late September! In the meantime, as your attorney, I suggest you come see us live! Buy the ticket, take the ride...as the fella said.

AU: Lastly, how many buds could a buffalo bust if a buffalo could bust buds?

BBB: That's why I like you Ryan, you ask the tough questions. I once asked Neil deGrasse Tyson the same thing, and after he emptied a full can of mace into my eyes, his lawyers hit me with a cease and desist order I still can't circumnavigate. Science man...I fucking love that shit.

buffalobudbuster.bandcamp.com/album/xx



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MASSIVE SCAR ERA

Metal Goes Egyptian

Interview with Singer/Guitarist Cherine Amr

Absolute Underground: For those unfamiliar with Massive Scar Era who are you, and what do you do?

MSE: Hi! My name is Cherine; I'm an Egyptian composer, singer, and guitarist based in Montreal. I'm the driving force behind Massive Scar Era.

AU: You have an interesting new release, "Metal Goes Egyptian", please tell our readers all about it.

MSE: Metal Goes Egyptian is a video performance series featuring the music of Massive Scar Era accompanied by a traditional Egyptian Arabic

music orchestra, all recorded in a studio setting. The music will be released as an EP under the project name 'Metal Goes Egyptian' on November 3rd.

AU: How was it coordinating Middle Eastern influences, a live orchestra, and metal all together for this record?

MSE: For accuracy, I'd like to clarify that the SWANA region is incredibly diverse. In this EP, my focus was solely on Egyptian music, and I must say, it was an extremely labour-intensive effort! Arabic music is typically characterized by its monophonic nature, focusing on melodic lines. In contrast, metal music often utilizes the riffing technique, where chords may not provide conflicting information with the melody. Hence, I anticipated that there wouldn't be a significant musical barrier in executing this project. My main challenge was finding musicians in Montreal who could play the unique Egyptian microtones. While microtones are present in the music of many Arabic-speaking cultures, each one has its distinct way of incorporating them into their musical phrases. This is where I had the pleasure of meeting Katia Makdissi-Warren, the founder, artistic director, and composer of OktoEcho, who generously agreed to provide guidance and connect me with the right musicians. Since I had never led a project of this nature before, having a consultant like Katia was crucial for my success.

To bring this project to fruition, I had to wear multiple hats. Firstly, I collaborated with an Arabic music arranger who played a significant role in selecting songs that would showcase Egyptian Arabic music effectively. Our process was a back-and-forth collaboration, and we specifically chose songs that already featured vocal ornaments with a distinct Egyptian flavour, avoiding any arrangements that might detract from the intensity of the songs. These songs naturally lent themselves to the Arabic arrangement we were aiming for. We worked closely with Katia to ensure that the arrangement could be faithfully interpreted on Arabic instruments in the chosen keys, which sometimes required key

changes. Thanks to Katia's guidance, we also enlisted a copyist with expertise in notating micro-tones on sheet music, as these nuances couldn't be accurately represented using standard notation software.

The project also involved a significant video component, and the music production process in the mixing and editing room was a substantial undertaking. It was truly an extensive session! If I go into details, I will fill pages and pages!

I'm extremely proud and grateful for everyone who contributed to this project despite my limited resources. I want to sincerely thank the Canada Council for the Arts for their valuable funding support, without which this project would not have been possible. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to Katia and Etienne Tremblay, the record producer, for generously donating hours to propel this project forward.

AU: You're a transplant from Egypt, has it been living and playing in Canada over the years? How do you find the music scenes differ?

MSE: Immigration isn't easy! I think I still need to crack down on the social codes. The music scene in Cairo is more engaging! We are more than 100 Million people, so shows are often full. People like to go out, dance, and party. The city never sleeps! People will hop from one show to another; they may start their night with a coffee at 5 p.m. and finish their night at the Jazz Club (a popular bar/venue in Cairo) at 3 a.m.! You also don't need to make prior arrangements to meet people; you are almost sure you will make friends in whatever place you will walk into. I struggled with this when I moved to Vancouver - making friends!

AU: Do you ever miss your home country?

MSE: No, I don't miss my home country. I miss the food and the jokes! We are so creative and funny! But I like living in Montreal a lot. I admire the architecture, the music, the festivals. I generally felt more integrated in the Quebecois culture

MONTREAL MASSACRE

than when I lived in Vancouver. My mom comes to visit every summer, and she loves spending time here.

AU: What would you like people to take away from this new EP Metal Goes Egyptian?

MSE: I hope that people can derive enjoyment from the music and gain a wider sonic impression of Egyptian music. Do you know how many American movies, often misrepresent Egyptian culture with an operatic soundtrack in the background? I aspire to provide a different, more perspective through this project.

AU: It's Halloween time, are there any Egyptian scary tales that fans should check out? Besides the Mummies coming back to life...?

MSE: It's funny because, in Egypt, we don't have this scary tale of mummies at all. One of the most famous characters in our heritage is Our Mother, The Ogre, always ready to kidnap or eat children. I used to be very scared of her! She is famous in our folk stories as the evil witch with an ugly and frightening face who used her magic to differentiate herself between the smart man and the handsome and beautiful woman.

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

MSE: While I'm in the promotional cycle for Metal Goes Egyptian, I also want to announce that I finished the recording of my next EP, Metal & Zār, which should be released at the end of Spring 2024. Zār is a cult of possession in which ritual incorporates music and dance. Zār's aim is to establish a state of reconciliation between the individuals and the possessing spirits (Asyad) that inhabit their bodies and are believed to be the cause of illness. I had a month-long workshop with a Zār group this August to create this fusion, and we presented the output in Montreal.

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ROCKIN' ENGINE

Altered By Evil

Interview with Steve O Leff

Absolute Underground: for those unfamiliar with Rockin Engine who are you, and what do you do?

Rockin' Engine: Hi there and thanks for this opportunity! Rockin' Engine is a four-piece band, based in Ottawa. We delve into the retro-horror and apocalyptic themes throughout our music and lyrics, and we're considered a modern thrash metal band, with great influences from old-school heavy metal. We've been around since 2018 when we released our first demo album "Midnight Road Rage", and since then, we've released two EPs, The Wretched And The Damned and Altered By Evil. **AU: You have a new EP Altered By Evil, what can you tell us about it?**

RE: This EP is essentially a tribute to everything we love about horror movies and serial killer documentaries. There's a fascination behind the love of the macabre and the grotesque that we wanted to explore with our lyrics and expose different nuances of some classic works of art. With this album, we're bringing the audience into a fantasy world of monsters and evil spirits, with a dash of historical elements that make the listening experience even more interesting.

AU: What is it about horror films and movies that draws you to write music about it?

RE: If I could breathe horror movies, I would! I was first exposed to horror movies at a very young age when my mother was basically using me as a shield so she wouldn't jump scared during old school TV series like The Hulk and V. Afterwards my first real horror movie was Nightmare On Elm

Street, which is still one of my all-time favourite movies. To this day, horror movies are the only movies where I just dive into the story and really focus on the characters and all the special effects. Since I've always been fascinated by monsters and evil spirits, I guess it just makes sense that most of my inspiration comes from these films. Screams, suspense, blood, gore, sexy scared victims, and crazy villains... what's not to like?

AU: What's your favourite horror film and writer?

RE: Well, that's a tough one to answer for sure. Although I'm a super huge fan of Rob Zombie's Devil's Rejects and House Of A 1000 Corpses, Wes Craven has to be my favourite writer, and more specifically for the Nightmare On Elm Street franchise. Wes Craven has a very unique way of creating captivating scenes, and most certainly the best horror villain of all time. I still watch all his movies on a regular basis, I just can't get enough of them!

AU: Freddy Kruger vs Chucky vs Jason (Friday The 13th) vs Pinhead (Hellraiser), who's the scariest of them all?

RE: Definitely Freddy Krueger! Although he might be more vulnerable in the real world, in the dream world, he's a powerful force and seemingly invulnerable. He has the ability to murder his victims in their own dreams, fueling their deaths by their own personal fears, causing their deaths in the real world as well... And he kicked Jason's ass in my books haha! For Jason, if you can't help but trip over every tree branch you step on when fleeing him, you probably deserve his wrath. Chucky, I'd kick his ugly head and score a field goal with it. As for Pinhead, he would probably be my second choice, but who tries to open a creepy weird puzzle box anyway? I mean really, throw it out and you'll be fine.

AU: We loved your music videos for "Carnival of Evil," very gory! How did you come up with the visual ideas for the videos and can we expect more?

RE: Thank you so much! The main inspiration for this song is actually Rob Zombie's fictional character, Captain Spaulding. We wanted to create something that would represent the true spirit of this character, with a retro horror kind of

vibe. That's when we came up with the idea of creating a creepy circus that tortures people for the sake of show business. So, in order to reflect that spirit, we decided, much like Rob Zombie does, to integrate a gory and psycho-comedic storyline to our music video. We had so much fun building and creating all the props and special effects for this project that we literally started to offer our services to movie and music video producers. In fact, we are thinking of creating a short horror film with Carnival Of Evil as its main theme to develop an in-depth horrific overview of what really happens behind the circus tents.

AU: How did teaming up with Insurrection Stef Jomphe on Room 185 come together?

RE: When we started writing the music for Room 185, we knew that we needed some really heavy vocals to accentuate that "punch in the gut" feel to it. Extreme vocals are not my forte and I admit it. It takes some really unique skills to master those types of vocals, and those who do have all my respect. So, I started searching for vocalists in our region who could deliver what we were looking for, and that's when I saw Insurrection perform for the first time. I was immediately blown away by Stef Jomphe's unique guttural vocals and does them flawlessly! At some point, I said what the hell, I'll send him a message and see how it goes. The worst that can happen is a No, right? About five minutes later Stef answered my message with a Hell Yeah, and it took me a few minutes to realize that we had our guy! Turns

out that Stef is one of the coolest and nicest guys out there, but he says it has to remain a secret to keep that death metal reputation haha. So, we ended up exchanging about the song, he sent me a demo, we booked him some time in the studio, and there you have it. He brought the key element to this song which makes it so much better.

AU: Who do you think are the kings of Horror metal these days?

RE: Behemoth definitely has the best horror music videos! The quality and attention to detail in all of them is astonishing. It's very dramatic and captivating, even if you're not a fan of the music, although it's awesome. Another great horror band is Ice Nine Kills. I'm a huge fan of comedy horror and they do it oh so well. Their song Hip To Be Scared is definitely one of my favourites, where they cover one of the best psycho horror movies of all time, American Psycho.

AU: Dream band to share the stage with?

RE: Oh, man! We've been so blessed to share the stage with amazing artists such as Tony MacAlpine, Death Angel, Anvil, and even Yngwie Malmsteen. But if I had to choose, Gojira would be on top of my list! This band has inspired me

in so many ways, not only for our music but also for our sound. They give such an outstanding performance and deliver high energy like no other. It would be an absolute honour to share the stage with these amazing musicians.

AU: How's the Ottawa Metal Scene these days?

RE: Our city has an amazing metal, punk, and hard rock community. All of the bands we worked with were very professional and became friends really quickly. But the real stars of the scene are the fans. There are many great bands in our region, and the supporters never cease to attend, sometimes even going out of town to follow their favourite band! We're fortunate enough to have created amazing relationships in the past years, which opened doors to many great opportunities. In the end, we're all in this to have a great time and enjoy ourselves.

AU: Any plans to tour Canada or beyond?

RE: We're currently working on scheduling a small tour across Quebec and Ontario, but with all members being extremely busy these days, it's hard to plan ahead. But we're definitely looking forward to performing out of town and getting to meet new people and make new friends in the process. We're also looking to join some metal festivals across Canada, and perhaps even Europe if everything goes well. We have been offered a few shows in Germany, so I think the future of Rockin' Engine is looking quite well.



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

RE: I'd like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who helped us with our latest album. Dark Moon Productions and Light Is Art Studio for music and music video production, Asher Media Relations for an outstanding job promoting our release, all the media outlets for the amazing reviews and support throughout the process, and most importantly, thank you to all our fans who keep supporting us in every way they can. Without all of you, none of this would be possible!

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RAYGUN COWBOYS

Fortune and Glory, Pleasure and Pain

Interview By Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Who am I speaking with and what do you do in the Raygun Cowboys?

Raygun Cowboys: My name is Jon Christopherson and I am the singer and guitarist.

AU: Where is your band from?

RC: We are from Edmonton Alberta

AU: How would you best describe your band for anyone who hasn't heard you?

RC: We play a mix of rockabilly, punk rock, country. And a little ska. It's kind of like Johnny Cash meets the Sex Pistols

AU: How long have you guys been around?

RC: This is the 23rd year of the band!

AU: How many records do the Raygun Cowboys have out?

RC: We have released six records and our seventh is coming out October 27th

AU: Have seen a lot of bands with great potential fall by the wayside over your career?

RC: Yes I suppose I have. I've seen many great bands over the years and some last, some don't. I think it all depends on the drive of the people involved and the reality is making music your life isn't easy, and the lifestyle is not for everyone.

AU: What are the secrets to your band's longevity?

RC: I think the drive that I mentioned earlier, I was driven to take the band as far as I could, and as time went on I just kept pushing and moving forward, despite some setbacks haha.

AU: You have a new album out the end of October on Stomp Records called Fortune and Glory, Pleasure and Pain. What sets this one apart from previous Raygun records?

RC: Well, this record took a long time to make, I started writing it in 2020 during the pandemic and with the situation over the last couple of years it was hard to get together as a band so we ended up making it pretty much in the studio. It's got a good mix of fast up best punk/psychobilly kind of tunes, rockabilly and country songs. I sent it to a friend who said it sounds like a more mature version of the band, which is true, I'm gettin' old!

AU: Where haven't you guys toured so far that you would like to see?

RC: I want to tour Japan and Australia someday, and some places in Europe like Finland.

AU: Where's your favourite place in Canada to play?

RC: I think my hometown of Edmonton would be the top but also Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. We have had great shows in those cities.

AU: Who are some of your favourite bands that you have toured with and why?

RC: We have toured with some great bands, the Real Mckenzie's for sure, recently the 8 Kalacas from California, we just did a stellar west coast tour with them and they are a great band.

The Long Tall Texans in Europe, amazing band and that was a really fun tour! I tour managed SNFU in their last Canadian tour. That was a great experience and a life changer.

AU: Who are some up and coming bands from Edmonton that we should all be on the lookout for?

RC: oh man, well Torcher is a great new band that some friends of mine are in, kind of like Motörhead. And Home Front is a great new band with Clint from Shout out and Graeme the singer from the Wednesday Night Heroes, killer band

STOMP RECORDS

AU: Where do people find the Raygun Cowboys music, merchandise and advice on life?

RC: we are available on all platforms digitally and you can order our vinyl etc from band camp or the Stomp records website. And I guess if there are any words of wisdom it's to make sure you always check the oil in the tour van!

AU: Thanks for taking time to answer these!

RC: It was my pleasure, hope everyone digs the new record and we'll see you in the road!
stomprecords.com/bands/raygun-cowboys





AS SHERIFF

Six Ways to the Ace

By Jason Flower

(additions by Klemen Breznikar.)

Featured on the recordings:

Andrew Godon: lead guitar (1967-72)

Ed Simpson-Baikie: bass/guitar, lead vocals (1967-72)

Reid Hudson: bass, lead vocals (1967-69)

Denis Scherk: drums (1968-72)

"Little" Ed Wright: lead vocals, harmonica (1969-71)

Ed SB: After the Fast Flying Vestibule broke up, Andy Godon asked me to join him in a new band. Our first gig was at Nine in the Fifth Place. We were stoned and scared shitless, but it went okay and many others followed.

Reid: I was contacted by Ed, whom I knew and respected as a very good Victoria singer in the folk clubs and coffeehouses around town. He was

starting a group with Andy Godon and they needed a bass player, so I quickly agreed and As Sheriff was born.

Andrew: In terms of our musical backgrounds, they were all a bit different. For instance, I was more of a folkie and Reid was more of a rock and roller. I have no memory of our early gigs, but I think we were well received as we were one of the first psychedelic groups in Victoria. The name comes from a 1936 National Geographic magazine. There was a Plymouth ad saying "As Sheriff, I Needed a Tough Car!" It was just a random name, there was no meaning. It was always spelled wrong.

Reid: Peter Lower was the first As Sheriff drummer,

then we got Mark Metcalf. After that, Harry Creech joined. There were lots of other members but the core and longest iteration of As Sheriff was Andy, Ed, me, and our fourth drummer, Denis Scherk.

Peter: A lot of dope was smoked during rehearsals and before we played – that I do remember. What we sounded like as a band is anyone's guess.

Andrew: I'll never forget one time we were driving to a gig up-island and we were in a van and Harry slid the side door open and made some vulgar gestures at a car alongside us, only to discover that it was an RCMP cruiser. Never a dull moment.

Andrew: Little Ed Wright, who had been the vocalist in Blues X Five and then Moxie, joined in 1969 and was a great singer. Recently listening to his performance on the recording of "His Father's Good Machine" really brought home to me how good he was.

Reid: I stayed with As Sheriff until I left for England in December 1969 and consequently joined May Blitz on bass. My old school friend Jamie (Jim) Black joined May Blitz on guitar and Tony Newman (Gene Vincent, Sounds Incorporated, and Jeff Beck Group) on drums. Still, it seemed like I was in As Sheriff for many years.

Andrew: There was a helluva lot packed into those two years! And As Sheriff went on for quite a while, I think at least till 1972. Ed Simpson-Baikie took over on bass when Reid left. There was a time when I was the only guitarist, then Rod and Barry joined. After Ed Wright left, I believe Ed Simpson-Baikie did most of the vocals.

Rod: During those years bands were trying everything to get ahead when it came to their sound. Anything was fair game if it worked. So I had an advantage being immersed in DIY since junior high.

Barry: Around August 1971, I got a phone call from Andy Godon saying that they dug my original arrangements and asked if I'd be interested in joining their band. Rod Evans (later famous for creating noiseless guitar pickups for Stratocasters) had recently left and they wanted a second guitarist to help fill things out. I jumped at the opportunity to join what I considered to be the most musically progressive rock band in Victoria during that era.

Andrew: There was a mescaline-fueled "Human Be-In" at Beacon Hill Park in Victoria plus the Universal Life Church Picnic at Mt. Douglas Park. Locals and police were surprised to see hordes of stoned freaks playing psychedelic music in the park. There was the trip to Inverness where we'd been hired to play for a bunch of bikers from Calgary. That was a memorable night of outdoor music, psilocybin, a full moon, and northern lights in the foothills of the Rockies.

Barry: Gigs were every weekend. Like our rehearsals, each show began ceremoniously with a hash pipe or a joint, comparatively mild stuff back in those days, but for someone relatively new to four hours of original material it was a trip-and-a-half at certain gigs where the clientele was boozing it up.

Andrew: The band stayed together until Ed Simpson-Baikie left.

Ed SB: I left Victoria in 1972 to seek my musical fortune in Europe (mostly London) and to be closer to my girlfriend Linda, who was studying



in Madrid. In London, I played with Paul Rudolph (Hydro Electric Streetcar) and in Uncle Dog with Carol Grimes.

Barry: Denis played in various Victoria bands over the years. Ed Simpson-Baikie left to pursue a long-lost sweetheart in Spain. He later moved to Holland where he still plays in a popular funk band. After As Sheriff, I produced the jazz-rock LP Noontide in 1974. My fondest memories of my

musical "career" were the magical days working with As Sheriff. Salute... Andy, Denis and Ed!

Reid: What you have with this collection of As Sheriff tunes is a product of the collaborations of a draft dodger guitar player, a folksinger, a rock and roller and a drummer with a military background. It was very exciting to be playing original music in little old Victoria BC Canada and being able to support

ourselves doing it.

Andrew: I have a really positive memory of it all. I was learning and it's something that I'm hugely proud of, the high point of my musical life. Things all came together well at that point for me. Sadly, Ed Wright, Denis Scherk, Harry Creech and Barry Newman have passed. Perhaps As Sheriff is tuning up and cranking the volume somewhere ...

Additional Members

Peter Lower – drums (1967)

Mark Metcalf – drums (1967)

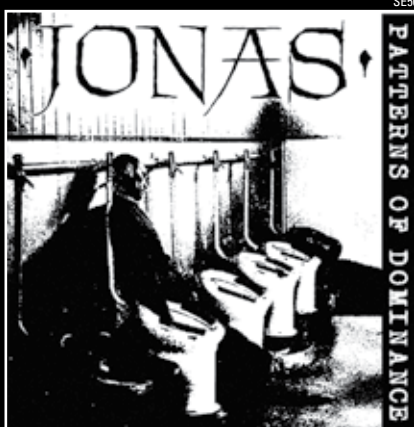
Harry Creech – drums (1967-68)

Rod Evans – guitar (1970-71)

Barry Newman – guitar (1971-72)



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BLACK DAGGERS

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BLACK DAGGERS

Phantasmagoria

Interview with Lead Guitarist and Vocalist Valentine Vandal

By Bradtasmagoria

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what do you do?

Black Dagers: Valentine Vandal, Lead Guitarist and Vocalist for Black Dagers.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

BD: Originally envisioned as a recording project between myself and drummer Spencer Mcleod, we started working on songs that would become our debut album Phantasmagoria, in January of 2022. Later that year we brought on Mike Szeles(Bass) and Stan Sullivan (Rhythm Guitar). After rounding out the lineup we started searching for a singer. Originally I was just going to help with writing, play lead guitar and do some backing vocals but we spent eight months

searching for someone and couldn't find anyone suitable. I had previously fronted a couple other bands so we decided to have me on vocals and try to put together what we had been working on for the last year plus. We had about 25 ideas that we eventually narrowed down to the 8 tracks that appear on our debut.

AU: Who else is in the band?

BD: Stan Sullivan (Rhythm Guitar), Mike Szeles (Bass), Spencer McLeod(Drums)

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

BD: We're definitely a hard rock band, but we don't really stick to one specific genre. Our influences are quite diverse and I think that comes across in our music.

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

BD: We're from Central Alberta and the music scene here is thriving! Many talented bands around here. Face the Earth, Divide the Dead, Bitter Rivals. It's a great place to build a following.

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

BD: We haven't played any yet! But we were featured nationally by Alan Cross as his Undiscovered Gem of the Week on all Corus media rock stations in August with our first music video.

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

BD: St. Anger - Metallica.

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

BD: I'm probably with XBOX. Anyone else playing Starfield?

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

BD: Nick Cross. His animated shorts and the video he did for "King of Magazines" by Danko Jones are amazing.

AU: Anything else to promote?

BD: We're focused on our upcoming album release and supporting it with custom made visuals by myself. I've been employing AI to create custom visuals to tell the story of the main character, so you'll be able to watch the entire thing like a short film, with the album as the soundtrack. The record is a concept album and we tried to really capture a grungier, somewhat psychedelic sound at times, but we also wanted to create something that you can really visualize while listening to it. It's a record about a Faustian bargain, and the main character is flawed, like all of us. It's really pulling from a myriad of influences and experiences in my own life that I wanted to write about. I think to some degree we all struggle with temptation and vice and I hope that what we've made is relatable to people.

Phantasmagoria, will be available everywhere on October 31st, 2023. Presently you can check out our two singles "Surfin' A Vibe" and, "I'm Here" on YouTube and all streaming platforms.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

BD: We're stoked to see all of you soon. We're definitely planning to make our live debut in the near future so stay tuned and make sure you follow our socials for all our updates and constant content.

AU: How do people find you online?

BD: They can find us on all social media platforms or simply visit linktr.ee/blackdagersmusic to see all the most current updates.

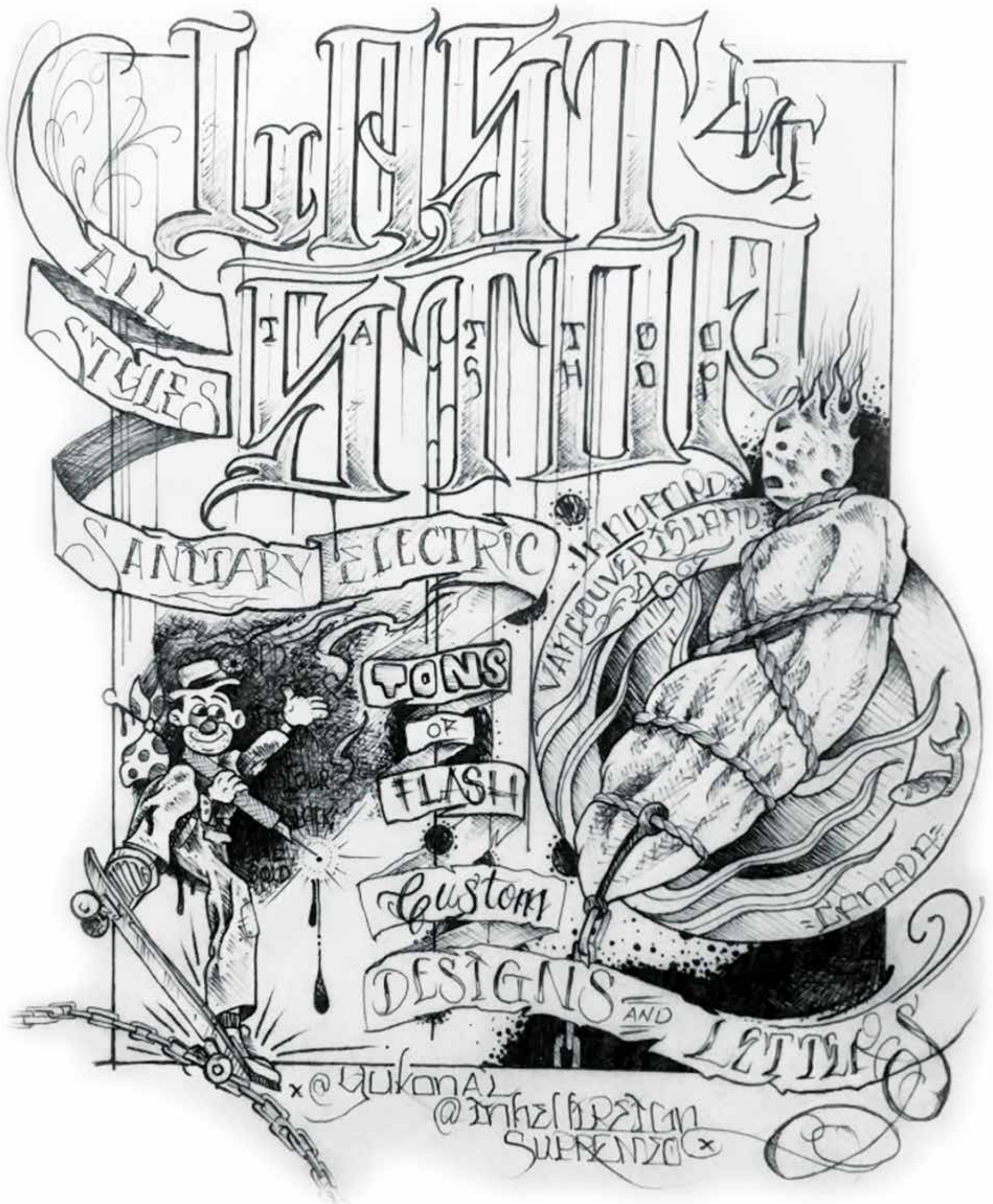
Black DAGGERS

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

BD: Some might disagree but I feel like Life is but a Dream by Avenged Sevenfold is a masterpiece. It really has some incredibly complex arrangements and I think they accomplished what they set out to do.

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

BD: Someone wearing their clothes backwards like Kris Kross.





GUNTMOLD

New "Sick as Fuck" EP in the Works

Interview By Brady "Hashmold" Tighe

AU: Who are we talking to today and what do you do?

Guntmold: This is Guntmold, an extreme metal band from Newfoundland.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

GM: Me (Grim) and Daniel (Guitars) actually met through our job, we worked at a fish production plant here in St. Lawrence together. One day we just started talking and then realized we had a similar taste in metal and the vast sub-genres it has! We would just talk about it each day at work, endless conversations which we continued after work as well. One day we were talking and we came up with the idea of starting a band together, and even though at first we didn't know what our sound was, or what our band name would be, it slowly started falling together. Guntmold was born and from there we have made some brutal songs. Then Gavin joined the band, Gavin and Daniel knew each other way before I met Gavin: him and Daniel used to jam together doing sick covers of Metallica and other sick bands. I remember seeing videos of the two of them and thinking holy fuck this shit sounds

good! They are definitely insane with the riffs. Expect more from Gavin in future songs, and trust me when I say there is way more to come in the future! Guntmold will live on!

AU: Who else is in the band?

GM: The members are Grim, the singer and bassist, and Daniel and Gavin who play guitar.

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

GM: Riffs played at bone-shattering speed, with raw production, and with honor to all facets of metal. Occasionally funny lyrics, but we're not fucking around. Like the brutal offspring of S.O.D. and Darkthrone.

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

GM: Guntmold is from the small town of St. Lawrence, from which we ARE the scene. Outside of St. Lawrence however, across Newfoundland there is a very lively hardcore and metal scene that is constantly growing and a very supportive community. Shout-out to HeavyNFLD for giving attention to new and upcoming artists around the province, such as ourselves.

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

Grim: Honestly the last perfect record I heard has to be We're Going To Hell For This by Carpathian Forest.

Daniel: With A Pike Upon My Shoulder by Grole. It's raw black metal with themes of Newfoundland life.

Gavin: The last perfect record I listened to is probably "Wolverine Blues" by Entombed.

AU: What are some of your favourite horror movies?

Grim: Some of my favourite horror movies has to be the classics for sure, definitely movies like The Exorcist, A Nightmare On Elm Street, and Halloween.

Gavin: Some of my favourite movies of all time are some of the horror classics, like Grim. Including The Exorcist, Poltergeist and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

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Daniel: I'm into creature features, such as Jaws, Cloverfield, REC, and V/H/S 2.

AU: Any shows or tours planned?

GM: We're currently living far away from each other, so we have not had time to gig just yet. However, we have plans to in the future.

AU: Anything else to promote?

Grim: In the next upcoming months be on the lookout for a sick as fuck EP that we're currently working on. It's going to be brutal, it's going to

be cold, it's going to be dark, and it's going to be true kvlt!

AU: Any final words for our readers?

GM: As a sick motherfucker once said to us, keep tape trading alive!

AU: How do people find you online?

GM: You can find us on our instagram, @gntmold709, or our pages on Bandcamp, Spotify, and iTunes.

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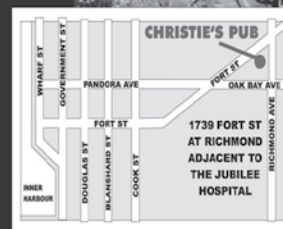


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ATRIA

Ground Zero

Interview with Vocalist Tom Emmans

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

Ataria: Thanks for having me. We are a metal band from London Ontario Canada who play aggressive music with melodic choruses mixed in. We started in 2017, and have recently adopted a more theatrical look.

AU: You have a new EP "Ground Zero", what can you tell us about it?

A: Our new EP "Ground Zero" is the next evolution

of our sound. It's more aggressive with what we feel are much more catchy melodic parts. This time we decided to compliment our sound with an image that reflects the music we play.

AU: Your lyrics come from a very personal place. How does it feel such personal details about your life with listeners?



A: I think when you're writing lyrics it's important to come from the most real place possible. I do this as a way of exorcising my demons so I accept the fact that sometimes that means being vulnerable. I feel like if I held anything back,

there wouldn't really be much point in doing this.

AU: Do you have fans coming to you with relation to their personal connection to the lyrics?

A: Yes, we definitely have. It has been interesting to hear the different takes people have on what they think the songs are about. While being very open and honest in my lyrics, I also make an effort to keep them vague enough that people can make them their own and find their own meaning in them. I always enjoy having conversations with audience members at the shows and hearing their personal stories about how the lyrics have resonated with them and why.

AU: How was it working with producer Jon Howard (Threat Signal, Imonolith) for this record?

A: Working with Jon is always a blast! We knew after doing our last EP with him that we would need to do our follow-up where we would take things even further together. His ear for vocal hooks, overall tone, and trying to capture the intensity that we're looking for was invaluable on this one.

AU: The EP sounds like a mix of Slipknot, Mudvayne, and Killswitch Engage? If you could choose to do a supporting tour with one, which one would it be?

A: Definitely Slipknot! Although I guess if Mudvayne or Killswitch wanted to take us out on tour, I'd be okay with it. (laughs).

AU: How did it feel to win the "Best Metal" trophy from the 2023 Forest City London, ON Music Awards?

A: It felt great! We're very lucky to be supported by such great fans. There was a voting system, and

the fans had to vote us in, which makes winning mean way more to us.

AU: You're opening for Katakysm in November in Kingston, ON on November 9th, what can you tell our readers in that area about

what a live set is like from Atria?

A: We give it our all and we leave everything on stage. There's a theatrical element with the uniforms, makeup and contacts that make the visual experience fairly unique and we work tirelessly practicing these songs to make sure the listening experience is as album-accurate as possible. Come see for yourselves and let us know if we

bring the intensity or not when you meet us after the show.

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

A: Please take the time to check out our new EP. It's on all online platforms, we put a lot of work into it, and we put our all into it. I appreciate you reading this, I hope to see you at a show, and I hope you enjoy the music as much as I enjoy making it, hope to see you out there

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SCREAMS OF JOY PUNK ROCK PHOTOGRAPHY

Interview with Founder and Photographer Sam Seaberg

By Brady "Left the Lens Cap On" Tighe
Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what do you do?

Sam Seaberg: My name is Sam Seaberg and I'm a photographer. I'm currently working on a project documenting the island's DIY music scene, called "Screams of Joy".

AU: When and why did you decide to get into photography?

SS: In high school, I made short films. I guess since I was already carrying cameras around, photography came naturally. I fell in love and it quickly took over, it's been my primary focus since.

AU: Why is the project called Screams of Joy?

SS: Yeah, so the project began when a friend invited me to a "show" at the beginning of

summer. I agreed and when we arrived, I realized it was a punk show. I almost shit my pants. I

thought I was going to get beat up. When we entered, however, I was surprised by what I found. Love and joy. So much of it. That's how this project started. That's why it's called "Screams of Joy".

AU: Do you have any other projects in the works?

SS: Not anything super definite yet. I am

really enjoying making portraits right now though. Semi-posed photos of people in their environments are very interesting to me. I think they provide a more

intimate alternative to candid. My reason for this is because the subject is aware of the camera; in acknowledging the audience, you're sharing

a moment. It's a way for the camera to converse rather than observe.

AU: What's your favourite thing to shoot?

SS: I think punk shows and portraits are probably my favourite at the moment. There are just so many smiles with those two. It's infectious.

AU: Is there a specific kind of equipment you like to use, and if so, why?

SS: I make photos with a Canon 90D currently. I bought it out of high school because it seemed like a perfect middle between a camera for video and a camera for photos. It's served me well so far. I also have a Fujica ST-605 that I use to shoot film. If I get bored too, I have a bunch of random half-broken cameras stolen from Value Village. Those are always fun.

AU: Are there any photographers who's work you really admire?

SS: I look at a lot of New York street photographers like Andre D. Wagner and Trevor Wisecup. However, the one that I always come back to isn't really a photographer at all but rather a painter: Edward Hopper. The way he uses light and shadow, as well as poses his figures are things always in the back of my mind while working. Even thinking about it now, I wanna go pull his book off the shelf and flip through. There's some local photographers I really like as well. After

a show, I'll be thinking I got some really good photos but then I'll see @graphicrealisation's from the same show and not even understand how he got some of the ones he did.

AU: What's your favourite photo you've taken?

SS: I love all my children equally.



AU: Do you have a favourite photo someone else has taken?

SS: I love pretty much all of Andre D. Wagner's work on the movie "Queen and Slim", especially the iconic one on the car. So good. There's also a photo-book by William Albert Allard called "Portraits of America" which I've been loving lately. Notice how I can never pick a single photo? Too difficult.

AU: Where can people find your work?

SS: @screams_of_joy on Instagram. There'll be more to come, so stay tuned.



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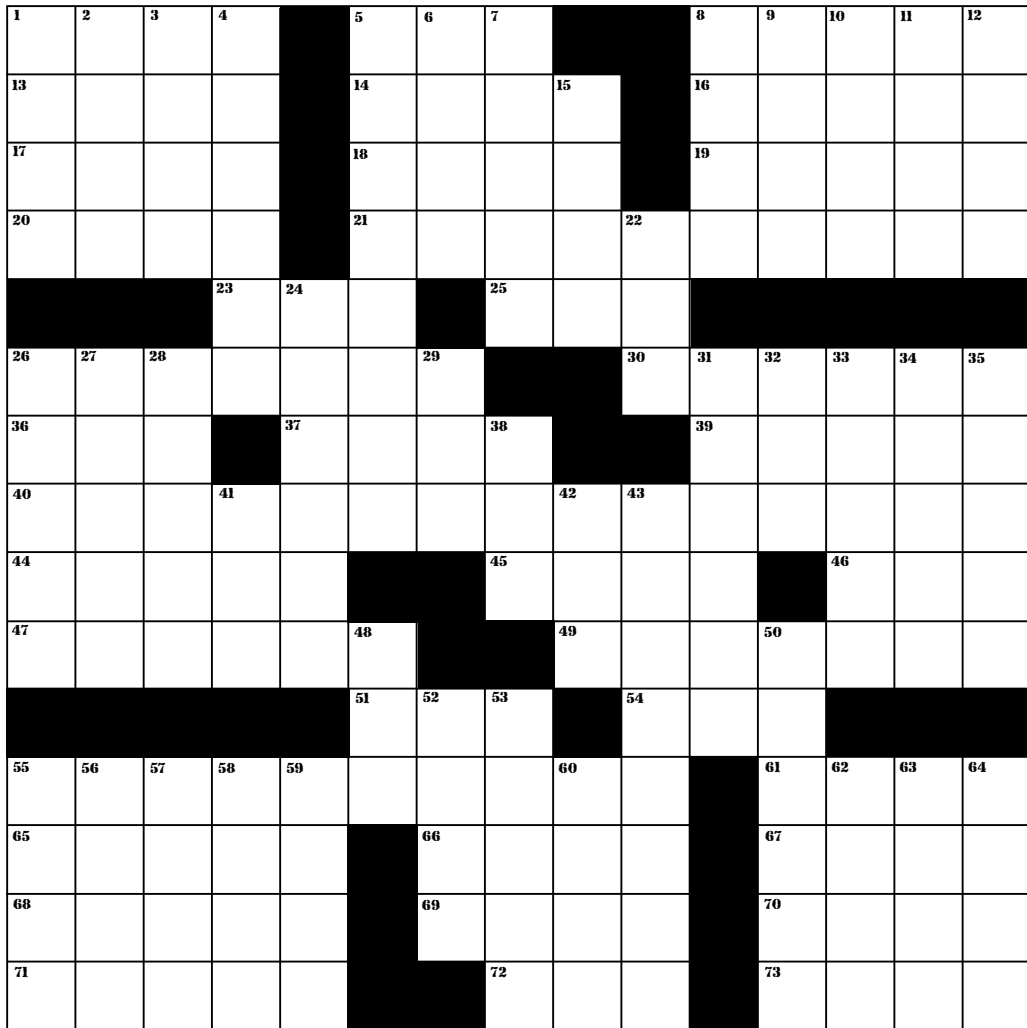
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ACROSS

1. Copspeak for 'suspect'
5. * With 8-across, dance medicine?
8. * See 5-across
13. Switch suffix
14. Popular brand of chips
16. Terror of the seas in WWII
17. "The Time Machine" people
18. Other: Sp.
19. Gram prefix
20. Rents out
21. * Wrestler Reginald Lisowski
23. Forerunner of the CIA
25. Root of reggae and rocksteady
26. One of the largest French fests in the world (with "Les")
30. Convertible
36. Electric measurement
37. Lamented
39. Exploding stars
40. * Fashionista complement
44. Only child of Henry Ford
45. French honey
46. Lamprey
47. "_____ and Hum"
49. Bond battles them
51. * See 71-across
54. Slip-up
55. * Sanitary engineer
61. Tonnes
65. Imperial and Becel
66. "Terrific!"
67. A famous Lisa
68. Flies high
69. Cookie company
70. Word with school or cook
71. * With 51-across, building scaler
72. Hit for Abba
73. There are seven, famously

DOWN

1. The Avengers' Emma
2. First name in mysteries
3. Word with cellar or canal
4. * _____ Ivy
5. Makes something disappear
6. Solemn promise
7. Parts of some funerals
8. Platter at a Chinese restaurant
9. Stork relative



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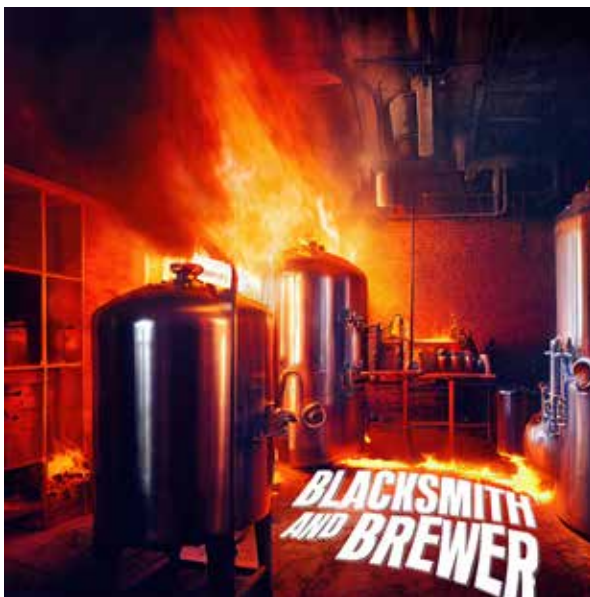
10. Nessie lives in one
11. First word of some talk shows
12. Last word of the first video played on MTV
15. "_____ it to me"
22. Compressed file format
24. Move on a screen
26. Entranceway
27. Mary's TV friend
28. (It's) absolutely necessary
29. Part of a larger whole: Abbr.
31. It's on top of a buck
32. State on India's west coast
33. * Living room staple
34. Western
35. Director of "Get Out!"
38. Sub's partner
41. Understand
42. Skinhead chorus
43. Spending: Fr.
48. Alphabet run
50. * Results of muscle strain (and theme of this puzzle)
52. You might be told to get it out
53. Gyms in 120 countries
55. "Wow!"
56. Expos baseball family
57. Package of paper
58. When doubled, a luxury island resort
59. Corp.
60. Aviation prefix
62. Collection of knowledge and traditions
63. Top-notch
64. It marks the end of the day

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BLACKSMITH AND BREWER

Forged and Fermented

By Brady "Bard and Brooder" Tighe
Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what do you do?

KB: Blacksmith Kelly Backs, drums and blacksmithing. Keep your eyes peeled for live blacksmithing on stage in our upcoming shows!

CB: Brewer Chris Booth, guitar and vocals

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

KB: Chris (the Brewer) called me up two years ago and asked if I would play in a 2 piece with him. I told him I was already stretched for time, playing in 3 other bands, but when he said "we are going to be called Blacksmith & Brewer", I said "You son of a bitch, I'm in!". He brought a bucket of songs to the project and I have been hammering out

lyrics while he brews up riffs and we forge new tunes together on the regular.

AU: Who else is in the band?

KB: Chris Booth, Guitar and vocals and brewing of the beer. He picked up a Gold Medal for his brewing last year, tell us about it Chris...

CB: Well it's not relevant to the band really but yes I won 1st place in the 2022 BC Beer Awards for the Bob's Auto Lager I brew at the 101 Brewhouse and Distillery

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

KB: We Get all kinds of reactions from people, White Stripes, Queens of the Stone Age etc, but the best I heard was from my friend Brett Hopkins, drummer from Modern Terror when after a show he remarked that I sounded like me in this more than any other band he

has seen me in.

CB: Queens of the Black Striped Blues Explosion Massacre

AU: Which of your band's songs would you most like to theme song of a horror movie?

KB: Dead in the Water, for obvious reasons, but Gone Wrong may work as well.

CB: Dead in the Water, but I think I Wanna Know could work as well

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

KB: We opened for D.O.A. in January of this year but I have to say the last gig because my memory fades far too quickly.

CB: Playing with fucking D.O.A. obviously, legends!

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

KB: Can I say Blacksmith & Brewer? I know I shouldn't but I find it ear candy. I really like the new Dead Bob.

CB: Well I've been listening to the latest Chats record a lot lately and the Dead Bob, but you said "perfect" record so I'm going to have to say Ultra Mono from Idles

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

KB: Me?

CB: Rain

AU: Does anyone in the band read horror comics?

KB: I read a shit ton of Fangoria for a while but In my youth, (aging myself here), I was into Creepy and Tales From the Crypt, but Eerie was my favourite.

CB: Fuck yeah Fangoria, but it's been a while since I've read anything, The Walking Dead comics were probably the most recent

AU: What are some of your favourite horror movies?

KB: Rare Exports, a 2010 Finnish Christmas movie is pretty good, Jacobs Ladder was rad, along with They Live! A Cabin in the Woods killed, but bring on the Evil Dead series again and again. Remember, shop smart, shop S-Mart!

CB: An American Werewolf in London, Humanoids From the Deep, Basket Case, A Nightmare on Elm Street,

Return of the Living Dead..This could be a long list.



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A Wilderness Of Intoxication Close Encounters Of The Drunkest Kind...

By Daniel Van Netten

In Thailand, a study found the drinking behavior of monkeys to be remarkably similar to humans. Monkeys are known to roam the beaches, steal drinks from tourists, and drink from cups left over from the night before. The study exposed that most monkeys are social drinkers and prefer to drink in the company of others. Some are regular drinkers that do not gravitate to socializing, but show strong leadership skills, and function well. Some just abstain all together, others are binge drinkers. The five percent that are binge drinkers are mostly male. They will drink as much as possible in the shortest amount of time, get in fights, or drink themselves into a coma. I had



a chat with a friend that does pest control the other day... this time of year all of the animals are drunk and crawl spaces are sketchy. He's come head first with an angry drunk raccoon, they had a stare down and the animal showed no fear, eventually he left but unwillingly. He has encountered many angry belligerent animals this time of year. Rats become fearless and wander around freely. It's in our DNA this time of year, the fruit ferments, the rye grows ergot, and civilization is a little less civilized.



Raise a glass to the animals, our drunken friends, and remember the nights are longer, the days are colder, and superstition runs rampant! Happy Halloween!

BRENDAN + CHERYL

brendanandcheryl.bandcamp.com



CÚT LỘN

Hanoi Rocks, Thrashes and Zaps
Interview By Ryan Dyer

Grab your Poké Ball and a ticket to Vietnam, because we are going Pikachu hunting. From Hanoi, Vietnam, CÚT LỘN are a self-proclaimed "stupid band wearing stupid costumes playing stupid music." Formed in 2018, the band are known for their crude Pikachu masks, though will wear chilli pepper costumes or scuba diver outfits made from BDSM get ups if the occasion permits. They play hardcore crossover/thrash with lyrics coming from the perspective of a seven-year-old child, reflecting Vietnam's sometimes juvenile style of humor. I speak with drummer Sergey Bochenkov about the band's lyrics and videos, the Hanoi scene, and what's next for the little yellow fiends.

Absolute Underground: "EM UỐNG BIA" is your latest single, meaning "I Drink Beer." I have been to Hanoi and tried the beer. What do you usually drink?

Sergey Bochenkov: Our drummer is the craziest beer drinking motherfucker ever, but the rest of the band is pretty chilled with beers. I guess we definitely all love coffee - cà phê s - đã is one of those distinctive Vietnamese tastes and everybody drinks a lot of it because you can find coffee shops around every corner in Vietnam. Our

vocalist loves energy drinks as well - you show him anything with the Monster logo, and he'll buy it instantly!

AU: Dinh of 7UPPERCUTS does vocals on this song. What is your relationship with that band?

SB: We have known each other for a very long time. Our guitarist and the drummer organized their first shows in Hanoi back when neither them, nor pop punk in general, was not such a big thing in Vietnam yet. We have another song where their bassist Aki did a feat, it's



called "Em Ăn Gì" and it was the first song we ever released. Hopefully someday their drummer Callum can also do some guest vocals for us, his Vietnamese is at pro level now, you can even see him teaching Vietnamese to kids in one of our music videos!!

AU: You did a lock down video for "CON NHÀ NGƯỜI TA" (Person's Home). Tell me about the making of it.

SB: In Vietnamese "con nhà ng i ta" means the same as "mom's friend's son" meme in English - it's that fictional person who is perfect in everything. That's what the song is about. We wanted to do a proper video for it, because in early 2021 Vietnam wasn't really at lock down, but then they asked everybody to stay inside so we had to figure another way.

I think this song theme works pretty well with

what people do in lock down - you always try to be a good person and keep going through your life like if the world is not going through this pandemic collapse, but then lack of communication and inability to go outside drives you crazy, so you end up fucking shit up and going mad instead of being that perfect mom's friend's son from your mom's imagination.

AU: Why all the food references?

SB: Food is the culture of Asia! Every time we host a band from Europe or the US, they ask us to bring them to museums and historical places. With Asian bands it's always like "let's go eat!" They're never like, "we wanna see the Mausoleum" or "let us visit the War Remnants Museum".

AU: Whose school did you record the "EM ĐI HỌC" video at?

SB: It was filmed in Đ i H c Xây D ng Hà N i - Hanoi University of Civil Engineering. They have a rock club, it's actually one of the few universities in Hanoi that has a very active rock club and many of their alumni still play music in bands for years after they graduate. The students from the club were kind enough to let us use the room while lessons were still going on in other rooms. They asked us to not make too much noise though. So we just invited some friends over, plus some of the rock club guys joined to fill the room, and that's how it was filmed. It was one of the easiest music videos to shoot, the whole thing with setup and everything took us maybe an hour or so.

AU: What is the underground music scene of Vietnam really like? Who are some other bands you recommend?

SB: There's a handful of promoters and maybe a few dozen bands speaking about the metal and hardcore scene. Plenty of bands if we talk about rock music in general though. The Hanoi scene is generally smaller, but more diverse musically. Saigon shows get much bigger crowds.

It's hard to recommend names, because so many

ABSOLUTE ASIA

of them pop up, but picking one that would have sort of punk appeal, I would pick *Gỗ Lim* - check them out, they have their songs available online and the story behind the band is also interesting. They aren't active anymore though.

AU: Have you performed outside of Vietnam? I think CÚT LỘN would be perfect for a festival such as Obscene Extreme.

SB: Yeah, we love touring and we've played in a bunch of places outside Vietnam! It would definitely be cool to come to Obscene Extreme one day, although it's not gonna be easy; getting



to the Czech Republic with a Vietnamese passport is quite a challenge, and our drummer has a Russian passport so he can't get there nowadays because of this war shit that is going on.

AU: What is planned for CÚT LỘN in the future?

SB: We are releasing a new single called "CAY!" Then hopefully gonna have something longer format like another 10-song album. We have a lot of unreleased songs that we regularly play live, we just need to come up with a few more to put it out as a longer record.

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VORTEX

The Future Remains in Oblivion

Interview with Founder and Guitar Player Dany Lévesque

Absolute Underground: for those unfamiliar with Vortex who are you, and what do you do?

Vortex: We are from the cold Northeastern part of Quebec, Canada. If we had to put a label on our music, I would call it orchestral blackened death. The five of us knew each other for a very long time and decided to form a band because all our other projects were dead or not going very well. Our vision was to create music that would have dynamics and a strong melodic side while retaining the essence of what death metal is. After our first album, we decided to add orchestrations to our sound. Mathieu, the other guitar player, is a music composer and we all love movie scores and symphonic black and death metal, so it was natural for us to go this way.

AU: You have a new album *The Future Remains in Oblivion*, what can you tell us about it?

V: Lighthouse, our previous and second album,

was our first orchestral work and it was more on the ambient/dramatic side. The new album's songs are still melodic/orchestral but much more aggressive and some of them have a black metal influence. Our goal was to create songs that would have a greater impact on our live shows, aggressive songs work well live. We feel the album is a good combination of aggression/melody, and ugliness/beauty.

AU: You seem very popular in Quebec, what is it like being a band from a small city like Rimouski and touring consistently from there across Eastern Canada?

V: There are many cities and venues that are fun and worth playing so it is cool, but we live in a remote part of Quebec and the road is always very long to get to any show.



The closest large city to our hometown is Quebec City and it's a 350 km drive. Montreal downtown is 550 km, Toronto 1150 Km, and Halifax 800 KM. I guess you can call us road warriors.

AU: You've been a band for nearly 20 years, what drives the band to keep pushing the metal?

V: I'd say there are four things that motivate me to keep the band alive; there's the love for music and the instrument itself, there's the comradeship within the band, there's the pure energy and power that you feel when playing live which is like a drug and finally, I really enjoy the creative process. For me there is nothing more satisfying than creating songs with the other guys, you go from nothing to releasing an entire album with ideas and collaboration, it is really hard but it is so rewarding and the feeling you get from it is hard to describe.

AU: How was it working with Chris Kells of The Agonist to direct your latest music video for the album's title track?

V: I had this idea and scenario for the music video that fit the topic of the album and I asked Chris if he thought it was feasible with the time and money that we had. Also, I was not sure we could do it without hiring comedians and that would have cost too much money, none of our band's members had any experience in acting. Chris told me not to worry, that he would direct our acting, and that it was all going to be fine. I decided to go ahead with the project even though I was a bit scared and not sure about the result I could expect from acting it ourselves. But he promised, Chris and his team did an amazing job at directing our performance and acting. I was really pleased

when I got to see the video for the first time. Chris is professional and he is very kind, he's a good person and I would recommend him to anyone.

AU: The video is about a post-apocalyptic world... If we lived in a world as such... which bands you think be the survivalists?

V: Burzum: A one-man band and his family already living at the margins of society, preparing for its downfall.

1914: This band's music is all about war, I suppose they could fight and take care of themselves in a post-apocalyptic world.

Akhlys: Judging by their music I wouldn't want to fight those guys

AU: Name one song you think you can survive on repeat for the rest of your life in a post-apocalyptic world.

V: Two very different songs and bands come to my mind, "This Empty Life," from ColdWorld and "The Fall of Constantinople," from Aeternam.

AU: How was participating in the 2023 Wacken Metal Battle Canada?

V: We don't like contests and band battles, so we usually don't participate in them. But we thought this one was different, it has the Wacken festival and good local people behind it in Canada. It was very strange when we realised in the first round that we had to stand on stage after our set to hear the judges comment on our performance, strengths and weaknesses, kind of like they do at The Voice... Competition in art is not enjoyable to me but, in the end, the battle was a good exposure opportunity and we also learned a couple of things that made our band better.

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

V: Thank you for your interest in Vortex. I encourage all of you to go and listen to underground bands from all around the world. Too many people just listen to the big bands, but there is so much good music waiting to be discovered, the underground metal scene needs all of you.

vortex.band



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CJ SLEEZ

A new single and live performance in Toronto this November!

CJ Sleez takes no prisoners with her new single "Waging War". Produced by one of the hottest names in today's music scene, Chris Snow and mastered by Grammy-winning industry icon, Howie Weinburg.

For those who don't know CJ Sleez is an original heavy-hitter of the 'queen-west' music scene and is renowned for her infectious charismatic stage presence, bad grrrl reputation and the gritty authenticity of her songs. CJ Sleez relentlessly delivers hard-hitting, trashy rock 'n' roll with equal parts swagger and intensity. Her shameless spirit of excess and unapologetically honest, gritty

originals have earned Sleez a solid reputation and a loyal fan-base. With three previous albums, hundreds of local and international performances, and 20+ notorious years of rock action notched into her bedpost, CJ Sleez is once again writing and performing with a new line-up.

On November 10, The Bovine Sex Club in Toronto will be presenting a feral night of fierce female-fronted hard-rock featuring three of the most savage scream-queens in the Canadian punk scene. This high-energy event marks the much-anticipated return of CJ Sleez to a Toronto live venue. Sleez will be joined by supporting acts - dynamic local duo 'Queens and Kings' and the wild women of 'Miss Conduct'!!

CJ starts at 11:45 pm.

cjsleez.ca



TERMINAL SESSIONS



long have you been a band and how would you describe your sound?

SKS: We are Skiltskins been around since 2004, we've called it beer belly lightening rock.

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

SKS: Zero lineup changes its been us the whole time, just an addition, Amy joined since covid..

AU: What have you major influences been and has that changed?

SKS: Zeke and Turbonegro. ZZ Top is number one Muddy waters alot of blues. In 2004 it would have been early Metallica and alot of Gwar.

AU: How has the Nanaimo scene been and has it changed?

SKS: The Terminal has always been here so its like the rock, the stage used to be different and you served food.

AU: Do you have an album or new material coming out?

SKS: We always have something in the works if an album comes out of it is another thing. We've been talking about how we really wanna record again its been 10 years.

AU: What motivates you guys to continue to play?

SKS: We just love playing music its apart of what we do. We all have day jobs its just the thing you do when your not working your day job.

AU: Link Wray or Joe Strummer?

SKS: Link Wray

AU: How are you finding attendance at shows after covid?

SKS: Our last show here after covid was better than normal. I think what you guys are doing here has a lot to do with it.

AU: Whats down the road for the Skiltskins?

SKS: Keep doing this and even when no one wants us well keep doing it.

SKILTSKINS

Amy Joined Since COVID

Interview By Jay Flett

Absolute Underground: Who are you, how

AU: Do you have a favorite show or shows you have played?

SKS: Just before covid we played in Bowser the Crown and Anchor pub and everyone was over 50, also DOA at the Waverly.

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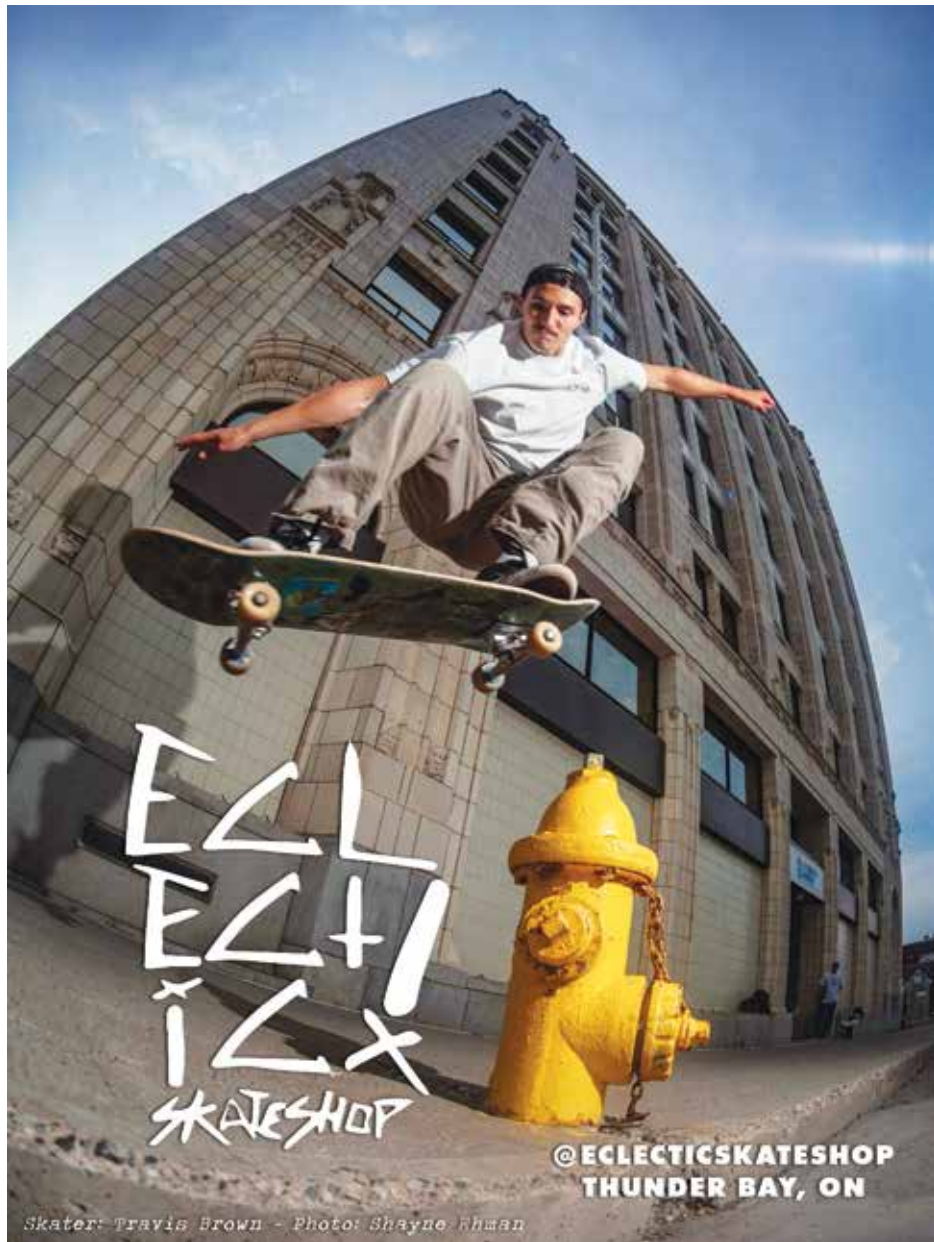
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Thank You - A Perspective on Coping and Healing
 By Gregorio "Crusty Craig" Lewis

I would like to express my gratitude to Absolute Underground Magazine for providing a platform to share these perspectives on coping and healing with all of you.

Something remarkable happened to me recently. I found myself engulfed in what felt like a crushing depression, with valid reasons contributing to my emotional state. Although I knew this phase would pass, I couldn't help but dislike how I felt.

Several months ago, a friend gave me a jar of mushrooms she picked from the mountain near our home. Seven days ago, I started consuming these mushrooms.

Here's what happened during that week:

The reasons behind my depression still existed, but I found myself handling everything about 90% better than I was a week ago. This change led to several positive decisions and an influx of healthy and positive energy around me.

I must admit that there was a day when I

went astray, believing that venting about my anger and grievances to the world would somehow make things better. While it does lead to some improvements, it also comes at a cost. I often end up losing friends, colleagues, and support for my projects.

However, amidst these losses, I encounter some truly remarkable individuals from different parts of the world who respect and honor something about me, and who genuinely want me to succeed. The past week, with the exception of that one day, I focused on all the good things, and the results were remarkable. I feel shocked by how different and in control I feel now.

Before consuming anything, whether prescribed medication or natural substances, it is crucial to make informed decisions about how to best help oneself. I am not an expert on psilocybin, but I am an expert on trying to survive the trauma that can sometimes be unbearable and inexplicable.

Therefore, it is my duty to recommend seeking out all possible treatments if you are facing depression or any other issue. In a world filled with different approaches to healing from trauma, coping with addictions, and facing other human struggles, my wish is to live in a world where people no longer

suffer in silence.

When I write these columns, I do so with the intention of not feeling alone in this world because, truthfully, I often feel more alone than I can express to anyone. I also write with the hope of finding like-minded individuals, or those who understand some of the things I talk about, those who are out there, hidden in the woodwork.

Whenever I learn that someone I know has taken their own life or succumbed to a deadly overdose, it serves as a stark reminder that that person could have been me.

I hope that not every person reading these words knows the feeling of not wanting to be in pain anymore to the extent of contemplating actions that could end their life. However, I know that there are thousands of people out there who do understand this pain.

My decision to start taking psilocybin mushrooms has had a profound impact on me. I feel a sense of control that I haven't experienced in a long time, which is why I can write this column today, submitting it 40 minutes before the deadline. I feel elated because I know that I am managing my responsibilities well, and I can share something

PUNKS IN RECOVERY

positive with all the readers out there.

I have formed my opinions based on my own experiences of engaging in recovery from trauma, and exploring various methods to heal and cope. To everyone reading this, I hope you are doing whatever it takes to be okay. Your life matters.

Furthermore, I encourage everyone to keep their minds open to all the possibilities available to help with dark moments. Whether it involves psychiatric drugs, substance use, or unhealthy coping mechanisms like overeating (which is my struggle), it is essential to explore various options that may aid in healing.

For me, it took seven years of hearing others talk about the benefits of mushrooms before I considered trying it for seven days. Give yourself the gift of healing by remaining open to all the possibilities available to you.

Thank you for your time, and I wish you all a beautiful day.

You can mail order the books I've published about trauma recovery and punk rock at my website: SANITYISAFULLTIMEJOB.ORG.

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SUNCOAST CANNABIS Interview with CFO Aimee Thornber

By Iree-I

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

Suncoast Cannabis: My name is Aimee and I hold the positions CFO, Responsible Person, and Head of Security. My background is in accounting with 17 years experience working in corporate tax, personal tax, finance, and business management.

My background in accounting and finance has helped in various areas of planning, forecasting, budgeting as I completed the licensing application for this company. We are licensed for micro processing and micro cultivation.

AU: When did you first start growing cannabis? SC: I was not involved in cannabis in any capacity prior to receiving our federal license in November of 2022.

My Dad - Jim has twenty four years of experience growing under ACMPR licenses.

AU: What drew you to the Cannabis industry? SC: I came into the cannabis industry through my dad. He brings the skills to grow amazing cannabis flower and I bring the skills to manage the government reporting, inventory, internal controls, and finances.

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

SC: We are currently growing: Death Bubba, Double Death Bubba, Pink, and Grapefruit Experience. Grapefruit Experience and Double Death Bubba came from our friends at Far West Genets in Sooke BC. We are cultivating our first batches of these strains and are very excited about them both. We also have some unannounced strains we anticipate

becoming available in the next 6-9 months. One very unique strain, in fact, we are the only producer that has this strain, it's exclusive to us. Follow us on Instagram, we will announce it when we are ready to start cultivating it.

AU: What is it like being a Licensed Producer in BC?

SC: Being a licensed producer is fun, I enjoy watching the whole process from clone to finished product. Plants are amazing and interesting to observe through all of their life cycles.

The cannabis community is also really great, I am happy that we have great friends in the

industry. The folks at Evergreen Cannabis Store have always been big supporters of us, and I love



the relationship we have built with them.

AU: Why is it important to support local growers?

SC: Supporting locals is always important whether it be growers or other small businesses. We need to take care of each other and support our neighbors and give back to the communities we live in so everybody thrives and does well.

AU: What makes an expert grower in your opinion?

SC: Like anything, becoming an expert takes years of experience, trials and errors, constant learning, and consistency working to do better.

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

SC: They wouldn't be secrets if I told you all would they?!

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

SC: We currently do not have any sub brands. But are working on some, to be announced!

AU: Where are your products available?

SC: Evergreen Cannabis Store on West 4th street in Vancouver - they also ship to the whole province of BC from www.ecsvan.ca. Infinity Cannabis Chill Out Joint in Roberts Creek, BC, and of course BC Cannabis Website or BC Cannabis Stores.

AU: How can people find you online?

SC: Follow us on Instagram [SunCoastCannabis](https://www.instagram.com/SunCoastCannabis).





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Canada's First Purpose-Built Cannabis Lounge: Cumberland's New Cultural Hub

In this article we shed light on an extraordinary transformation taking place in Cumberland, British Columbia's cannabis landscape. This is a pioneering project led by *Trugreen Solutions Inc* and *Community Urban Bazaar (CUB)*, a project that they have been working on for the last two years and look to complete by the end of 2024.

In a groundbreaking collaboration, Trugreen and CUB are spearheading a cannabis culture movement that's poised to redefine the way we think about cannabis consumption spaces.

What makes this project truly distinctive is that it's not just another concealed spot for cannabis enthusiasts; it's an open and welcoming cultural space in the downtown core. And what sets it apart even further is that it's Canada's first-ever purpose-built cannabis consumption space. Situated outdoors, this consumption space at CUB is unlike any other. Equipped with state-of-the-art heating and cooling systems, comfortable seating arrangements, and staffed by knowledgeable cannabis concierges, it's designed to offer a

sophisticated and enjoyable experience. More than just a physical space, CUB is a movement aimed at shifting societal views on cannabis. Historically

stigmatized, cannabis has often been shrouded in secrecy. However, CUB is challenging these stereotypes by creating a legal, responsible, and open platform for cannabis use. While it's undoubtedly a place for consuming cannabis, CUB also emphasizes education. Expect a wide range of workshops and seminars designed to enhance cannabis knowledge and promote responsible usage.

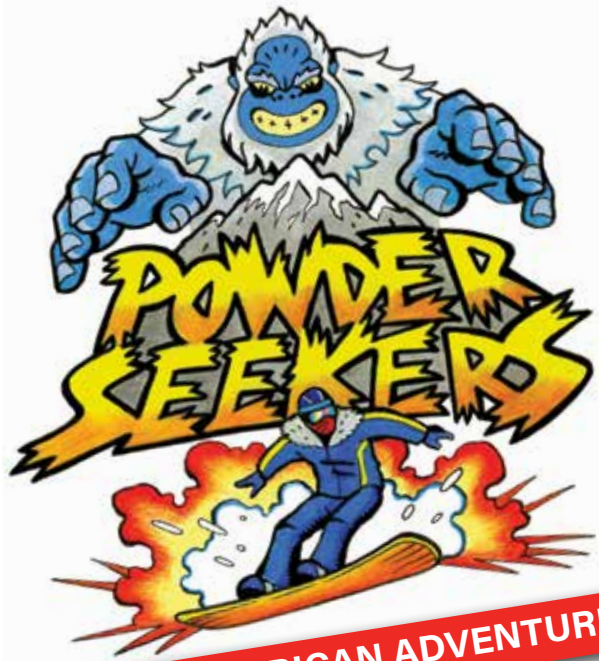
Trugreen Cannabis and *Community Urban Bazaar* are trailblazing a project that transcends the traditional cannabis consumption space. It's a pioneering cultural movement, an educational platform, and a legal endeavor all rolled into one. This project's unique features, including its outdoor setting and focus on breaking



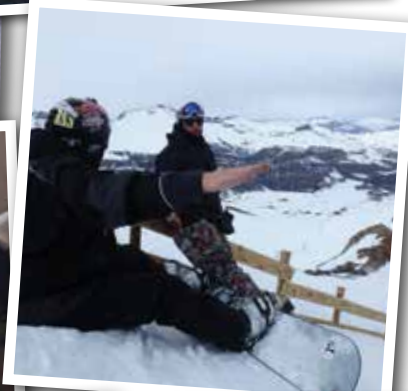
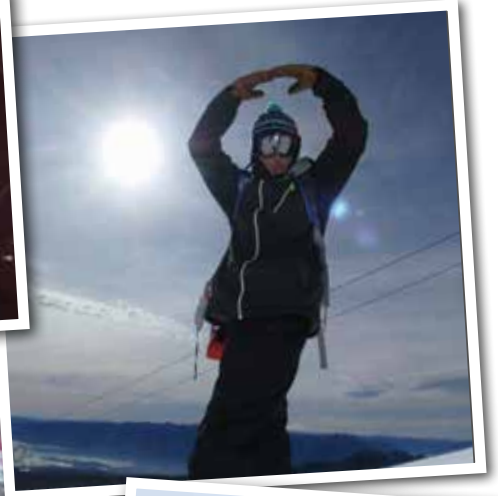
stereotypes, make it stand out. Moreover, community involvement and engagement play a pivotal role in its success. It's an exciting and transformative initiative in the cannabis landscape, marking a shift towards more open and responsible cannabis culture.

Stay Tuned For More Info Next Issue.

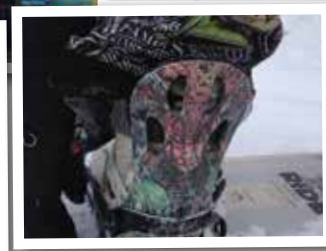
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SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURES - CHILE



Photos by Brydon Parker



POWDER SEEKERS



SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE – PART 3

Don't Stress

By Brydo "Chill On The Hill" Parker

We left off last time after riding at Centro de Ski Pucón, which is a live volcano that had previously erupted five years before our arrival. The resort, like most in South America, had German investors that had just installed a brand new Doppelmayr lift system that would drop you off right below the cinder cone. The work was finished in the South American fall and they just had it certified to run with passengers for the following winter when Boom the fucking top of the mountain blew off in a massive eruption that wiped out the new lift and access to the tippy top of the mountain. The mountain had been continually erupting ever since building back up the iconic volcano shape during the eruptions. Thankfully it spared the lodge and all the old lifts.



We left off last time after riding the lava chutes

that are like half pipes snaking down the mountain, the most fun you can possibly imagine. We met up with another friend of the Snow Ninja's. His name is Javier Munoz. We went to his dad's house, his name is Dr. Peter Paul. Our mission was to cook an epic feast on the large family estate. Dr. Peter Paul was instrumental in the building of John Hopkins

memorial cancer hospitals programs that are all over the States. So he was teaching me the great art of Gaucho (cowboy) fire cooking, we call it Bar-B-Que. The Chileans have elevated it to a high art form! So the doctor was told by his son that I was involved in the study of medical marijuana for use in treating and preventing cancer. And was interested in conversing. As well as I am a chef and love to cook. So we are cooking a massive bone in prime rib over very hot coals that were carried with a shovel from a nearby fire of hardwood. Once transferred to the cooking pit with a mechanical lift grill so you can raise and lower the grilled items closer to the hot coals or further away. Now I asked if he wanted to chat about it? He said in Chile when men

cook they talk about cooking and anything other than work. He then salted the delicious roast with what looked like road salt. When tossed at the sizzling browned meat it basically bounced off and landed in the hot coals. Dr. Peter Paul then guided me away from the fire, lit up a smoke and took a large drink of red wine and said to not look at the fire. I had no sooner thought to myself. Why? When "bang bang bang," like firecrackers the salt exploded blasting superheated liquid salt and burning embers right into the meat. Flip meat and repeat, smoke, drink, "bang bang bang." I had no idea salt explodes when big chunks get very hot. What a crazy way to cook but very effective. We brought the meat inside when he determined it was done and dropped it off in the kitchen. There were several ladies preparing all kinds of local food that was going to different households. Same meal two or three families work together to prepare.



After dinner we had a very enlightening conversation about how to not get cancer. This man knows what he is talking about. So here it is the secret to a healthy life without cancer. Dr. Peter Paul said that anger, hate, jealousy, angst, fear, chronic grouchingness, and things that make you blow your top like our volcano. These states of mind lower your immune system and leave you vulnerable to all sorts of health issues including cancer. Yes, you can possibly get it from environmental conditions or are predisposed to it from your Mom, but most often people develop issues from being continually unhappy. The song "Don't Worry Be Happy Now" is the recipe for healthy survival. Easier said than done. This is obviously true due to millions of people with cancer and who are running themselves down right now. So don't stress out about that occasional smoke or jug of wine. The stress is worse



than the action. We had a great meal with more judgment-free smokes and wine. We left in the morning and headed back to Santiago. We took one more piece of advice from the good Doctor. Stop at the hot springs, they are great. Hot, cold and slightly radioactive but don't stress. Any pain or stress you have will just melt away.

Boarding the jet home there was a customs



official who recognized us from a metal show we saw and she wished us a good trip back. What a country of extremes! Great people who riot once a week. Awesome snowboarding in August. Killer resorts that are 20 years in the past. Riding down snow to cactus or jungle or monkey trees. To great wine, beef, music and weed! And at the bottom of the world if you know where to look you can find the secrets of life. If you can't find the secrets don't stress, that is the secret!



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PKEW PKEW PKEW

STOMP RECORDS

Siiick Days

Interview with Bassist

Mike Warne

By Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Who am I speaking with and what are you responsible for in Pkew Pkew Pkew?

Pkew Pkew Pkew: Mike Warne. Writing and singing and bass playing.

AU: Where is your band from and how's the scene holding up these days?

PPP: Toronto. Lots of good bands, not a lot of good venues. And there's nowhere to practice.

AU: What was the genesis of the band? How long have you guys been around?

PPP: I don't know how long we've been around. My guess is 12 years? That's what I said on our visa application. We started because we all worked at the same boring office job together and we wanted an activity, aside from just drinking, to do after work.

AU: Where does the name of the band come from?

PPP: Comic book sounds. It's not "pew," that's a church seat. It's also not from Star Wars. I'm more of a Trek guy.

AU: Tell us about your new album that just came out.

PPP: We recorded it in Asbury Park, New Jersey with Pete Steinkopf from The Bouncing Souls. Pete knows all the good places to eat and he's a great producer. We hope that this album is fun, because we had fun making it. It's actually our best record to date.

AU: How did Pkew Pkew Pkew come to be on Stomp Records?

PPP: We decided that we wanted a record label that was completely accountable. Matt and Mike run stomp. They always have, they created it. We like them and they like us! I wish we did it sooner because it's better to work with your friends. No need to overthink it.

AU: What has been your biggest career highlight as a musician? Any lowlights?

PPP: Playing late night TV was always my childhood goal, so playing Seth Meyers was huge. After that, working with some of my heroes: Craig Finn and Pete Steinkopf.

AU: What's your favourite song from your new album Siiick Days? Mine is "Farside Bathroom."

PPP: Not sure. Maybe "Trooper Cover Band," because I like the outro a lot. I really like the pre-chorus in "Farside," though.

AU: Can you talk about some of the other new tracks as well. What's "Trooper Cover Band," all about?

PPP: That song is about being dragged out to a show in Oshawa when you probably should just stay home and drink and be sad. I'm pretty sure I've seen Trooper play in Oshawa a few times, but also, it could have been a cover band.

AU: What's the dumbest thing you've ever done?

PPP: Oh, lots of stuff. Recently, my wife asked me, "how often do you think about the Roman Empire?" I got very confused and said, "what do you mean, like ancient Greece Brad Pitt stuff?"

AU: Did one of you guys actually play a Bouncing Souls song during a guitar recital as a kid?



SIIICK DAYS

PPP: Yeah, me. I played "Kate is Great," and "Say Anything." Love those songs.

AU: Who are some of your favourite bands that you have toured with?

PPP: PUP, Hold Steady, Bouncing Souls, Spanish Love Songs, Ramona, DOA, Direct Hit. We've got Decent Criminal coming up, and one of my favourite bands; Matt and Kim, who are very good friends.

AU: Any plans for Halloween this year?

PPP: We will be driving home from Florida, so I guess getting a hotel with a hot tub is where we'll be.

AU: What's the best Halloween you can remember?

PPP: I think it would be our first time playing Fest in Florida. It was a wild show. We go back every year if we can.

AU: Best costume you ever rocked?

PPP: My favourite costume is 2000's cartoon Peter Parker. It's just a very specific polo/golf shirt with large horizontal stripes and regular jeans. It's about the details, you do your hair right, hold a camera. I wear it all the time. Similar idea with my John Frusciante costume.

AU: Are you more into treats or more into tricks?

PPP: Oh treats for sure. Tricks are too involved, just gimme something to eat.

AU: Ultimate favorite Horror movie?

PPP: Emmett is the horror guy. I'll text him now and see if he answers before sending this off. Mine is Deep Blue Sea, does that count? The sharks are kind of like scary monsters because they are genetically engineered to be super smart. Oh, he said "Oh man. Tough to choose but I think Opera." I don't know what that is. It doesn't sound spooky. Maybe it's his short form for Phantom of the Opera? That's spooky.

AU: Where can fans find merchandise and records by Pkew Pkew Pkew?

PPP: Band Camp. It's easy to use. I appreciate that and think it's a cool company.

AU: Anything you would like to add?

PPP: Yeah! We got a new band member, her name is Kate and she plays guitar and keys, and adds a nice new energy to the gang vocals and the gang in general.

pkewx3.bandcamp.com/music

Photo Credit: Graham Isador



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COMING SOON - TURNTABLES & AUDIO EQUIPMENT

UNEARTHED HORRORS

HALLOWEEN HORRORS!

By Brain Clement

It should come as no surprise that amongst the thousands of horror movies out there that many take advantage of Halloween itself as a setting or part of their world. In keeping with the season, I thought it would be fun to explore some underseen (maybe deservedly so?) movies that take place using Halloween as a backdrop, and without a guy named Michael Myers slicing up the town of Haddonfield. That would be too easy! These are in no particular order of favour, but in my humble opinion all are worth checking out for some reason or another...

Halloween 3 (1982)

Wait, but I said there would be no entries in the "Halloween" franchise, right? Well this one has earned scorn for being a "name-only" sequel to Halloween 1 and 2, with no connection to the others in the series. Probably the most well known on this list, and also one of the more bizarre, featuring a Celtic cult, with robot slaves (??), ancient monoliths, and a conspiracy to take advantage of the holiday by selling masks that melt kids' heads as part of a massive evil ritual. Sounds like most modern novelty and toy companies. What's not to love? Forget the lack of psycho killers and enjoy.



Trick or Treat (1986)

Taking the old cliché urban legend of Satanic messages on records and running with it, this one features a teenager who gets roped into resurrecting dead rocker "Sammi Curr" who died as a result of immolation in (what else) a Satanic ritual. (Remember Christine? This is like that but with a dead rock star in place of a car.) With a

tribute to mid-80s metal, cameos by Ozzy Osborne and Gene Simmons, a massacre at a school Halloween dance, and some fairly clever effects, this one is better than you might expect.

Trick 'r Treat (2007)

An anthology of sorts, I first caught this years ago at a film fest with a very appreciative audience. Features several interconnected stories taking place on Halloween in and around a small town and has murderous undead kids, werewolves, serial killers, and a creepy goblin-like recurring character. This is a fun love letter to Halloween and horror in general, and makes some unexpected reversals of standard horror clichés.



Hack o Lantern (1988)

An evil cult led by an evil grandpa has plans to raise the devil from hell on (when else?) Halloween and slaughters anyone in the way of his deranged plan, centering around his grandson. Probably the cheapest and trashiest on this list, a friend of mine considered this a cinematic endurance test, but if you're into a low budget, loosely



scripted picture with nudity and gore you could do worse (and it seems like the people who made this were having fun).

Hell Night (1981)

College bozos get locked in a supposedly haunted mansion as a form of hazing after a costume party. Drags at times, but the original part of this is that the creature/slasher/mystery killer isn't just one guy, but several. That makes it a bit confusing at times, but also amps the energy up a notch. Featuring a post-Exorcist Linda Blair!



Neon Maniacs (1986)

There's no neon in this and the killers aren't really maniacs, but what we do have are some undead/ghostly creatures in varying historical garb (a samurai, a surgeon, a cop) and others that look like cyclops reptiles, mutants, and bizarre monsters. Maybe someone wanted to market action figures? (Within the movie they appear to have their own trading cards!) There's no point in trying to dissect the logic of this or what the Neon Maniacs are, all that matters is that they emerge from under the Golden Gate Bridge and go on a murder spree that ends at a high school Halloween dance.



Night of the Demons

(1988) I don't know why I slept on this movie

for so long. It has every fun element (and all the standard subtext) of 80s horror and is reminiscent of Evil Dead, with a group of college dopes getting stuck in an old house and one-by-one possessed by demons and/or killing each other in various gruesome ways. Naturally, anyone having sex dies a terrible death. Plenty of great practical effects, well made, never dull, this one is probably my favourite on this list.



Haunt (2019)

OK, nearly everything here is an old movie from the 80s. What gives? Well, here's a modern movie that I really enjoyed. It's not the most original premise of course - teens get trapped in location and picked off by masked killers - and even the idea of a Halloween haunt that doesn't just scare but genuinely kills people has been done before, but there's a pretty clever idea in that the haunt is populated by multiple killers, and for a fairly bizarre and innovative reason. It doesn't mean to win any Oscars, so just turn your logic off and appreciate that people worked hard on making a decent horror picture.



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Tales from the Darkside: Kasey Ferguson's Halloween Scare-A-Thon! By Vince D'Amato

This Halloween, Darkside Releasing had the unique opportunity and pleasure to chat with Kasey Ferguson, the "wise-cracking and outspoken Kingston-based musician-turned-radio-host" and founder of the annual Halloween Scare-A-Thon (airing this Halloween with hangover follow-ups on Nov. 1st and 2nd)...

Kasey: "The idea was to create a radio version of the 'All Night Halloween and Horror Marathon' programming blocks that were so popular on TV growing up. The name itself comes from 'The Simpsons Halloween Scare-A-Thon' and [was also inspired by] 'The Simpsons Tree-house Of Horror', which ran on Fox [and] shows like TNT'S 'MonsterVision' with Joe Bob Briggs, Elvira's 'Movie Macabre', [and] even 'Dinner and a Movie' on TBS... basically anything where a host (or hosts) guided you through the programming with fun interstitials and included special bumpers had me from jump street. I didn't have a lot of friends growing up, so in

addition to music that kept me company all those years, it was these hosts, characters, programs, and films [that] became my closest friends. Halloween movie marathons served as a tool for discovery as well. I remember watching some of these themed broadcasts and seeing Vincent Price in House of Usher or the original 1978 Halloween for the first time. I watched a lot of 'Tales From The Crypt' growing up. So, tonally the horror elements are mixed with a lot of black humor, puns, homages, winks and knowing nods to the macabre. I [also] began including vintage horror movie trailers and Halloween commercials between songs for nostalgic purposes. I want to take the listener back to a simpler time by including these things in the broadcast."

As for the music, even when Kasey is including more mainstream artists such as Alice Cooper, Ozzy, The Misfits, and Dokken, he's often delving for those deeper cuts.

"When was the last time you heard 'Give The Radio Back', 'Waiting For Darkness', 'Skulls', or 'Kiss of Death' on the radio? [I like to] give the listener something familiar but with a twist, like a cover or live version,"

The Halloween Scare-A-Thon made its debut in 2020 when the pandemic lockdown had Kasey's favorite night of the year in a stranglehold.

"I remember reading an article saying that Halloween was canceled due to COVID concerns. I was like, 'Canceled, MY ASS!' The Scare-A-Thon was my way of fighting back and keeping the Halloween spirit alive."

The new 2023 episode will feature guests Theresa Tilley and Betsy Baker from The Evil Dead, Lisa Wilcox from A Nightmare on Elm Street 4 & 5, Lar Park Lincoln from Friday the 13th part VII, and Simon Wright, 1980s AC/DC drummer (Who Made Who), just to name a few!

"...That episode will also air in Australia with 101.3 FM Memphis Mayhem Radio. It's the first new episode I've produced that will air on Amherst Island Radio in five years. Just when you thought it was



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safe to go back in the water."

Darkside Releasing is proud to be one

of the many incredible sponsors involved with the 3rd Annual Halloween Scare-A-Thon this Halloween! The FM version will start at 11pm EST on Tues, Oct 31st, but will also re-run as a "Halloween hangover" at the same time on Nov 1st and 2nd. Syndicated version will be airing on internet radio stations Unity X Radio (based in

Edmonton), Unity X Radio Thunder, MM Radio (based in Switzerland) Radio Dark Tunnel (based in Germany) and Ripper Radio (based in Ohio) at different days/times, so please check @thekaseyfergusonshow for all of this year's official air dates....And Happy Halloween!

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The Friedkin Connection By Vince D'Amato

The passing of Hollywood icon William Friedkin this past August was hugely significant – not just because of his track record of wild, rebellious, edgy, director-driven Hollywood studio films, which were often produced with the vigor and enthusiasm of an independent auteur; and not just because of said edgy work being conducted with huge Hollywood heavyweights like Gene Hackman, Al Pacino, Sigourney Weaver, and Matthew McConaughey; and not only because he single-handedly revolutionized the horror genre in Hollywood with what is arguably the best, or the most famous, Hollywood horror film of all time: *The Exorcist*. No, aside from those gargantuan accomplishments, the biggest reason that William Friedkin's death is so significant now is because of a nearly-forgotten part of Hollywood history from the mid-seventies: The New Hollywood Filmmakers. Massively influential at the time, a small group of renegade Hollywood directors were seen as the group that was going to burn "Old" Hollywood to the ground (figuratively speaking) and rebuild it using the very same vigor and enthusiasm and rebellious attitudes they brought to their own films. They were all expected to be handed the keys to all of the major studios in the 1980s, when they were reaching the middle of their insanely successful careers... Only this handing over of the keys never happened. The reason why is actually extremely interesting and somewhat nostalgic and a little bit sad, in a way – but that's a story for another time and place. Here, we're going to talk about horror, of course. Let me go back to the New Hollywood Filmmakers of the 1970s, which included (most famously) William Friedkin, Martin Scorsese, Paul Schrader, Francis Ford Coppola, Brian DePalma, George Lucas, and Steven Spielberg. These were the directors poised to take over the entire Hollywood studio system – until they didn't. Their legacies are now simply left within their body of individual works; and they never did take over and create the New Hollywood that everyone had expected them to. And, if you haven't guessed

yet at this point, William Friedkin is now the first of these Hollywood directors to pass on. William Friedkin died on August 7th, 2023, less than one month before the premiere of his final film, *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*, premiered at the 80th Venice Film Festival. After William Friedkin's death, I started thinking about the works of influential horror that came from these directors at the beginning and in some cases in the middle of their impressive careers.

Brian DePalma's "Sisters" (1972)



I have actually talked about this one in earlier Absolute Horror columns, but this twin-sisters revenge-horror was actually one of the key films (with Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets*) that started the whole New Hollywood movement. It was a film that grabbed the attention of studios and film critics – and is still attention-grabbing to this day.

Brian DePalma's "Carrie" (1976)



The first Stephen King film adaptation ever, about a telekinetic high school girl who gets pushed to the edge by her high school bullies and overbearing religious-fanatic mother, brought horror (and Stephen King) to the forefront alongside Friedkin's *The Exorcist*. Oddly, Brian DePalma was the only one of the "New" group to do an actual Stephen King adaptation. And it wouldn't be his only foray into telekinetic horror – DePalma also directed the somewhat bizarre but fairly exciting *The Fury* (about telekinetic twins) in 1978.

Paul Schrader's "Cat People" (1982)



Paul Schrader's real claim to fame will always be as the screenwriter for Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* – but he's actually a hugely talented film director as well, and one of the films that jump-started his career was the updated adaptation of the original 1942 film; a horror allegory about sexual repression – here, Schrader does a fantastic job of amping up the sexuality and the gore to make a thoughtful but still balls-out 80s horror film, which is still a standout today.

Tobe Hooper's / Steven Spielberg's "Poltergeist" (1982)

Other than *The Exorcist*, *Poltergeist* might be the most famous horror film of the selection here. Technically speaking, I personally don't believe Spielberg ever actually made a horror film by himself. *Duel* and *Jaws* were intense, but I can't categorize those as horror films, nor do I think they were ever meant to be categorized as such. *Poltergeist*, on the other hand, was meant to be a



balls-out horror film, and I think that's exactly why Spielberg had to give himself a producer's seat while he hired an actual horror movie director, Tobe Hooper, to really sharpen all the edges of the story. Without Hooper, *Poltergeist* would never have had the bite nor the cult status that it does – it's still debated today whether it was Hooper's own directorial decisions that were responsible for the inventive horror of *Poltergeist*, or if it was Spielberg's ideas, and he was simply relaxed enough hiding behind a "horror director" to finally open the gates to the dark concepts from his own brain – either way, *Poltergeist* wouldn't be what it is without Tobe Hooper having been at the helm, and it ironically remains Spielberg's only honest foray into the horror genre.

William Friedkin's "Rampage" (1987/1992)



William Friedkin dove into the horror genre three times in his amazing career, this second outing was based on the true story of the "Sacramento

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Vampire", a young serial killer who brutalized the corpses and drank the blood of his victims. This is actually a very good and compelling film, starring Michael Biehn (The Abyss, The Terminator), which has heartbreakingly long fallen through the cracks into obscurity because the film's production company went bankrupt just before its intended theatrical release in 1987. Five years later, in 1992, Rampage found its way to home video via VHS rental stores, but it went under the radar and failed to really gain any sort of significant audience attention, even from the horror hounds or those who knew Friedkin's name from The Exorcist. To this very day, any cult following that Rampage has is minimal at best, and the film remains somewhat elusive on current streaming platforms.

William Friedkin's "The Guardian" (1990)



The third and final horror film from the director of The Exorcist and Rampage is so bizarre, it nearly defies description. The Guardian at least has a far better survival rate than Rampage, thanks to Scream Factory re-releasing it on Blu-ray and on various streaming platforms. This movie came to me in a legendary-sounding trope-filled (but true) scenario... Picture it: a group of teens at a late-night high school party in the early 90s, with a little drug-smoking and a lot of drinking, it's completely dark out, and at some point the conversation shifts to horror movies - and one girl says, "Hey, have you ever seen The Guardian? It's pretty f*cked up, it's about a nanny who feeds babies to a possessed tree." All of us were like, whaaat? ...I rented it the very next weekend.

Martin Scorsese's "Cape Fear" (1991)



Much like his Taxi Driver collaborator Paul Schrader, Martin Scorsese chose to do a remake and update it (and wildly intensify it in every conceivable aspect). Much like Friedkin's The Guardian, Scorsese's Cape Fear had become the minor stuff of legend in our high school when one weekend a group of teen girls, underage, snuck into the R-rated film at the local Cineplex by purchasing tickets to some other PG-rated film. They returned to school the following Monday thoroughly traumatized, one of them had even run out of the theatre during one of the brutal scenes of violence midway through.

Francis Ford Coppola's "Dracula" (1992)

Like Scorsese, Coppola cut his teeth in the film industry at Roger Corman's company, editing horror fare such as Dementia 13 (which also earned him a directing credit in 1963). By the time Coppola's big-gadget studio horror film came out in theatres in 1992, we were all in our last year of high school, and most of us were either already 18 years old, or close enough that no one needed

to buy a fake ticket to get into this R-rated horror film. That being said, a part of me wishes I had actually waited a while before seeing it, at that time I hadn't yet read Bram Stoker's novel, and I don't think I really appreciated Coppola's lush vision for what he really did accomplish in his longtime passion project. In other words, I like this film a lot more now than I did in 1992. In a strange sort of remix, Coppola's slight obsession with vampires was re-examined by the director himself, but outside of the studio system this time, in the far more hallucinatory Twixt.



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IGGY POP PART II

By Les Wiseman

Greetings Iggy Pop fans. When we last left you (issue #113) we had printed the first page of my 1986 interview with Iggy Pop as it appeared in Vancouver magazine, the second page seemed to be lost; however, a query on social media was rewarded with a longtime fan sending me that lost second page. Herewith then, we present the second part of my interview with Iggy on the occasion of him coming to Vancouver to receive a Canadian Gold album for Blah, Blah, Blah.

"There has been a hard-won, solid energy that I've built up under the work I'm doing right now. It's very different for me. This album and these shows I've done since October are the only pieces of work I've done in my life without taking drugs or alcohol to help swish me through the process.

Inspired by a volume of Sam Shepard's work, Pop has been hustling acting auditions. He scored a bit part in Alex Cox's Sid and Nancy, and a swell little vignette as a wasted pool player in Martin Scorsese's The Color Of Money.

"Working with Scorsese fulfilled a little dream of mine for years," he says. "I kept sending him my book [the autobiography of excess, I Want More] with a little note saying, 'You ought to make a movie out of this; let's have coffee; here's my number.'" He was also written in, and then written out of, an episode of Miami Vice.

After the interview, in Le Pavillon at the Four Seasons

hotel a group of music industry hangers-on sucked Heinekens and greeted a beaming Pop. Climbing a dinky stage he was presented with a gold album for Canadian sales of 50,000 copies of Blah, Blah, Blah. Now BBB is by no means the finest of Pop's efforts, but David Bowie's extremely commercial, accessible production, plus the buying audience having grown to accept those of wilder styles, made this baby Iggy's hit.

Folk who would not have crossed the street to see him three years ago were swarming all over Pop, cadging autographs and glossies, pressing palms and chewing fat. Cheeks creased in a Perma-press smile, Pop took a sip of champagne from a goblet. Hey, what is this, I asked, figuring I had witnessed



the critical moment. Ping, ping, next stop Skid Road? Iggy pawning the goldie for another gallon of porchclimber? "No, no," he said.

"I can have a drink. I'm not a proselytizer. The basic idea for me is that being intoxicated is not what living is all about. It's not in my work. But if you have a well-balanced life and you are doing your work sober because you want to, and if you are enjoying yourself

when you get up for the day and you work hard, then I think you're perfectly welcome to have a drink, when you can handle it and police yourself."

It seemed a specious exculpation. But-what the hey-he had waited a long time for this moment. And besides, slumped over in the corner, with an empty bottle of Dom in his hand and his chin on his chest, was the ghost of an old failure. Iggy followed my eyes. I think he saw it, too...

AND, unless you were living under a rock, you will be aware that on Sept 15 under the auspices of Rifflandia 2023 Iggy hit the stage with a crack band, featuring collaborator and guitarscapes innovator, Noveller (Sarah Lipstate), playing straight ahead rock'n'roll. His band consisted of: second guitarist Greg Fauque; bassist Kenny Ruby; drummer Tibo Brandalise; keyboard player Florian Pellissier; Corey King on trombone and Leron Thomas on trumpet.

Now when Pop last played Seattle on the Post Pop Depression Tour, he espoused that the music he

was creating with Queens of the Stone Age main-man Josh Homme was his real music, as were the stripped down tunes of The Idiot and Lust for Life -- that were produced by David Bowie during the pair's rehab sojourn in Berlin. The rock that had been the mainstays of his touring life that included selections from the first three Stooges albums went missing. Well, while I adore the man, but an Iggy show without Search and Destroy, 1969 or TV Eye is not the full-meal deal that I

want from his performance. Hence, I was most glad that his latest album, Every Loser, was a return to rock'n'roll form after the ambient jazzy Free, and his crooner albums Après and Préliminaires. Now, could the 76-year-old Pop haul his broken-boned, weathered-leather carcass onstage and do justice to the material that endeared him to die-hard fans over the past 54 years.

To a majestic imperial processional from Noveller, Iggy bounds across the stage and hits the thudding opening of Five Foot One from New Values. His shirt is dispensed with in the first minutes and there he stands and gyrates. That body that once made him the wasted Adonis of Hollywood Boulevard has been through a lot of injuries, from self inflicted scars from cutting his torso with broken glass to a dislocated shoulder when no one caught him in a stage dive. He limps because of a blown hip from having two different length legs, and you can see that it hurts him, but through sheer force of will and love of audience he does his dervish dance. His body looks in better shape than many of the photos that circulate that are shot from unflattering angles. He has a swollen belly, but that is likely from the Qi Jong breathing and exercises that he has long used to stay healthy. That and a sway back likely from his blown hip. Still he projects the image of a warrior, one who has defeated many foes and sustained many wounds.

Then the stage erupts with the overdriven chords of TV Eye from Funhouse and the audience loses its shit for this, the Stooges finest. Modern Day Rip Off from his latest album follows with a

Keith Richards-style intro, which should come as no surprise as guitarist producer Andrew Watt oversaw the Rolling Stones's new Hackney Diamonds as well as Pop's Every Loser. Continuing the guitar assault with Raw Power and Gimme Danger from the Raw Power album, it is a nonstop onslaught of slashing guitars and pounding drums. To the ecstatic ovation, Iggy says, "Thank you for fucking coming. This means everything to me."



Then we get into the Bo Diddley beat of Lust for Life and the wildly hypnotic The Passenger. From there it is Death Trip, I'm Sick of You, the Stooges classic I Wanna be Your Dog from the first Stooges album all building to climax with Search and Destroy one of the Top 10 aggressive rock songs of all time.

There is hardly a pause to indicate we're into the encore and the newly added horn

section brings in the grand daddy of industrial rock Mass Production from The Idiot album. Knowing we're coming to the end, the crowd goes into breakdown mode for Down on the Street and Loose, two classics from Funhouse, which many consider the greatest hard-rock album ever.

It all ends with Frenzy, his new single. He's tired; he's sweated out his demons. He has entertained and has cemented his position as one of rock's finest frontmen. We know he's given us all he's got to give and will be heading to his hotel for the single glass of wine that the former wastrel now abstemiously allows himself. I'm reminded of a Tennessee Williams quote that Iggy has often paraphrased: "If I kill off all my demons, my angels might die, too." That night at Rifflandia 2023, Iggy soared, superhumanly powered. You could almost see the angels pulling him to his feet time and again and pushing him through that magic corpus of compositions he has laid down since 1969. Iggy was both hero and heroic. He presented hard, fast and powerful, his body worn, but his credentials thoroughly vindicated, and his spirit undaunted.

Rifflandia Live Shot Photo Credit: John Carlow

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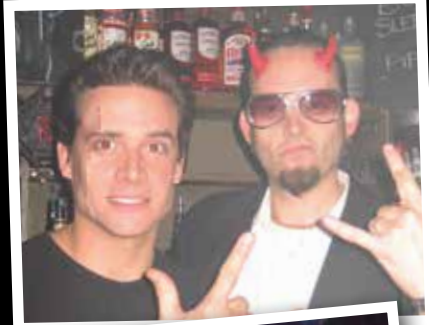
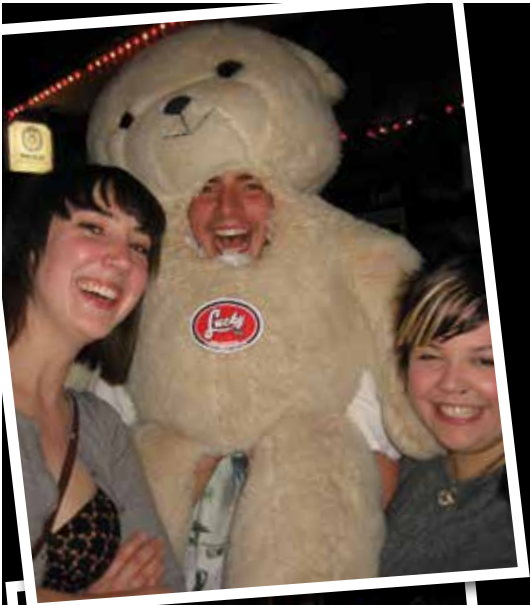
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RANDY, ASSISTANT TRAILER PARK SUPERVISOR

Joy And Happiness One Cheeseburger Picnic At A Time
By Ira Hunter and Brady Tighe

AU: Who are we talking to today and what do you do?

Randy: I'm Randy, assistant trailer park supervisor and weekend trailer park supervisor of Sunnyvale trailer park in Halifax NS Canada

AU: What's the secret to cooking the perfect blue jay burger

R: Sometimes a blue jay burger can taste gamey. I like to add bacon and some sweet and spicy hot sauce. Delicious!

AU: Do you miss Mr. Lahey?

R: I do miss Mr. Lahey. I think about him every day.

I try to live my life well and often wonder if he would be proud of me...I think he would. Spreading joy and happiness one cheeseburger picnic at a time!

AU: What are your plans for Halloween this year?

R: I am giving out treats to the kids back in Sunnyvale! We always have a little Halloween party with treats, snacks and party games like the annual pumpkin carving contest, spooky haunted trailer tours, dance like a zombie contest...so much fun.

AU: What's the best Halloween you can remember?

R: Halloween 1999 was very cool. We wanted the last Halloween of the 19th century to be unforgettable. I collected old pallets and wood from fallen down tree limbs and we had a huge bonfire. Ricky also had awesome fireworks that lasted 1/2 an hour, he must have stole them from the corner store! But they were

awesome

AU: What's the best costume you ever wore for Halloween?

R: Best costume I had was when I dressed up as the Incredible Hulk. He doesn't wear shirts either and his skin is green. I love the colour green.

AU: What's the best pizza place in Halifax?

R: We have a few great pizza places here but the one I like best is KOD, King of Donair! Best donairs ever, and a good spot to meet nice people. When I was Smokey I'd hangout by KOD and ask folks if they wanted to party

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

R: I like the band Great Big Sea. Their album "Up" is awesome, Friggin' perfect in my mind!

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

R: I saw a dog on a skateboard. That was pretty weird.

AU: What are some of your favourite horror movies?

R: I like watching horror movies around Halloween time. The old ones like Friday the 13th, nightmare on elm street, pet cemetery. Gremlins is a bit scary too. I watch that at Christmas time. Gizmo is cute but when he gets wet and eats after midnight he hatches some scary gremlin creatures! Makes me yell "Sweet 'n' sour chicken balls!! I hate gremlins!!!"

AU: Any final words for our readers?

R: Hope everyone enjoys a happy and safe Halloween. Remember to bring a flashlight when you go trick n treating so cars can see you in the dark and always pack an extra garbage bag in case your treat bag rips accidentally.

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BAT SABBATH

Singer/Screamer/Headbanger
Liam Cormier

Interview by B.J.T.

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

Bat Sabbath: HEY WHATS UP!?! This is Liam from Cancer Bats/Bat Sabbath and I sing/scream/headbang.

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

BS: Cancer Bats have been around since 2005 ripping, doing our thing, and in 2009 we got asked by a festival in the UK to do a special surprise-after-party-cover-set. We decided to cover Black Sabbath, and that's how Bat Sabbath was born.

AU: Who else is in the band?

BS: It's all the guys from Cancers Bats!

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

BS: It sounds like a sludgier, down-tuned version of the classic Sabbath tunes, but then kicked up a notch to really bring the party.

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

BS: Bat Sabbath played Download Madrid and we went on main stage after System Of Down had played. It was 2 AM and the crowd was NUTS

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

BS: Paranoid by Black Sabbath

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

BS: I was saying this the other day, I wish all of "Crazy Train," was as heavy as the intro. You know what I mean!?! Maybe we'll cover that and beef it up.

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

BS: There's lots of great new artists but id have to say PusHead would be mind blowing.

AU: What is your favourite Black Sabbath tune to play?

BS: Theres lots of rippers, but "War Pigs," is a huge tune. I also really love our version of "Into the Void"

AU: Is there a Black Sabbath song you'd like to play live or on record, that isn't exactly Bat Sabbath material?

BS: I think there's lots of great tunes that Sabbath has done, but when it comes to a Bat Sabbath show you want it to be all hits so that people can just rage the whole time

AU: Anything else to promote?

BS: We also just put out a LIVE Sabbath EP of the three of us playing some Sabbath tunes and JBone covers both Bass and Guitar. We did one whole rip with him on Bass and one whole rip with him on guitar and then glued them together.

Theres a sweet video we made of it on the Cancer Bats YouTube page.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

BS: Thanks so much for reading!

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1984 - 1992

W.A.S.P.

W.A.S.P. The '7 Savage: 1984-1992' Deluxe Boxset

In the annals of Rock N' Roll, few bands have ignited the love, hate, and raw emotional impact of this band. From their humble beginnings in the small venues of Los Angeles to being banned from stages worldwide, the group's unique Shock and Rock style prompted protests from religious organizations, local councils, parliaments, and even the U.S. Senate.

Fronted by founding member Blackie Lawless, W.A.S.P. has led a four-decade-long legacy of sold-out shows and millions of records sold, influencing the musical landscape and reshaping the rock scene. 'The 7 Savage: 1984-1992,' an exquisite 8LP boxset, is the embodiment of their Capitol Years, featuring studio album half-speed mastering, bonus tracks, a 60-page book, posters, and a numbered certificate. This exclusive release hits stores on October 27, 2023, with only 2000 copies available worldwide.

During their brief break from the 40 Years

Live World Tour, W.A.S.P. proves they are as unstoppable as ever, remaining a consistent force in rock music. The band's iconic frontman, Blackie Lawless, who has remained the lead vocalist and primary songwriter since day one, is known for his distinct brand of social, visual, and political commentary that has propelled the band to international stardom.

Blackie Lawless commented on the release: "It's an incredible honor to see these records reintroduced with such attention to detail. Adding expanded notes and extra photography to the original recordings holds a special place in my heart, and it will do the same for all the fans who cherish these albums as a part of their lives."

The boxset features W.A.S.P.'s first five studio albums: 'W.A.S.P.,' 'The Last Command,' 'Inside the Electric Circus,' 'The Headless Children,' and 'The Crimson Idol.' These albums have been half-speed mastered at Air Studios in London, enhancing their sound for a crisper and more immersive experience.

Presented in a deluxe red leatherette effect double slipcase, 'The 7 Savage: 1984-1992' also includes two additional LPs: 'Live... in the Raw' from 1987 and the new compilation 'Bonus Tracks & B-Sides,' featuring the controversial hit, 'Animal (F**k Like a Beast).'

Created in collaboration with Blackie Lawless himself, this boxset includes a 60-page book with exclusive and rare photos by legendary metal photographers like Ross Halfin, Tony Mottram, David Plastik, and Paul Natkin. The comprehensive liner notes by Amit Sharma (Kerrang!, Planet Rock) offer added depth. The set is further complemented by an exclusive Blackie Lawless poster and an individually numbered circular saw-shaped certificate.

To order the box set: madfish.lnk.to/WASP_The_7_Savage

Liam's Campfire Stories

By Liam Crocker

This Halloween, I'd like to regale my readers with a few true stories of some incidents in my life where the crust of my reality was chipped enough to reveal the roiling substrate of horror that is underneath all things, always. Now, I'm a rational individual. I've never been committed, I've never heard voices, I don't take psychedelics, and I've never seen a ghost. I'll admit, astrology is growing on me. No judgment if you're feeling judged - I'm just building a case for myself.

Because these stories I'm about to tell you are 100% the truth as I experienced it. I am not lying. Happy Halloween.

THE TUNNEL

Underneath Victoria, all over, are vast networks of sewer tunnels that can be accessed by anyone at the right place.



There's a famous one underneath Shelbourne street that has a neat art installation inside of it - a timeline of Earth starting with the Big Bang all the way to now. A friend and I decided to explore the tunnel and check it out. I don't recommend doing this - there are sharp objects down there hidden under the murky water and the smell is horrendous. We were trudging along this tunnel that was maybe a mile or two long, with smaller ones branching off. We stayed in the main one, as I have no love for confined spaces and I had heard stories of explorers finding wet cougar tracks in them. We carried on past the end of the art installation and started to notice some more disturbing art on the walls. Satanic graffiti - symbols hastily scrawled, blasphemies, infernal proclamations. I began to feel uneasy, as these weren't your typical

teenage indiscretions. They were genuine. We spoke very little as we walked on, observing our surroundings closely and watching our footing, spotting the occasional rat scampering away into the darkness beyond. The only sounds were from our boots in the water and the traffic on the road above us. We came to a bend in the tunnel. Then we heard something new entirely. A great, low, horrible moan that sounded something like a whale from Hell. It reverberated up and down the tunnel behind and ahead of us, its otherworldly quality echoing throughout. We turned to each other and both shook our heads. What the fuck was that? I cannot tell you how disturbing this sound was, and I will never forget it. It was unlike anything I have ever heard and my best rational explanation is that it was some freak reverberation caused by a large truck. But part of me really has no idea. Part of me knows there's something down in those tunnels. We carried on through to the other side and left without incident. There are many tall tales about the tunnels in Victoria. There certainly are people performing rituals of some kind down there, free from prying eyes. Perhaps they are being called. Perhaps something awakened. I won't be going back.

MOVIE MAGIC

This is a tale of synchronicity, of the power of art, and of possession. It all began in 2018: A close friend of mine was shooting a movie about a young man going off the rails after a drug addicted hobo buddy of his overdoses. The young man's life devolves into crime and chaos as a result. I played said hobo. My character was a quirky guy - he had a dual personality in a puppet that he acted as ventriloquist to. This puppet had been bought by the director on Ebay and was very creepy in its own right. It's modeled

after clown Emmett Kelly's Weary Willie character, based on hobos from the Great Depression. The shoot went fine, the movie was completed. Then the weird shit started.

My friend, let's call him Joe, who starred in the movie as the off the rails young man, has a very distinct way about him. He's got a big head of curly black hair, square jaw, pale skin, always wears brightly colored, often patterned shirts. He's recognizable from a mile away. Not long after we finished the movie, we woke up one morning to find a series of voice messages from Joe.



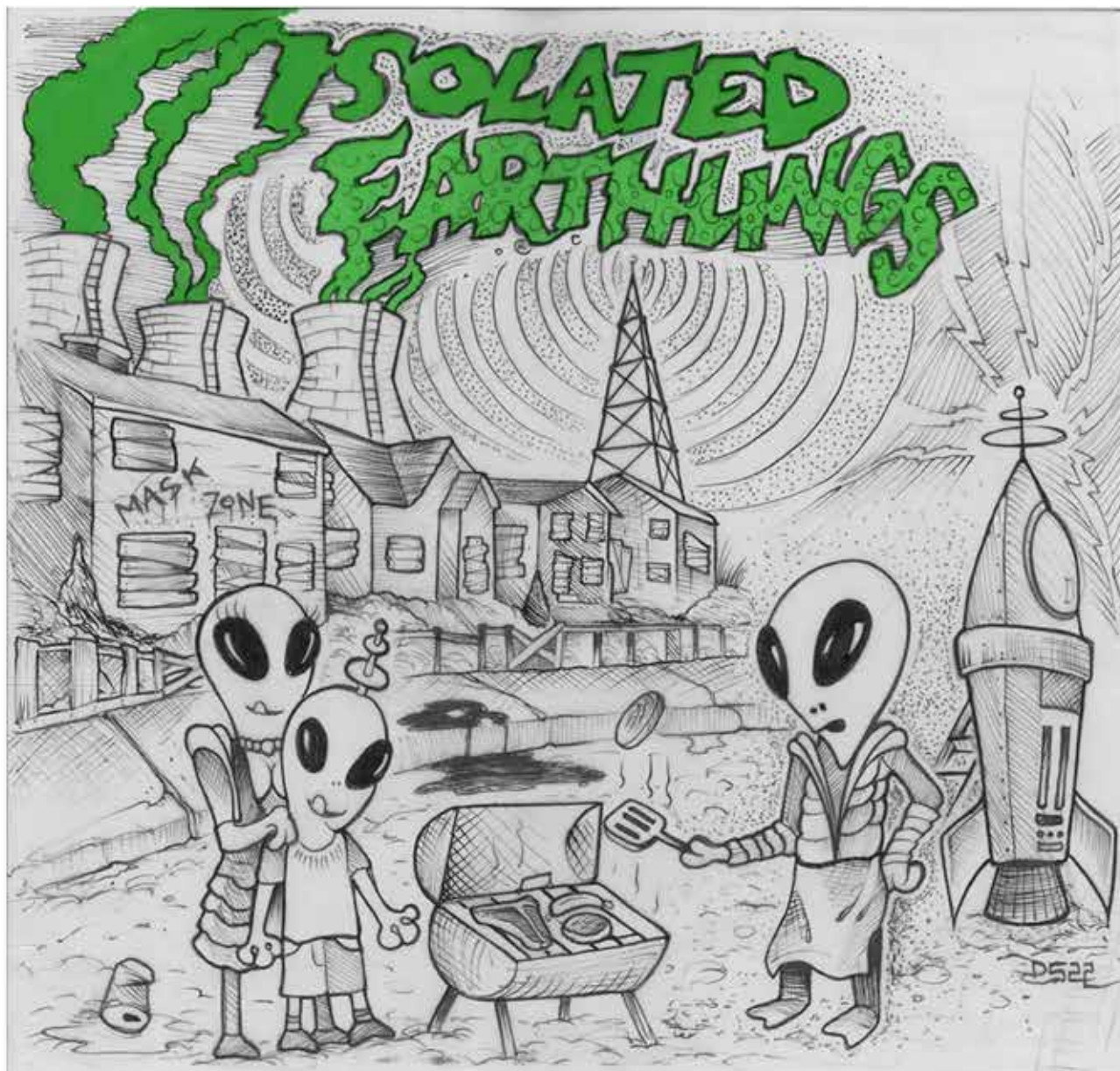
He had been apprehended by the police for questioning in relation to a crime that happened in his building. At the bottom of the apartment he lived in at the time was a liquor store. A man assaulted someone at the liquor store. This man looked almost EXACTLY like Joe. But it was not

Joe. Joe was a regular patron of the liquor store due to his proximity, and naturally someone or multiple people thought the assaulter was him.

This is all to say this: there are many stories of artists meeting what we may call a Tulpa. A manifested being borne of the mysterious energies of art itself. Be careful what you create. It might come to say hi. After the shoot finished, we had a celebratory dinner at a Japanese restaurant. 6 or so of us packed into a booth. We were having a great time and brought Willie the puppet with us, cracking jokes that he'd probably love to have a drink with us, him being a hobo and all. He sat squeezed between us at the table, his little head poking over the rim. We finished our food and ended the meal with some hot sake, which came in shot glasses. We all had a glass and one friend who wasn't drinking had set his in front of Willie. We couldn't leave him out. We were all



engaged in raucous conversation when suddenly the glass of sake shot across the table, seemingly of its own accord, straight towards Willie. We sat in stunned silence and looked at each other in disbelief. "Am I insane or did you guys fucking see that?" was spoken by someone, maybe me. We all saw it. Magic! Of course, I quickly googled it. In the right conditions, the right surface and the right temperatures, a glass can glide across a smooth table. Sure, there always seems to be a rational explanation for everything, right? But I couldn't shake the idea that Willie just really wanted a drink.



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CHAINSAW CONFIDENTIAL

How We Made The World's Most Notorious Horror Movie

GUNNAR HANSEN

CHAINSAW CONFIDENTIAL
A New Book On The Making Of
The 1974 Classic

On Chainsaw Massacre Day, Dark Ink, the publisher responsible for Kane Hodder and Tom Savini's biographies and the upcoming book "In Search of Darkness," is proud to announce the re-release

of Gunnar Hansen's classic, "Chainsaw Confidential: How We Made the World's Most Notorious Horror Movie."

Gunnar's beloved book, initially released in 2013, had been out of print for half a decade, making it nearly unattainable for fans. Michael Aloisi, owner of Dark Ink, expressed his honor in bringing "Chainsaw" back to fans to celebrate Gunnar's legacy and the film that changed the world. Dark Ink plans to keep the book available for generations to come, alongside titles from Gunnar's friends and colleagues.

The re-release features a new cover and a foreword by author Ray Garton. "Chain Saw Confidential" is now available in paperback, hardcover, and eBook formats from all major retailers and Dark Ink's website. The original audiobook, narrated by Gunnar Hansen, will be released later this year.

The original 1974 film "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre" captured the imaginations of audiences and critics, earning recognition as the greatest horror movie ever made by Total Film. It has been showcased at Cannes, briefly banned in England, and included in the permanent collection of New York's MoMA. Gunnar Hansen, the actor who portrayed the chain saw-wielding

Leatherface, offers a unique perspective on the making of the film. In this literary memoir, Hansen debunks myths, provides behind-the-scenes details, and shares insights into the film's reception and our enduring fascination with the horror genre today.

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WORDBUGLAR
THE SPINNER RACK EP
ISSUE # 1 IN MINT CONDITION

Interview by Raymond MacKay

AU: Who are we talking?

WB: I'm Wordbuglar. I burgle words.

AU: What was your first introduction to music?

WB: My parents played Barry Manilow records to me as a baby because they were the only things that would put me to sleep. Jokes aside, I got love for Manilow today. He writes the songs.

AU: Give us a brief history of your musical career.

WB: I'm what happens when you start rapping as a kid and then just never stop. I guess I started rhyming along to my favourite rap albums around grade 3 or 4. By grade 5 or 6 I was writing my own rhymes and messing around making songs with my friends. My cousin Joe is a musical genius who encouraged me to record raps on his 4 track and then I started making pause-button loops that I would then attempt to rap on. I kept working on my craft throughout high school, and just



loved everything about rapping and hip-hop. I was free-styling all the time, which I do to this day. I took what I was doing seriously but it was always just for fun to entertain myself and my friends. Pure love. We had a group called "The Dregs Of Society" and made some tapes and burned CDs that I guess I can say became semi-infamous around Halifax when I was in High School. After High School I recorded some solo songs under the name "Wordbuglar". I had a 5 song demo that wound up playing on a bunch of college radio stations across Canada and I think got shared on some university file sharing servers or something because suddenly strangers had heard my songs outside of Halifax. Shortly after that I got my demo to Hand Solo Records in Toronto and they started helping me release my music. To date I've released 8 solo albums, a bunch of group albums with my good pals Backburner Crew, a half-dozen or so EPs, some mixtapes, compilation songs and a ton of singles. I'm having more fun than ever.

AU: What are your biggest influences?

WB: Outside of music? Comic books, movies, video games, baseball, chips, and coffee.

AU: Describe what you do musically?

WB: I rhyme my business. I rap what I know, what I've experienced and what I love.

AU: What makes Wordbuglar a unique live experience in your

opinion?

WB: Anyone can make words rhyme, but only one man makes words mine.

AU: Tell us about your latest tour with Cybertronic Spree.

WB: I taught those Transformers everything they know about Humans and they've repaid me by

taking me across the galaxy. In all seriousness I've known them for years and we've played tons of shows together. They're some of my best pals in music and I think we're a great combo on tour because we're both very different musical acts obviously but we meet at precisely the perfect intersection of party rocking fun and nerdity.

AU: Any other memorable tour experiences?

WB: I'll never forget the time I played Newfoundland and the posters called me the "Word-BUGLER". Needless to say, I have never wished I owned a bugle more in life than at that moment.

AU: He-Man or G.I. Joe?

WB: C'mon. G.I. Joe! But I do have a soft spot for Clawful.

AU: Ewoks or Smurfs?

WB: Smurfs.

AU: Batman or Spider-Man?

WB: Spider-Man

AU: VHS or Blu-ray?

WB: Blu-rays maintain quality better after

multiple watches, but VHS tapes have the weight and ridiculous amount of parts. Weirdly a tough question, but since I'm buying them to watch in 2023, I'll go Blu-ray.

AU: Are you a Jar Jar Binks lover or a hater?

WB: I strive to live a life free from hatred, so let me just say I was, am and forever shall be very disappointed with Jar Jar.

AU: Any plans for Halloween this year?

WB: I'm going to eat every mini Coffee Crisp I see.

AU: Best Halloween you can remember?

WB: The Silver Snail Halloween Party, 2009 at the Charlotte Room in Toronto. It's the night I met my wife.

AU: Best costume you ever rocked?

WB: Croc-Master from G.I. Joe! Or Fist-O from He-Man. Both were pretty good haha

AU: What is your favorite non hip-hop album?

WB: Barry Manilow's Greatest Hits Volume 2

To Be Continued Next Issue...

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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 FOUR

TOUR TIP NUMBER 19



AUDIENCE INTERACTION IS A GOOD THING

You're not playing an arena. Don't act like you're playing an arena.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 20



IT'S OKAY TO BE A FAN

Take a selfie with your Punk Rock heroes. They won't mind.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 21



PLAY EVERY FEST THAT YOU CAN

Lots of bands to meet, lots of fans who may have never heard you before.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 22



TAKE LOTS OF MERCH

It's what will pay for the gas to your next show.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 23



ALWAYS TAKE A PICTURE WITH THE GIANT THINGS ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

...even when you can't figure out what they are.

TOUR TIP NUMBER 24



DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

Deal and move on. Remember, this is supposed to be fun.

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Michael Wilder: My favorite performance by The Cramps was Halloween night 1981 at Devonshire Downs in Southern California. The Cramps had just released *Psychedelic Jungle* a few months earlier, and my passion for the band was feverish. Performances by The Cramps shows in those days were nothing less than magical, filled with mystery and legend. Being Halloween, everyone was dressed in black for the occasion: devil goth girls and satanic punks everywhere. I was dressed as the Prince of Darkness while my date, a sorority girl who had never heard of The Cramps, was dressed in victim red. The smoky, under-lit venue was an old Quonset hut originally built to house livestock for a racetrack and smelled of clove cigarettes and horse piss. The event included a painfully shrill audience screaming contest and grisly, gore-filled horror movies dimly projected on a screen behind the bandstand. The opening act was Tav Falco and the Panther Burns. Alex Chilton (who produced *Songs the Lord Taught Us* and was the lead singer in *Big Star*) played lead guitar for Tav Falco.

DAZZLING DEVIATION – MY MOMENTS WITH THE CRAMPS

In part two of my ongoing discussions with former career music writer Michael Wilder (*Chic*, *RIP*, *Hustler*) we discuss his early recollections of The Cramps.

By John Carlow

Photography by Michael Wilder

AU: You have many stories about your relationship with The Cramps. Skim off the top and share if you would.

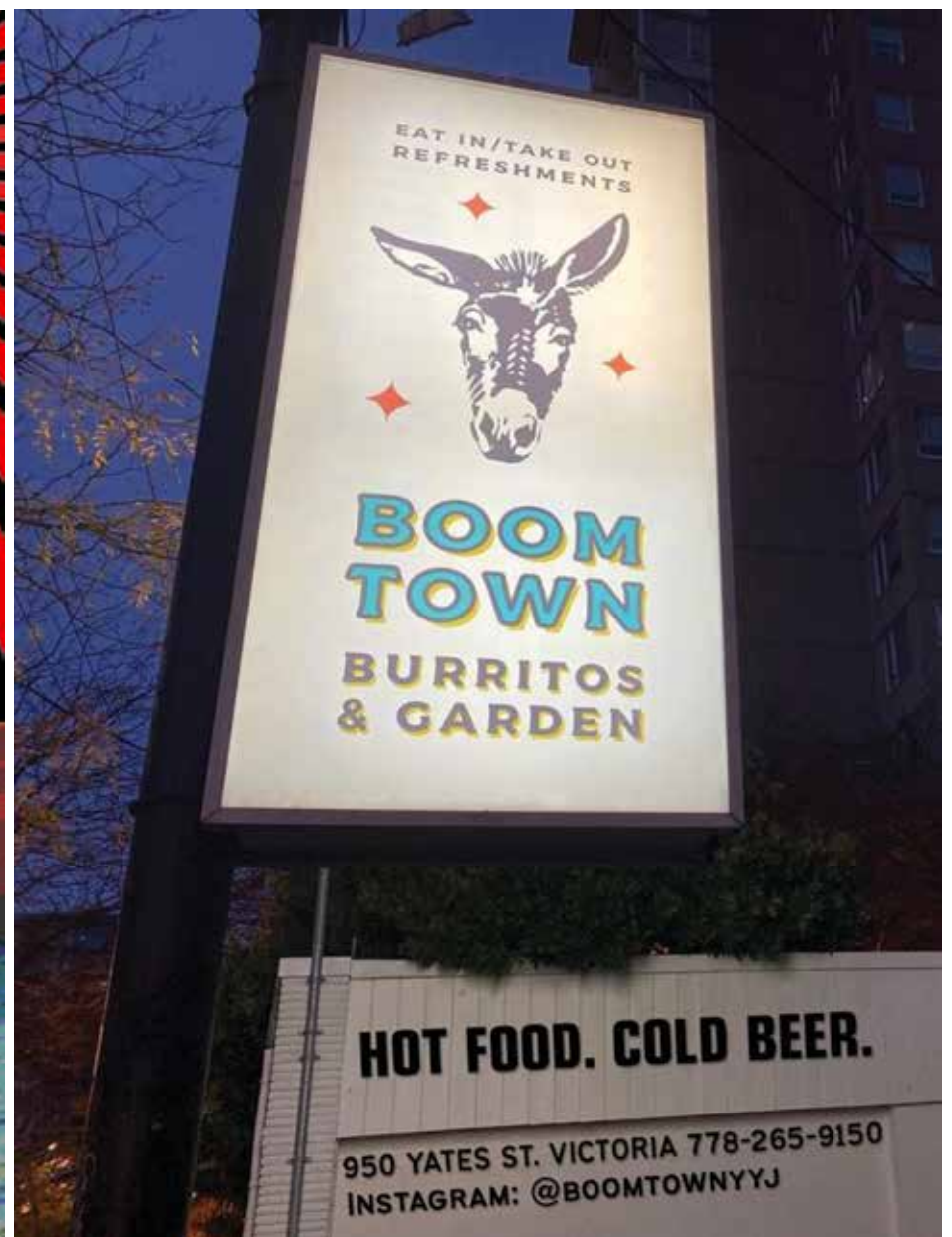
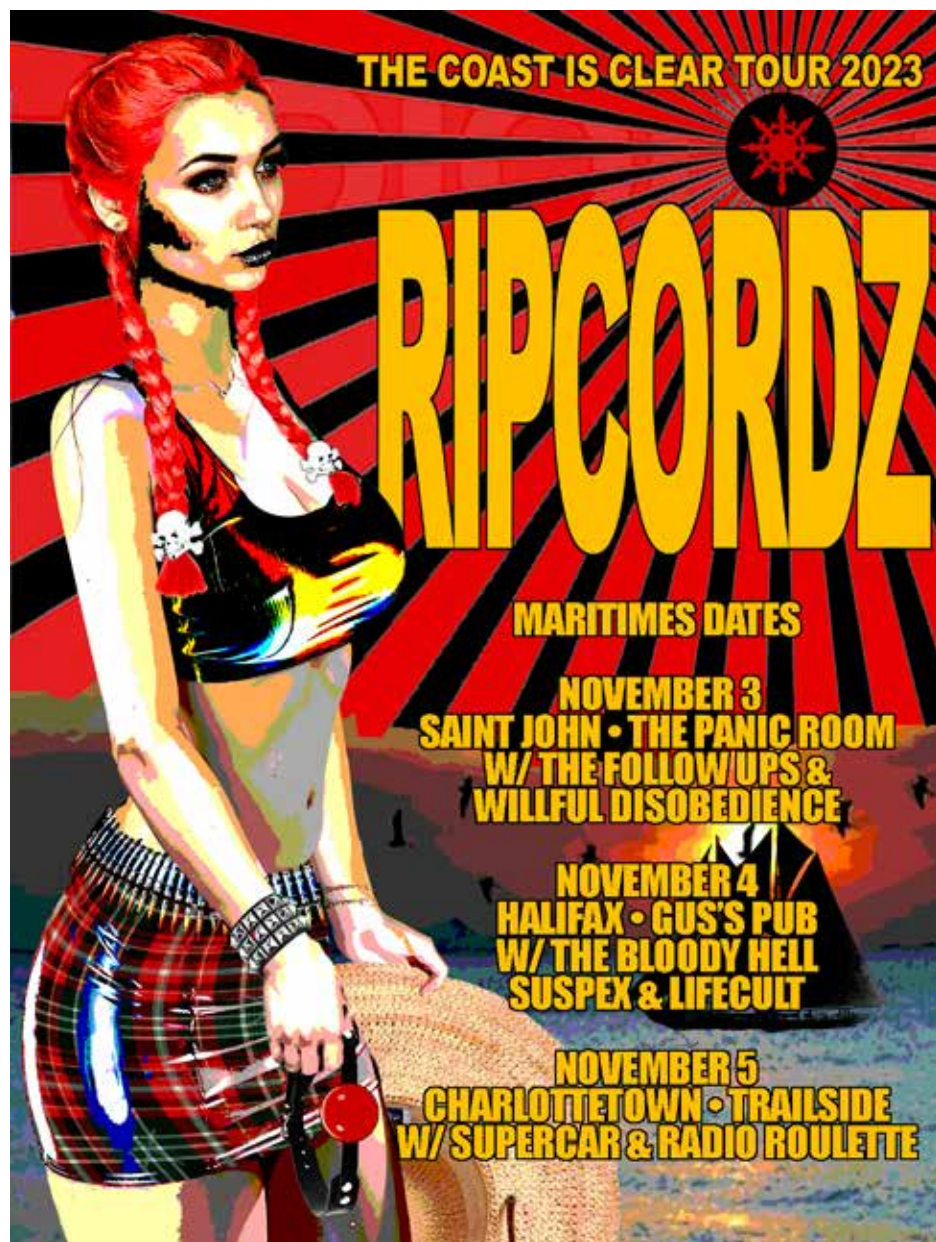
With a crash of a gong, The Cramps took the stage: Lux Interior, Poison Ivy Rorschach, Nick Knox, and Kid Congo Powers. At a time when pop music was dominated by "Tainted Love" and "Betty Davis Eyes," The Cramps were a dazzling deviation. They played favorites from *Songs the Lord Taught Us* and *Psychedelic Jungle* including "Primitive," "Sunglasses After Dark," and "Jungle Hop." Naturally, Lux stripped down to his G-string as the night went on, mouthing the microphone, and writhing around on stage. When the band started to play "Strychnine," someone threw a whole, skinless cow's head up onstage while Lux caressed, crooned, and kissed the head. Needless to say, I never got a second date with my sorority friend. The first time I met Lux Interior, Poison

Ivy Rorschach, and Nick Knox in person was a few years later, around mid-1981. Kid Congo Powers had already left the band at that point. After college, I had gotten a job as a copy editor for Larry Flynt Publications (LFP) and, following my interview with The Mentors, I figured I might as well try to interview my favorite band: The Cramps. Imagine my thrill when they agreed to meet me at LFP headquarters on the forty-third floor of a Century City tower. When they arrived, they were dressed in character. I imagine they expected to be visiting the *Hustler* photography studio (which they later did). The main headquarters was primarily where magazines were put together, however, filled with editors, artists, and typesetters. On my desk, I had a copy of "Betty Page Private Peeks" with Bettie posing in lingerie on the cover. They offered to sign my copy, and Ivy wrote, "Michael, how would you like to see me like this?"

We chatted for a while, I asked a few questions for an interview, then we agreed to take some photos. Since the editorial office was definitely not visually spectacular, we took the elevator down to the parking garage below the building. The photos you see here are taken from that evening. Following the photo session, we agreed to chat again later. A few days later I asked Ivy a few more questions over the phone.* After meeting in Century City, Lux and Ivy agreed to follow-up interviews for another article. We decided to meet over drinks at a small tiki bar in West Los Angeles called Kelbos. Kelbos was a classic tiki bar with strong drinks, flotsam hanging from the ceiling, and quiet nooks to hide out in for privacy. The dance floor was a giant coconut shell where elderly couples danced to big band tunes. Lux, Ivy, and I sipped tiki drinks while they answered my questions. In a very short time, we were pretty sloshed. Unfortunately, the tapes from that evening are unintelligible, either from the alcohol or the batteries from the recorder. During the interviews, Screamin' Jay Hawkins came up a few times. The Cramps were definitely fans, and his macabre performances were influential. It occurred to me that arranging a meeting between them would be a great

opportunity. At the time, Hawkins and the Cramps lived in the Hollywood area. I proposed the idea to Lux and Ivy, and they graciously offered their home for a meal. I offered to cater the food. Hawkins seemed interested, so we set a date. When the day came, I picked up the food and called Hawkins. He had changed his mind at the last minute. He preferred to be interviewed individually over steak at Musso & Franks (which we later arranged). I called Lux and gave him the bad news. Since I had already purchased a huge meal for us, he invited me to their home for dinner. When I arrived, the door opened by itself! According to Lux and Ivy, they were living in one of Bela Lugosi's apartments, and the door could be opened from the top of the stairs with a mechanical system. During dinner, we lamented Hawkins's decision, but enjoyed the food, listened to music, and told stories. The last time I saw Lux and Ivy was several years later. We arranged a photo session in the LFP studio in Culver City where hundreds (if not thousands) of women had been photographed in various stages of undress for the centerfolds of *Hustler*, *Chic*, and others. When they arrived, Lux was like a kid in a candy store. He and Ivy raced through the studio looking for props and costumes. Unfortunately, most of these were locked up, so Lux settled on a short latex skirt and high heels he had brought. They had brought their own photographer from Scandinavia to set up and take the photos. Unfortunately, the lighting wasn't set up properly and the entire session was ruined by a flair in every photo. Lux was super pissed, and I never heard from them again. I could be wrong, but I believe I've seen one or two shots from that session floating around in the wild.

*A recording of that conversation can be found here:



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PASSING PLUTO

PASSING PLUTO Interview with Lead Guitarist and Vocalist Jon Dickinson

By Brady Tighe

AU: Who are we talking to today?

Passing Pluto: My names Jon and my role in the band is Guitar/Lead Vocals!

AU: Give us a brief history of your band.

We started just over a year ago while in a rush to find a drummer for a previously committed show. Mark, Kyle, and I were blessed by a stroke of fortune when we found Jaxon's ad about him looking for a band. Immediately we clicked! We just haven't looked back since, and just kept our heads down and kept grinding!

AU: Who else is in the band?

Kyle Engelage (bass)
Mark Bennett (Guitar)
Jaxon Smith (Drums)

AU: Describe the band's sound if possible.

I think we offer a range of sounds in our music but obtain elements of Pop-Punk, groove metal, metalcore and overall good ole' Rock 'n' Roll!!!!

AU: Which of your band's songs would you most like to theme song of a horror movie?

Well, actually one of our songs coming out in October, "Misshapen Faces" is written about the film "Night of the Living Dead!"

AU: Most memorable gig you've played?



I think it would have to be this past years Cowboys Music Festival where we got to play the Main stage three different nights and the patio stage twice! It was an insanely awesome opportunity for a band of our age to be able to play that show and have that platform!

AU: Last perfect record you

listened to?

In the Court of the Dragon by Trivium. That album hits a spot that every time I put it on my adrenaline is at a ten.

AU: Weirdest thing you've seen in public?

A minivan without doors like it was Jeep was pretty interesting!

AU: Is Pluto a planet?

A lovely one at that!

AU: Favourite horror movie?

I love classic 80's slashers like Halloween, Friday the 13th and Nightmare on Elm Street, but of "all time," I think I have to go with Brain-Dead, also known as Dead Alive!

AU: Any shows or tours planned?

On November 11th we'll be playing the

Rec Room with a super awesome Iron Maiden cover band named Losfer Words.

AU: Anything else to promote?

I and the fellas would greatly appreciate you checking out our Spotify, Instagram, Youtube, Tik Tok and all those other social medias!

AU: Any final words for our readers?

Passing Pluto loves Absolute Underground Magazine!

AU: How do people find you online?

"Passing_Pluto" on Instagram and just Passing Pluto everywhere else!

FROM THAT MOMENT ON, BILLY KNEW HE LOVED HALLOWEEN



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GOBLIN

Founding Member Claudio Simonetti

Interview By Billy Hopeless

What if we made out with Goblin playing in the background?

Ok, so when it comes to the bucket list of blood I've just stuck the knife into one of the biggest names already carved deep in my heart. When I first saw the masterpieces of the macabre Deep Red and Suspiria at a tender age the soundtrack by Goblin was as, if not more, influential than the amazing art before my eyes. Just seeing that name in the credits of those and the movies that followed would and still gives me a satisfied smile knowing I was going to be aurally haunted. As this is my birthday month I can honestly say this interview, and getting the chance to experience the composer of glorious nightmares live at the Rio Theatre has made this one of the greatest birthdayweens of my life. Boils and ghouls let's make like bats to the belfry and hang with founding member Claudio Simonetti from Goblin!



Billy Hopeless: Since the first time I encountered Goblin at a young age I've always felt it was a supernatural entity not a band. How and why was this spirit conjured?

Claudio Simonetti: Actually we were born as a very earthly band and not supernatural entities. We only played Prog music, typical of the 70's, but then, thanks to Dario Argento's film, we created our own "supernatural" style.

BH: As a huge fan of soundtracks I've always thought of the composers and musicians as painters of the cinema. You to me are the Michaelangelo of this craft. What makes a great soundtrack? And what do you consider the closest you've gotten to immaculate conception or demonic possession?

CS: First of all thanks for the comparison with Michelangelo, a really nice comparison, wow! I believe that, before writing a soundtrack, the film must be beautiful and suggestive, otherwise you won't find the inspiration to create suitable music, especially in thriller and horror films.

I honestly don't think I had demonic inspirations when I wrote my soundtracks (or maybe I did, who knows?).

Actually the movies were demonic enough on their own, I just helped make them even scarier.

BH: Who are the masters you admire and consider inspirational artists of musical magic?

CS: Surely the first musician who inspired me was my father Enrico Simonetti. He was a great musician very famous in Brazil and in Italy, I owe him a lot, he was a complete musician and was able to give his best in every musical genre, including soundtracks of all kinds.

I often went to the cinema when I was very young and listened to the music even though I didn't know the composers, then later I learned about Bernard Hermann, John Williams, Nino Rota, Ennio Morricone and many other classical musicians also because there haven't been many rock bands writing soundtracks for films, I think I was among the first with Goblin.

BH: Since we are speaking such legendary names, tell us about what it was like when you first were summoned by the dark lord Dario Argento to become the painters of his dark dreams?

CS: It was the end of 1974 and my band and I were recording an album in Rome (we weren't called Goblin yet) with the Cinevox Record label. Our producer was called Carlo Bixio and he was also one of the most important Italian music publishers and already worked with Argento (as well as Sergio Leone and many other great Italian directors). Dario Argento had recently finished the film "Profondo Rosso/Deep Red" and had begun to have the soundtrack written by a great Italian musician called Giorgio Gaslini but he was not satisfied because he considered the music too "classical" and wanted a sound more rock and aggressive.

BH: There have been many different separate incarnations of Goblin over the years. Tell us what makes this entity you bring before us currently a force to be recognized and hailed?

CS: Since we split in 1978 there have been a few different line-ups using the name Goblin, although the original name now belongs to the four founding members (Simonetti/Morante/Pignatelli/Marangolo). After this decision, everyone created his own version using various names, New Goblin, Goblin Rebirth and Claudio Simonetti's Goblin (the only one currently active.)

In 2013, with this formation, I changed the name to Claudio Simonetti's Goblin and changed the style of the group, bringing it closer to the original sound. Over the past 11 years I've changed some musicians and now the current line-up includes Cecilia Nappo on bass, Daniele Amador on guitars and Federico Maragoni on drums, all young musicians from the rock/metal scene in Rome. I think this is my optimal band to make records and concerts with my music.

BH: You're on tour accompanying the movie Demons, which I saw when it debuted during my teens. It featured a handful of pieces by heavy metal bands. This was a groundbreaking step to me in the unholy union between metal and horror movies. What's your opinion of metal and who do you consider worthy of display in the aural gallery?

CS: Demons was my first film as a solo composer of the music for an Argento/Bava film. It was the period of electronic dance music and Demons gave me the inspiration to create a soundtrack with all the keyboards, electronic drums and equipment of the time. I had a lot of fun doing it also because I think Demons is a fun, innovative and tasty film to watch even though it is now 48

years old. There are not only Heavy Metal bands on the soundtrack but also some dance/pop artists of the time, artists such as Billy Idol, and Go West. It was very common then to put rock songs by well-known bands in addition to the main soundtrack, even if I never liked this.

BH: Cool, allow me to brush my words freely and ask of you, as a person who works in the night realm and often with tense uneasy and sudden shocking situations; I often find I need to embrace the light to keep my spirit strong and charged. What do you do to relax and keep your journeys into darkness from taking you down?

CS: I once lived a lot at night, I always went out and I really liked going to discos, especially in the 80's and 90's, very cheerful and happy years. I've written a lot of music for horror films but also many dance tracks, I was a pioneer of Italo Disco in the 80s which influenced me a lot for the soundtracks of Tenebre e Demoni. I have two different aspects of my personality, maybe I'm like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hide. I have been living outside Rome for many years now, I don't like the big city, I live in the countryside where I also have a recording studio (and 5 dogs) where I relax when I return from long tours.

BH: This is our Halloween issue and as a late October baby this holiday is very special to me. What was Halloween like where you were when you were a child?

CS: It may seem strange to you but when I was a boy there wasn't a Halloween celebration like you did, both in Brazil, where I was born, and in Italy. We started celebrating Halloween here, in the American way, around the late 80's so I was quite old by then. Let's say that Carpenter's film inspired this celebration for us too, even it was very late.

BH: Much like horror, though it is also a festivity of magical fun fantasy transformations it has always held a dark exciting sense of fear and the unknown. Tell me a old folklore story of your birth land that you heard as a child or discovered later that holds as such?

CS: Luckily I have not had any scary experiences in my life, however, being born in Brazil, my memories linked to horror fantasy belong to the Brazilian tradition of Macumba and the magical rites connected to it, even without having experienced them personally. We heard stories of dolls pierced by pins that caused people to die and similar things, let's say that superstition there is very strong and people are very easily fooled while in Italy this type of spell doesn't exist even if superstition is very strong here. Here there are many stories of ghosts who live in various castles and cemeteries but belong to the various cultures of the various Italian regions.

BH: I can not praise and thank you enough for all you've done through your career of creepy compositions and for making the celebration of my unholy birth the best ever this year by playing the temple known as the Rio theater this Oct. Do you have any parting magic words for those who like await your arrival like the great pumpkin as well as our readers around the world?

G: Thank you so much for this interview and for the kind words, I hope to meet you live at Rio, it's always a great pleasure to return to Canada. I really want to name my musicians from my current lineup of Claudio Simonetti's Goblin, truly extraordinary and collaborative musicians:

Cecilia Nappo: bass

Daniele Amador: guitar

Federico Maragoni: drums

It's truly extraordinary to have so many fans in America, it's a great satisfaction to play so many concerts in different cities. I greet all my audiences who have followed me for many years, hoping this time too, by playing the Demoni soundtrack live for the first time and new songs during the concert after the film, to satisfy their expectations.

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ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN

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Interview with guitarist
Sal Canzonieri

By The Brady of Frankenstein,
Invisible Ray MacKay, and
Ira "Monster" Hunter

AU: What are you most famous for?

Electric Frankenstein (Sal): This is Sal Canzonieri. What am I famous for? Actually, not just for being in Electric Frankenstein, but I'm known all over the world for Chinese martial arts. I've got a bunch of black belts and I wrote a bunch of books about it.

AU: How did you meet the other members of Electric Frankenstein?

SAL: Well, the bass player is my brother so that helped. I've known him since birth. I was in another band called The Thing. I used to have a record store. That's how I met most people. Then when I wasn't doing my other band anymore, I started writing songs that didn't fit their style. And my new band was like I'd mixed punk rock and hard rock together. And I was calling it high energy rock 'n' roll or punk rock 'n' roll. I wanted to add in all these different mixtures and elements. And then I started to call it Electric Frankenstein because Frankenstein is a mixture of all different body parts.

At first it was me on rhythm guitar, my brother Dan on bass, and Jim played lead guitar. Vocals it took a while to audition people. And drums, forget it. We went through like 40 different people trying to find a rock'n'roll drummer, because everybody wanted to play like Neil Peart back then. We were like, "No, we want to play like The Stooges." So eventually we stole members from other bands basically. Then we started Electric Frankenstein and we were different, because there was nobody doing this return of the Rock and Roll kind of thing, and it exploded. Our first show was at CBGB and our second show was at the Continental in New York. It was packed, both shows. We really did a good job of promoting the band with the Frankenstein artwork, we put fliers up everywhere, and people were impressed by

the art. I was writing those songs and it just grew really fast. The right time, and the right way.

AU: With the name Electric Frankenstein, do your songs reflect horror themes sometimes?

SAL: A lot of the lyrics are through the lens of if Frankenstein was a modern thing and the social psychological aspects of what he'd have to go through. Because in Frankenstein the village people are meaner than the monster ever was. They always want to kill you for being yourself and it's not your fault that you're different, right? So, it's not Frankenstein's fault. He didn't have a choice in the matter. Like everybody, you're born, was it your choice that you're born? No. And then you've got to live your life and people were getting bullied and picked on so the whole punk culture was always talking about that.

AU: How many albums have you guys put out?

SAL: About a dozen. As far as a new album of all new songs, that hasn't been since 2008, which is kind of pissing me off. Too many things like Covid happened, but now we can start to do a brand new album, which is what we're doing now.

AU: You've had such cool artists do your album covers. How do you pick the artists?

SAL: Here's the thing, I never had to ask anybody. Everybody like Kozik, Coop, Johnny Ace, Art Chantry and everybody famous, was already into Frankenstein and came to us. And they liked the whole concept. At the very beginning, I was doing the artwork with my brother, it was just punk rock style, like photocopied collages. But since then, we've worked with over 300 artists and that's why I was able to do some Electric Frankenstein art books through Dark Horse Comics featuring art from our first 10 years. Then we did The Son of Electric Frankenstein art book. Then a big publishing company, Clover Press, put out a new book, The Illustrated Electric Frankenstein Lyrics: It's the first 145 songs illustrated by all different artists. It looks like a demented children's book.

AU: We have an artist you've worked with, Mike Hoffman, doing the cover art. How did that collaboration work?

SAL: We all know each other because of the comic book industry. One day Mike says, "Hey, I'm going to do a comic book, do you want to make it about Electric Frankenstein?" I said, "That'd be great." He'd done a bunch of stuff for the art books already and so he wrote the story and did all the art, and I thought it was really well done. The cover is really cool, right? The one with Frankenstein and The Bride and all the little Frankenstein cherubs flying around!

AU: Are you a big fan of Halloween?

SAL: Yeah, pretty much. But it can get goofy, a lot of people don't make a good effort at it.

AU: Any Halloween shows planned this year?

SAL: We're going to be in Tampa and then Orlando, the last weekend of October.

AU: Ever dress up for your Halloween shows?

SAL: I think we're going to do it for these two shows. We're going to dress like the Misfits. We all got the skeleton costumes like they used to wear.

AU: If you could have one of your songs be the theme song of a horror movie. Which one?

SAL: We have a song called Already Dead, so that probably lends itself to being in a zombie movie.

AU: Have you done any soundtracks?

SAL: Yeah, we've done a bunch of soundtracks. Horror films and porno movies too. There was a marijuana zombie movie where they smoked marijuana and it was laced with some kind of chemical that turns them into green zombies.

AU: Do you have any favourite horror movies?

SAL: I like the Bride of Frankenstein, that's a great movie. All the Frankenstein movies from the first one to Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein. The Creature from the Black Lagoon. Also newer stuff like Deadly Spawn and Basket Case.

AU: Anyone in the band read comic books?

SAL: Everybody does. Our drummer, Wheez Von Klaw, he has his own comic book called Cat Nasty. I read all the old Marvel and DC Comics. My brother reads a lot of Japanese comics. Ed (Warner) our other guitarist likes Batman.

AU: If you could have any artist, living or undead, do your album art, who would it be?

SAL: Who hasn't done one? Well, Ed Repka was supposed to do one - the guy who does the Megadeth record covers. The most important one was Basil Gogos, the guy who did all the Famous Monsters magazine covers in the 1960s. He did the last album called Burn Bright, Burn Fast!

AU: Weirdest thing you've seen in public?

SAL: I saw some people in LA take that drug that makes you like a zombie. And they really looked like zombies, their heads were hanging on one side, their legs were twisted in, their hands were all gnarled up, and they were walking like zombies. I'm like, "Who the hell wants to take these drugs?" They looked like The Walking Dead.



AU: Any cool bands you're currently into?

SAL: I really like Crime Line from Virginia. There is also something I do called the Fistful of Rock & Roll compilations. I have over 750 bands on my compilations and I'm still doing them.

AU: Anything else you'd like to promote?

SAL: I'm always looking for new bands for my Fistful of Rock & Roll compilations. We want to come back to Canada and tour, and we're working on a new album. I want to revive Frankenstein with electricity and charge him up again.

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ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN Monsters Of Rock

Bassist Danny Frankenstein
Interview by The Brady of Frankenstein, Invisible Ray MacKay, and Ira "Monster" Hunter

AU: Who are we talking to?

Electric Frankenstein (Dan): Dan Canzonieri aka Danny Frankenstein. I play bass in Electric Frankenstein and have played in When I Was Dead, Kung Fu Killers, Cathedral, Shadow Project (w/ Rozz Williams of Christian Death)

Way back in 1992-93 I used to sit in on rehearsals for the reformed Misfits. I literally had to sit down and teach those guys how to play their old songs and give them all the proper lyrics so they could eventually audition singers.

Interesting tidbit Michael Graves auditioned for

Electric Frankenstein. He didn't fit so I sent him over to Jerry Only.

AU: First introduction to rock n roll?

DAN: My mom listened to a lot of Elvis when I was a young kid so I wanted to be cool like Elvis.

AU: How did you meet the other members of Electric Frankenstein?

DAN: I had just come back from living on the west coast and playing with Rozz in Shadow Project. Sal and Jim Foster were starting to write some songs together and they asked me to come play bass with them. The thing that made us form the band was we were really dissatisfied with the music we were hearing at the time, and nobody was playing the type of music we wanted to hear.

AU: How would you describe the band's sound?

DAN: We're a mix of punk, hard rock and west coast hardcore. Sort of a mix of Misfits, AC/DC, and Black Flag.

AU: Horror influences of your band?

DAN: I think the biggest horror influences are Universal Monsters and Hammer Horror films.

AU: Are you into celebrating Halloween?

DAN: Yes, but it's disappointing how corny and not scary it is now for kids. It's all smiling cute lil' pumpkins. Where did all the scary monsters go?

AU: Most wicked Halloween you can recall?

DAN: We played a Halloween show at Coney

Island High in NYC with Murphy's Law, and The Misfits showed up and played an unannounced set. Their first post-Danzig live performance.

AU: Most killer costume you ever wore?

DAN: The Creature from The Black Lagoon

AU: If you could have one of your songs be the theme song of a horror movie, which one?

DAN: *Dead By Dawn* for sure. It's totally about the Evil Dead movies.

AU: If you could have any artist, living or undead, do your album art, who would it be?

DAN: Here's my short list: Jack Davis, Frank Frazetta, Dirty Donny, Coop, and Don Picton.

AU: Favourite horror movies?

DAN: Evil Dead trilogy, Bride of Frankenstein, Creature from the Black Lagoon

AU: Any favourite local bands to promote?

DAN: Temp Agency, Dead Cool, Lie Heavy

AU: Any upcoming shows after Halloween?

DAN: We're working on some gigs with Nine Pound Hammer at the end of December.

AU: Any memorable touring experiences?

DAN: Breaking my hand on our first European tour when I punched someone in the face because he spit a big loogie on my leg while we were playing a big show at a civic center in Spain. After the gig the "village elders" came backstage, and I thought I was going to be in trouble. They brought me bottles of liquor and apologized for



the behavior of the youth in their town.

AU: Can you tell us about any new releases?

DAN: We have a few new releases in the works like a fun little session we recorded at Tim Armstrong from Rancid's studio in LA with the current EF lineup and our friends Jaime Pina (Chemical People) and our old singer Scotty (Infamous Stiffs) called Shipwrecked in LA and the flip side of that record is Annie's Grave Revisited where we recorded updated versions of some older EF songs with the current EF lineup.

We also have a live album we recorded in 1996 coming out and finally a full new proper Electric Frankenstein album.

AU: What is your favorite album of all time?

DAN: Of ours? *How To Make a Monster*.

Favorite album ever? Probably have to go with Earth A.D. at the moment. Ask me tomorrow and it will be something completely different.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

DAN: Come see us live. You won't be disappointed and hopefully you will see us in

Canada in 2024. It's been too long.

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JOHN CARPENTER

Q&A

Video games, Basketball, Movies, and Wanting to be in ZZ Top

AU: How you been?

John Carpenter: I am alright, thank you very much. I'll be better here in a second, and now I am perfect.

AU: What's been keeping you busy lately?

JC: We finished the score to the last Halloween film, and then we're working on some music, and playing some video games. But the most important thing going on in my life, is the N.B.A. The season just started.

AU: Who's your favourite team in the N.B.A.

JC: I'm a Golden State Warriors guy.

AU: We've talked about your love of video games before, what are you playing right now?

JC: I'm still playing Fallout '76, but I'm switching over occasionally to Horizon: Forbidden West. I love that game. Sensational.

AU: In Halloween, who thought up the imagery of the tombstone, the jack o' lantern, and the body on the bed?

JC: Well, Halloween was written by myself and Debra Hill, so one of us. I actually don't remember. It was a long time ago.

AU: Has Hitchkok had an influence on you?

JC: Yeah, I think every director was inspired by Alfred Hitchkok. When I was in film school years ago, he came and talked to us. He told great stories, I don't know if they were true or not. His movies, especially Vertigo, maybe the greatest movie ever made. Especially in the area of suspense.

AU: Who is your favourite horror director working today?

JC: I like Jordan Peele, I think he's extremely talented.

AU: In your opinion, what film has the best score? Of your own, or others?

JC: The best scores were the one's for the movies I saw in the 1950's: The Horror of Dracula, The Quarter-mass Experiment 1 and 2, all have brilliant scores by a guy names James Bernard, who was one of the biggest influences in my career.

For my own movies? Ehh.

AU: Were you influenced by the band Goblin for your new soundtrack composition?

JC: I'm influenced by that band for every soundtrack composition I do. Claudio Simonetti is a friend, and a brilliant composer. I think the score for Susperia, I've ripped off so many times I can't even remember.

AU: Do the things that frightened you as a child still frighten you today?

JC: I was scared of everything when I was a kid. Nowadays, I'm scared of real life, very much. What's happening in the world is terrifying, there's a lack of humanity and a cruelty in the world.

AU: How do you approach someone who doesn't want to give a horror a chance?

JC: I don't know that you can. Everybody has their own reasons why they don't like horror movies. Maybe they get scared, or they think it's low rent filmmaking or that it's beneath them. That's fine. They can always go see Jerry Lewis movies.

AU: What is the one book you think fans of horror should read?

JC: I'm not a big fan of fiction anymore. But when I was younger, I would read the work of HP Lovecraft. He's pretty creepy. I know it sounds like a recommendation from World Literature Class, but it's good. And also, anything by Stephen King.

AU: What's your favourite video game?

JC: That's an impossible question! I began playing video games in the 90's with Sonic the Hedgehog. I loved that game, but it was damn hard. Borderlands 2. I'll say that.

AU: What monster do you identify with the most?

JC: The Mummy. The Hammer version. Because he does what he does out of love.

AU: If you were stuck with one Halloween candy for the rest of your life, what would you choose?

JC: That's the most serious question I've had all day. Wow. Milk Duds.

AU: Who have been some of your favourite actors and actresses to work with?

JC: Kurt Russell, Sam Neil, Adrienne Barbeau, Jeff Bridges, and Amber Heard.

AU: Was there any actor of actress that you wanted to work with that you never got to?

JC: Clint Eastwood and John Wayne.

AU: Was being a director always your goal?

JC: Ever since 1956, that was what I wanted to do with my life. I didn't like my options when I was finishing college, so I came out o California to go to USC film school, which is where I found my destiny.

AU: Was there a specific movie that did it?

JC: Yes, when I was eight-years-old I saw Forbidden Planet, and that was it.

AU: Which one of your own works frightens you the most?

JC: None of them! I had to make them. I know it's all fake. I was there, I saw it. Everybody is fine, and they all had a good time.

AU: What do you do to unwind or disconnect after a long day at work?

JC: Well, I used to have a couple of drinks. But I've stopped. Now, I just go to sleep. Because I'm tired after a day of directing.

AU: How do you judge a good day on set?

JC: Any day where you get the work done is a good day on set. Because you're up against time and money pressure at all times. If you finish the work for the day, you know you're on schedule.

AU: Do you believe we're being visited by beings from another world?

JC: I have no idea. That camera footage from the airplanes recently is pretty convincing though.

AU: Have you ever kept anything from your movies?

JC: Miss Pitman from Mouth of Madness.

AU: What's the one piece of advice you would give to an aspiring director?

JC: There's a lot of ways of getting into the business that were not around when I started. I would say to utilize all of them, and keep working, keep practicing, make stuff, make stuff and show it to people, and don't stop. It's a long, long hard road, but you can do it. If I did it, you can do it.

AU: If you could hangout with any of the characters that you created for a day, which one would you pick?

JC: I'd hang out with Snake Plissken. Just because he's a cool guy, I would hope some of that would rub off on me.

AU: What was the inspiration for Big Trouble in Little China?

JC: A whole lot of Asian cinema, and lots of Kung Fu movies. There was an innocence to it, that I really responded to.

AU: Any book or music you're currently enjoying?

JC: Any book on physics is good. (Editors note: Yes, he said physics.)

AU: Were there any funny moments behind the scenes of the serious movies you've made?

JC: All the time. The only time you really focus in, is when an actor is really working on their performance. The rest of the time though, I keep is as light as possible. Because it's hard working in front of the cameras, so you want to keep it light, breezy, and fun.

AU: Did you always intend to do a sequel to Escape from New York? What combination of factors eventually led to Escape from L.A.?

JC: Kurt wanted to do a sequel because he loved the character and wanted to do another. I started working with him on it, came up with a script, got it to paramount, and that was it. We just wanted to revisit that character again.

AU: What instruments can you play?

JC: I can play the guitar, the keyboards, and the bass guitar. Many years ago, I attempted to play the violin, but it was really disastrous. We don't talk about that anymore.

AU: What are some of your favourite music influences?

JC: The Beatles. I was the right age for the British Invasion, so I absolutely loved The Beatles. I love The Rolling Stones too. I love them all. Not a big fan of rap music, but maybe I just don't know

enough about it.

AU: If you could assemble the perfect band, who would you have in the band?

JC: I've always wanted to play in ZZ Top.

AU: You're noted on set as a bit of a prankster. What are some of your favourite pranks?

JC: Well, I love giving shit to the sound department. So, whenever I can, I unhook their equipment in-between setups. They're yakking away, talking to people, completely unaware. Then I go to call "Action," and get to watch the sound department go ballistic. They're a great crew though.

AU: What is the best piece of advice you've ever received in your life?

JC: My dad said to me, "the opportunity will come, just make sure you're ready for it." I give the same advice now.

AU: What was that opportunity to you?



JC: Any chance to direct a movie. The chance to make Halloween was my opportunity, and I was ready for it.

AU: Where was your favourite location to shoot, and would you ever consider moving there?

JC: We shot The Fog around Inverness, California, and I actually bought a house up there and lived there for years. The house burned down in the fires in the 90's though. That place is paradise.

AU: If you could have one of your movies turned into a video game, which one would it be?

JC: Big Trouble in Little China.

AU: How did Alice Cooper end up in Prince of Darkness?

JC: I ran into him at WrestleMania 3. We were sharing a limo and chatting about things. His manager was one of the Executive Producers on the movie, and he wanted to be in it. He's great. theofficialjohncarpenter.com

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HALLOWEEN FILM CLASSICS

John Carpenter's Prince of Darkness and The Thing

By Steve Earles

John Carpenter's Apocalypse Trilogy comprises "Prince of Darkness," a film that shares thematic threads with "The Thing" and "In The Mouth of Madness," though they are separate stories.

In "Prince of Darkness," a clandestine Roman Catholic order, The Brotherhood of Sleep, safeguards an ancient enigma concealed in a church crypt. When the last guardian perishes, a priest (Donald Pleasence) deems it impossible to keep the secret any longer. He enlists physics

professor Birack and his students to investigate a mysterious life force contained within an ancient cylinder in the crypt.

Professor Birack's lecture, challenging classical reality on a subatomic level, sets the stage for the film's unfolding mysteries.

Amidst Birack's diverse group of students, Brian Marsh and Catherine Danforth have fallen in love, an apparently trivial event that gains immense significance as the story unfolds.

The investigation unveils an ancient book, a palimpsest with erasures hinting at a dark truth. The liquid in the cylinder is revealed to be the Prince of Darkness, the Son of Satan. The book suggests that Jesus was of extraterrestrial origin and came to Earth to warn humanity. The Church concealed this reality, representing evil metaphorically rather than physically.

Chaos ensues as students fall victim to Street Schizos, including the iconic Alice Cooper. The possessed students become instruments of the Prince of Darkness.

A chilling message is delivered by the possessed Lisa—neither science nor religion can save them. Only love and self-sacrifice offer a glimmer of hope.

As the survivors attempt to escape the church, they find themselves trapped by the Street Schizos. The priest and Birack conclude that the Prince of Darkness seeks to bring his father, the Anti-God Satan, into our world through a mirror.

Shared dreams warn the uninfected survivors of a looming catastrophe beamed to their subconscious from the year 1999. A shadowy creature appears in the church doorway, and a voice warns them of a future event they must prevent.

The climax unfolds as Kelly, now the receptacle of the Prince of Darkness, attempts to bring Satan through the mirror into our world. Catherine's ultimate act of self-sacrifice hurls her and the possessed Kelly into the mirror, with the priest smashing it to trap Kelly in the Anti-

God's universe.

With the possessed no longer under demonic control, they wander aimlessly away from the church. In a final, haunting scene, Brian Marsh has a recurring dream, this time with Catherine appearing in the church doorway. The screen fades to black as he touches the bedroom mirror, bearing the same stigmata as Kelly, leaving the audience to ponder the consequences of love and sacrifice.

John Carpenter drew inspiration from quantum physics and Nigel Kneale's work, combining science and the occult to craft this thought-provoking film. Carpenter's "Prince of Darkness" remains a standout in his body of work, well-crafted, well-acted, and laden with complex themes and subtexts, making it a must-see for horror enthusiasts. Critics may have panned it, but it stands as a testament to Carpenter's unapologetic and daring storytelling.

John Carpenter's "The Thing" has aged like fine wine, becoming a cinematic masterpiece over time. Inspired by Howard Hawks, Carpenter's adaptation of John W. Campbell's "Who Goes There?" is a tale of an Antarctic research station infiltrated by a parasitic alien organism. The film downplays character development, focusing on the characters' responses to their dire situation and the erosion of their humanity.

Trust is a central theme in the film, mirroring contemporary concerns about hidden threats within society. The movie's ambiguous ending adds complexity, leaving questions about trust and identity unresolved.

The groundbreaking special effects by Rob Bottin still impress, while Ennio Morricone's haunting score contributes to the eerie atmosphere.

Despite initial disappointment, "The Thing" has found its audience, earning a spot in the National



Film Registry and Empire Magazine's list of greatest movies. A 2011 prequel renewed interest in Carpenter's work.


Carpenter's proposed sequel idea reflects the ongoing issue of trust in a world of superficial communication. He cherishes "The Thing" despite the emotional toll of criticism and understands the balance between art and business in filmmaking.

In conclusion, "The Thing" stands as a timeless masterpiece, a testament to Carpenter's enduring legacy.






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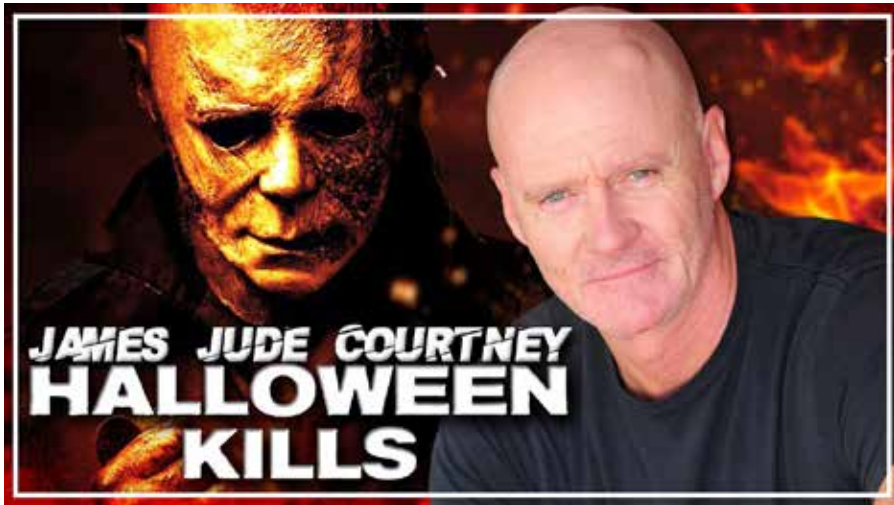
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HALLOWEEN

MICHAEL MYERS

James Jude Courtney

Whispers of Evil

Calgary Horror Con 2023

Conversation and Q&A with Michael Myers actor and stuntman, James Jude Courtney from *Halloween (2018)*, *Halloween Kills* and *Halloween Ends*.

Moderators: ReAnimate Her, A CER1AL KILL3R

AU: Where did everything start for you?

James Jude Courtney: In fourth grade I knew I was going to make movies for a living. It wasn't a dream, it wasn't a wish, I knew I was going to be a movie star. My Dad had a 1950s era Kodak Tri-Lens 8mm camera. I picked that camera up in fifth grade started making my own films. I stayed in college undergrad longer because I wanted to study things I thought pertained to making films. Things like psychology, anthropology, lots and lots of literature and of course media arts. Making films, recording my own music. I intended to go out and be an actor. That innocence really helps because expectations are a part of manifestation. I ended up in California and did a play called *Requiem for a Heavyweight*. It's a Rod Serling play. I met in that production a former instructor from the Royal Academy of the Dramatic Arts. He became my private coach. He was the one who got me an audition at Universal Studios for the live show *The Adventures of Conan*. In that show I was a double swordsman. I've done martial arts for years so that was kind of a no-brainer picking up some swords and fighting. I got thousands of stitches in that show, broken bones, concussions, it was so much fun. So they wanted me to switch characters and fight with a seven foot broadsword and do a 20-foot high fall into a flaming pit. But I was afraid of heights because as a kid I jumped off a super slide and knocked myself unconscious. But my buddy Alex Daniels, who is now the president of the Stuntmen's Association, was like, "No dude, you're not turning this money down." So he took me to Bob Yerkes' circus training ground and Bob taught me how to do high falls. Starting at 10 feet, we were working on the trapeze, within an hour he had me at 70 feet doing high falls. I did about 3,000 high falls

in that Conan show and about seven thousand sword fights. So that's what kind of opened up the actor/stuntman thing for me.

AU: Are you still practising martial arts?

JJC: I haven't been on a mat for over 10 years. However, all my experience with martial arts has influenced what I do when I'm acting. I'm not a cerebral actor, I don't make notes. It's all

experiential, it's all spiritual for me. So I breathe the character in. I let the character control my body and then when I'm done I breathe the character out. David Gordon Green, the director of *Halloween 2018*, he told me he'd only worked with one other actor who could go as deep and dark as I went. Then that poor gentleman ended up in a psych ward for two months, he had a psychotic break. But I'm immune from that because I have techniques. I have protection. I'm consciously entering into that space allowing it to own me but I consciously choose to remove it then. So I don't go to bed at night with that kind of energy. Personally I'm 66 years old and I'm still doing my own stunts. So all these things come together and gave me the little tools in my toolbox to be able to play this character.

AU: What projects are you working on now?

JJC: I'm going to do horror film. I'll play an action-oriented anti-hero in keeping with sort of the

character type that I played with Michael Myers.

AU: So taking on the character of *The Shape* in 2018's *Halloween*, how did that come about?

JJC: I got a call from the stunt coordinator from the Rob Zombie films, and he said "Hey we're doing another Halloween." I was aware of it. I was like "Yeah, cool man." He goes "Yeah, well I read this script and I called Malek Akkad and David Gordon Green. I said the script is different than any of the other Halloween scripts. You need somebody who has really deep acting chops who's also a really good stuntman to play Michael Myers." David said "Well he's got to be six foot three 200 pounds and he's got to be in his 60s, who do you know?" So that's when they called me down to be put on tape. Before I went down I watched the '78 version one time. Back in the 80s an actor named Ted Knight gave me an incredible gift, he said "If you want to be a good actor learn to emulate. Reach inside their soul and grab their essence." So I started practicing that. I never thought about the character, I made no notes, I never looked in the mirror, I never practiced. I went down and I moved on camera. We talked about the psychology of killing. After that audition, I wasn't even out of the parking lot and Blumhouse called and said "David Gordon Green wants to meet you. Can you come back?" I went

back and they just stopped everything. They knew they had the guy and that was it.

AU: What's the first real movie you worked on?

JJC: My first movie was called *Freeway Maniac*. It was a Cannon film. It sucked! It was horrible. We had no idea how to make a movie. We just went out and did it. There's not even a freeway in it. To prepare, the director and I spent a weekend in a lockdown ward with paranoid

schizophrenics who had committed murder. It's kind of odd that in that movie I played a psychopathic killer who escapes a mental institution, is pursuing a woman, and leaves a trail of bodies behind. How prescient was that? My very first movie and then all of a sudden here I am 40 years later, it's crazy.

AU: What is your favorite kill in the franchise?

JJC: The Bob kill 100%. Nothing compares to it. For me, I had so many fun kills but I think the

Cameron kill. Because it's just a nasty little touch at the end. Snapping that little fuckers neck. I mean he deserved it, man. My favourite scene in my three movies is the finale with Jamie Lee. Both she and I agree that's the most powerful thing we each have individually ever done in a movie. She did all the fighting. Jamie did all her own stuff. So that hands down is the best thing I've ever done.

AU: Does it take a lot of energy to connect to that character and create that atmosphere?

JJC: Well, the ancient Greeks wore masks and believed they were channeling spirits. They weren't pretending and I can promise you when we do what we do we're not pretending. So everything we're experiencing in those movies is real. It's real inside of us. Our bodies are being affected physiologically and hormonally. The trauma that victims are feeling is real to them. What I'm feeling when I'm killing is real to me.

AU: Do you enjoy horror conventions?

JJC: Convention people are hands down the nicest people. If the world were populated with all you guys we wouldn't need the military or cops.

AU: What are your thoughts about the controversy around *Halloween Ends*?

JJC: First and foremost making a film is very much like playing on a football team. If you can't buy into the coaches program just get out of the locker room. David Gordon Green had a game plan and he knew exactly what he was doing. I think much like *Halloween 3* it's going to become a cult classic.

AU: When *Halloween 3* originally came out the majority of the audience disliked it but now you ask people and they go "Oh I love that movie. I didn't like it at first though."

JJC: Yeah, and David knew that. He often wore Season of the Witch t-shirts when we were shooting. It wasn't subtle.

AU: Did you work with Nick Castle, the original Micheal Myers, on any of these new films?

JJC: Nick showed up at about three weeks into the first one. We've never ever talked about the character. Not one word, even though we're very close friends. He did one scene in 2018 where he's in the window when Laurie drives up and sees him. It was great because we were hoping that he could pass the torch to me. Also in *Halloween Ends*, Nick played a character called *The Flasher*.

AU: Will there be another *Halloween* movie?

JJC: If you made three movies and they grossed about \$900 million would you make another movie? So I would say the franchise is not going to die. It's very sacred for producer Malek Akkad. Which is why you'll never see a Michael versus Freddy or a Michael versus Jason. You will never see it. He will never denigrate this character. You'll also notice you never see someone who's played Michael Myers doing photo ops with a mask and a costume on. We don't do that because, for us personally, that's like a clown on the sideshow, and those of us who have played Michael Myers have too much respect for this character.

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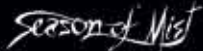
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ANTHONY CECERE

Renowned stuntman and pyro stunt expert Tony Cecere has played Ghostface in the original *Scream* (1996), the flaming Stay Puft Marshmallow Man in *Ghostbusters* and the burning Freddy Krueger from *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. He has also appeared as a stunt performer in John Carpenter's *The Thing*, *Swamp Thing*, *The Enforcer* (*Dirty Harry*), *Chopping Mall*, *Child's Play*, and many more!

This Q&A panel took place at Calgary Horror Con 2023 moderated by ReAnimate Her

AU: How did you get into stunt performing?

Tony Cecere: Well, I went to California to become an electrician but they were on a strike. So I started going to a gym down in Santa Monica and there was a bunch of stunt guys there and I progressed from there. I learned how to do fights and high falls and stuff like that. That's how I



got started in the business. I ended up doubling Robert Blake on the TV show *Baretta* for one season. Then I got into doing stunts and I met Wes Craven and then I did 20 years of Wes Craven stuff. I think I've done 19 of his movies. I started with him on *Swamp Thing*. On *Swamp Thing* Adrienne Barbeau was working on that picture and Adrienne Barbeau was married to John Carpenter. She told John Carpenter about me and then I did the burn on John Carpenter's *The Thing*. So when Wes Craven was working on *A Nightmare on Elm Street* he knew I could do fire work so he hired me for *Nightmare* where I did the stair fall on fire, which no one had ever done a stair fall on fire before. I actually developed a technique they use in the movie industry to do fire burns, where you're using just two sets of clothing to do a fire burn. Prior to that they were using great big asbestos

suits and you looked like a gorilla on fire and you couldn't move around or make it look real. So I actually developed a way to make it look real to do a fire burn. My career went on from that, one

year I did 28 fire burns. I've done other stuff other than fire burns, but I got known for that in the movie industry because I could make it look real.

AU: You did a super crazy stunt on Terminator. Can you tell us about that?

TC: Well, on *Terminator*, I was doubling Schwarzenegger when he comes out of the truck on fire. I get set up to do my fire burn and I come out of the truck on fire and I trip around and I'm supposed to fall down and die in one spot. I fall down and die in that one spot. I thought that was the end of the movie until I went to see the screening. I didn't realize a robot was going to get up and walk around for the next 20 minutes killing people.

AU: What about on Ghostbusters?

TC: When I did Stay Puft Marshmallow Man, I came in on the set and they had this fake building they wanted me to climb while on fire but I had no idea what the movie was about. I said, Sure, I'll do it. We do the fire burn the first day on *Ghostbusters* and the fire was too big. It made Stay Puft look small. So the next day we reduced the size of the fire, so we'll make him look bigger. Well, what they didn't say was on the second day the head split open and the inside of the suit caught on fire. Thankfully I was wearing my fire suit on the inside, which they advised me not to do originally.

AU: What was your craziest fire stunt?

TC: Well, the *Nightmare on Elm Street* was the toughest because I had to help supervise building the stairs I was going to fall down. I had to make sure there were no sharp spots I would tear my suit on coming down the stairs. So that was probably the toughest one because no one had ever done it before and I wasn't exactly sure how I was going to do it.

So I got to the top of the stairs on fire and I'm trying to get the door open while I'm on fire. The door comes open and I fall down the stairs and roll down to the bottom of the stairs. While I had enough time down there that I could have burned longer. So I actually get up and start back up the stairs and then it dawns on me, I have nobody at the top of the stairs to put me out. All of my safety people are down at the bottom of the stairs. So I stopped halfway up the stairs.

AU: What was it like to work with Wes Craven?

TC: Wes Craven was a great guy because he allowed you to use your own imagination. We would discuss certain things like on *People Under the Stairs*. They had multiple people falling down the stairs, I was the stunt coordinator, we had six people and so each one of them had to be different. One had to go backwards, one had to go sideways. Wes would allow a lot of people to put input in his shows, he would listen to you and then

he would decide what he wanted to do. We were discussing on one of the *Scream* movies and we were saying, "You know, we're killing too many people in the same way. We got to do something different." Wes says, "You got any ideas?" I said, "Well, when I was a kid, I seen this mafia picture where a guy puts a knife, a stiletto, on the back of a chair and kicks the knife through the chair and kills the guy. Wes said, "Now that's a good idea." He said "I'll think about it." So he came back the

next day and that's when we did the scene where the guy is tapping on the stall and the knife goes through the stall and kills the guy. He would allow you to put your input like that and then he would make it a lot better a lot of times. He was actually an English teacher before he got into the movie industry.

AU: What do you remember about working on The Hills Have Eyes 2?

TC: As a stunt coordinator, you get the script and you figure out what are stunts and how they're going to be done. Then you discuss it with the director. Well, the first time Wes and I had a disagreement was on *Hills Have Eyes 2*. They had this big Styrofoam rock that's supposed to fall on this actor. I told Wes "I think we should use a stunt guy for this. Wes said "No, no, I'm want to see his face. I want to use the actor." and I said "Okay, but I still think we should use the stunt person." Well, when the Styrofoam rock falls on the actor, he

shuts his eyes and falls on the ground and hits a real rock and gets a black eye. So for the rest of the show, this actor's got a black eye. We had to do another scene the next day. When the guy gets off the bus he says "It's kind of sunny I think I should wear my sunglasses." So through the rest of the movie, he's wearing his sunglasses. From

then on Wes pretty much listened to me when I said I thought we should use a stunt person for certain things.

AU: I heard that your daughters were cast as a couple of the jump rope girls in A Nightmare on Elm Street.

TC: Yes, there was a scene jump roping in the beginning of it. The wardrobe girl told Wes "Tony's two daughters are on set. Do you mind if we use them?" Wes said "No, not at all." So one of my daughters is turning the jump rope and the other one is holding a ball. They had to learn how to sing that song *One Two Freddy's coming for you*. My youngest daughter, who's now 35, she still hasn't seen *Elm Street* all the way through.

AU: Did it give her nightmares?

TC: Well at home I had a case with the head from *The Thing* in it, and *Freddy's* head in one, and one from *Scream*. The one from *Scream* used to glow at night so they used to take a blanket and cover it up before they went to bed at night.

AU: Can you tell us about your part in Scream?

TC: That's when Kenny gets killed in *Scream*. It was shot in one day and the footage was bad so we were re-shooting it the second day and we had no stunt person there. We still had to get the shot so I ended up doubling for Ghostface and I had to stand on an apple box in order to cut Kenny's throat. The production wouldn't pay for a stunt person to stay on contract for the full show so therefore there were different people in the *Scream* suits and we had six or seven different people

playing Ghostface.

AU: How hot was it working in the Scream mask?

TC: Well, the *Scream* mask, when we first got it, it was hard to breathe in it. So we actually cut the mouth out of it and put black cloth behind the mouth and there was already black cloth behind the eyes so you could see. The biggest things when you're doing stunt work is to being able to see and to breath. A good example of that was



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when I did John Carpenter's *The Thing* before the head splits open when Kurt Russell shoots me with a flame thrower. I have to shake my head to get the head to split open. I can't see anything until the head splits open. Once a head splits open, I can see what to do and where to go.

AU: Is there a favourite movie that you've worked on?

TC: Other than *Elm Street*, I'd have to say *Wes Craven's The Serpent and the Rainbow*. I enjoyed that. We were out of the country. We shot it down in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. You know the scene where the fellow is polishing the coffin at the beginning of the movie? That was originally shot to be the end of the film. Wes used to say you've got three pictures. He said, "You've got the one in the script, you've got the one you're really shooting, you've got the one you're editing, and all three of them are different."



AU: You also did some stunts on Rambo?

TC: I was on *Rambo: First Blood Part 2*. I'm the guy in the cane field on fire and the story behind that is they were shooting in elephant grass one day and they said "Don't worry, we can't get the sugarcane to burn." Well all the Americans didn't know the difference between sugarcane and elephant grass. So when I have to do my burn, I'm in a sugarcane field. They light me on fire and they accidentally light the field on fire too and the whole field takes off and burns and they can't see me. I hear my safety team "We can't get through it, we can't get to you." So I had to roll over and over to get out of the field for them to put me out. Well, they could never see me in the shot. So for the next two weeks in Acapulco, they pulled up all the old stubs and they brought in replacement sugarcane and put it in same spot because we'd already established that location. I did the fire burn again the next time, but we wet down the whole field before I got caught on fire.



AU: What was your involvement in *Child's Play*?

TC: I got *Child's Play* just after I did *Stay Puft*. They were going to make all the furniture three times bigger than it was and I was going to do *Chucky*. Well Ed Gale, who's a little person, he asked me "Will you teach me how to do a fire burn?" So Ed Gale actually did the fire burn on that, but I had to teach him how to do it.

AU: So there's no Academy Award for stunts, what's your thoughts on that?

TC: The stunt people have been trying for a long time to get the academy to present stunt people with Academy Awards either for the best stunt, or the best stunt coordinator. They just refuse to recognize us. Stunt people are all members of the Screen Actors Guild just like anybody else. But at

any given time, there's probably only about 200 stunt men that are making a living and about maybe 50 stunt women. So it's a tough crew to get into.

AU: If anything was to get an Academy Award, I feel like stunt performing should be because you're doing so much work. You're doing probably the hardest job of everyone.

TC: Well, way back in the old black and white days, they wanted the people to think the actors were doing the stunts so they didn't publicize it back then. But nowadays they know pretty much all of the stunts.

It's like when they say Tom Cruise does all of his own stunts. Well, there's just another stunt man that is doing the stunts beforehand to make sure most of the danger is taken out of it. Because if you're working on a picture and say you got your life savings in it, would you want the actor doing anything? Because if he gets hurt the picture gets closed down. That goes way back to on *Wild Wild West* when Robert Conrad was swinging from a chandelier and the chandelier broke. He broke his ankle and they had to pay everybody on contract until they could finish the picture.

AU: During the filming of *The Serpent and the Rainbow* there's been a lot of rumours, and it was on Shudder's *Cursed Films*, that a lot of weird stuff happened in Haiti. Did you see any of the weird stuff?

TC: We actually went to a Voodoo ceremony. They would dance around for a while and then one guy picked up a stick of ember out the fire and would start eating it and then a

woman picked a glass up off the table and started eating it. Then the Oungan would come out and put a blanket over their head they'd pass out and they'd haul them off. That was a strange show to work on. One of the other interesting things was they interviewed two people that remembered their own funerals. They remembered the coffin being nailed shut, nail went through the side of the coffin and hit the person in the jaw. They could feel it, but they couldn't scream. The other person was very incoherent. The thought behind it is the dust that they used to dust people with to make zombies would actually put people in a suspended animation, like they were asleep. Then they would take them inland and use them to make charcoal. These two people actually escaped from that and got away. But it was kind of strange how that show came about. It was actually based on Wade Davis's book. In Haiti, when they would bury people, they would put concrete over top of the grave, they said, so the dead wouldn't get up and walk.

AU: Was there any movie throughout your career that you wish you would have gotten the chance to work on?

TC: Well, I tried to get on *Firestarter*, but because I couldn't get on *Firestarter* I ended up working with Wes Craven, which was a saviour because for the next 20 years I did his shows. I worked in the film industry 44 years and out of it 22 years for Wes Craven, I would quit other shows just to go to work with Wes, He was that enjoyable to work with. Actually my two kids used to call him uncle Wes.

AU: What all did you do in *Chopping Mall*?

TC: That's too far back. I don't even remember that one and another one I did called *Chopper Chicks in Zombietown*. It's me and a girl are walking down a street on fire and a motorcycle

takes her arm off. But *Chopping Mall*? I haven't seen it in a long time. I can't really remember what I did in *Metalstorm* either. I know I rode a motorcycle out in the desert. But that's about it. Because after a while you're going to work, you're doing a job, you don't keep track of all of them. The fire stuff the reason I kept track of it is because I wanted to know after I did a burn how big the fire was and what I needed to change. I used to make my own fuel up. It depended on whether the director wanted me to light up right away, I had a low flash point or if he wanted me to start slow and as I was running build up on the fire. So I usually had a stunt guy with my camera that took pictures of me when I did a lot my stunts.

AU: Has your height ever stopped you from doubling a certain actor?

TC: No, when I doubled Schwarzenegger I was nowhere near his size, and on *Swamp Thing* the guy that I was doubling was 6'6". So a lot of the scenes you just can't tell.

AU: Has there been any close calls you've had while doing stunts?

TC: If I wouldn't have worn my fire suit inside the *Stay Puft Marshmallow Man* I would have gotten burnt.

AU: Is that the worst one then?

TC: Well, on *Rambo* I could have gotten cooked there too. But when I'm going to get on fire, I usually have two ways to put me out and two means of doing it.

AU: Anything else people should know about stunt work?

TC: The way stunt people get paid, it's the difficulty of it. If you fall down a flight of stairs that is a fire escape you get paid a lot more than falling down stairs that are padded. So we get paid on

the difficulty of the stunt and if it's ever been done before and how many times we do it. If we do it wrong we have to do it over again a second time for free. If production misses a shot and we do it right they have to pay us a second time for doing it.

AU: With Robert Englund, did you teach him to do any of the stunts himself or was it mostly just you and other stunt performers?

TC: No, it's just me and other stunts people. Other than the fire burn, I also did coming through the



mirror and fighting with her on the bed. I did the one where he falls over the railing and when the sledgehammer hits him. I think one of the guys from production did the wide arms that stretched across the alley. Wes used to have those long Freddy arms in his houses. Wes told me where he got the idea for Freddy. Up in the northern wine country when they pick grapes a lot of the pickers would tape a knife to their hand so when they grabbed the grapes they could cut it off at the same time.

AU: How has your experience at Calgary Horror Con been?

TC: Well, I'll tell you what, this one is more friendlier than the other ones. The other ones are huge and so commercialized compared this one. You get to talk to people quite a bit longer than you do at the other ones

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MY BLOODY VALENTINE
Harry Warden The Miner Speaks
Interview with actor, producer, and
stuntman Peter Cowper

This Q&A panel took place at Calgary Horror Con 2023 moderated by A CERIAL KILL3R and ReAnimate Her

AU: Tell us about yourself.

PC: My dad was in the Canadian Navy and met my mom in England. She survived the bombing Blitz in London. They dated and, "voilà!" I was born. We lived in Nova Scotia for six years in Dartmouth. Which is kind of funny because the film, My Bloody Valentine, was done on Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. So it's kind of return to sender.

Then we moved to Quebec and I learned to speak French. I played on a lot of hockey teams. I was a goaltender. Then I was drafted to go play but my friend drove us through a barbed wire fence on a motorcycle, that was the end of my hockey career.

AU: How did you get the role in My Bloody Valentine?

PC: I was in the National Theatre School of Canada doing swordplay in a Shakespeare play and trying to figure out one part using broadswords and I was knocking people's swords out of their hands. Our sword master was a stunt man from Montreal. He said, "Where did you learn to do that?" I said, "I was a sword master in high school." He said, "There's this guy I want you to meet. His name is George Mihalka and he's doing this show, I don't know what it is, but how tall are you?" I said, "Six feet." and he goes "Perfect."

So we went to George's house and when the door opened it knocked a goalie stick on the ground. I picked the goalie stick up and flipped it like I do with the pick-axe sometimes and George goes "Are you a goaltender?" I said "Yeah, and obviously you are too." He said "How tall are you?" I go "Six feet." and he said "You got the job."

So I went away for a month and a half to Nova Scotia to work on My Bloody Valentine.

After that I had 25 years of stunt work and theatre.

AU: Anything else surprising about you?

PC: A lot of people don't know but my other name is Liam Blackwood (aka Liam Blackwood). I changed my name in theatre school after I did My Bloody Valentine. My IMDb list for Liam

Blackwood is pretty strong for movies and television. But on My Bloody Valentine it's just Peter Cowper. But I've made more money doing horror conventions thanks to all the fans than I ever made doing the movie. It's amazing having people honour what we've done in the past.

AU: What other projects have you worked on?

PC: After that I did Shakespeare in the round in Regina and worked in the Centaur Theatre in Montreal. Then I did Street Justice, it was a cop show. Carl Weathers played my sergeant. Then I was on the show Bordertown. I played all the bad guys because I knew how to ride a horse.

Now I'm retired and I have a tree house building company. treehousebuilders.com

AU: How did you get ready for the role of Harry Warden The Miner in My Bloody Valentine?

PC: Well, the interesting thing was that the director of the National Theatre School was Perry Schneiderman and he was a master at Commedia dell'arte, which is Italian clown work. So we were taught how to use our bodies as actors with these specific masks and personalities. The Miner was this evil creature that had no qualms about killing. Just kill and move on. No, don't look at the kill, just kill 'em and move on. He's a psychological

machine, he has no brain, just kill. The light on his hardhat was used as a beacon, like a lighthouse, in order to latch on to somebody and that was it. You are done. You're going to die.

So that mask work helped me being in a blackened mask. To become invisible and then all of a sudden when the light came on, you were



visible and it wasn't good. It was never good.

AU: Were you able to see out of the mask?

PC: Barely. I rehearsed my kills to steps and motion. Purposely I got to Nova Scotia early and went to this utility room where they had like hundreds of pick-axes and I picked the heaviest pick-axe and I used to practice every night killing my pillow in my hotel room. Then I trained for a week and a half before we started filming. By the end I could take a walnut and crush it in my hands. So that's how strong I had to be able to stop the pick-axe before it would actually hurt the other actors...because there was no green screen. Everything you saw was the real thing.

AU: Any troubles filming in an actual mine?

PC: The methane down there was an issue for sure. We had engineers with meters and there was twice we had to stop filming. Other than that it was the wattage. Using his lamp to light a scene was sometimes all that was lighting the scene because you couldn't use lamps that were over five watts because of the methane. So in the scene where I'm breaking all the light bulbs. That was freaking people out. I am telling you. George goes "Break six light bulbs." and the electrician goes "Oh no George, just two okay?" George replied "Nope. Six. I need the rhythm for the actors to look and go "What was that?" Another bulb breaks. "Oh shit, what was that." Another one. So it's building up a crescendo of music but using light bulbs breaking.



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AU: What's your favourite kill?

PC: I guess the technical "kill" was the shower scene. Lifting the girl up and impaling her on the shower and then opening up the tap. That was kind of fun. She's still my best friend.

AU: Any other memorable kills?

PC: Here's another interesting story about when I killed the character Happy with the door opening and then boom, right through his head and up through the eyeball. I didn't have any black screening on my eyes in that shot. In the DVD, you can stop it when I go down to pick up the pick-axe and drag him back to the room and you can see right through the mask and you can see part of my face. So George goes "Cut! Cut! Cut! We could see right into the mask." Then Bob Presner, the line producer, goes "Let's just colour his face full black." and I go "There's no black people in this whole frickin' film, Bob. We can't have one black guy and he's the killer, that's not good." I was a gearhead so I said, "Why don't we just get the glasses tinted?" The next day, I had perfectly purple and black lenses in my mask.



AU: Any reason why there wasn't a sequel?

PC: Paramount didn't want to put up the money for it. George has a script and everybody that I didn't kill is going to be in that movie. So we'll see. I know the ending, you'll never guess the ending, it's just absolutely amazing.

AU: What was the bloody heart made out of?

PC: A pig's heart. One of them was. The one in the dish and at the hospital. But Burman Studio out of California did all the prosthetics and stuff like Mabel falling out of the dryer.



AU: I heard there is a story about shipping Mabel's body across the border.

PC: Customs was not too happy about that. They had to get a representative from the movie to come and clear Mabel's body and say it's not real, it's a prosthetic. Another thing, the only time anybody threw up on the set was the director when he first saw Mabel. That's a true story.

AU: Is it true that the rest of the cast didn't know that you were actually the killer throughout the whole movie?

PC: The reason I was hired as a quote unquote, stunt guy, was I was six feet tall. Everybody kept asking me "Are you six feet?" because all the other actors were six feet. So they hired me as a stunt man to do all the killing. Both Harry's killing and the Miner's killing because they didn't want the actors to know who the killer was. Because it could have been one of them. The last three pages of the script weren't even in the script and the movie was originally called The Secret.



AU: How far down was that mine?

PC: Eighteen hundred feet down and then two miles under the ocean. I went back there in February to do a charity event with Kenny Caperton, who owns the North Carolina Michael Myers house. He does these events where he goes around to different movie sites like Crystal Lake and they do sleepovers. Same for when we went back to Nova Scotia. We went around to all the different sites where I did all the killings.

AU: Did you help come up with some of the kills or was everything set for you in the script?

PC: George always had the parameter and he said "What finesse do you want to put into this?" and I said "I just want to be as still as possible, no extra movements, no embellishment." He is like, "I like that." So usually if something was good the first time, because it was so dangerous, I could have put somebody's eye out with the nail gun or a pick-axe or a knife etc. So one or two takes was it.

AU: How did you feel about the 2009 My Bloody Valentine 3D remake?

PC: There was a lot of things that weren't right. The only thing I liked in the 3D one was when the pick-axe was coming at you.

AU: When was your son born?

PC: My son was actually born on Valentine's Day.

AU: Did you keep anything from the set?

PC: I had two pickaxes and one got stolen. It was one of the original pick-axes that I used in the film. But I gave my practice pick-axe, which was twice as heavy, to my agent Sean Clark.

AU: How was the director, George Mihalka, after all that work he did on the gore, when they forced him to trim it out?

PC: Not happy. That film went back and forth to California probably six or seven times and we were on a tight schedule. We finished filming around October and it had to be out for February for Valentine's Day. The ratings board kept saying "No, we don't like that, cut that." When you cut

film you need lead off of the film to cut or else you can't put it back. It's just gone forever. So that's what happened with the auger scene when the two lovers get impaled. That's gone forever because the lead wasn't enough to create the scene anymore. When I saw it in the theatre for the first

time I was like, What the hell happened to that? What? I don't think I like being an actor because all your work is cut. So when it was put back in the Blu-ray, that was like weee!

AU: Where did they find the footage?

PC: In a cold vault. 35 mm has to be kept in a cold vault. So they found two master reels that had everything on them except for the lead that couldn't be cut to the auger scene. So that's how Shout! Factory did the double disc release.

AU: In the final fight scene, that sparking from the pick-axe is real, isn't it?

PC: Yep, that's real. T.J.'s eyes were as big as Loonies and Toonies. He was very paranoid about blowing the place up, so

when he saw the sparks he was not too happy about that.

Here's another funny story. So you know when Harry's discovered and he's chewing on an arm. Well, that arm's blood is made out of corn syrup and dye. We shot it on a Saturday and something was wrong with the lighting and they said don't worry we'll pick it up Monday. So they put the corn syrup on this sunny window over the weekend and it baked. When it came time for me to munch on the arm they loaded me up with blood and I was like Oh, I think I'm going to throw up! So that reaction you see when Harry is being discovered, that's real. That was disgusting.

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SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

Interview with founder/lead singer Mike Muir

By Ira "Suicidal" Hunter and Brady "Tendencies" Tighe

Absolute Underground: I was worried about you and the small stage. I know you're like a panther up there.

Mike Muir: They warned me before we went on. "You're going to have to be more like an animal in a cage," and I like being free.

AU: Who are we talking with today? And what are you most famous or most infamous for?

MM: It's Mike here from Suicidal Tendencies. What am I known for? That depends on who you ask. Ben was talking earlier about all the things that they call them, and I said those are the names they call you to your face, but what about the ones behind your back?

So, depending on who you talk to and what time, the answer changes. It's kind of like when someone's alive, they say one thing, when they're dead, they say another thing, you know? But it's always good excuse for them to get drunk and I don't drink, so I don't wanna die.

AU: So how did you actually get to Victoria? Did you catch the ferry or did you fly in? How is it different than a show in Vancouver?

MM: We flew from Calgary. Yeah. I forgot about the island.

We got the offer to play, and all of our fans in Vancouver were saying, "when are you going to come and play?" and when we told them about this gig, they said, "no, a real show, that's one is out on the island."

This is probably the least amount of people that we had text or message to say that they were going to the show, so we thought it was going to be a little bit different than when we play Vancouver.

So it was interesting and I said, I think this is gonna be in with the bill, I think it's gonna be one that like, there are probably a lot of people that haven't seen us, and that type of thing. But we love that.

AU: How do you think the new audience reacted?

MM: While we do our thing, you see the people are looking and they're like, "maybe I'm going to go and get away..." And they're like, they realize they can't get away, they're stuck there.

You know, I remember the first punk rock show I went to, and it was the most amazing thing. And the next week I went to another one and it was the worst show I'd ever been to. And then I realized, as I went to see different styles of music in the late 70's, early 80's, that it's not the style of whatever it is, it's the band in the moment.

And so tonight was a perfect example, it was one of those times where we're playing to an almost entirely new audience, and you see at the end of the show where people have got the big smiles and love it.

AU: Yeah. It's interesting because you played punk rock bowling and I noticed tonight you didn't play "I Saw Your Mommy." I was just joking with my wife about it. It was on the setlist, did you cut it because Rifflandia is more family-friendly? Or just because you didn't have time?

MM: We just played it with Robert Trujillo when we opened up for Metallica at the football stadium last week, which is quite a different thing. This time, we were just told, "you got four or five more songs," and then we just gotta kinda cut them off.



AU: And now Robert's son is in your band.

MM: Yes, yes, we've been playing the last few years. It's great in a number of ways. It's funny because people say, "it's like back to the future, there is a time machine!" And Ty reminds me so much of Robert at the age when he got into the band. He's an absolutely great player.

On the internet, you got stupid people saying stupid things to their two followers like, "oh, you got young people. There's thousands of people that have been playing for years!"

Dude, I was 16 when I started the band. Josh Freese was 16. Brooks was 14. Thundercat was 16 when he started playing. Different style of music, huge. His brother Ron played all the jazz stuff. He was 18.

Why do you get young people? It's like, because they're the best person for the gig, not because they're young. I realized when I was young is



there were a lot of people that spend a lot of time practicing, going to music school, there's all these people go to MIT, but when they play, it's not wrong, but it doesn't sound right, you know?

AU: This is going to be our Halloween issue do you remember any memorable old-school like Halloween shows that Suicidal would have played or who you played with? Have you ever played with the Misfits?

MM: One of the first shows we did was Mindy Ola's Ballroom, and that was with the Misfits. I can't remember if that was around Halloween or not. There was a crazy ass riot.

To me it doesn't matter what time of the year it is. Everywhere you are, that's your moment and that's what you either take advantage of or don't.

AU: The themes of your songs, like "Fucking with Me Subliminally," still apply today. What are your thoughts on that?

MM: It's interesting when we get booked to play a show. Because local radio stations will start to get requests for our songs, because we're playing there, or have just played there, and the kids calling in will think they're new songs. Not that the radio will ever play them.

However, I think now there's kind of this convergence going on, and the people that used to get bullied perse are the ones that are the bullies now. They have a problem with people that are happy. It's really unfortunate, and people are really distorting definitions to the point where they're sitting there scared of what people are saying. Why are you scared? Because if I'm not saying exactly what you want to hear, and you have a problem and then you're gonna run and try to stop it. That's fucking insane. That's what we were up against with the PMRC. But it's interesting because at schools, it used to be the teachers that reported the kids wearing Suicidal t-shirts. Now it's the kids reporting it, going to the teachers.

AU: What did you do with the newest album then to like you say to bring the relevant like a new relevance to these older ideas?

MM: I think one of the things is you don't worry about what other people do. That's what we did with our first record. The record label was concerned more with looks, and said something like, "well, you know It's actually you guys aren't that bad, but you'll never do anything looking like that and if you toned it down a bit..." I'm like, what is fucking tone it down to me?

This is the way I go to school. Do you go, did you go to school like that? You know, it's different and some people can't handle different.

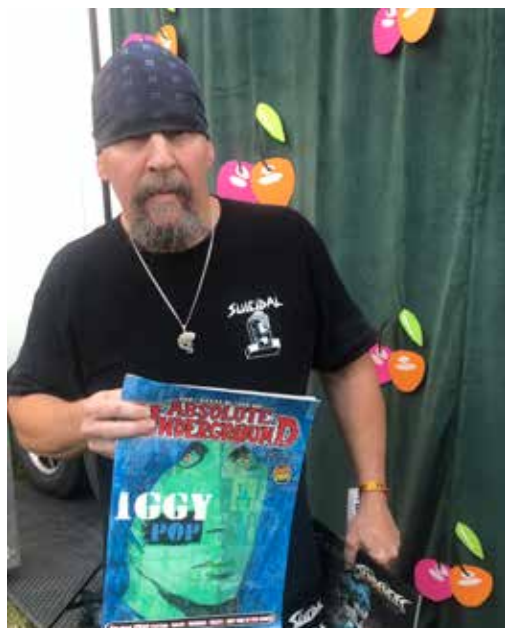
AU: Your older brother was on the Dogtown skate team and the "Possessed to Skate" video featured Natas Kaupas. What do you remember about making that video?

MM: Well Natas is from Santa Monica so I've known him when he was the little kid that was coming up. I'm five years younger than my brother, and he used to drag me to the skateboard contest so I was able to meet all the pro skaters and people like Lance Mountain, I met a lot of people that I looked up to. The good thing was that when you're like 12 and people are 17 or 18, you look up to them. But then when you're older and then you see as they start changing, you're like, what's going wrong? And a lot of times that's the drugs and the alcohol.

AU: You've never drank or done drugs?

MM: I've never done drugs, and I don't drink.

That's the lesson that I learned the hard way; the people you think you knew; are not the same people anymore. I didn't want to learn that. The "hard way," for me was to see it with my family and my friends. I've seen it with other people, and I don't want to be that person.



So, I'm the person everyone says is fucked up, but I've never done no drugs.

AU: You always have a good message in your onstage banter, do you have anything you'd like to say now?

You need to believe in yourself. That's not narcissistic, it's just a different kind of attitude. Believing in yourself is being able to sit there and go, "I'm not who I want to be this moment, but I'm fucking going to keep trying."

You have to keep going, and you have to keep swimming. Or you're going to fucking drown.

Getting to deal with yourself is a very difficult thing. You have to do that battle with yourself. I had to come to believe a lot of things my Dad said, that I didn't want to believe, even though they made sense: Tolerate, never accept, and that the

biggest war you fight is the one you fight with your mind not with your fists.

Dude, acceptance doesn't come from other people. Acceptance comes when you know you're doing your best and sometimes you have to deviate, not to take shortcuts or whatever, but to realize that there's other paths that may be better.

AU: You said onstage that before there was mosh pits, there was another name for them?

MM: We used to call it, slamming. Down at the Santa Monica Civic, we used to call

them "Police Runs," and, "Beach Runs." The beach was on one side of the Civic Center and the police station was on the other. So we'd pick a side of the center and run at the other side.

I remember after the show, the police would be lined up outside in riot gear trying to separate people, and eventually we realized that they had riot gear, but we had way numbers. And so, yeah, there was one time when we all just said, "let's fucking go." And charged them.

They rely on control and fear, and what scares people the most is when you're not scared.

Absolute Underground: Thank you! Final words for Canadian fans?

MM: Suicidal!



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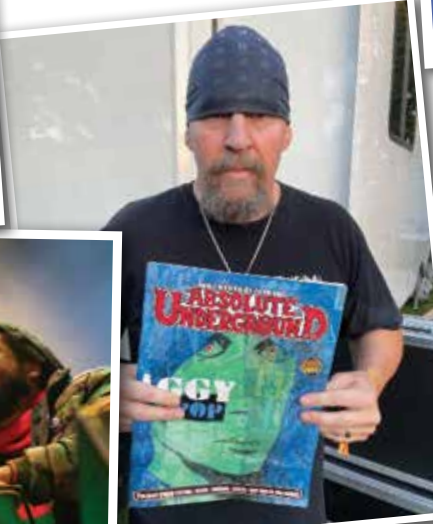
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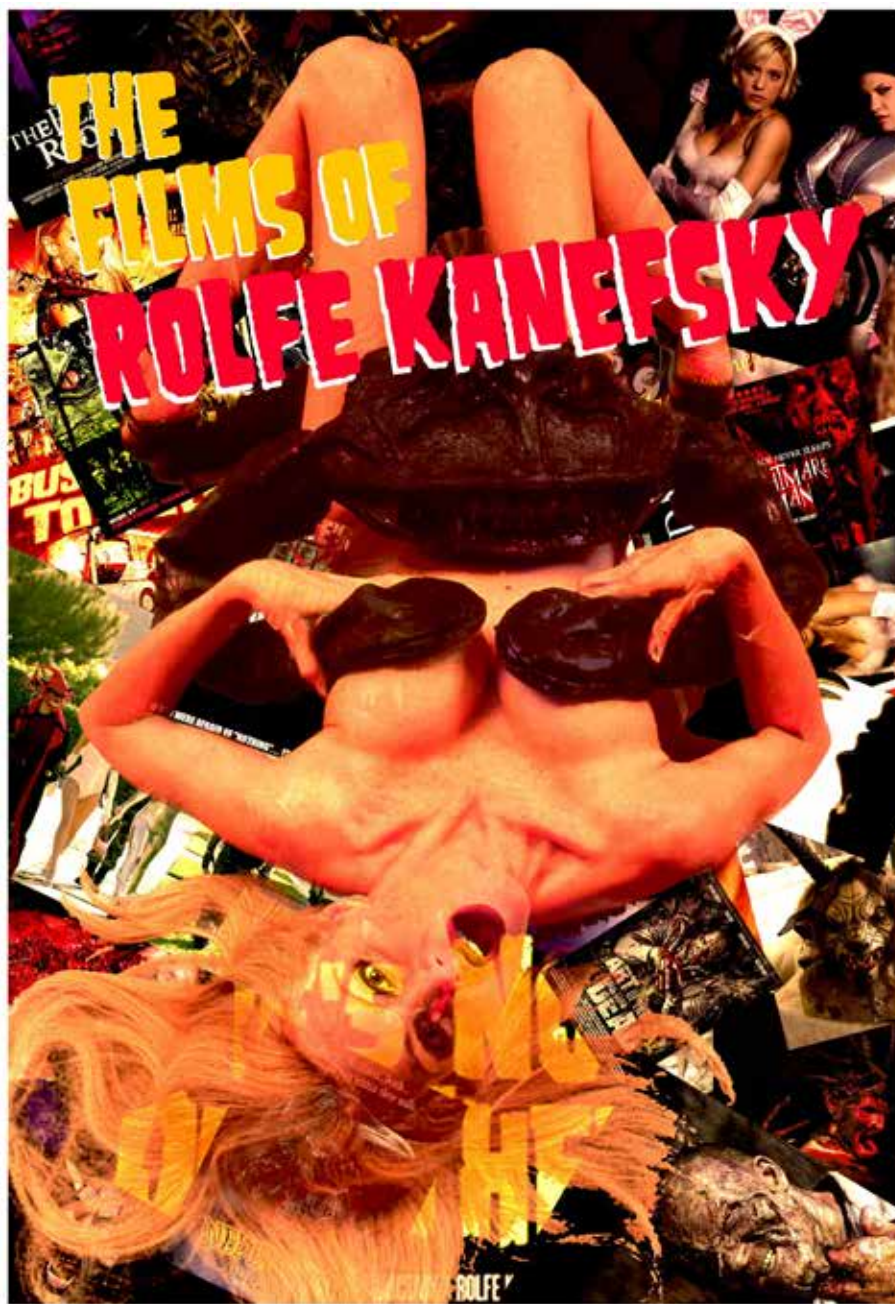
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HAPPY HALLOWEEN



ROLFE KANESKY

Filmmaker and Writer

"There's Still Nothing Out There"

Interview by Ira Hunter

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

Rolfe Kanefsky: I'm Rolfe Kanefsky and I am an independent filmmaker and writer mostly known for "There's Nothing Out There" and "Nightmare Man". Probably most infamous for my slew of late-night erotic comedies with Producer Alain Siritzky, the man behind "Emmanuelle".

AU: What are your skills to pay the bills?

RK: I'm a writer/director. I've paid more bills as a writer thanks to my ability of being fast, cheap, and good. I also have written in almost every genre.

AU: What was your first introduction to screenwriting/directing?

RK: At 14, I took a screenwriting course which lead to my first screenplay. When I got my first video camera at 13, there was no looking back. After that was many home movies that all eventually led to "There's Nothing Out There".

AU: Give us a brief history of your career in film.

RK: After some home movies that will be available for the first time ever on a special blu-ray edition of "There's Nothing Out There", I worked as a P.A. on "Troma's War" and "Posed For Murder". While in college, I took a semester off to write and direct, "There's Nothing Out There". This led to helping on a family film with Dee Wallace and Alex Vincent called "My Family Treasure". I then moved to California.

AU: How many movies have you written?

RK: Currently I have written close to 90 feature films (All produced.) Ones that I've written but not directed that I'm proud of are "Watch Your Back" aka "Killer Photo", "I'm With Me", "For Better Or Worse", "Deadly Sorority", "Lost and Found

In Rome", "Royal Blossom", "My Stepbrother Is A Vampire??".

AU: How many movies have you directed?

RK: I'll call it 28. Which includes some co-directing jobs, and a crazy short film called "Mood Boobs".

AU: Your directorial debut "There's Nothing Out There" is having a resurgence in popularity. What would you like to tell us about the film?

RK: It's the little film that could. Almost 35 years and still kicking. In fact, it's getting more and more popular with each passing year. I wrote the script when I was in high school as an experiment to see how long it would take me to write a generic exploitation film. By page five I realized that I just couldn't do it, so I added a character who had seen every horror film on video. He knows the rules of the horror genre and starts warning his friends that they may be in a horror movie. Turns out he's right and a stupid alien creature from outer space is prowling the woods looking to eat the guys and reproduce with the gals. It's a send-up of all the horror movie cliches while still delivering a fun horror/comedy adventure. Meta before Meta. I shot the film in 1989.

AU: There's a new physical release of the film planned as well?

RK: Yes! Towards the end of October 2023, Ronin Flix will be releasing a special 2 disc blu-ray with a brand new 2K transfer of the film, five commentary tracks (2 are brand new), never-before seen storyboards, all the previous interviews and special features from all of our previous DVD and blu-ray releases plus a second disc that includes over 6 hours of my home videos made mostly in the 80s! 10 features and shorts. Most never before seen including my first feature "Strength In Numbers" an action comedy thriller. This release will also have a mini-poster 16x20 of the original artwork for "There's Nothing Out There". It's a very cool release.



AU: There's also a "There's Nothing Out There" book planned. What can you tell us about that?

RK: Yep! Just today I received the latest check copy of the book. It's 424 pages complete with about 75 pages of photos and my unpublished sequel script "There's Still Nothing Out There". You'll get a history of my life through "Nothing" as an aspiring 20 year old, independently-established 30 year old filmmaker and finally a disillusioned 54 year old. Provides an unusual insight for anyone thinking about getting into this crazy business.

AU: What are your thoughts on the argument that "There's Nothing Out There" was the precursor and inspiration for the meta horror elements of Wes Craven's Scream film?

RK: That has been discussed a lot over the years. There's a wonderful short film called "Copycat" that a UK filmmaker named Charlie Lyne directed that says a lot. I actually address and give my final belief in my new "Making Nothing" book. In many ways, "Scream" has been a blessing and a curse to my career. It proved that I was on the right track but at this point, I leave it up to others to discuss how much, if at all, they believe "Scream" owes some inspiration to my little flick.

AU: Will the soundtrack for "There's Nothing Out There" be coming out on vinyl at any point?

RK: Yes, it will. I was contacted by a new label called Klaatu Records who will be releasing an awesome CD in October and next month Terror Vision Records will be putting out a 2 vinyl record of all the music from "There's Nothing Out There" with pages of liner notes and some awesome pictures. I can't wait and am amazed that there will be a soundtrack of Christopher Thomas' cool score after all this time. I really never thought this day would come. I hope people have a listen.

AU: Tell us about some of your other favourite films you've written/directed?

RK: Well, my favorite is unfortunately my lost film. In 1999, I wrote and directed a dark comedy thriller entitled "Tomorrow By Midnight" starring Carol Kane and Alexis Arquette. It's about a group of USC students who go to rent a movie and end up taking the video store hostage. It's funny, dramatic, suspenseful with some fantastic performances. It's also my most personal film in many ways. I've always said the movie is "Breakfast Club" with guns. Or "Clerks" meets "Dog Day Afternoon".

In the horror genre, I'd have to say to check out "The Hazing" aka "Dead Scared" starring Brad Dourif, Parry Shen, Nectar Rose, and Tiffany Shepis. It's my "Night of The Demons" meets "Hell Night" and "Evil Dead". Big throwback to the 80s. I am hoping to get a blu-ray of this film released with all the bells and whistles next year.

AU: How did you break into screenwriting/directing? Any advice for anyone trying to break in?

RK: Well, for me I was very lucky to have two very supportive parents who really helped finance my first film. But they did it because I had proven to them that I was ready. I was obsessed with film and knew by the age of 14 that I wanted to be a filmmaker. I had already written 7 or 8 scripts by the time I was 20 years old and had directed two feature length home movie on VHS as well as

many shorts. My two Super 8mm shorts, "Peek-A-Boo" and "Just Listen," is what finally made my parents think I was ready so we looked through my scripts and decided that "There's Nothing Out There" would be the best one. The horror market was huge in 1989 thanks to the video market so we all thought it was a "safe investment". We were wrong but were optimistic enough to move forward and make the film.

My best advise to upcoming filmmakers has always been that you must be responsible and finish everything you start. You must prove that you will make a movie and follow through with your promises. Also, the more you do, the better you get. You must learn from hands on experience. Work on independent films as much as you can. You'll see what works and what doesn't. That way you can avoid other people's mistakes while you make your own.

AU: What genre is your favourite to write or direct?

RK: Comedy has always come easy to me and there is always a sense a humor to everything I do but I love writing horror stories and thrillers. Especially with some good twists and turns. It's fun to play a game of "cat and mouse" with the audience or readers. If you can surprise the viewer, usually they will appreciate it. Love a good mystery and a great murder sequence. It's also a blast to combine horror, humor, and hotness in the same sequence. My "tongue" scene is a good example of that in "The Hazing". Also the game of truth or dare during "Nightmare Man". My "Jacqueline Hyde" and "The Black Room" is loaded with moments like this. And there's a great over the top vampire seduction/murder scene in "Sunset Society" that I'm pretty proud of.

AU: How many movies are in your personal collection at home?

RK: I'm getting close to the neighborhood of 18,000 movies and television series.

AU: Tell us about any upcoming or future projects in the works.

RK: Right now, I am hoping my script based on the comic book series "Undead Inbreds" moves forward. It's a really fun, over-the-top splatter horror/comedy. I wrote the pilot for an animated zombie series that I'm hoping gets green-lit. Can't say too much about that but I think it's very smart, funny, and current. I'm writing a new female-driven thriller right now that's based on a horrible true event. It's a pitch I had for years and it finally was approved to move to script. Fingers crossed that one will get made in the next coming month.

And I have to mention my last spec script. I just finished a brand new sequel script to "There's Nothing Out There". After a lot of thought I figured out how to continue the story and jump 35 years to the present with Mike returning that makes sense. The few people who have read it are very positive so I'm going to look into trying to find some funding. It would be fun to return to my roots after all this time.

AU: Any plans for Halloween this year?

RK: Yes. There's always an awesome 12 hour horror movie marathon that I attend at the Aero theater in California on October 28th. I don't know the line-up yet but it's always a lot of fun. I try to get to Knott's Scary Farm every year if I can afford it. And I do have some signings this

year thanks to my releases of soundtracks of my flicks, "The Hazing", "Nightmare Man" and "There's Nothing Out There" and the new TNOT blu-rays. On October 15, I and composer friend Christopher Farrell will be signing the Klaatu Records CDs at Dark Delicacies at 3:00pm. And I'll be attending a fun convention on October 22nd as well in Burbank.

AU: Best costume you ever wore for Halloween?

RK: This year I dressed up as Norma Bates, and that went over really well.

AU: Who are some of your favorite actors and actresses you've worked with?

RK: I have to say Robert Donavan, who has appeared in over 20 over my films. Robert's my good luck charm and I try to get him in everything. I started working with Robert in 1996. He can do anything.

Tiffany Shepis is a good friend, great mother, and a force of nature on a set. I've worked with her about seven times now. Check her out in my "The Hazing", "Nightmare Man", and even "Corpses" if you want to really see what she can do.

AU: What are some of your influences as a screenwriter/director?

RK: Well, it always depends on what the project is but there's no question that Sam Raimi's "Evil Dead" flicks, Tom Holland's "Fright Night", Joseph Ruben's "The Stepfather", "Zapped!", Kevin Tenney's "Night Of The Demons", and so many of the classic comedians from the 1940s like Abbott and Costello, Danny Kaye, The Marx Brothers, plus the great writers; Billy Wilder, Preston Sturges, and Rod Serling. If you went from picture to picture, I could probably name a dozen or more movies that I was inspired from or tip my pen at with inside jokes or references.

AU: What's the secret to writing a good movie script?

RK: You must know what the goal of your story is and what genre you're doing. If it's a comedy, it has to be funny. If it's a horror film, you have to find the scares. The old rule was "Write what you know". I don't really believe in that but it helps to know a little of what you're writing about. Also research is your friend. And it helps to know where your story going. Many people come up with an opening and maybe they have a rough idea of the conclusion but run into big problems in the second act. It can help to outline your story with index cards so you don't get stuck. And force yourself to finish the script. Writing is rewriting so remember, your first pass doesn't need to be perfect. It will be revised, probably countless times.

AU: Have you written any comic books as well?

RK: Funny you should ask that because just recently I was asked to be a guest writer on the eleventh issue of "Undead Inbreds" based on Joel's wild drawings. That was a first for me. My

other experience which was a little different was a project called "Mood Boobs".

Back in 2005, I made a short called "Mood Boobs" with Tiffany Shepis that became somewhat of an internet sensation and still has a following. Years later, I was approached about turning my short into a comic book series. I was okay with that and at this point 26 pages exist of "Mood Boobs" that pretty much follows my original short but with a little more hand-drawn topless nudity.

AU: What's your dream project you want to work on still?

RK: One of them is a script I wrote long ago called, "Nevermore". It a modern tale based on a bunch of Edgar Allan Poe stories. I weaved them together to create a fresh story that I would love to make one day. I've had actor such as Natasha Henstridge and Barbara Crampton interested in playing the lead but have not been able to find enough money.

I also have a thriller called, "Just Listen" with Anna Lynne McCord attached to star that I would love to make. It's my "Rear Window" meets "Repulsion".

And I have something called "Horror Fest" that would be a blast to make. Mostly takes place inside a movie theater during a horror marathon. It's a little "Popcorn" meets "The Final Girls".

AU: What's the best way for people to watch your movies currently?

RK: A bunch of the films I've written and some that I've directed are streaming on Amazon Prime and I believe 6 or 7 are currently playing on Tubi as well. Ronin Flix has "There's Nothing Out There", "The Hazing" and "Nightmare Man" streaming on many of these and other pay sites. Plus internationally MUBI is about to start running "There's Nothing Out There" and that short "Copycat". I also heard that Shout! Factory will be running three of the romantic comedies I recently wrote that turned out pretty well. I'm not sure but I think it will be playing on their streaming site eventually.

So, I believe you can find "Art Of The Dead", "The Black Room", "Pool Boy Nightmare", "Watch Your Back", "Picture Perfect Royal Christmas", "Bus Party To Hell", "Sunset Society", "The Hazing", "There's Nothing Out There", "Royal Blossom", "Nightmare Man", "The Admirer", and "Deadly Sorority" currently on-line if you search.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

RK: Thank you for reading "Everything you probably didn't know and didn't care about Rolfe Kanefsky but now do". I hope you check out some of my flicks and if you're a genre fan, you don't mind some silly humor with your horror. My films are meant to entertain with a little personal commentary thrown in for good measure.

AU: How do people find you online?

RK: Probably the best way is via facebook. I'm on that site mostly under my name, Rolfe Kanefsky. I also have a listing on the Imdb.

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Balve Cave
By Abelardo Mayoral

When Agalloch announced that their reunion show would take place at Prophecy Fest, I knew what needed to be done. I would not miss the return of one of our (my wife and I) favourite bands of all time. Soon after booking tickets and completing arrangements we learned that the venue is inside a cave.

The Cave of Balve is located in Western Germany, in a very small town called Balve, just under about an hour East of Dortmund.

The actual festival was Friday and Saturday. Thursday was a pre-fest in the camping area with a small outdoor stage and folk bands playing all day and giving away free beer.

FRIDAY

We arrived as soon as it was possible to be able to obtain the wrist bands and check out the venue. This allowed us to enjoy the setting before the bands started.

The first band that we saw perform was Disillusion, and they didn't disappoint. The sound and lights of the cave, together with a tight and professional performance made them one of the highlights of the festival.

Next up, The Vision Blake, a band of storytellers and very entertaining.

Darkspace followed, another one of the highlights of the festival. I was more familiar with the album "III" which is fast and relentless black metal. Here they performed a set of slow and hypnotic industrial metal.

My Dying Bride was next in the main stage, and performing inside a cave was the perfect visual for their majestic theatrical performance.

Amenra were the headliners of the night. They played an absorbing, melting, enveloping, dominant, and anguishing set that made each person in the audience forget there are others around. It was just Amenra and you.

SATURDAY

The day starts with E-L-R. This trio delivered their beautiful post-metal music in a beautiful way.

Saturnus delivered a tight set. They invited Paul from Novembers Doom on stage to perform the romantic track "Even Tide" off their new album "The Storm Within". A glimpse of beauty in a set marked by Thomas' impressive, brutal and deep guttural vocals.

November Doom brought their A-game and represented the American continent with high energy. With their brand of thrash infused doom-death they brought a welcomed change of pace, and did not allow the recently all too common "doom fatigue" set in.

And at this time is when I rushed myself to try to



get to the very front of the small stage to check out Dymna Lotva. I was not familiar with this band until they were announced for the festival, and I checked them out prior to the trip. This was one of the bands that got my attention the most. This band is originally from Belarus, but have now relocated to Poland, due to persecution in their

and some deep cuts as well.

The band seemed to be very happy during the duration of the performance. Instead of solemn rituals, the band engaged in more audience interaction during this set than in all ten previous times I have seen them combined. Positive energy complemented the melancholic music, and a

actively participating in protests against their government. The performance was extremely emotional, full of anguish and despair. One really felt it through the shrieking and harrowing screams of singer Nokt Aeon.



straight upfront stage presence complemented the multiple layers in the compositions. The set, the interaction all combined worked to make the audience remain attentive

Agalloch prepared for the stage behind a black curtain for what will be their first performance in over eight years. The curtain stays on during the initial intro-like riffs of Limbs, and then drops when the strong riffs come in. A majestic start that brought everyone into ecstasy. Their set-list spanned all their discography, with some classics, fan favourites

from the start to the end of the performance. Their set ended leaving the audience in a strange but good place, both satisfied and wanting more. And judging from the band members faces, there must be a lot more for us to see from Agalloch in the upcoming years.

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There are elements that conjure visions of Powell Peralta's Animal Chin ramp, in addition to Vancouver's Hastings skatepark -albeit within tighter square footage. This makes sense with Hastings completed in October 2001 and Cortes in August 2002. With much of Cortes' skatepark built with concrete wheelbarrowed in, it's a feat that the park turned out as significant as it did.

Alas, things have changed a bit over the last 20+ years though. The younger skaters that frequented the park are now adults and still others moved off island to pursue different adventures. Like most parks of this era, the surface has roughened with age as well. This is where my friends Lucy and Mac Diver come into the picture. They feel there's lots of life left and plenty of fun to be had and I agree with them.

On August 5th, 2023, Lucy put out a rallying call to have a skate jam at the park. The goal was simple: let's not forget about this great skatepark and remind locals of its relevance to the community. With many people visiting from Quadra Island, nearby Courtenay and Campbell River, Tofino, as well as a host of skaters from Victoria, I feel the beckoning call was answered *if not in skating itself, definitely with the enthusiastic partying and chilling at nearby Hague Lake.

Jimmy's North Island Adventures!

By Jimmy Miller

Part 1: Cortes Island

Getting a skatepark built anywhere is a challenge. Throw-in a smaller scene, the constantly rising cost of concrete AND multiple boat rides, then you have a battle. Thankfully Cortes Island won that fight way back in 2002.

Spearheaded by local skater Romney Shipway, alongside (then) Spectrum Skatepark's Jim Barnum, Cortes Island's skatepark has a bit of something for everyone.



Kyten Travis, frontside hip transfer

Beyond stoking the masses, Lucy and fam would love to raise awareness so the park can get upgrades, namely water. Yes, the event flyer came emblazoned with the warning/heads-up to bring your own bottled liquid(s). Skating in the summer heat is an exhausting activity and skaters (or even spectators) need to stay rehydrated. Let's get this skatepark a water fountain! Additionally, most skaters would love to have lights at their personal park but lights on Cortes would serve an important double purpose as a means to safely direct

any emergency flights towards a safe yet remote landing; let's get this park some lights!

So, how can you help? How about coming to check out next year's event and perhaps make a donation towards this valuable cause. I know I plan to trek north again and I hope to see you there. Big thanks to the Diver family, Christmas family, Who Da Hell Skates?! and Red Dragon Apparel for facilitating such a fun time.



Part 2: Sluggo's Mini Ramp

On September 9th, I had the pleasure of being invited to co-judge an event at Rob and Kelsey Boyce's mini ramp up island. The goal was to create a safe space for aspiring young rippers to feed off each other's skate energy in a fun and inclusive environment with Red Dragon Apparel and Centre Distribution as the primary sponsors.

I showed up the night prior, squeaking in just before sundown. I was treated to a nice meal and great company as my old pal Dave Boyce arrived shortly after me. Hell hath no fury like two Star Wars enthusiasts reunited so we certainly shared numerous thoughts and theories on that topic. The following morning Kelsey and I shared a nice walk, catching up, down to the nearby beach with their dog Sage. Such a beautiful location for the day to come. Fellow co-judges Graham McLean and Mike Prangnell showed up and we snuck some pre-game runs in on the ramp.

On event afternoon, with supportive families in tow, 15 rippers promptly destroyed Sluggo's

ramp. The intensity, consistency, and burgeoning camaraderie of all the invited competitors left a positive impression on me and all other attendees. Nowadays it seems every young skater can flip into and flip out of every coping trick which I bore witness to. I was also stoked on

the ratio of female to male skaters, which had an evenly balanced roster. Surely a sign of the times with so many skateparks on our island; the greater the accessibility the greater the growth.

For any up-and-coming ramp ripper that wishes they could've made it, keep shredding and posting clips.

I know that Rob's eyes are peeled for potential candidates. Also look for the contest recap on Instagram to get the gist of what went down. The future of local skating (and beyond) is in great hands and I look forward to experiencing what future events will bring!



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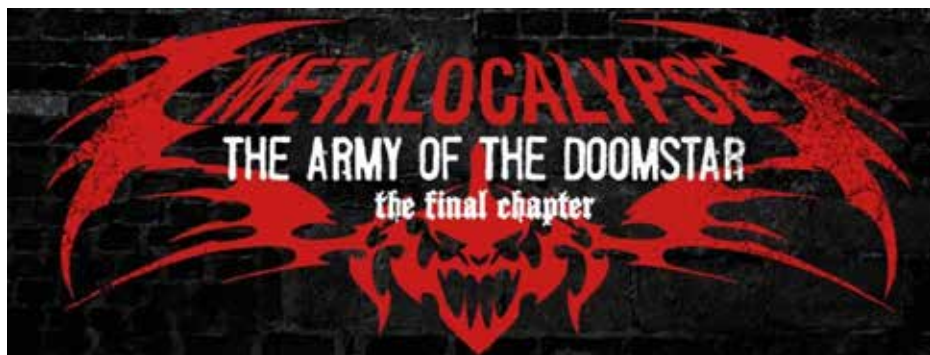
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METALCALYPSE: Army of the Doomstar and DETHKLOK Dethalbum IV

Interview with co-creator **Brendon Small**
by Ira "Thunderhorse" Hunter,
Ray "Briefcase Full of Guts" MacKay,
and Brady "Murmaider"
Tighe.

AU: What are you best known for?

Brendon Small: I'm Brendon, and I'm known for having made a couple of animated shows. One called Home Movies, the other called Metalocalypse. And Metalocalypse comes with a whole musical component through the band Dethklok that is band from the TV show.

AU: I assume Gene Hoglan is still drumming with Dethklok.

BS: Oh, yeah. If you're fan then you know I only play with one drummer, and that's Gene Hoglan. It's been Gene the whole

time and we've been on this tour for about six weeks going all across America. The movie Metalocalypse: Army of the Doomstar and the album Dethalbum IV came out about two months ago, and same with the Army of the Doomstar soundtrack album.

AU: Tell us more about the movie and the new album.

BS: The movie is the culmination of the entire series, and it's meant to be bigger, more cinematic, more exciting, and more bombastic than anything we've done before. Same with the record, it's a little bit more intense, it's a little bit heavier. And it's just kind of pushing it to the next level. And that's the idea with all this stuff is pushing it to a big conclusion.

AU: How long did it take to create the movie and also the new album?

BS: Three year. So in those three years, I made a movie with a big animation team and a bunch of collaborators. That's a pretty fast turnaround time for an animated feature. And while I was doing that, I was preparing and writing and making Dethalbum IV and the feature film score with orchestra and everything. So all those things are

going on at once while we were preparing for this gigantic tour.

AU: What's it been like touring with Babymetal from Japan?

BS: They're not joking around. They're throwing down every single night and their band is intensely heavy. It's pretty crazy.

AU: Yeah, I don't think Rob Halford would get on stage with them if he didn't think they were legit.

BS: In my eyes, they're amazing. It's a production that is honed it's built to be an intensely entertaining experience that is meant to stand aside from the normal the hesitancy to having metal show. And I think they succeed wildly in what they do. And there's a reason we're on tour with them. I know how big their audience is. And I also know that they're theatrical, and Dethklok is theatrical, we play to picture with a gigantic movie theatre sized screen. I've been doing this show for six weeks, and I don't see any naysayers. I

see people with smiles on their faces. That's all I see from our audience watching them from their audience watching us.

AU: On the soundtrack album are there any other bands featured, or is it all Dethklok?

BS: This is done exactly like how we've done every project, which is that I write the music. We don't have like Judas Priest and Metallica on the soundtrack. The soundtrack is an original score and most of it is totally instrumental, except for one spoken word thing that happens somewhere in the middle.

AU: How would you describe the current tour and live show?

BS: The way that I described our live show is a celebration of all things Metalocalypse and within

that we have songs that are from the movie and that are also on the new record. So that's part of what we're showing the audience is a couple of these new pieces with more cinematic animation. But this is the celebration of the entire project so you'll see something from every record represented. We play to picture in lockstep through a click track and the result is really cool because we have a total synergy between music and picture that the audience gets to ingest and be hypnotized by.

AU: Do you ever do sequels to your songs? What's the most enjoyable part of that?

BS: Yeah, I do. If I have a story that I need to tell, and then there's more story to tell, then it's nice to go back to a couple of the melodic ideologies and see if I can sculpt them into something that feels both familiar and new at the same time, and to continue telling this saga and shapeshift it as it moves forward.

AU: Who does the Dethklok album artwork?

BS: On three of the records it was a guy named Antonio Canobbio and on the fourth Dethalbum it was guy named Arthur Tang who he was the art director of the movie as well.

AU: Rob Halford or Bruce Dickinson?

BS: I don't really like to compare which is better. They all have a kind of an important part in my musical upbringing. So I like them both.

AU: Many years ago at Comic-Con, Jon Schnepf had these prototype Dethklok action figures. I have a Murderface one. Whatever happened with the action figure line?

BS: I don't know. I didn't have too much control over that stuff. My focus was not on the action figures. At the time it was on getting the story and the TV show produced and making the records. So any ancillary stuff was kind of out of my reach.

AU: Did you have any help writing the Metalocalypse movie?

BS: I had lots of help along the way for this movie. I had a team where we discussed story and plotted out the structure. But when it comes down to what the characters actually say, I will write a lot of stuff, I'll improvise a lot of stuff, I'll work with the actors and give them opportunities to put stuff in their own words. But for the characters that I play, I kind of go into a fugue state and they kind of take over.

AU: What characters do you do the voices for?

BS: I do a lot of the voices on the show. I do the majority of the band and a lot of ancillary

characters.

AU: Corpsegrinder got to voice the Metal Masked Assassin on the show. Who were some of the voice actors in Metalocalypse: Army of the Doomstar?

BS: Kirk Hammett, King Diamond, Mark Hamill, Jon Hamm, Laraine Newman, Thundercat, Amy Lee from Evanescence, Scott Ian from Anthrax. Lots of different people are in this thing. The movie does have a lot of voice cameos and so too did the show. That was kind of one of the things that made the show unique is that we cast people like Corpsegrinder, James Hetfield, people from Emperor and Enslaved, also Slash and Dave Grohl, and even Werner Herzog.

AU: Craziest Halloween you remember?

BS: The craziest Halloween I remember was when I overdid it on chocolate when I was 11 or 12 years old. I developed a terrible rash all over my entire body and my skin started buckling with like fat.



My eyes were swelling and my body was going into shock because I was poisoning it with too much chocolate. I had to go to a doctor and get a shot to calm me down and I threw up.

AU: Any favourite heavy metal movies?

BS: Well, the ultimate heavy metal movie for me is probably Spinal Tap. Also to me Conan is a heavy metal movie and so is Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior. Plus there's Trick or Treat (1986), Black Roses, Shock 'Em Dead, and Jon Mikl Thor's Rock 'n' Roll Nightmare.

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

BS: The new Cannibal Corpse record called Chaos Horrific. Then I got Jason Richardson's record. Jason is someone who's on this tour with us and he's a very creative guitar player.

AU: Any final words for Canadian fans?

BS: I gotta say our Vancouver show was a real highlight for us. There was just an amazing energy. People in Vancouver really love heavy metal and it's so fun to perform for them. On this whole tour I think Vancouver was one of the most rowdy shows, a real show to remember. Also I hope everyone checks out the movie and the new albums.

AU: How do people check them out?

BS: You find them wherever you stream or buy movies and music. iTunes, Amazon, on Blu-ray, and on vinyl. If you ever want to get Dethklok merch we're gonna be adding a lot more stuff in the near future.

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Photo Credit: Jim Donnelly

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Six Ways To The Ace
12" LP | 1969-70
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BLUE OIL
Blue Oil
12" LP | 1981-83
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MX-80 SOUND
Big Hits And Other Bits
12" LP | 1976
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BILLY LIAR

Crisis Actor

Interview by Chuck Andrews

Absolute Underground: Who am I speaking with, and what are you best known for?

Billy Liar: My name is Billy Liar, and I am best known for being the fastest guitar-slinger in Scotland. It's a fact. I won the race.

AU: Where are you from?

BL: Edinburgh, Scotland. Land of haggis, castles, and dormant volcanoes.

AU: Do you have a follow-up album to 2019's Some Legacy coming out soon?

BL: I do indeed. Crisis Actor drops November 3rd, and I am very excited about it. Check out the first single - Oblivion on YT & Spotify now. Be a pal and buy the record, vinyl sounds best. I bet you.

AU: What is your relationship with Pirates Press Records?

BL: I was introduced to Pirates Press Records through dear friends in Bar Stool Preachers and after various dates this year and last, we decided to go ahead, make it official and get married. Very happy to be on board. Ahoy there! Etc.

AU: How would you describe your music?

BL: Sad songs played fast; happy songs played slow. Cathartic, crushing punk rock you can scream along to with catchy melodies and fun arrangements. Your new favourite band.

AU: How long have you been a one-man band?

BL: Too long. Can you play bass?

AU: Where in the world have you toured so far?

BL: Everywhere and also nowhere. Cause they're one and the same. No for real, I've toured the UK and mainland Europe nonstop and America extensively for over 10 years.

AU: You are touring in the United States this fall I see. Have you ever toured or been there before?



BL: Yep. Ten tours at this point, I think. I've played Fest in Gainesville every single time, have also played a big outdoor stage at CMJ in NYC, did a run with Smoke Or Fire, had a lot of great times, had some shitshows too. Loved every second.

AU: Have you been to Canada yet?

BL: I haven't! Hit me up. I'd love to.

AU: You are friends with Jay McAllister who goes by the stage name Beans on Toast? I saw him at Rebellion Festival in Blackpool, UK last year. He was great!

BL: I am indeed. We've been pals since his first ever tour in Scotland in maybe 2012. We played a house show together and have played most years together since then. I have a million wonderful memories with Jay - he's an absolute sweetheart and a phenomenal songwriter.

AU: Where can everyone learn more about Billy Liar, and purchase your music and merchandise?

BL: Get the record from me at a gig or from Pirate's Press Records directly. Canada or US merch is probably cheapest for you to order from Stupid Rad. (Stupidradmerch.com/billyliar).



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Lucky in Love (with VHS)

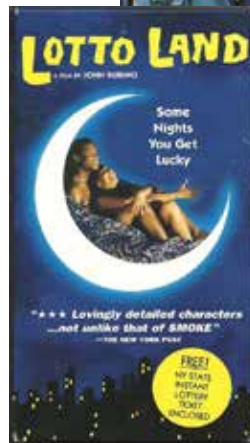
By Josh Schafer

Gimmicks encourage sales. That's a solid fact when it comes to marketing. And VHS video releases were no exception as they employed everything from 3D covers with light up eyes (Imperial Entertainment's The Dead Pit and Metamorphosis), talking boxes (Shapiro - Glickenhau's Frankenhooker), and of course, that natural allure of the almighty big box. But I had recently been sent a tape (thanks to Rob from Wild Eye Releasing!) with one of the most amusing (and well-conceived) gimmicks

I've come across: a flick called Lotto Land that, get this, offers a FREE lottery ticket inside the box! The flick itself is a mid-90s independent urban dramedy, directed by John Rubino and filmed on location in New York concerning a \$27 million dollar lottery ticket and its influence on the four main

characters. If you ever wind up sitting in front of this flick for any reason, watch for a bit part from Paul Lemos, founder and main brain for the wildly prolific and genre-defying group Controlled Bleeding.

I'm willing to speculate that the free lottery ticket only lasted for the promotional and possibly the initial retail runs for this flick. The version I have is promo only



and sports the emblem advertising the free lotto ticket, but I have yet to come across any retail versions having the same emblem. I'd like to think that the producers of the VHS would keep this awesome idea around long enough to spread into the retail world, but

until I find a copy, I can only surmise.

As for the ticket itself, the grand prize was valued at \$2,700. Kind of a random number, right? Possibly a reflection of the \$27 million ticket portrayed in the film? Either way, that's pretty penny to potentially stick in your pocket just for picking up a video, and I imagine (as I'm sure the marketing folks did!) people were apt to pick up this video as opposed to the next just because of the chance involved. And the correlation with the theme of the flick is genius. There

LUNCHMEAT



is simply no better gimmick you could tack on to this flick. And much to my surprise, I actually won a dollar on the ticket! A winner I am! Alas, there's no way the New York Lottery is going to honor this bad boy seeing as I'm about 15 years too late. Doesn't bother me, though. I find it rad that I've actually got a winning ticket; it adds to the awesomeness of this piece of VHS video nostalgia.

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LUCIFER ANNOUNCE NORTH AMERICAN CO-HEADLINE TOUR WITH OCCULT ROCK LEGENDS, COVEN, IN NOVEMBER 2023

Having just wrapped up the recording of their fifth studio album, Stockholm based heavy rock megalith LUCIFER announce that they will be touring North America with occult rock legends COVEN and L.A. doom rockers EARLY MOODS in November 2023. Tickets for the SATANIC PANIC co-headline tour of LUCIFER & COVEN are on sale now.

Singer Johanna Platow Andersson commented:

"As I write this, we are literally still in the studio recording the last few hearse screeching guitar solos, funeral

whispers and organs of our new album 'LUCIFER V'. I am excited to report that most of the songs have already been sent off to mixing at Robert Pehrsson's Studio Humbucker



(Death Breath, Tribulation, Dead Lord etc.) and I cannot wait to let this record loose.

In addition we are extremely thrilled to announce that we are finally coming back to North America and we are in phenomenal company! Together with COVEN and our special guests EARLY MOODS we are kicking off a month of SATANIC PANIC in early November and are hoping to see many of our Fallen Angels while we make our way across the USA and Canada."

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Tales of Robert Plant's Principle of Moments to the Strange Ways of a Halloween KISS!

By Clark 'Super' Mantei

In September 1982 my friend's dad left us a milkcrate of LPs of bands from the late 60s until 1982. It was here we discovered Led Zeppelin and Robert Plant. Plant released 2 LPs in '82 and '83. 'Pictures at Eleven' and 'The Principle of Moments' and the songs "In the Mood" and "Big Log" were video and radio hits.

In the last issue I ended with wishing to attend the Sat Oct 1st, 1983 concert of Robert Plant in Vancouver. Earlier in Sept I had escaped from Victoria via ferry to see Bowie without permission after mom said no. So I was not allowed to see the upcoming Plant show. So I did all my chores, attended school, worked and made her happy so she said "O.K. you can go."

So off my buddy and I ventured to the ferry (a friend charged us \$3 for gas to drive us there in his '75 Grand Prix) and then we bussed it to the Coliseum. Upon arrival there was a lady who surely had a pair of glittering golden seats for \$20 each. She paid \$15.75 each. We swooped them. Score! And now here we were attending his final show of his 1st solo tour.

The doors opened and I purchased a tour book and sat in my row 9 seat reading it as the arena filled as there was this amazing music playing. It was really neat stuff I hadn't heard prior. I told my friend "I bet this is what Plant listens too." By the time 8:30 had arrived the place was packed. It was electric.



The lights went down and these low blue lights were pointing at us as the music began and in the dry ice haze

I could see Robert walking slowly to the mic as the intro hit its peak and all the lights spun bright on Plant and he belted out "I'm in the mood for a melody" and the roar of the crowd lifted to a high. I was watching my favorite artist and his band right in front of me. I'd spent a year indulging in many shows and this was the one I most wanted to witness. I remember the movable colored lights were really low above the band to fit the moods of the songs from both LPs. The songs were played even better than the vinyl with extra improvisations within the songs to encapsulate my senses. They truly played amazingly. Robert had an incredible kick ass band. On the keyboards was Jezz Woodruff along with Bob Mayo on keys and guitar and backing vocals. Lead guitar was Robbie Blunt and on bass was Paul Martinez who Plant found in a local English pub. Their band was called 'The Honey Drippers' when they met Robert in 1981, he offered them a deal to record 2 LPs and then tour. The drummer was Phil Collins who I had only known of from the 2 Plant LPs. I myself had played drums for 4 years and was learning to play right handed as I was a lefty. This was the first time I'd ever seen a left handed drummer playing and I was blown away. I noticed some songs had programmed drum tracks so Phil could leave the kit to play the congas or the vibraphone. When he was introduced he stood up behind his kit and blasted a trumpet and I smiled. He would also turn around and was playing the new electric drums of the era. During the song "Wreckless Love" Robert and Phil performed a vocal/drum solo duo as they lifted the jam to new heights. It was sheer bliss. The track "Horizontal Departure" added "Lively Up Yourself" by the late Bob Marley in the middle. I was not yet aware of reggae style music yet I took it all in. The keyboard solo from

Jezz shook my bone marrow to the core as the low notes vibrated my whole body. 90 minutes of songs and they left the stage. The 1st encore was the song "Burning Down One Side" and then a vibraphone was wheeled out with a sign that said 'Uncle Phil the kiddies pal. Toffee, candy apples and donuts' and Phil played them during "Big Log" and it was a longer, better version that the LP. I'm amazed I remember it so clearly. I remember the fellow in front of me had 2 microphones in the air and was recording the whole show. I had never seen this being done. He also had on a shirt that said 'Genesis' on the back. Must be a bible thing I thought.

I later discovered the band Genesis and realized Phil Collins was more than just a drummer for Plant.

The 2nd encore song was "Stranger Here Than Over There" and Robert and Phil once again spun our senses with an all out psychedelic jam reminiscent of Led Zeppelin's very best works. The entire crowd was in suspended disbelief. Robert then thanked the crowd. "Thank you Vancouver. Goodnight." The lights came back on and we all left completely satisfied.

Upon leaving the arena I saw a guy selling his last t-shirt. I bought it for \$5. On the bus to the ferry home the next day a man saw my tour book. "Plant was in Vancouver last night? How was it?" I told him it was the best concert I had ever seen. I went home and thanked my mom.

I later found a recording of that concert and this year on Oct 1st I played it again and was blasted back 40 years and lived that 1983 show again. Plant played Vancouver 9 more times until 2018. I went to every show. On June 30 2018 I was able to meet Robert in person in Vancouver. I didn't know what to say to him so I told him about that magic milkcrate of LPs I discovered in 1982. He was happy to talk about those vinyl LPs from all those years ago. I told him how grateful I am to have enjoyed his music for 35 years. He smiled and shook my hand and off he went. Robert tours to this day. On that note I recommend anyone to discover any of his 12 solo LPs. All of them are great. Cheers.

Now the Halloween magic of the phenomenon of the band KISS.

I discovered KISS in Oct 1976 with the LP 'Destroyer' and at 9 years young I could not get enough of the 4 characters that made up KISS. The makeup and music was magic and I was a fan since

that first listen. That October KISS made an appearance on the 'Paul Lynne Halloween Special' and millions of family's saw KISS perform 'Detroit Rock City' and King of the Nighttime World' along with 'Beth' which was the number 1 song in America too. Margaret Hamilton replayed her 'Wicked witch of the west' character from the Wizard of Oz also. The phenomenon had begun. In 1978 we moved to Victoria and I bought a magazine with a Halloween KISS poster that had a print of their autographs. "To one and all. A happy All Hallows Eve" wrote Gene. Also that September in '78 KISS released 4 solo LPs at once. Gene Simmons solo LP is a Halloween classic to me. I play it every year as a tradition. In 1979 I dressed as Gene for Halloween too. I made high heels from wood blocks that I nailed to my shoes and then tin foil



around them. The cardboard chest I glued Styrofoam and then foil. Along with chains and wings. Once in makeup and costume mom snapped a polaroid. I was in character all over the neighborhood. I felt invincible. KISS also sold 'KISS Your Face' make-up kits and for 5 decades dressing as KISS is in the Halloween culture forever.

I wrote a story in issue 110 this past February detailing the 50th anniversary of KISS and also the 30th of KISS tribute 'ARISE!' I played The Catman. For this issue, in Oct 93 a 2nd KISS tribute called 'Strange Ways' was formed and booked a local Victoria venue called 'The Forge' to perform on none other than Halloween night. We had full costumes made to recreate the 1975 'KISS ALIVE' outfits. It was a lot of fun. The candelabras and smog along with breathing fire and the blood and smoking guitar solo made us feel we were living the dream. We were Strange Ways. A time warp back to the 1970's. I even carved 4 KISS pumpkins lit up with the 4 solo LP colors. They turned on during my drum solo in "100,000 Years" and it was a blast. We invited the audience up on stage for the finale of "Rock and Roll All Nite" and confetti rained down on everyone as we all felt magical. I'm proud to say even my father showed up as he remembered me as a kid in the



heyday of the 70's.

Let's end this with a quick chronology of KISS's Halloween events:

1973 NYC the New York Dolls hosted the first rock n roll Halloween bash at the Waldorf Astoria. Ace Frehley is present in KISS make-up. It's on YouTube.

1976 Paul Lynne Halloween Special makes every fan put on make-up year after year.

In 1982 came the release of 'Creatures of the Night' 1993 'Strange Ways' debut performance in Victoria.

1998 in Dodgers Stadium in L.A. KISS perform a 3/D live televised event for the release of the 'Psycho Circus' LP.

2012 Oct. sees the release of the 20th and final LP 'Monster' and a 40th world tour.

2011 to 2022 held official KISS Cruise ocean adventures coinciding with Halloween. The band played fan favorites and deep cuts in those shows.

For decades to come the KISS characters will be seen every Oct. 31st and I'm proud to say I experience the fun yearly.

Lastly, it's awesome to say that right here right now in 2023 KISS are still touring on the 'End of the Road' final tour. They will play a Canadian tour this November and end their 50 year run at N.Y.C.'s Madison Square Gardens this Dec 1st and 2nd. What a legacy they will leave planet Earth for eternity.

That brings this issue to a close and I wish everyone a fun time this year.

Until the next issue... Rock out and Rrrrrroll on.



ABSOLUTE PINBALL



Quazar's Pinball Reviews Tales From The Crypt Pinball

"That was a game to DIE for!"

Manufactured by Data East 1993

Written/Photographed by: N.Wairoa and a CPU

It's been a whole year since our last pinball machine review, and despite welcoming a slew of newcomers like James Bond, Alien, Cactus Canyon, and the Foo Fighters, none quite resonated with the eerie vibes we needed for a Halloween-themed issue of Absolute Underground. Enter "Tales From The Crypt," a name that echoes the infamous HBO series. As



we delve into this macabre machine, we find ourselves transported back three decades to this hauntingly dark month in 1993, when this chilling masterpiece first emerged. Now, rising again from the depths to grace our arcade floor once more, just in time for Halloween. Considered

one of Data East's finest, "Tales From The Crypt" has withstood the test of time. Some critics once labeled its play-field as cramped, but seen through the lens of modern pinball enthusiasts, it fits right in. Certain shots may test your skills, lending an air of exhilaration that caters to the seasoned player. However, fear not, it is no Rick and Morty, a game you need a sniper scope to make shots on. The play-field features a familiar enough layout, two ramps, a vertical up-kicker, drop target shots, inlanes delivering opportunities, and out-lanes delivering sadness. With three flippers at your disposal, one placed on the right side, midway up the play-field, every inch is accessible, and adorned with rubber eyeballs, begging to be smashing repeatedly.



Leafing through the original flyer, we stumble upon a time when the price of admission stood at a mere 50¢ per play. Today, as it graces the hallowed grounds of Quazar's, it remains impervious to the often seemingly inescapable clutches of inflation, inviting you to immerse yourself in its frightful, ghoulishly fun embrace for just \$1 per play. We may kid about its spine-tingling nature, but the truth is, we've removed it more than once from the arcade floor due to its artwork by the masterful duo of Kurt Andersen and Markus Rothkranz, and animations crafted by Kurt Andersen and Jack Liddon, being more gory and graphic than you would expect. To us, a point in which becomes a highlight and simply put, the reason to play this machine

Each game kicks off like many others, aiming for the elusive skill shot. However, a grim twist awaits: To launch the ball, you must reach into the mouth of a door knocker, fashioned into the

wrinkled shell of the Crypt Keeper, and depress his unholy tongue.

If timed correctly the display will show a head, freshly severed from its body by way of guillotine, flying through the air, and landing in an awaiting basket. It satisfyingly continues, escalating throughout game-play as expected. If you were just playing Toy Story 4, prepare to be shocked and horrified in the most delightfully morbid and gruesome manner imaginable.

"Tales From The Crypt Pinball" is a timeless masterpiece that beckons players, especially those with a penchant for grisly, ghastly vibes. Its

enduring appeal, despite the ravages of time, is a testament to its captivating game-play (but most) its spine-tingling aesthetics. If you seek a pinball experience that combines the nostalgia of the past with the thrill of the present, and revels in the darkness of the crypt, then this machine is an absolute must-play. Embrace the darkness, a sinister delight that awaits your every plunge into the crypt's depths.

For our more in depth walk through (and others) check out: [youtube.com/powerhousepinball](https://www.youtube.com/powerhousepinball)

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CROSSWORD NO. 94 SUMMER, 2023

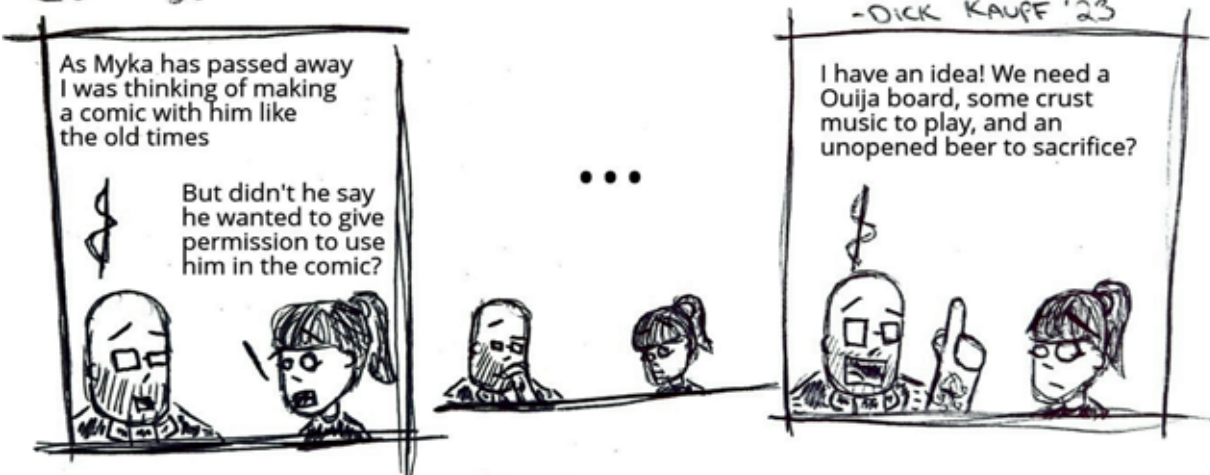
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COFFEETRATION



Absolute Album Reviews

Arbor – In Starless Night... We Follow a River of Blood!

I got it in my head that I wanted to listen to some black metal! I didn't acquire any new albums recently so as usual I hit up YouTube to see what I could find. Normally I have to do a bit of searching but literally the first band I came across was a band called Arbor! In 2023 they released a demo called "In Starless Night... We Follow A River of Blood!" This is the release I came across and by the first track I knew this one was worthy of a full listen.

It is your standard "old-school" sounding BM—and the production is super Lo-fi (think of early Burzum). More than any other band though I am reminded of Vaino! This is a good thing as Vaino produced one of my favorite black metal releases from the last few years! Automatically by reminding me of both Burzum and Vaino I will put this one up there with some of the better releases I found from 2023!

The vocals are your standard rasp and the guitar work is "super cold"—yet strangely the recordings have a bit of warmth to them. This was released on "Blood and Crescent"—something I haven't heard of before. With that said, if they are releasing acts like this I would imagine they shouldn't find it hard gaining some support within the black metal underground!

In conclusion this is not the best black metal I have heard. But again, it is some of the best I have heard in the last few months! Without doubt I'm sure fans of BM would be happy to listen to this—I know I was! So without further rambling I will just suggest you give this a listen. Or don't? It's truly up to you!

-Devin J. Meaney

Dio – Holy Diver

I had taken some time from writing and reviewing—but eventually I felt the desire to put something together. It just so happened that a few weeks before sitting down to write this I ordered myself a CD copy of Ronnie James Dio's "Holy Diver". Knowing the impact Dio had on the heavy metal scene and the world as a whole I initially thought there was no point in writing about Dio. I mean...everyone has already heard of him, haven't they? Even if a person is not a die-hard fan I'm pretty sure everyone that listens to classic metal has had his name dropped into their laps at some point in time. Still...while gathering my thoughts to pen some words I figured "What the hell?" and decided to give this amazing album a few paragraphs.

The title track "Holy Diver" is easily my favorite track on the album—followed closely by "Rainbow in the Dark". With that said there is not a single song on this CD that is not worth listening to. With 9 tracks in over 40 minutes it follows a similar formula to most 80's metal greats—but unlike the vast sea of music available from the era this stands out as a true beacon of something deserving of the word "memorable".

The guitar work is amazing—and the drum work and synths/keyboards are pretty great too!

This paired with Dio's iconic voice makes for many listens that don't get boring or grow old—and to top that off the cover art is on point and the overall atmosphere presented on this disc is at times ethereal and other-worldly!

In conclusion—this is probably one of the greatest albums from the time it was created—and I'd go as far as to say that (personally) it holds more weight than even Metallica or Megadeth. Not that either of those bands are bad—just that their music has been played so much that at times it comes off as tired or over-used. Holy Diver is something that is well known—but is still obscure enough that when listening to it you don't feel as if it is something you have heard a million times over.

Dio was a legend—and this album—well...I can say the same thing for it as well!

-Devin J. Meaney

Electric Bath – Cutting Close

After a brief search I came upon "Cutting Close" by Electric Bath! Over the past few days I cured my black metal hankering and I got my punk rock fix—so I figured it was time to get my goregrind/grindcore on!

First and foremost the music on this is straight grinding. By that I mean crunchy riffs and ping drums galore paired with noise and a grainy production tone! Something worth noting is that the low "guttural" vocals are very reminiscent of early Mortician! I wouldn't call Mortician a "grindcore" band to say the least...but vocally it is the closest comparison I can make! When it comes to the guitar I can also hear some hardcore and punk influence in the riffage!

Electric Bath is a two piece grind unit from Rochester—New York! According to the YouTube bio this is their second release after a debut in 2022! I won't bother rambling any more as this is 10 minutes long—but I will say one more thing! ...Don't you love that fucking snare? Golly gee willickers Batman!

-Devin J. Meaney

S.H.I.T. – Demo 2023

I had just finished working on some fiction early in the morning and I realized I was hankering for some punk rock! Just like with my last review I wasn't feeling like something in-depth or long—I wanted a quick blast—something fast and full on menacing!

I checked out a few demos but eventually I came to Demo 2023 by S.H.I.T.! Featuring four short tracks (two of which I believe are covers) this is just enough to get the blood rushing to your head! The guitar tone is crusty, the drums are pummeling and the vocals are purely "old-school hardcore"! Overall the sound is a bit standard but everything is put together nicely and in the long run I have no problem saying that this is something worth listening to! I mean—it's super short! But put it on a loop for three or four times and you definitely have a solid listen and a head banging session!

All of the songs on this are pretty

great but my favorite would need to be the very last one titled "Never Surrender"! I will also mention that these guys are from Ontario, Canada!

Something else worth throwing out there is that this was uploaded by "grindwar channel" on YouTube. This is a great channel for finding new music of a heavier variety...

so what are you waiting for? Hit up grindwar and listen to this demo—and hopefully you will find much more!

-Devin J. Meaney

Slant – Demo 2023

Wanting to be productive with my music writing output I decided to hit up YouTube to see what I could find. I wasn't feeling like goregrind or grindcore or death metal or anything like that so I typed "punk demo 2023" into the search bar just to see what popped up. I listened to a handful of bands that were "just ok" but after a bit I came across "Demo 2023" by Slant!

Featuring 3 short tracks this little blast of punk rock makes for a great listen to get your motor running early in the morning. The demo is less than 6 minutes long so this is not an extensive listen—but if you listen to it two or three times in a row it is just enough to get the blood flowing before some cornflakes and your morning coffee!

From reading the YouTube bio I noticed that these guys are from Seoul, South Korea! I don't know much (literally nothing) about the South Korean punk scene—but I do know one thing. If you can find bands like this I'd for sure be interested in checking out more stuff from this area!

Once again—this is a short one. But short demos are great for when you're not feeling like something full length. So give this a listen...what could it hurt?

-Devin J. Meaney

Stormkeep – Tales of Othertime

Just before sitting down to write this I was talking to the charming Mr. T of Light's Go Out Zine! He requested I do some "digging into the archives"...and it just so happened that I was on a musical journey!

Stormkeep's "Tales of Othertime" is something I listened to when it first came out. I went through a period where I listened to it religiously every few days—but eventually just as most bands do this faded into the past and for a while I had forgotten about it.

Today I have re-found it—and let me tell you this is an amazing piece of musical mastery! The atmosphere alone is enough to send you off on an epic quest within the confines of your cranium! The guitar work is absolutely excellent, the percussion is steady-fast and vicious, the synth work/keys are done well and add to the feel of the album overall and the vocals don't get old!

Now that I have re-found this I will probably listen to this a handful of times throughout the week and maybe a bit further—and just as before it will probably fade out and be lost to my memory. With that said—it is something that will not be lost completely as it is just that "epic" and after my current and near future listenings at some point in the distance I will listen yet again!

This is an amazing album—and fans of melodic black metal should revel in the offerings put forth by Stormkeep. Whether you are going on an epic quest involving goblins and faeries—or if you are just chilling alone in your room—this album is a solid choice and a sure-fire way to blow off some steam!

-Devin J. Meaney

The Runways-'Neon Angles On The Road To Ruin 1976-1978' Cherry Red Records

With all the notoriety connected with The Runaways, it's easy to forget they were actually a damn good band, as evidence by this comprehensive 5 CD collection comprising the band's four studio albums and their 'Live In Japan' album.

It's an astonishing amount of quality music to produce in such a short period of time, particularly as they band were touring hard.

CD 1 is the band's self-titled debut, which features the now classic 'Cherry Bomb', the song most associated with them.

CD 2 is their second album 'Queens of Noise', which shows a much improved band

CD 3 is the 'Live In Japan' album, a country where The Runaways were huge. It's a great live album and a lasting testament to the band.

CD 4 is the 'Waitin' For The Night' album, which, following the departure of singer Cherie Currie, has Joan Jett taking over as lead vocalist. I prefer Joan as singer, she brings a pleasingly punky edge to proceedings, and anyway, I lust love Joan Jett.

CD 5 is the band's final album 'And Now...The Runaways'. Even though the band were disintegrating behind the scenes, it's still a great album, I love their version of 'Black Leather' Listening to these albums in chronological order makes me realise just how criminally underrated The Runaways were, but then, that's often the way with trailblazers, and kudos to Cherry Red for rectifying this with this excellent package.

-Steve Earles

Toyah-'The Changeling' Cherry Red Records

'The Changeling' was originally released in 1982, but it never sounded as good as it does in this remastered edition.

What strikes me on listening to 'The Changeling' now is how utterly original and fresh it sounds. While the music in not Occult Rock in the sense of, say .Ghost or Lucifer, it is very much occult with the emotional and esoteric themes of the songs.

Toyah is without a doubt, then as now, a sensitive artist of great originality and depth.

The songs, such as 'Brave New World' (which has an amazing occult/post-apocalypse theme, filmed by the iconic Battersea Power Station, Toyah makes a great action hero), 'The Druids' and 'Street Creature' are magnificent.

There are a plethora of bonus tracks such as stand-alone single 'Good Morning Universe' (a really cheery tune to start off your day!) and interviews and demos. This is a truly magnificent package.

An added bonus is the inclusion of several images shot of Toyah for the cover of 'The Changeling' by the late Bob Carlos Clark. Every one of them could have made the cover, they are so beautiful and otherworldly, I'd love to see them released as prints.

To sum up, 'The Changeling', like Toyah herself, is still, strange, beautiful and inspiring.

-Steve Earles

AK47 (Victoria BC)

Call Them Out

Cd/ Vinyl/Digital

There's all kinds of uneasy perfection to the latest from Victoria's hardcore veterans; AK47.

You can play all its 25 blistering tracks twice in the time it takes Jamie to set up his kit for a show. You can look forward to its release soon on vinyl (eta November) a first for this band, and you can be assured that the ringing in your ears after Red Sunrise ends hasn't anything to do with volume. These songs press on your skull from both

sides.

Call Them Out is a pull no punches call to arms in part, taking aim at a fracturing world. The album turns the guns back on to oppressive and violent regimes, calls out corporate owned media and pays homage to those who have bled to regain equitable lives. In AK fashion the songs are delivered like ballistic surges of blood in your ears as you close your eyes and run towards a row of shields.

At times a sonic gut punch delivered to the cast of a guilty, insular world of corrupted politicians, military, police, and media. Other tracks pay tribute to those fallen in the local scene, pulled to the earth too early by relentless demons. (Falling) Those stripped of justice are also given a voice (Guilty As Fuck) and there are offerings of reclamation through a much needed uprising . (We Will Rise Again) Tony G told me once it was Joe Strummer who inspired him to write lyrics that count. The all-important messages in this release are included in the packaging. Lot of those quotable words would not seem out of place on a t-shirt,at,armband or sign held up at a protest. (when we speak It'll be through blood and fire)

CTO is a sonic social statement delivered loud, fast and furious, AK style by the bands long standing lineup. I've always felt the magnetic frenzy in AKs recordings and coveted live shows. The vibe is not unlike old B Lines gigs at the Tavern of the Damned, or DOA dust ups when they would roar through town. The mosh is the safer battleground here. When you hit the ground, some one will help you up and there wont be a boot on your head.

Push back and protest have always seemed to have a soundtrack historically.

I think this record qualifies.

-John Carlow

Tom Robinson Band-'The Albums 1978-1979' Cherry Red Records

The original Tom Robinson Band burned briefly but very brightly in the late '70s, and over the years their importance and influence has diminished rather than increased.

Before I talk about the music, in the case of Tom Robinson Band, causes and politics are inseparable. They were to the forefront of Rock Against Racism (like The Clash and many other brave and worthy bands), but Tom Robinson, as a gay man, courageously did so much for gay rights (what is are known as LGBT+ rights). Remember, this is a time when a gay man could be sent to prison for the so-called 'crime' of being a homosexual. Tom showed immense courage singing 'Glad To Be Gay.' Years ago, I worked with a man who had been a drummer with several notable Irish punk and new wave bands. He saw the original TRB and described them as 'incredible' and that Tom was incredibly brave. So, there you have it, from a man who was there.

All the best rock music is courageous and confrontational, and TRB were definitely both!

As Tom says: "People wanted new music that was honest, heartfelt, loud and basic-and didn't seem to care how well you could sing-which for me at least was very encouraging."

It is interesting to note that Britain's biggest radio station Radio One, didn't play any of Tom's music for at least five years ago. That's way more punk than Green Day. But then, Tom was out to change the world, not to become rich and famous.

The first disc in this excellent collection, 'Power In The Darkness', is one of the all-time great debuts. Tracks like 'Better Decide Which Side You're On', 'Grey Cortina' and 'Up Against The Wall', still sound like they were recorded yesterday. The bonus tracks are awesome, I mean '2,4,68 Motorway' wasn't actually on the original 'Power In The Darkness'!

The second disc is the 'TRB Two' follow-up album. Despite its difficult birth, it's a splendid album and time has been very kind to it. Tracks like 'Bully For You' and 'Law and Order' still sound just as relevant now as they did then. And again, the bonus tracks are superb. And again, non-album single 'Never Gonna Fall In Love... (Again)', one of my all time favourite songs, co-written by Elton John, is a non-album single.

-Steve Earles

Bad News-'Every Mistake Imaginable-The Frilly Pink Years 1987-1988' Cherry Red Records

The origins of Bad News lie in cult '80s comedy show 'The Comic Strip Presents' which ran on Channel 4, then a ground-breaking station. Bad News first appeared in a 1983 episode called Bad News Tour, a day in the life of heavy metal band. This preceded the release of 'This Is Spinal Tap' by more than a year. Bad News were singer and guitarist Vim Fuego (played by Ade Edmondson), bassist Colin Grigson (Rik Mayall), drummer Spider Webb (Colin Richardson) and Guitarist Dan Dennis (Nigel Planer).

When you consider that three-quarters of Bad News appeared in cult TV series 'The Young Ones' (Rik Mayall, Ade Edmondson and Nigel Planer), you get an idea of how funny Bad News were.

And they were bloody funny, as Mick Wall memorably said, heavy metal should be able to laugh at itself occasionally!

And in the '80s there were lots of bands who looked as stupid as Bad News, and they were bloody serious!

Music-wise too, they actually don't send bad, in 1983, there were plenty of New Wave of British Heavy metal bands that sounded pretty similar, and again, they were bloody serious!

Bad News's hysterical massacre of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' aside, the songs are good craic, and anyway, they were never meant to be taken bloody seriously!

Much here for fans of 'The Young Ones' 'Spinal Tap' and crazed comedy in general to love.

-Steve Earles

The Cold Blooded Hearts-'The Cold Light of Day' Cherry Red Records

Formed by in 2015, The Cold Blooded hearts finally release their debut studio album. Consisting of British soccer icon Gareth Ainsworth, who formerly played for QPR, Wimbledon and Wycombe Wanderer, and who now manages Queens Park Rangers [he probably knows his way around their grounds by now!] as frontman, along with guitarist/songwriter Lee-Van Sergeant, bassist Ron Campbell, and drummer Luke Sergeant, The Cold Blooded Hearts play Classic rock in the vein of early Whitesnake, Deep Purple and Asia. They aren't reinventing the wheel, but they play with passion and sincerity, and anyone who loves the aforementioned bands will find much to like here.

The production of 'The Cold Light of Day' is excellent, not surprising since it was produced by legendary Yes keyboardist Geoff Downes.

Overall, this is sincere music coming from a place of friendship. Classic Rock finds will find it ticks all their boxes.

-Steve Earles

Bloodrhine – Bloodrhine

Two cups of black coffee, a spin of this album, and you will be capable of running through walls. Members of Bison and Black Wizard have come together to make me headbang. Mission accomplished. There is the sound of experience and skill in this record, you feel that the band is in control of what they're playing, and the production supports the music, instead of drowning it behind walls of gimmick. Riffs and volume above all.

- Brady Tighe

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**Beast in Black
Dance with the Dead**

September 22, 2023, Dickens, Calgary AB

Right smack in the middle of Beast in Black's 2023 North American tour was this sold out show in Calgary. Let's get into it.

Opening was synth/metal band Dance with the Dead, who came to town about a year ago to this day with Magic Sword. Guitar-driven synthwave comes across great live, though when comparing their live sound to the sounds produced on their albums, there is somewhat of a difference - the metal is more pronounced and while the synths are audible, they become more of a backing element. Nonetheless, Dance with the Dead is a must for fans of synthwave, metal and horror films and the fans who didn't know them here were praising them as a perfect opener for Beast in Black.

Ghost in the Shell-esque half naked and half-assembled robot women in glass tubes were unveiled on either side of the drum kit as the men from Finland, wearing neon glasses to match their neon guitars, emerged on stage. Combining power metal with cyberpunk is as appealing as merging metal with synth, and indeed Beast in Black and Dance with the Dead together was like a Creepshow/Blade Runner double feature.

They gave the fans what they wanted - a techno-dump of songs from their three albums, including "To the Last Drop of Blood". "Oceandeeep" was the true stadium moment, when all the phone flashlights came out for the start-soft end-heavy ballad, just one of Yannis Papadopoulos' high points. He's a modern day Halford. Their name may be Beast in Black, though Priest in Black may more accurately describe them.

- Ryan Dyer

**Avatar
Orbit Culture
The Native Howl**

October 1, Macewan Hall, Calgary, AB.

Having unfortunately missed the dark carnival running through town via Violent J's Three Headed Monster, it was imperative to see the next sick circus with Avatar's return to Calgary.

First off though, were the warmer uppers - Swedish buddies Orbit Culture and Detroit-based thrash grass grapplers The Native Howl. When they came to Calgary

behind the weird face paint, there is a lot of humanity to their music in a similar sense to Devin Townsend and his Strapping Young Lad days - it is extreme though emotionally cathartic.

I've compared them to Rammstein before (their groove in some songs could be from the Germans, like "Colossus"), and noticed more similarities in the structure of their show this time: a piano was brought on stage for "Tower," for Eckerström to perform solo, Eckerström went out into the audience to make balloon animals, a gimp helper brought out a present which contained balloons, and then in an Alice Cooper moment, Eckerström's head. He took the balloons and the band went back to their roots for "Black Waltz," the song that introduced the jester persona that has worked so well for the band. Basically, they give the fans the songs they want but offer enough on and off stage antics to keep a non-fan interested for the two hours they are up there. Which bands, besides the huge ones like Metallica or Iron Maiden, give that long of a show?

As it was an all ages show, families were in the venue - something that Eckerström acknowledged and stated he was proud of. Indeed, when listening to songs like "Hail the Apocalypse," it's hard to imagine it being family-friendly entertainment. Still, the adult world of concerts isn't a completely PG-rated place. When the band started up "Smells like a Freak Show," it indeed did smell sorta like one, with a whiff of weed hitting the air. A dad then said to his two young boys wearing Avatar t-shirts, "Let's go. Now."

- Ryan Dyer

**Avatar
The Native Howl
Orbit Culture
October 4th, Commodore Ballroom,
Vancouver, BC**

On October 4th, Swedish band Avatar made a stop at Vancouver's Commodore Ballroom.

Kicking off the night was Detroit's The Native Howl who describe themselves as thrash bluegrass. With the four main instruments on

stage consisting of mandolin, banjo, bass guitar and drums, the crowd was not prepared for the absolute riot that occurred when they performed their mashup of Metallica's 'Harvester Of Sorrow' and 'Man Of Constant Sorrow' from the O' Brother Where Art Thou soundtrack. Their version 'Harvester Of Constant Sorrow' was an odyssey

in itself of thrash drumming and Southern harmonies that tipped the crowd from interested listeners to active participants in hellbilly stomping.

Next up was Swedish black metal band Orbit Culture, who came onstage to be greeted by people excited to throw down in the pit.

If The Native Howl got the crowd steaming, Orbit Culture brought it up to a swift boil

before (opening for Airbourne), The Native Howl were without a drummer, with their vocalist (who still looks like WWE's Elias) stepping on a bass drum pedal with his bare foot in order to keep some sort of beat. They had a drummer this night, but didn't even mention their last somewhat awkward stop here. Come on, Native Howl, acknowledge it - keep the story going.

Orbit Culture I came across before when doing up a Halloween playlist (bands who did songs about Michael Myers or have covered the theme song). I hadn't actually listened to their original material, though. The Swedes had a very bottom-heavy sound, which sounded somewhat murky at this venue. As the heaviest band of this show, they were like a bouncer beating you up and taking your money before throwing you into the Avatar circus tent to let the clowns have their way with you.

With their new album *Dance Devil* *Dance* now out, the Swedish metal carnival known as Avatar embarked on their Chimp Mosh Pit Tour, which saw them hitting up many cities Avatar had previously played, with both the fans and the band wanting



another sweaty, passionate night together. It was seen in the audience - the people were painted up like Johannes Eckerström, showing that like ICP and their Juggalos, the cult of Avatar is indeed growing. Still, it does feel like a secret club when seeing Avatar - most of the folks I would see at other metal shows were not at this concert - which is a shame because Avatar bring one of the most exciting live shows around and if you see

with a swirling pit of hair and gritted teeth that culminated in an absolute monster wall-of-death that parted leaving a Gandalf-coded older gentleman serenely leaning on his cane in the centre of the Commodore Ballroom floor before lead singer Niklas Karlsson signaled the crowd to smash back together and annihilate our gentleman in the middle. I echo the band's later sentiments when I say that I hope that man is OK. The moment will live on in Vancouver metal scene infamy and the videos online are glorious.

Formed in 2001, Avatar have used their years as a band to put together a show that makes good on the rumour that their act will melt faces.

Absolute Live

Propelling the show, guitarists Tim Öhrström and Jonas Kungen Jarlsby were perfectly synced up with their matching guitars roaring when they weren't competing with each other in a riff-off.

At one point Jarlsby comes out on stage crowned and bedecked in finery befitting the king of shredding that he surely is. The crowd of vassals yell their approval for this mighty lord of the axe.

About three quarters into the show a piano is brought on stage and Ringmaster Johannes sits down and plays 'Tower'; a tender ballad that with the help of a smoke machine transports us all to where everyone



Cohesive and comfortable together on stage, they know exactly how to work their audience with Ringmaster/lead singer Johannes Eckerström at the forefront.

Launching into their set with the title track and first single off of their latest album 'Dance Devil Dance' was a one way ticket to sonic pound town and everyone was aboard the good train Avatar.

Part clown/part violent maestro, Eckerström grinningly beseeches the rowdy audience to 'Step inside the circle/Jump and turn around' and the people do just that as a human caldera forms in the middle of the ballroom floor.

With the crowd firmly in hand, drummer John Alfresson plays explosively while managing to move like an automaton, throwing blistering looks in to the audience as though to say "is that all you've got?" This frenzy onstage goes on until the fourth song where everyone is encouraged to let out their inner animal to the sound of bass guitarist Henrik Sandelin smashing out his part in "Chimp Mosh Pit."

Not just a cool name for a song, Chimp Mosh Pit is also the name of this tour, having four shows left before it winds up and becomes known in 2024 as The Great Metal Circus.

Moving on from there we get to the seventh song "For The Swarm," which one can safely assume made stocks in ibuprofen go up the next day as people dealt with self-inflicted whiplash. (It's me. I'm people. I got whiplash)

can hide and be safe together. At least that's what he tells us but the imagery of the song lyrics tell two different tales. Though ominous, the ballad gives the audience a minute to catch their breath and figure out where bruises might show up tomorrow.

This encore is a bit different.

Not content to simply clap, woo or scream, the audience begins a coordinated effort of stomping in unison and calling out to Avatar. The chant gave no room for refusal and before the usual few minutes of din had time to pass by, the band was compelled back to the stage where Johannes bargained with the crowd to do one to five songs depending on everyone's attitude. At one point Johannes blows a raspberry at the crowd and skips off stage while proclaiming that we will get no more songs unless we behave. The crowd capitulates and we are promised three more that conclude with "Hail The Apocalypse" from the 2014 album of the same name.

All in all, the show was one of the best that I've seen in years in terms of showmanship, audience appreciation, technical precision and onstage camaraderie.

Heck, I didn't even tell you about the balloon animal or the moment that made me mentally coin the term 'trom-boner'.

If you can see them, see them.

-Renee Hutchinson

Photos by Colin Smith

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BLOODRHINE
Self-Titled EP to Release November 17th
New band featuring members of Black Wizard and Bison

Fans of Vancouver heavy metal mainstays Black Wizard will be excited to see founding members Adam Grant and Eugene Parkomenko, as well as lifelong friend and most recent Wiz bassist Kent Law, shuffle the deck and return with Bloodrhine! A new force to be reckoned with. For fans of Necrot, Power Trip, Midnight and Slayer. In this trio, Grant

and Law trade places on bass and guitar, and ditch the twin leads, for a faster, dirtier, heavier sound. Stepping up to the writing table with undeniable original riffs, Law demonstrates his shredding prowess and leaves nothing missing from this leaner and meaner configuration of rockers. As the beat behind it all, Parkomenko delivers the kind of steady and devastating performance his career as a percussionist has been defined by. Bloodrhine is ready to open a new chapter of heavy music offerings to the world, and welcome old and new fans on a sonic journey to the depths and back. Recorded with Mike Kraushaur at Little Red Sounds in New Westminster, BC, and featuring logo art from Adam Vick, Bloodrhine's eponymous EP is set to be released both physically and digitally via Heartache No.2 Records.

[instagram.com/BLOODRHINE.BAND](https://www.instagram.com/BLOODRHINE.BAND)

CONCRETE GRAVE

BC Skins

Interview with Mike and Daz (Guitars and Vocals)

By Chuck Andrews
 Absolute Underground:
 Who am I speaking with and what do you do in the band?

Concrete Grave: Mike and Daz, guitar and vocals
AU: Who else is in the band?

CG (Mike): Will plays drums. J-Man plays bass.

AU: When did Concrete Grave form?

CG (Mike): Concrete Grave initially formed in spring of 2022 as a one off demo written for fun, though I had written more. Nothing really happened with it for about a year. Our friend Jon played bass on that first track too.

CG (Daz): After crashing a Split Arrows jam we recorded an impromptu demo. Then some time passed and we decided to do more since we are all good friends.

AU: Where are you guys from?

CG (Mike): Victoria, BC.

AU: Who are some of your influences?

CG (Mike): Our influences are classic mid to late 80s and 90s Oi! bands such as Section 5, Boisterous, Distortion and Revolt.

CG (Daz): Major Accident, The Crack, The Magnificent to name a few.

AU: What other bands do you guys play in?

CG (Mike): Will, Jord, and I play in No Heart, and Jord and I also play in Crosshairs. Daz and Jord played in IQ 78 recently.

AU: When and where is your next show? And who are you playing with?

CG (Mike): We are playing with our friends Black Dogs from Winnipeg in our friend's basement,

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here in Victoria on Saturday October 28th. We are also playing with Doug and the Slugs in Vancouver in the new year.

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

CG (Daz): Definitely the people, for a small community with a lack of venues, the friends and familiar faces

make it all really work and we are happy with what we've got.

AU: Are we going to be seeing more shows from Concrete Grave in the near future?

CG (Mike) The Aforementioned Vancouver gig, and if people want us to play other Oi! gigs in BC we will be there.

AU: Do you guys have any recordings that are going to be released anytime soon?

CG (Mike): We have a 5 song EP entitled "BC Skins" coming out on cassette in October, through Attack with Force Records, which is our friend Tony's label. They are based in Saskatoon, they do cult cassette releases for western Canadian punk, Oi!, and metal bands. We will also have a song on a vinyl compilation put out by Last Years Youth Records next year.

AU: Who are your favourite Victoria and Vancouver bands currently?

CG (Mike): Neurospasm from Victoria (Betty Ford alumni), Toy Tiger, Buzzers and Phane from Vancouver.

CG (Daz): Tough one, as I don't want to leave anyone out. Buzzers, Toy Tiger, Bishops Green, No Heart, Bug, and Tranzmitors to name a few.

AU: Do you guys have a social media page where people can check out your music, upcoming events, etc?

CG (Mike): No, we aren't bothering with that stuff.

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

CG (Mike): VCS rules, OK?

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BACKSTAGE PASS - VENUE PROFILE



QUADRA HOUSE (VICTORIA)

Interview with Organizer/ Operator Rylan Anderson

By John Carlow

Photos By Finding Charlotte
Photography

AU: Please introduce yourself.

QH: Rylan Anderson, the operator and organizer for the Quadra House. Member of Safe Decisions, Dirtnap, Skum Shine, Hippiecritz and a couple other passion projects.

AU: When did Quadra House host its first show?

QH: Maybe two years ago now? We try and put on one show a month every month of the year. Generally, that is what I'm aiming for. I would host more but since this is a house venue with neighbours, we have to keep a balance that keeps everyone happy. We generally have pretty cool neighbours, as long as we shut everything down by 10 pm they leave us alone. Sometimes they even come rock out with us! We are lucky that the people who usually come out to the shows here are very respectful of the space. I'm very grateful for that!

AU: Did you have it in your head to do more than one show here?

QH: Not at first no. There was such a lack of venues in Victoria after covid, and after Logan's shut down. I was playing in a few bands, and we were rehearsing here in my basement and trying to get shows with very little luck. Eventually I was just like, screw it lets just host a show here and see how it goes. It went very well, and people were so appreciative to have an all ages venue in town again, that it inspired me to keep booking more shows here. The Victoria scene really needs

the venues! I started booking bands (besides just my own,) and now I have touring bands asking me to book here all the time.

AU: How many shows have you hosted to date?

QH: I'd have to go back and count all the posters. A show every month for 2 years roughly, but sometimes we did double on certain months. We also throw more relaxed folk shows here as well that I will do multiple of in a month, since the acoustic shows aren't near as loud for

the neighbors. I'll give you an estimate of 30!

AU: What motivated you to create a basement venue?

QH: Well I've almost always found ways to turn my house into a place where I can share my music with people. I lived at a place called the "Hell House" in Vancouver for three years and we did the same thing there, turning our basement into a venue and putting on punk shows there. The Quadra House has been something I've taken a lot more seriously. We released a compilation album, as it doubles as a recording studio, and I've started recording and producing some local bands.

There's really only one local punk venue, being the Phoenix. Sometimes the Little Fernwood will book stuff, which is great! But as a musician who lives here, its very difficult to get gigs here, and for touring bands, to justify the ferry cost they need a solid venue that can promise a good turn out. I like to think the Quadra House is that venue for a lot of bands who've come through here.

AU: Who has played here?

QH: Fully Crazyed, Knife Manual, Hung Up, Dead Rights, Zero Coping Skills, Greg Rekus, Gnar Gnars, Moonbather, Mr. Awesome, Mean Bikini, Safe Decisions, Dirtnap, The Hex, The TV Dead, Overdose, KNOX, Grawlix, Danger Box, Coyotes In The Meadow, Skum Shine, Job Site, a bunch of grindcore bands that I can't read the band names of in the crazy font; and so many more. I released a compilation CD that's up on Bandcamp, with 28 original songs from 28 different bands who have played here over the past couple years. Check that out if you want some good local Vancouver Island hardcore!*

AU: What do you have setup as permanent infrastructure?

QH: We have a PA system with 4 speakers and 2 monitors. I provide a basic drum kit, bass amp and

guitar cab for back-line. The basement has low ceilings, so we have Christmas lights and stuff like that stapled up. I would love to invest a bit more money into a nicer PA and some better monitors, but that will come with time. I'm not making any money off the shows, as it all goes to the bands. I have been financially supporting the sound system down there on my own, and I am not a rich man. We work with what we have.

I've had close to 100 people in here before and I would say that was our capacity. Its standard basement size so for the big shows you get that proper sweaty cramped basement vibe that us punks love so much.

AU: How has response been?

QH: The response has been incredible. The gratitude expressed to me from the scene for providing this space has been something I didn't expect, and has been a huge motivator in keeping this venue up and running for as long as I can. Feels almost like a service to the scene now, and I'm more than happy to pour myself into this. I believe in the importance of the punk scene and how much it has meant to me my entire life. I love being able to provide a space for young punks to come and play their songs and have their friends mosh and dance. It's something that will never get old for me.

AU: Neighbours? Noise complaints?

QH: We had some at the beginning, but generally just during rehearsals. I used to rent this space out as a jam space for awhile until the venue and studio kind of took over. But we had to invest

some money into doing some sound proofing, I've got packing blankets over all the walls and sound dampeners everywhere I can fit them. We haven't had a noise complaint in over a year.

AU: Funniest / most unusual thing to happen at a show so far?

QH: Funniest moments are usually when people try to crowd surf in here, cause the ceiling is so low people get pushed right up against it. Seems to be an unpleasant experience for the crowd surfer but usually a good laugh for the crowd and bands.

AU: Plans looking forward?

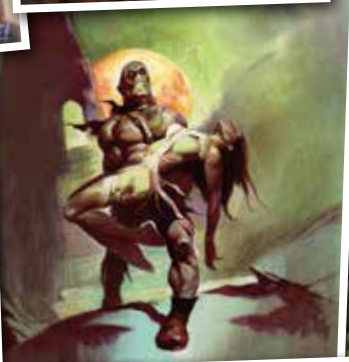
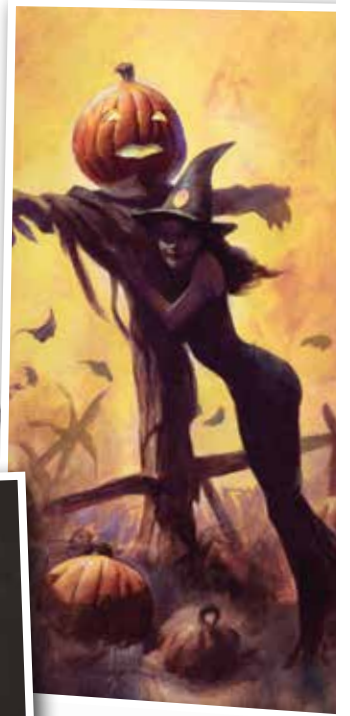
QH: Keep hosting shows and providing a safe space for bands and fans to come and rock out together. I've thought about starting a label and providing free studio time to bands, but that's something I need to do more research on. I've recorded Dirtnap and Oh Deer here and have a few more projects lined up to record in the fall. I have my degree as an audio engineer, and I didn't put it to much use until recently when I finally had the financial freedom to buy some gear and get an actual studio set up. I really enjoy recording and producing bands. One thing that won't stop is the shows. You can count on once a month always having a Quadra House show to go to let the demons out and support some local music!

The Quadra House is on Facebook

* Quadra House "The Head Smasher" Compilation:



Mike Hoffman



MIKE HOFFMAN

Comic Book Legend

Interview by Raymond MacKay

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

Mike Hoffman: Mike Hoffman here, I sell original art, drawings and paintings. I've created 200 publications. Plus, I also teach art online.

AU: When did you first become interested in art and comic books?

MH: Probably around 1967 for comics, but I'd always been drawing, just like most kids do.

AU: Who were some of your favorite artists that influenced you early on?

MH: Jack Kirby first, then Jim Steranko, then Frank Frazetta. I got away from influences ASAP because my goal was to learn the skills, not to copy anyone.

AU: How did you first get involved in the comic industry? What was some of your first published work?

MH: I started with small publishers in the late 80's, eventually doing work for Marvel and DC comics in the 90's. I did Batman, Swamp Thing, and others. Then I left that to create my own stuff.

AU: How would you describe your artistic style?

MH: I have dozens; cartoon-y ones, realistic ones, kid's books styles, and one I call Wonky.

AU: Tell us about some of your current/ongoing comic book titles.

MH: The only regular comics project I do is publish a Horror magazine called EYRIE, which is on issue #16 right now.

AU: What are some of your career highlights and works you are most proud of?

MH: Meeting Frank Frazetta, making half a million bucks on eBay, and having my artwork in collections around the world.

COMIC BOOK ICONS

AU: What do you think is the secret to writing a solid comic book script?

MH: Making a personal statement based on your own life experience.

AU: We understand you're also a musician. Tell us about your music career and your songs and albums.

MH: I apply as much craft to music as art, but it has never brought in as much income, unfortunately. That's my biggest career disappointment.

AU: You've worked with Jon Mikl Thor on some artwork for his albums. What did you do and what was that like?

MH: I contacted him with the idea for an album "Beastwomen from the Center of the Earth", we each did six tracks then went on tour in Canada. I created a comic for that as well.

AU: What sorts of bands are you into?

MH: I stopped listening to other people in the 1980's, and focused on my own music.

AU: How/Where can people find your music?

MH: Through my website there's a link to downloads on Payhip, and my Monster University and Arturo Bastard stuff is on most streaming platforms.

AU: Any upcoming projects to promote?

MH: EYRIE Magazine, and a new book called Secrets of Creating Comics.

AU: What is something about you that people would be surprised to learn?

MH: I was a slave trader in Turkey in 400BC.

AU: Any advice for someone trying to break into the comic book industry nowadays?

MH: Bring real life experience to your work, and don't be influenced by the comic scene as it is.

AU: Any final words of wisdom to share with our readers?

MH: Subtraction reveals invisible solutions.

mikehoffman.com

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13 BEST HORROR COMICS OF THE YEAR

By Ed Sum

There weren't enough comic book reads for the Halloween season during the pandemic years, and thankfully a lot has changed. The publishers heard the screams. Although some titles are tailored for this holiday, others are just timed for this month because that's when sales projections are best.

With no further ado, I present the best top thirteen titles to keep an eye out for at your local comic book store. What I offer is a mix of both ongoing releases and one-shots.

Alice Cooper (Dynamite)

Oct 11, 2023

In this new ongoing series, Alice Cooper, the Nightmare Lord, has reclaimed the seat of power in his own dark realm. However, there's something wrong with his dreamworld. Could Freddie Krueger be waiting in the wings? Or is there someone else wanting to make things topsy-turvy? Ever since the release of *Welcome to My Nightmare*, which came out in 2015, fans like me have been wanting more, and we finally have it with this ongoing series which debuted in September.



In the October issue, Alice must face-off with the Lord of Hell himself, Lucifer! Joe Harris is the team lead of this series as the writer, with Eman Casallo handling the artistic chores.

Gargoyles Halloween Special #1 (Dynamite)

Oct 18, 2023

Like the episode where Goliath and crew wandered the streets of New York during All Hallow's Eve, their children now have a chance to experience this city's life. More people are aware of these creatures' existence, but when their life is under threat by unsavory cults, these lads better be fast on their feet!



Fans of this classic series have been enjoying Greg Weisman's return to writing comic books. I have every issue of what he crafted with Slave Labour Comics, and although the artistic quality wasn't there back then, what's offered now is a vast improvement. Also, this creator has learned a lot since then when concerning writing for comic book publishing houses. And when they're offering him a chance to continue this beloved series, I'm certain he won't say no to it!

A Call to Cthulhu (Titan Comics)

Oct 25, 2023

Part comic book, part art book, part children's storybook, *A Call to Cthulhu* is a fun, irreverent trip through the classic stories of HP Lovecraft for kids. That is all anyone considering picking up this release needs to know.



The Great Yokai War: Guardians, Vol 1. (Titan Comics)

Nov 14, 2023

Anyone who has not seen *The Great Yokai War* movies will be thrilled that there's a comic book adaptation. I've seen the first film, and while its adolescent attempt was more family friendly, I'm hopeful this release will get darker.



Here, Kei must become the next monster slayer. When these spirits tell him he's the descendant of Watanabe no Tsuna, the last noble warrior, he'll have to train hard. As a boy, that's hard to process! He'll have to deal with a threat terrorizing the spirit world. As for whether that story can be covered in one graphic novel or many, it's likely more volumes are in the works.

Crueler than Dead Vol 1-2 Collected Set (Ablaze)

Oct 31, 2023

Tsukasa Saimura's manga is getting reissued in a collectible set, and it looks awesome! Splashed right in front of it is the art of Koza Takahashi. And as for why it'll imprint upon those who don't know this series, that's because it's a timeless tale that's reverent even today.



From the official plot synopsis: No one knows where it started...but when the world finally realized what was going on, it was already too late. When Maki Akagi wakes up in a lab full of corpses, she learns from a dying soldier that she is a result from a last-ditch experiment to cure humans of a virus turning them into zombies.

Accompanied by a young boy who also miraculously escaped, she will have to get to the very centre of a devastated Tokyo filled with bloodthirsty monsters. The dome located there contains the last survivors of humanity. Their very survival depends solely on a few drops of a miraculous vaccine, which without a doubt requires her blood!

Fear the Funhouse Toybox of Terror (Archie)

Oct 18, 2023

Ever since Archie Comics decided to bring a slice of terror to America's most beloved teens, various creative teams have been finding novel ways to deliver more "Chilling Adventures" year after year that fit into this universe. Not every story has to include Sabrina, but in what's delivered this year sounds toy-ifying!



Writers Timmy Heague, Danielle Paige, and Michael Northrop are teaming up with artists Ryan Caskey, Tango, Ryan Jampole, Ellie Wright, Jack Morelli to deliver some cinematic inspired scares based on toy properties. The publisher promises you'll find tales inspired by M3GAN and Child's Play.

Archie Halloween Spectacular (Archie)

Oct 4, 2023

As per tradition, this yearly annual will feature an all new story. In "Monster Mash-Up!" Tom DeFalco writes about how the nefarious Trick and Treat is back to harass Archie and Jughead with assorted monsters. Okay, maybe Sabrina has to get involved, and what she does is worth a read for those who love anything involving Riverdale's most famous teens.



Horror Pulp Stories (Alien Books)

Oct 4, 2023

From the official pitch sheet: This one-shot promises to deliver some fond classics illustrated by the master of horror Salvador Sanz, told by Damian Connelly and Matts along with newcomer, Leo Lujan! Their work is something to behold, and what this release offers is to promise 64 pages of everything that made those pulp comics of yesteryear frightening! If the cover art doesn't sum up what one can find within its pages, then nothing else will.



Boris Karloff's Gold Key Mysteries (Gold Key)

Oct 18, 2023

At long last, all those Gold Key comics I read in the past featuring this iconic master of terror have a new chapter! In this all new series, something is creeping upon the mansion where Karloff lives.



From the official press

summary: When a gothic mansion infested with arcane power appears from the mist, Boris is the world's last hope against dark forces led by a malevolent government agent bent on harnessing the house's power. Boris Karloff is back with a new ongoing horror anthology.

The Cat From the Kimono (Humanoids)

Oct 31, 2023

Nancy Peña rose to prominence with *Madame Cat*, a graphic novel about this feline who thinks she owns the place. No, this isn't a rehash of *Garfield*, but it's a lot more mysterious and hilarious as readers learn why this cat is a cat.



Although she has other works published in France, just why they haven't gotten international notice is still a mystery, and perhaps this latest work will change all that. By the title alone, I think this narrative deserves an animated take too!

Here, the protagonist is a cat who yearns to reunite with her owner. She's lost this kitty who was once impressed upon her kimono. This work is a tale readers should consider during a very spiritual month because it's said spirits can occupy anything. And just what this cat must mean for this lady must mean more than meets the eye to its origins in this interesting tale.

A Haunting on Mars (Scout Comics)

Oct 25, 2023

Not a lot is known about this work created by Zach Chapman (writer), Ruairi Coleman (artist) and Hugo Petrus (colourist). Here, what readers discover is that the planet Mars has become a wasteland. It's a dead colony whose founder is also dead. However, what he has been hiding within its capsule walls is something that Echo



Team must deal with, and although the movie *Doom* crossed my mind, I'm sure what's presented here isn't about shooting down strange aliens.



In this group is a hacker, a telepath, an empath, a soldier, and no spy! But if they're to survive, they must work together or die trying.

Victor Crowley's Hatchet Halloween Tales V (American Mythology)

Oct 25, 2023

With this anthology, I'm ready to spend Halloween with three creepy tales from Honey Island Swamp! Novelist SA Check delivers the doomed destiny of a circus troupe attempting to add Victor Crowley to their freak show. In "Following," writer Jason Pell shows us that heartbreak can lead to a fatal outcome. And in "Patchwork," horror author James Kuhoric delivers a Halloween monster mash of bloody revenge. Plus—a horrific bonus—enjoy several holidays themed pages to give horror fans a bloody bit of holiday entertainment in the gory Hatchet vein!

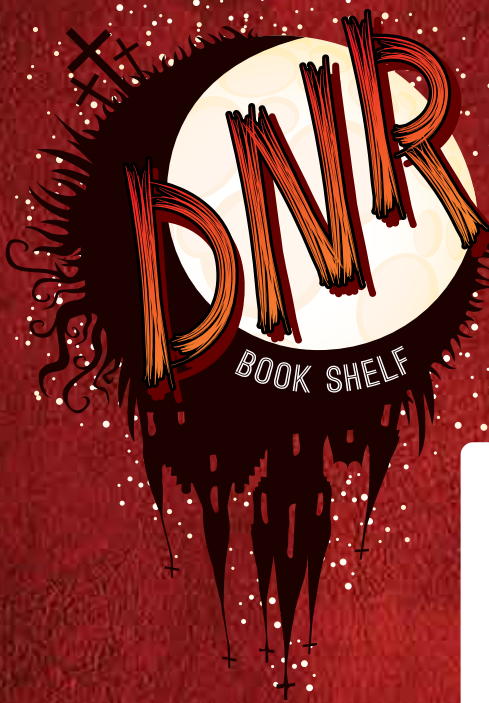


Whisper of the Woods Original Graphic Novel (Mad Cave)

Oct 24, 2023

In search of his missing friend, Adam travels to the heart of Romania's most supernatural forest, Hoia Baciu. Disregarding the local's warnings of lele hunting the men in the vicinity, and the witch's premonition of his impending death, he remains steadfast in his decision to find his friend. Though with every passing night, it becomes impossible to ignore the happenings around him.

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FEVER HOUSE



Keith Rosson
Random House
August 15, 2023

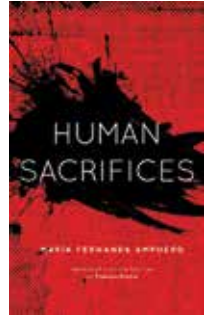
Truth be told, I was sold on this book the moment I saw it described as a “punk rock Pulp Fiction meets X-Files,” affair. There was no question that tagline screams of my interests, but what I wasn’t expecting was how this book would grip my unsuspecting brain in a full-nelson and refuse to let me get on with my life until I came to its manic conclusion. It called to me as if the demonic severed hand that graces the cover and plays a central part of the story was working its dark ways on me, page by page. In short, I’m in the Fever House.

In lesser hands, the multitudes of characters and factions within the book could easily be fumbled, but Rosson’s pacing is frenetic and somehow perfect. The reader finds it easy to shift between a pair of debt collection thugs who stumble onto something evil and powerful, to a former punk/alt-rock singer struggling to crawl out from under her demons and life as a recluse, to a government black-ops team tasked with finding a missing asset with the power to decimate society, or humanity as we know it. These threads are woven amongst the backdrop of modern-day Portland, Oregon. A city reeling from the real-world issues of police brutality and adverse poverty.

As I mentioned above, the book flexed its dark hold on me, and I was beholden to sprint to the downright insane finish. Meals were skipped, work was glossed over... all that mattered was Fever House. The combination of horror and gritty crime noir is nothing new, but I can’t recall it feeling so fresh and electric in quite some time. I get the same feeling I get when reading Joe Hill or his father the King. I think the key is that throughout the supernatural, Rosson is able to keep the base humanity intact. This is still a story about family, fear, love, loss and trauma as well as ancient evil and demons both mental and literal. The good news is that we won’t be waiting long for another fix. Rosson has the sequel *The Devil By Name* already written and ready for release next year. I can’t wait.

Ty Stranglehold

HUMAN SACRIFICES



María Fernanda Ampuero
Feminist Press
May 16, 2023

Translated from the original Spanish by Frances Riddle “HUMAN SACRIFICES” forces the reader to bear witness to a painful perspective on identity—whether that identity is woman,

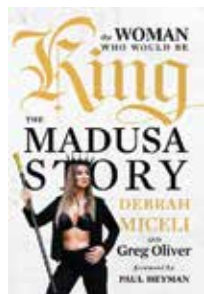
immigrant, or simply “other.” Combining visceral, stomach-turning language with experimental writing styles, Ampuero finds ways to deliver a building dread and violent climax to stories which otherwise might be at risk of feeling all too relatable, even mundane.

Twelve stories, some no longer than a few pages, make up this collection. Don’t mistake the brevity for a lack of consequence, as some of the shorter offerings are the ones that continue to haunt the mind long after reading. “Leeches” is one such example, which starts innocuously enough as a group of neighborhood children gather to play while their mothers share wine, gossip, and a few hands of cards. Even the most common of days can end in screams. “Sister” comes to a head after three teenage girls make the mistake of playing idly with a paper Ouija board. The culmination of the evening is a grisly scene, though perhaps also a satisfying comeuppance for the pushy girl whose idea it was to meddle. A third favourite is “Pietà”, told from the perspective of a nanny who has perhaps put more love and effort into raising her employer’s son than her own, and discovers in predictably disturbing fashion just how far she will go to clean up after this golden boy.

From the first, Ampuero pulls no punches. She weaves harsh truths of naïveté and stigma into a truly unsettling tapestry—the “others” of the world, the outcasts, being pushed head-long into dread, despair, horror, pain, and just a little bit of necrosex.

Laura Phaneuf

THE WOMAN WHO WOULD BE KING:



THE MADUSA STORY
Debrah Miceli, Greg Oliver
ECW Press
March 28, 2023

There is this time in wrestling history known as the “Forgotten era”, which is sandwiched right in between the “Golden era” and the “Attitude era”. You probably have no idea who Deborah Miceli is unless you are a real wrestling fan and plausibly a female wrestling fan, or a fan of Monster Jam. This book is written full blast, no holds barred, out with it and let the chips fall where they may. I laughed, I cried, I was angry along with her, my heart bled for her as she set the atmosphere of the time. There is no woman

who has reached for the stars and fucking lit the sky up more than she. Written like you are talking to the coolest person on the planet, it’s a breeze to get through and I loved that she included a ton of photos spanning her entire life.

Not everyone grows up in a picture perfect family, and Deborah Miceli is no exception. Her childhood is so tumultuous with poverty, an unaffectionate mother, a (adopted) father who raped her, countless other family secrets that only come to light much later in life. Troubled children do not always become a statistic, and Deborah was one of them. A star athlete who learned to get by on her own. “To be clear, I don’t want anybody’s sympathy at all. It’s a reminder that we all have an inner strength, something untapped, that is there for us when needed. It’s called survival”. Dropping out of high school in Gr 11, then Modeling school, then nursing school... A string of odd jobs eventually led to training with Eddie Sharkey in the 80s. She smartly trademarked her own stage name Madusa and thus a star was born.

By 1991 WCW had contracted her but they did not see her full potential and she didn’t wrestle very often. 1993 WWF(E) reached out and they rebranded her as Alundra Blayze. By now we are starting to learn the harsh reality of a real women’s wrestler (not a valet, or T&A) in this day in age as well as the politics of the business. The shit this woman went through! Working with women such as Debbie Combs, Luna Vachon and Heidi Leilani Kai none of which can hold a candle to Debs actual wrestling abilities. They just didn’t know what to do with a woman like this in that era and in 1995, Women’s Champion and all, her contract expired while the company told her they were eliminating the Women’s Division. Of course we all know what happened ... enter Sunny and Chyna... and the Attitude Era. Needless to say 5 days later she went on WCW and famously threw her WWF Women’s title in the trash on national television. The cojones this woman has! In 2015, she was rightfully inducted into the WWE hall of fame.

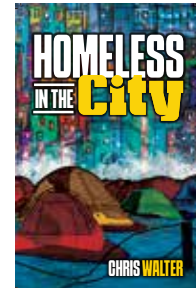
We also learn about her men, marriages, her painful struggle to become a mother, her animals, her health, her businesses, her motorbikes, hardships, happy times and more...the lady just keeps on keeping on. If you thought her wrestling career was crazy, we then get to dip into her time at Monster Jam. Between wrestling and Monster Jam, she was on the road for 40 years of her life. Again starting at the very bottom, working her way up methodically learning everything just as she did in wrestling. And don’t forget it’s the hard way since you are a woman in a man’s sport yet again. Debuting in North Carolina in 2000 with Monster Jam. The woman is an absolute beast learning how these 10,000lb machines work and excelling yet again in this! Keeping her name Madusa, dubbed “The Queen of Carnage” for a reason. She was the champion twice, and competed in the world finals 12 times. Reiteratively we learn about the bullshit behind the scenes including what the hell to do with a woman champion. The good old boys just didn’t get it even after 15

years and all those accolades.

Retired, she doesn’t sit on her laurels at all, going to school in her 50s to become a natural health practitioner, yoga instructor, life coaching, personal training, seminars, podcasts, and on it goes.

My only note is that the book bounces all over the place; back and forth through time and it would have been much neater to have it all in chronological order, but I get it... it’s a massive undertaking and the sheer volume of information is staggering. The fact that she can even remember all this is incredible. It didn’t take away from the book for me and I am still left in awe of this trail ‘blayze’r. A true fan of this feminist warrior for the ages.
Demonika

HOMELESS IN THE CITY



Chris Walter

GFY Press
September 28th 2023

“...if New York is the city that never sleeps then Vancouver is the city that is always screaming”
Newley released from Vancouver’s punk rock littérateur, Chris Walter, is as gripping as it is distressing. I

couldn’t put this one down as it was just so heartrending and way too close to home for even those of us not living in Lotusland.

The compendium begins with a visit to several different citizens from all different walks of life, all just getting by as best they can. Financing, housing and employment - all cogs in the machine that must turn smoothly in order for the machine of life to amble along. No easy feat this day in age. One at a time, we are shaken as we see how just one crumbling brick in the structure of our lives can tear down the delicate building of the middle to lower working class.

Walter is almost bewitching with this one and I found myself so sucked in to each protagonist and how quickly they all found themselves with more in common than they started with. All too real, a narrative more than fiction, this book will bring you to tears and make you want to get involved and figure out the solution that Vancouver and other large cities have struggled with for years. One of Walter’s strongest works, I’m certain you will devour this one as quickly as I did.
Hatchetface

A LIFE WITH GHOSTS: TRUE,



TERRIFYING, AND INSIGHTFUL TALES FROM MY FAVORITE HAUNTS
Steve Gonsalves, Michael Aloisi
Gallery Books
August 22, 2023

The question I have about Steve Gonsalves memoir, *A Life With*

Ghosts, is if he truly wrote it all? I suspect Michael Aloisi may have contributed too with the background information that introduces each chapter about the places this paranormal investigator went to. Afterwards, the tone switches over to this ghost hunter's voice. Thankfully, this consultant gets credited in the acknowledgments, and also with his credentials listed on the back book sleeve cover.

However, I still like to know how he helped in the development of this book. Nobody can craft an interesting reflection of a past case without learning the ropes on how to write an effective anecdote. There needs to be a structure—a hook, rising action, and some payoff. In what Steve learned, he deserves the letter grade of A- for his ability to include his love for paranormal pop culture into his look at this genre of reality television that examines the supernatural.

Instead, what he delves into is a fondness for what got him interested in this world. It all started with the movie titled *The Entity*. Also, he didn't plan on being a career investigator, but it just happened! Now that he's gained a reputation, he can go on the convention circuit to share his experiences—assuming his stories are to be believed!

What *A Life With Ghosts* mostly focuses on are the cases he's been on since becoming part of The Atlantic Paranormal Society (T.A.P.S.) team. His partner in crime is Dave Tango, and their comradery is a terrific highlight. In the early seasons, they often joked around, and that made this series good to watch. These days, it's not as well featured. Thus, I'm betting the producers told them to tone it down.

As for whether this organization is still the focus in the revamped *Ghost Hunters* series, only those avid followers can say for certain. That is, this program is more about validating if places are haunted than to help the people who live there deal with them on a regular basis. Some clients may well choose to move away, and others are here to stay because these spirits are not malevolent. I'd love to see a series deal with that!

In contrast, this book is about what he and Tango can do together as brothers in arms while in the field. Since the production company wanted less of that on-screen chemistry, the series formula has changed. As a result, I stopped watching. After reading Gonsalves' book, I'm ready to revisit *Ghost Hunters* again.

His reveals about how the show is made versus actual investigations is nothing I haven't heard before. I find it great to have validation on what's presented is exactly what

many viewers suspected—it's really pared down. He also informs readers that the group conducts longer studies when they have the opportunity, and while no TV producer is ready to document it. When compared to recent shows like *Curse of Oak Island* or *Secrets of Skinwalker Ranch* from other networks, they aren't the same, and I doubt sustaining the suspense is even possible.

Technically, *A Life With Ghosts* is not meant to dive deep into everything Gonsalves loves. His passion for horror films, music, and his cat reveals a bit of that private life. But to be invested in this world for this long, I'm sure he made sacrifices. I'm sure he has more stories to tell about how this series is made, and we just have to wait for another book to learn about it.

Ed Sum

BOWIE ODYSSEY 73



Simon Goddard
Omnibus Press
May 25, 2023

This is the fourth of Simon Goddard's excellent 'Bowie Odyssey' series of books.

Goddard's 'Ziggyology' book is one of the best books ever written

about Bowie and indeed his world, in the period of time where Bowie played Ziggy, and is a great favourite of mine.

Simon's idea of charting Bowie's journey through the '70s in a highly detailed year-by-year fashion' is a highly inspired idea. When Simon gets as far as 'Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps)', my favourite Bowie album, he will have produced a magnum opus on the Thin White Duke in this period, especially when all the books are taken as a cohesive whole.

By 1973 Bowie become the megastar he always knew he was, but he now faced the dilemma—was he to keep playing Ziggy Stardust, until the novelty wore off, or was he to kill Ziggy off, and be reborn again, phoenix like, in a new identity?

Well, we all know the answer to that!

Simon really tells the story of Bowie's 1973 well, it's an exciting story. Bowie may be dead, but at least, unlike the majority of us, he actually lived first!

I'm going to finish by quoting from Simon's text. It gives you a great idea of how good 'Bowie Odyssey 73' actually is.

This is an exciting roller-coaster of a book that makes you feel like you were there. No higher compliment can I pay it!

Steve Earles

HAIRS



Ira Rat
Filthy Loot
January 1, 2024

Before even digging into the book, I absolutely love that it's only 4x6" and you could easily shove a handful of these into your backpack, devouring them in moments of wait should you be traveling or sipping coffee at your favorite shop. Already giving off the thoughtful creative aesthetic I desire, I knew I would enjoy this one. It takes competence to create a book, but even more to be thoughtful with how it is presented. A collection of 6 short stories that vary in topics from turgid gallery life to something more shocking like giving up and being eaten alive by pigs on your generational farm. All stories are poetic, pleasing, and exquisitely told with Rats graceful savvy.

I really enjoyed this collection and can't wait to read more.

Demonika

TALES AND LEGENDS OF THE DEVIL: THE MANY GUISES OF THE PRIMAL SHAPESHIFTER



Claude & Corinne Lecouteux
Inner Traditions
August 29, 2023

An old verse states: 'That there's a Devil, there is no doubt/But is he trying to get in us, or trying to get out?'

A form of Devil has always existed in folk tales, literature, popular culture, indeed in our everyday lives.

Why is this? This is just my opinion, but I feel it has been a way for humankind to absolve themselves from personal responsibility. We didn't do it, we say, we were 'tempted'. It wasn't our fault.

It was though, it happened because what Aleister Crowley wisely called the Will, was weak. No more, no less. Everything that happens in the world of man, we make happen. It's us. Not God, not the Devil, not the

Easter Bunny! Us!

Nevertheless, this is one highly entertaining collection of folk stories about Satan from around the world. I particularly enjoyed Chapter six, 'The Devil and the Church', after all, Satan would have no trouble finding plenty of customers in such a wicked organization!

These are truly great stories, they strike a chord within us all, literally, because there's a little bit of the Devil in all. We're only human, how could it be otherwise?

Steve Earles

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WEIRD DETECTIVES



TIVES: Supernatural and Paranormal Elements in Novels, Pulp, Comics, Film, Television, Games
Paul Green
McFarland
September 13, 2019

This book very much lives up to its very long and precise title, covering weird detectives in a variety of media!

This is the sort of book I love, a thing of beauty and joy forever, for the reader will always return to it to dip into the storehouse of wondrous facts contained therein!

It's impossible to cover a fraction of the marvelous books and films covered here, so I will just pick a few personal highlights:

Kim Newman's incredible sequel/re-imagining of Bram Stoker's 'Dracula' remains one of the best books I've ever read, I cannot recommend it enough, and it remains a mystery to me that it has yet to be filmed.

A sign of how thorough this book is, is the inclusion of a 1973 film called 'Baffled', starring Susan Hampshire and Leonard Nimoy. I love this film, so charming.

Then, we have *Night of the Demon* (1957), a truly great British occult detective film.

The excellent Jonathan Creek series is included, as is one of my all-time favourites, the much-missed 'Supernatural'!

Finally, I loved seeing the inclusion of Hammer's 'The Devil Rides Out', a truly smashing film!

Indeed, to sum up, this book will awaken your own inner weird detective as you hunt down some of the gems you'll read about.

Steve Earles

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MICAH BEAUDRY

August 11th 1979 - September 1st 2023

Survived by his only child, Aethon Beaudry.

By Jarrod Kinch

It's been over 19 years, Micah.

You've helped me get my feet back under me twice: after my divorce and when I couldn't find



a job. Though you are smarter than I ever could hope to be, you never looked down on me, thank you for doing that and always being there when I needed you most.

I'm sorry I wasn't there when

you needed me and that's something I'll have to live with and grow from.

I'm the last surviving AWT member from the smallest meeting ever held. I'll have to be sure to tell everyone how Jay Brown, Ange Morris, you, and I, scared the shit out of that lady at the elevator that day, and how hilarious it was.

I still grade people's intelligence on their opinion of the movie Idiocracy. Thank you for introducing that to my life.

I'll never forget that time I went to the Nanaimo Cambie (now The Terminal) for my birthday and you were the only one who showed. Sure it was by accident that you stumbled in inebriated as fuck, but you called your wife and explained why you weren't coming home for a while, and I joined you in getting staggered-ly drunk. You could always make someone feel important.

One other thing, you're the reason why I began drawing comics again (and for a big paper too!). You gave me confidence when I had none (my ex-wife temporarily won that in the divorce too it seemed) so I applied to Absolute Underground Magazine and been drawing for Ira ever since.

There isn't much more someone could ask for in a friend.

P.S.

I got drunk tonight and am doing well. Couldn't have been here without you staggering in to my life.



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Rick was a great artist with pieces all over the place. He mastered several mediums. He loved Lowriders and was always the life of the party. He also had a prominent acting career as an extra on several TV Shows. Jaks Team Captain Tom Scott is still pissed Klu played a cop on several

shows! Rick was always helpful to bands coming through and was always there for a ride from the Clipper. He was a tall fucker so he always



stuck out at shows. He also knew every fuckin band on the planet. We are sure gonna miss him...

R.I.P.

KLU JAK

Rick Klucsarits aka Rick Klu

Sad news from the Emerald City. We just lost a colorful punk scene icon and member of the infamous Jaks Skate Crew. Rick Klu passed away last week and it has sent a shock wave of sorrow through the Pacific Northwest Punk/Skate scene.

lucky for us we have all his amazing art to share. Hope you are happy wherever you are, Rick Klu. You are going to be missed by folks far and wide. Jaks Team For Life. www.rickklu.art



- Dustin Jak

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OPUS COMICS HALLOWEEN RELEASES

By Ed Sum

Opus Comics loves their heavy metal, and I'm thankful that there are more publishers who want to translate those fictional worlds of those bands to this sequential art medium. That is, Dynamite and Z2 aren't the only companies who're doing a bang up job at translating these rock and roll stars to comic book life! They've been publishing for over a decade.

Although I was primarily admiring their releases of titles under the banner of Frank Frazetta in the past, I've always paid attention to the occasional release when it concerns working with a few bands, namely Cradle of Filth. Their visual style gels with why I love the Gothic, and I think of them as today's modernized version of Metallica.

Plus, the comics are something that can become nightmare sauce for lovers of the occult, in any of its forms. That said, I introduce the following titles that'll be out for the All Hallow's Eve season. Two titles aren't considered since they'll be released after the day, but before, readers can pick up:

Sanjulian's Witches' Sabbath #1

Centuries ago, a devoted musician, the Red Priest, was executed by Witch-Hunters. His spirit lay trapped until a group of young women unwittingly resurrected him through a frenzied dance. Now, he seeks revenge on his killers' descendants. Written by M.J. Wilson (Fluorescent Black) and inspired by the art of legendary Spanish artist Sanjulian!

Cradle of Filth: Maledictus Athenaeum Vol 1

In the ruined halls of the Maledictus Athenaeum lie occult histories, sealed records, and cursed artefacts - this unholy archive explores the far corners of Cradle of Filth's musical legacy. Inspired by their albums and songs such as "Bathory Aria," "Cruelty and the Beast," "King in the Woods," and "Darkly, Darkly, Venus Aversa," this captivating journey delves into a vast universe of ageless vampires, mythical creatures, vengeful gods, and the enigmatic figure of Lilith.

Within these hidden vaults, stories, and poems come to life, penned by an all-star roster of comics talent and accompanied by lavish paintings. Step inside the walls of Cachtice Castle, where the Countess Elizabeth Bathory sheds virgin blood, and journey under the mesmerizing moon in the hymn to its beauty personified by the celestial huntress Diana. Amidst the echoes of anguish and ecstasy, discover tragic romances and delve deep into the darkly poetic and haunting world of Cradle of Filth's musical legacy.



Cradle of Filth: Her Ghost in the Fog

In the ruined halls of the Maledictus Athenaeum lie occult histories, sealed records, and cursed artefacts - this unholy archive explores the far corners of Cradle of Filth's musical legacy. Inspired by their albums and songs such as "Bathory Aria," "Cruelty and the Beast," "King in the Woods," and

Darkly, Darkly, Venus Aversa, this captivating journey delves into a vast universe of ageless vampires, mythical creatures, vengeful gods, and the enigmatic figure of Lilith. Within these hidden vaults, stories, and poems come to life, penned by an all-star roster of comics talent and accompanied by lavish paintings.

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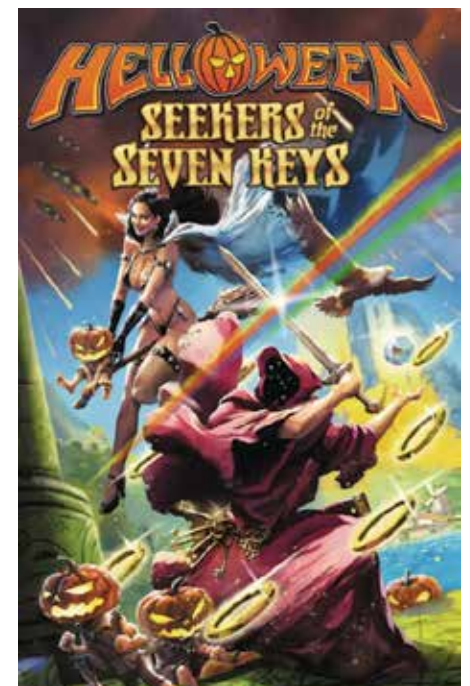
Also, available from this publisher are these reprints:



Monsters of Metal Vol. 1

Spinal Tap meets The Monster Squad! Written by

cult director Jason Lei Howden and Llexi Leon, turns iconic creatures into a heavy metal band in this riotous send up of life on tour! With a blend of mythical beings and electrifying music, this unique spectacle unleashes chaos and mayhem as the band rehearses in Dracula's castle, confronts the dreaded Krampus, and rocks the stage with unruly magic.



Helloween Vol. 1

This trade paperback reprints what I assume was last year's story about this German heavy metal band, in a crazy 1980s science-fiction, fantasy-horror adventure! I missed getting the run, as I didn't know about the release until it was too late. These godfathers of melodic speed metal love their comic books, and to have their image emblazoned in print is enough to get me curious. Here, they're in search of The mystical Seven Keys.

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