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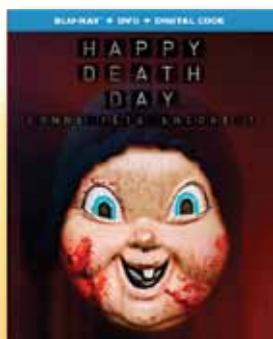
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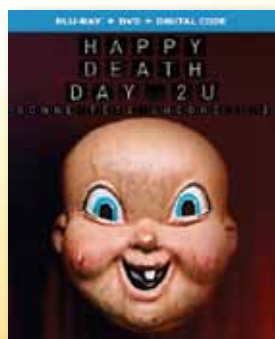
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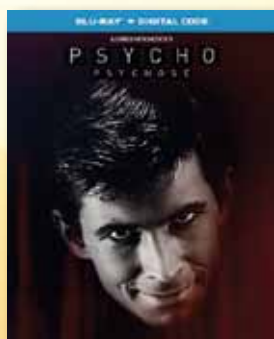
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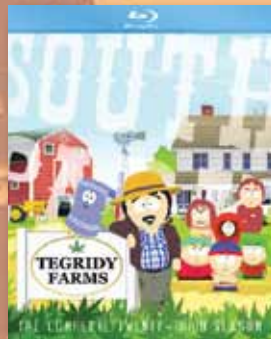
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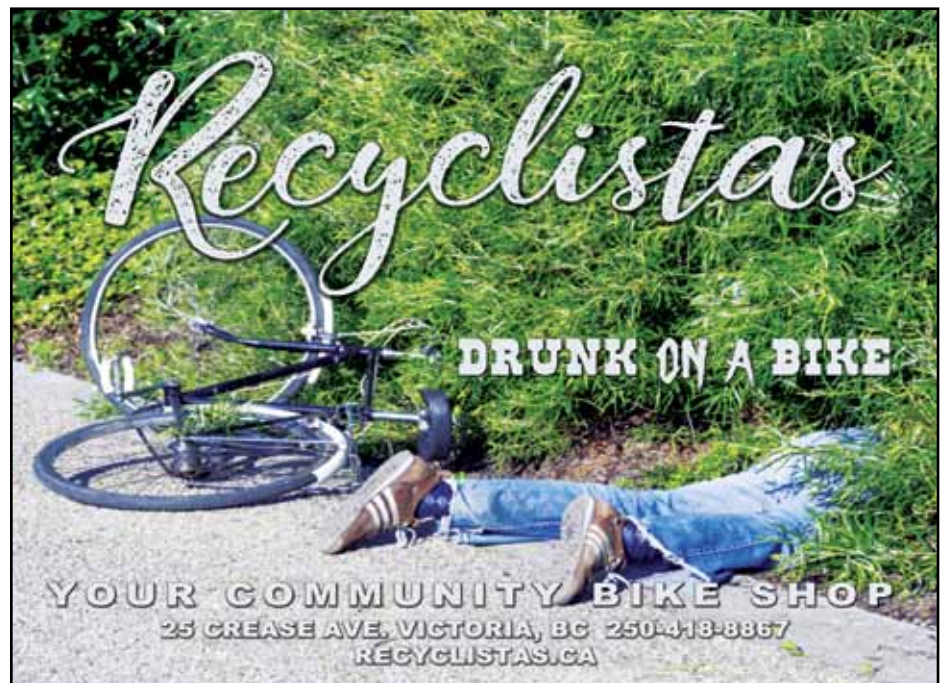
THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED THE GOFUNDME TO GET THIS SPECIAL MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL ISSUE PRINTED. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU.

IT'S APPRECIATED BEYOND BELIEF. YOU ALL ROCK!

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Live Music Venues on Ventilators

How many of us paid any attention to intubation and ventilators in the Before Times? Not many I'd venture a guess. Metaphorically speaking (and maybe this isn't the greatest metaphor), live music venues in Canada are facing an existential crisis that will require heroic measures akin to being put on ventilators.

When COVID-19 hit, live music venues like many other businesses across the country were forced to shut their doors. They were the first to close, and they will be the last to re-open. Unless financial assistance from all levels of governments is made available immediately, a

staggering 96% (according to a poll conducted by the Canadian Live Music Association) of live music venues might not survive a prolonged lockdown.

Smaller independent venues play a crucial role in the development and sustainability of every artist's career. Without the support that smaller venues provide, Canadian musicians, and artists across the globe, whose names and music we have come to know and love would never have made it out of their basements or garages. Unless urgent action is taken, the entire musical economy could be wiped out. This not only includes independent music venues, but also musicians, managers, production crews, bartenders and wait staff, suppliers, tour managers, promoters, booking agents - an entire ecosystem of interdependent stakeholders, not to mention audiences.

Beyond the joy and meaning that these beloved institutions bring to our lives, independent music venues exist within a larger ecosystem. They are economic multipliers and community builders. It is said that every dollar spent at a music venue generates twelve dollars of economic activity in the surrounding neighbourhood — in restaurants, hotels, retail shops, transit... and the list goes on. That level of financial contribution is consistent in cities and towns across Canada. What would our communities look like without them? We must ensure their survival.

Many independent for-profit venues like the Rickshaw find themselves ineligible for federal programs such as the federal government's emergency funds for "Heritage - Arts & Culture" designed to provide financial relief. Venues continue to be hit with fixed costs but with zero revenues, with no end in sight. We urge the federal government to step up to assist

Canadian independent venues weather this crisis, and provide the kind of enduring support that will help sustain them down the long road to economic recovery, as we reimagine new ways to gather. And as we wait this pandemic out, let's plan for the future; this pandemic could be an opportunity to reimagine the live music sector, and to create a more sustainable music economy.

How can you add your voice to support independent venues? The Rickshaw is part of the Canadian Independent Venue Coalition and we have a website (www.supportcanadianvenues.ca) where you can TAKE ACTION and #supportcanadianvenues! - Mo Tarmohamed

www.supportcanadianvenues.ca

Road To Recovery

3

TODAY

The most urgent issues are retaining staff and preventing the loss of venues.

MEDIUM TERM

Support to bridge the gap when operations resume with significantly diminished revenues and increased costs.

LONG TERM

Programming support to stimulate event activity, offsetting low consumer confidence and economic fallout.

SHORT TERM

Financial support to mitigate the devastating impact from a complete loss of revenues.

01

03

02

04

www.canadianlivemusic.ca

Keeping Live Music Alive

4

Venues

The most critical piece of cultural infrastructure, our venues are at risk.

Booking Agents

Professionals facilitating live music performance currently experiencing a catastrophic loss of revenue.

Production Companies

Countless independent contractors whose livelihood comes from live events are currently out of work.

Presenter / Promoter

Those who connect artists and audiences, assuming the financial risk of presenting concerts have lost all revenue.

Ticketing Companies

Facilitate the primary commerce of live music, with all revenues currently stalled.

Support Organizations

The CLMA receives no operating support from federal programs unlike many sister organizations across the broader music industry, yet is a critical resource during this crisis and beyond.

www.canadianlivemusic.ca

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

Welcome to my humble life of disarray
While I listen to my Joni Mitchell tapes
Sitting here at the cannibal café
Wondering if Eric's had a bad day

My broken toy is fixed with bumper stickers
There is another load in Michelle Pfeifer's diaper
He's not getting older he's getting bitter
the pig will always be better than Eddie Vedder

She's not on the menu is my pathetic past
All those opposed better get off your ass
Oh big thumbs you make me thick
I'm real scared that I forget

It's a painful reminder when I see a black cloud
Drunk on a bike, don't have a cow
A postmans pet peeve is better homes and
gardens
This is goodbye, this is the end.

EULOGY BY MR. PLOW

GONE BUT NEVER EVER TO BE FORGOTTEN
KENDALL STEPHEN CHINN aka MR. CHI PIG
Oct 19th, 1962 - July 16th, 2020



Photos By Cat Ashbee



Nardwuar The Human Serviette vs. Chi Pig

On June 24, 2005, I was honoured to do a phone interview with Chi Pig for my Radio Show on CTR Fm 101.9 in Vancouver, BC Canada. R.i.p Chi Pig.

Who are you?

I'm Mr. Chi Pig. And I come from nowhere.

But you found CTR thank you for finding CTR Chi Pig. I appreciate that.

Oh no problem.

You've been trying for an hour at the wrong number but finally we got ahold of you.

It was meant to be, you know how it is.

And you are Chi Pig of SNFU and Chi Pig we also played, while waiting for you, some Malibu Kens!

Oh rad! The single, I imagine?

No not the single, the track from the "It Came From InnerSpace" compilation album.

Oh what was the name of the song you played?

"Party's Over" by the Malibu Kens.

Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah...I went to high school with the Malibu Ken that wrote that song and who turned out to be Blake Cheetah, who became the bass god for Jerry Jerry and the Sons of Rhythm Orchestra.

Were the Malibu Kens also related in some way to Jr. Gone Wild?

Malibu Kens became Jr. Gone Wild later. Mike McDonald was cursed with that name at birth. Mike McDonald not to be confused with Doobie bro, Mike McDonald. Mike McDonald was the singer of Malibu Kens and he called himself Mike Sinatra, at the time. And actually Mike Sinatra, claims that Frank Sinatra's people claimed to break his legs if he didn't change his name. So he changed his name.

Did you do the cover artwork for the Malibu Kens seven inch?

No, no I laid out their posters for them on the inside.

Ah well I'm glad you were able to clarify that because I was saying you did the cover art. So I'm so happy that you phoned in, and again we're speaking to Chi pig from SNFU.

If you look down in the corner you'll see I signed with my real name. What was I thinking back then?

That was the Malibu Kens seven inch as helped put together by Chi Pig of SNFU. And speaking of bands getting back together--well actually you've never really left us, did you? Did SNFU ever break up?

We took time off, SNFU doesn't die until I die.

So was there ever a last gig?

There was an official last gig in August of '89 and that lasted for about two years.

And of that August '89 lineup who is playing tomorrow night at Seyllynn Hall in North Vancouver?

Mr. Chi Pig and the original guitar player Marc Belke. That's been the genesis of the band the whole time, because Marc writes 80% of the music. We're the Lennon and McCartney of punk rock.

And Chi Pig, next week the Subhumans, the legendary Vancouver punk band, the

Subhumans are getting back together.

I wish I could see that, but I'm going to be out of town.

Now, drumming for them will be Jon Card, he was in SNFU at one time, wasn't he?

Yes, he was on the "If You Swear, You'll Catch No Fish" record, and he toured with us, he was with us for about a year and a half.

Did you ever play with the original Subhumans?

Yes, we did.

Where was that? Was that in Edmonton?

I believe we did a show with them in Edmonton, yes.

And when did you guys first play Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada Chi Pig?

My furthest recollection would be 1984 New York Theatre.

What was the reception like? How did bands from Alberta go over in Vancouver, British Columbia Canada?

Well, because we were SNFU and we had a record out already. It was pretty amazing. It was really good. Jason Priestley with a mohawk was in the audience.

You're sure of that?

I'm sure of that because he told me that in a drunken state years later.

What did you look like back then Chi Pig of SNFU? What did you look like back then?

I had the shaved back and sides haircut dyed blonde with dreadlocks and I would slice it in the air like slicing knives through butter.

The first time I heard SNFU, believe it or not, was from the "It Came From The Pit" compilation. I was a bit late, but "It Came From The Pit" compilation, released on the Psyche Industry Records label with the song "Poor Poor Pitiful Me", who else has done "Poor Poor Pitiful Me", like Linda Ronstadt, what is that originally "Poor Poor Pitiful Me"?

It's a Warren Zevon song, Warren Zevon wrote it.

And who else has done it? SNFU has done it, I know Linda Ronstadt has done it, do you know anybody else that has done "Poor Poor Pitiful Me"?

Not that I know of, but it's a pretty good song. We did it, not because of Linda in her roller skates, but because of Warren because Warren writes great songs.

Are you going to be doing "Poor Poor Pitiful Me" tomorrow night at Seyllynn Hall?

That is one of the covers we haven't redone. Actually, we'll be playing no cover tunes on Saturday.

No cover tunes! What cover tunes have you done in past Chi Pig of SNFU?

"Uncontrollable Urge" by Devo and "Wild World" by Cat Stevens, "Poor Poor Pitiful Me" "Gimme Some Water" by Eddie Money and countless others.

Chi Pig from SNFU, another thing that's drilled into my mind, has nothing to do with SNFU, it has something to do with your other band The Wongs, when did The Wongs form?

The Wongs were an entity from 1990 to 1991. A one year program.

And you played that big, famous gig that happened at the Commodore Ballroom in 1991. It was you guys, the Doughboys, Nirvana and Screaming Trees? I think I mentioned to you just a little while back that I interviewed the Doughboys that day, and I remember they were kinda upset that they had to open for Nirvana that night. What do you remember about that gig? The Wongs, Doughboys, Nirvana, Screaming Trees gig.

I remember it was pretty fun, and we smoked some weed in the back. And yeah, the Doughboys opened. Screaming Trees headlined, but people started leaving while the Screaming Trees played. And there was a little quip of mine on stage. I

said "stay tuned for the Toiletries" as opposed to the Screaming Trees.

And Mr. Screaming Tree himself came up to me later and asked me what the hell I was saying and asked me if it was a joke. And I said "yes, it was a joke". He said, "Oh, I thought you had a chip on your shoulder" and I said, "Well, I do. But I have a full bag as well."

Baboom! What about the Doughboys, Chi Pig?

I know those guys and you know what, they were huge Nirvana fans and I think only one of the Doughboys was against opening, but the other guy Jonathan who was the genuine songwriter of the band, the Paul McCartney of the band. He was just enamoured with Nirvana. He just was honored to be with them.

Well, that's good to hear it. However, Chi Pig, how many gigs did you play at the LA Olympic with SNFU that was like a giant ex boxing ring.

Oh you know what, we never played the Olympic we played the other place. We played Fender's Ballroom which was half the size, but just as violent.

I saw a flyer though, it said SNFU view at the Olympic, did that gig not happen?

That gig did not happen. You know why that gig did not happen? Because the engine fell out of our van and between Vancouver and Portland and we went back home.

Oh no and that was gonna be a huge gig, like Dead Kennedys at the Olympics. How big were the Olympic shows at that time? They were like 3-4000 people weren't they?

Yeah, up there, 5-6000 people. And actually, we played we played a gig in San Diego once with the order of the lineup was this: Adrenalin O.D., Gang Green, SNFU and FEAR there was 3500 people there and half of them were military goons.

I guess I was curious though Chi Pig, you mentioned playing Fender's back in the day, how was it violent back then for the punk rock that was being displayed in Southern California?

Back then there were a lot of gangs. So it'd be like 200 members of one gang, and 200 members of another gang. So there'd be like, the Suicidal gang, as in Suicidal Tendencies, the Triple FFF gang and then the I'm In A Gang gang.

What did they think of you guys? What did they think of Canadians? SNFU from Edmonton, Wayne Gretzky, what did they think?

They liked us, SNFU at the time was the perfect skateboarding soundtrack music and we were loved and adored, so we never got beaten up, it was good.

Chi Pig of SNFU I saw you also at the NOFX or should I say the Me First and the Gimme Gimmes gig at Richard's on Richards a while back, when did you first meet Fat Mike?

The first time I met him was at a show way, way back he came to the Roxy on Hollywood Boulevard and he told us that Brett Gurewitz was going to show up and offer us a record deal on Epitaph, which he did. And that was one of the first times that I met him. But he phoned me up in a drunken phone call when he was a teenager and wanted SNFU to come tour with his band. And they were going to supply all the gear and travel with us and I had no idea who the hell they were, he was really really drunk.

I also saw you at the Queens of the Stone Age gig. What was your connection to the Queens of the Stone Age, Chi Pig of SNFU?

Well I have known Hutch, their sound man who did their graphics and everything for 20 or 25 year, so he introduced me to Josh Homme. Yeah, so we just hang out and eat cheese dip and things like that. And we talked about possibly doing a Desert Sessions this year.

That would be great to have you on there.

Yes, I think it would represent Canada in a good way.

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

What would you do in The Desert Sessions? Would you just sing? Would you play something? Would you provide puppetry? What would you do Chi Pig?

I would do some yoga, a yoga workout. I would orchestrate a yoga workout regiment and some singing, and then maybe we'll play charades later.

Chi Pig of SNFU, you're from Edmonton, Alberta. What were the punk bands on the scene in Edmonton, Alberta. I mentioned the Malibu Kens. I also played the Hot Nasties from Calgary, Alberta.

Yeah, they were a bit uppity because one of them one of them had money. And he was into culture...painting. And so the people in the punk community hated him. So he was the target of spit.

What was the first punk band in Edmonton to put out a seven inch or to put out a release? What was the first punk band in Edmonton? It wasn't SNFU was it?

No. Umm, to put out a release? I'm not sure.

There were some bands like Joey Dead & The Necrophiliacs.

Joey Dead & The Necrophiliacs were the Malibu Kens actually. Thanks for reminding me, they were the punk version of the Malibu Kens. I don't think the Malibu Kens were the first to release a single. But Moe Berg was in a band called the Modern Minds, they were great and he released a single. That was probably one of the first. There was a band called The Diefenbakers as well in a band called Legal Limit.

Do you remember scenester, Spyder Jones?

Spyder, his middle name is Yardley. He's the son of Yardley Jones the Edmonton cartoonist and he is now a contributor to political cartoons.

And was he a punker back then?

Still is. Bold n' proud. Punk for life.

Chi Pig, what about Jerry Jerry, had they put out any vinyl before they moved to Montreal?

Yeah their first record was out before they moved to Montreal, and then they did what I think is their best record, "Battle Hymn of the Apartment", in Montreal.

Chi Pig, how hard was it to get on BYO, the record label? Like you guys were on BYO which at the time was pretty happening? How hard was it to get on BYO?

It was pretty easy. We met a bald headed dude named Shawn Stern [of Youth Brigade], who we called penis head. And we made friends with him. It turns out they're from Toronto. Three brothers from Toronto, their father worked on The Amityville Horror film, and henceforth they moved to LA and became punk rockers. But anyways, they were touring with Social Distortion on the "Another State of Mind" tour. We met them then and they asked us to contribute to a compilation they were making called, "Something to Believe In", which we did, and that song got a good response, "Victims of the Womanizer". So we did a whole record with them and then that led to another record.



NARDWUAR VS CHI PIG

years, for the "Better Than a Stick in the Eye" album.

Chi Pig, being from Edmonton and being the premier band from Edmonton. How much did you play in Edmonton? Did you guys play every single weekend over and over again? Because there's a quote here from the punkhistorycanada.ca site: "thrashing punk band from Edmonton who made it big in the US. How many weekends did you waste watching Chi's antics on

And they're still sending you checks to this day? You're still on BYO your back catalogue?

Yeah, I still get two checks a year from those people. They're very honest and they're still the same great people.

And Chi Pig, you also set up BYO Canada, how many records did you put out on BYO Canada?

BYO Canada was set up by our manager named Gubby. Who now works for Wax Trax Records in Chicago. And I think he put out three records. He put out the first two SNFU records and a Jr. Gone Wild record called "Less Art, More Pop!".

And that "Something To Believe In" record, were the Unwanted on that record as well?

Oh yeah.

Who were the Unwanted? I noticed your band SNFU played a lot of gigs with the Unwanted, they're from Winnipeg. What were they like? I don't really hear too much about the Unwanted.

The Unwanted were more like a political punk band, kinda metal, who had a jock like singer, who wore too tight of clothing. Much like yourself.

Baboom!

Baboom! And we ended up having the bass player for about six months. They were a pretty good band. Actually, here's a connection, the singer's little brother Ted was a drummer, and he ended up being the drummer for SNFU for a few

stage?"

We didn't play every weekend, probably twice a month, twice a month in the city. But we always played around the city.

And I also found out that you played a friend of mine's house party, he had a house party, it might have been one of your early gigs. You went there, you played the house party. And then afterwards you had this SNFU stamp, and you stamped it everywhere and it kind of got him mad. The SNFU stamp was stamped everywhere. Was that common practice? You'd play a gig and then stamp SNFU everywhere?

Yeah! You have to make your mark in this world. Even if it's with indelible ink.

Chi Pig of SNFU. Moving on to the 1990s, you were on Epitaph records during the glory days, weren't you? Didn't you ship 75,000 records like before the records were even in store? Was that true like you shipped quite a few right off the bat?

Yeah, we did. We shipped them and then we sold them and then they shipped us out the door.

Did you do any tours with The Offspring?

I think we played one or two shows with The Offspring, I like those guys. Yep.

Was there any interesting events that happened with them? You know, during the glory days, that era of Epitaph, when records

were shipping 75,000.

Uhh...not really. I meant to meet Devo, so that was cool.

Oh so Epitaph helped you meet Devo?

Ahh yes, so the drummer for Bad Religion told me that Devo was housed in this one green building down the street from the Hyatt Riot in LA.

Oh you went to the Devo warehouse!

Yes, and I went there because we had just made a T-shirt with a spoof of the first Devo record cover, with SNFU in Devo letters, it said "Are We Not Punk?" and it had me instead of a Chi Chi Rodriguez it was Chi Chi Rivera. And then I pretended I was a delivery boy and I said "Hello I have a poster for Mark Mothersbaugh please" and they let me in the building.

And once in the building what happened Chi? Did you go crazy?

I went crazy and I ripped my pants and whipped it and I whipped it good. And when I whipped it good, Mark Mothersbaugh introduced me to his brother and a couple of the bed members, and gave me a half hour tour. I walked out with Devo T Shirts and a Devo video.

Do you still have that stuff?

I still have that stuff.

And nowadays, you are playing really interesting gigs, you played Tofino. Did you play Tofino?

I played Tofino, yes.

And how was that?

Was good, I was wearing a wetsuit, like the guy in In Living Color.

You were wearing wetsuit on stage?

Like the guy in In Living Color, remember In Living Color?

Oh! The band In Living Color. Okay.

Yeah. The guy used to wear wetsuits on stage. That was the look.

I always thought that was spandex! Well, thanks much Chi Pig, anything else you want to add to the people out there at all.

I would like to say Whooooo, OOOhhhhh! That's about it.

All right, Chi Pig. Thanks so much and doot doola doot doo...

Doot doo!

To hear this interview hop to www.nardwuar.com



Photo Collage by Matej Oven - Thanks to all the photographers featured.

R.I.P. CHIPS
 "Playing live is the best high I ever had."
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BLKR

interview with Ratboy Roy (Vocals) – Jay LeBlanc (Guitar) - Knuckles (Bass) - Blind Marc (Drums)

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

Ratboy Roy: I am infamous for having a gorgeous cock and sometimes shitting my pants.

LeBlanc: I am infamous for recurring incidents of mushroom fuelled mayhem.

Knuckles: I am infamous for inventing the martial art move called the 'Spinning piss kick'

Blind Marc: I am infamous for graduating at the top of my class at air traffic control school.

AU: Give us a brief history of the band, who are you and how did you form?

Ratboy: We formed four or five years ago but we've all been friends for decades, Marc and Knuckles have been in bands together since the mid 90's. But I think Knuckles and Jay were thinking about doing something completely different but Knuckles hijacked the project and got me and Marc in on it

LeBlanc: Knuckles tricked me as I was trying to form a band to drum for that he agreed to play with. But when we met at his house he told me I had to join his band and play guitar with Ratboy Roy and Blarc. Although Blarc was unaware. What could I say but "Fuck Ya" and the band was born.

AU: Who's in the band and how would you describe each of the other members if you were writing their Tinder profile?

The band is;

Vocals-Ratboy Roy, was in; *Alcoholic White Trash,* and *The Ted Bundy Project*

Ratboy is an oaf trapped in a midget's body, He's a singer, and song writer whos likes include: watching porn with the sound up loud, dirty panties, and a nice warm glass of urine. His dislikes are; shitty music, and flat beer.

Guitar- Leblanc, was in ; *Blem De LaBlem, Blackie And The Triumphs, Cum Soc, Drunken Superheros,* and *Last of the V8 Interceptors.*

Jay is a professional maniac who is always set to full speed ahead, the music is never loud enough, the party never long enough, and the booze never strong enough. In his leisure time Jay enjoys relaxing by getting into high speed police chases.

Bass- Knuckles; was in *Drunktank, Alcoholic White Trash, The Shivs,* and *The Capital City Stalkers*

Knuckles is a very talented bass player who just discovered his DNA is almost 3/4 Neanderthal . His hobbies include grooming his abundant body hair and clubbing unsuspecting victims.

Drums- Blind Marc, Is currently in *The Dayglo Abortions, Keg Killers, Skid Marxist.* Was in *The Shivs,* and *Junky Death Squad.*

Marc is a short stocky, bald, blind man with lots of back and nose hair, long yellow toenails. He was born with two left feet and a hunch back. He also has a drawer full of A&W and McDonald's coupons.

AU: What is BLKR all about?

LeBlanc: Blkr is a coalition of veteran hard core musicians bent on taking their art to the maximum potential

Ratboy: BLKR is about writing , and playing no bullshit hardcore music to help ourselves and others cope a world that sometimes seems like a bullshit factory. We're about getting and giving a good blast of spazz therapy delivered through killer music. Whether in the jam room or on stage nothing going on in the world matters to us while we're playing.

AU: What are some of the songs about?

LeBlanc: The songs vary from the ridiculous and humorous to the political and social awareness in which we live.

Ratboy: Our songs are about a bunch of different shit, one is about cutting off a snitches fingers and throwing them in a deep fryer at KFC, We got songs about war, injustice by governments and cops. It's a mix of either shit that pisses us off, or makes us laugh. Jay is a non stop source of good ideas to write about, the crazy stories never stop



Live photos by Cat Ashbee

with him around.

AU: What style of music is it? Can you describe your sound, for those who've never heard you before?

Ratboy: Our sound is definitely hardcore, it's loud, fast, angry thrash. Like if you smash 80's speed metal with hard punk.

AU: What else does 2020 have in store for BLKR since Covid fucked the world?

Ratboy: We believe in doing our part to help this unhappy, virus riddled world by finishing the mixing and mastering on our upcoming album called Full Speed Ahead. This world needs hot dose of BLKR hardcore pumped into their veins anytime the urge strikes them. It was recorded at Lap Of Luxury studio by Scott Henderson ,and Scott Bennett. Murray Cretin from The Dayglo Abortions is producing and mixing it and the sounds fucking killer. Regular doses of the finished album will be at least as effective as Hydroxychloroquine in preventing and treating Covid 19.

AU: What do you remember about the last show you played before Covid hit? Was it the Dayglo show at Lucky Bar?

Ratboy: Our last show was at Pat's Pub in Vancouver in mid March, it was the 3rd show in three nights that we played with The Dayglo Abortions, and AK47. I definitely remember thinking the turnout was good since it was becoming clear that the world was beginning to go in to shut down mode. Then I remember thinking it was fucking lucky we got the shows in when we did, that was the last weekend before all the restrictions were put in place...and I remember Leblanc was attacked by a pretty hot chick when he attempted to fix Murray's microphone problem. He bobbed and weaved like Mike Tyson avoiding multiple haymakers and kicks until he grabbed her by the leather jacket and swung her around three times and flung her in to the pit, much to the horror of Tony from AK47.

AU: Any stories or thoughts to share about the recent passing of SNFU's Mr. Chi Pig.

Blind Marc: I grew up in Edmonton where my

brothers were going to shows back in the 80's. When I was eleven years old they took me to my first show, the bands were SNFU, and Beyond Possession. My brothers brought me to the merch table and introduced me to Chi. They said " Hey Chi this

is our little brother Marc, This is his first show and he doesn't see so good." Chi said " Hey little buddy" He gave me an SNFU toque, and brought me up front so I could sit on the stage watch the bands.

Ratboy: I just finished a set with AWT at the Cobalt and was getting off the stage when Chi pulled me aside and told me we played a killer set, and then went on to say a bunch of really nice things about my personal performance. It really meant a lot to me coming from him.

Leblanc: Of all the times I've ever hung out with Chi, and some were good times and some not so good times, but the first time I ever saw him with SNFU he was playing at Harpos in Victoria and it was billed as the last ever SNFU show, his final song was It's a Wild World by Cat Stevens. It literally brought a tear to my eye which is the only time a performer has had that effect on me. Very few people will have the impact he had and leave the legacy

he did.

Knuckles: Me and Chi were considering doing a project together the Chi and Knuckles project, or Chuckles for short.

AU: What's the state of the current state of music in Victoria? Who are the other wicked bands in town?

Ratboy: Victoria has tons of killer bands, *Dayglo Abortions, Keg Killers, AK47, Gnar Gnars, Fully Crazed, Class of 1984, The Frostbacks, Rival Gang, Knife Manual.* Everyone of these bands and others too kick ass. Most everybody in the Vic scene get along really well, which is why there's about fifteen guys that make up like thirty bands. Lots of good healthy band inbreeding.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

Ratboy: Final thoughts?

VICTORIAS LOCALS ONLY



Group photo by Scott Bennett

Sure let's not be cunts to one another. We got politicians doing everything to divide us, and make us believe that we can't get along with one another. We can fucking get along, and it starts with not being fucking cunts to one another.

AU: Where can we find you guys online?

Ratboy: You can find a live video of the song KFC from our last show in Vancouver. The album will be finished when Cretin is good and fucking ready.



Scan QR code for BLKR live footage of the song KFC

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UNLEASH THE ARCHERS

Interview with lead vocalist Brittany Slayes
by Erik Lindholm

Absolute Underground: Where are you now? Set the scene for our readers – what is the view out the window?

Brittany Slayes: I am in my home studio in the heart of Vancouver looking out over a very grey and rainy False Creek... My favourite kind of day!

AU: Walk us through the cover art of the new record, *Abyss*: there is a floating woman, there is outer space, some sweet moon-scaped planets – and possibly a very strong male protagonist.



BS: We were going for an old school science-fiction novel vibe, in the vein of Dan Simmons or Frank Herbert, where a particular scene from the story is depicted as vibrantly as possible. The artist Adam Burke is an incredible painter, and he did an amazing job with the directions we gave him. Basically, I gave a detailed description of what was happening in the exact moment we wanted to portray, and also provided some similar images and inspiration shots, and he just went to town.

There were a couple of edits for perspective but other than that he pretty much nailed it bang on. In that scene, our main character The Immortal is seeing his nemesis The Matriarch again for the first time since she betrayed him, and Adam did a great job of bringing the emotional tension of that moment to life.

AU: Please tell us about your projects to interact with fans during the time of COVID-19. How have you adapted to the new world? What is upcoming?

BS: We live-streamed our album release show on August 22nd The Rickshaw in Vancouver. Even though it wasn't really 'live' it [was] amazing to be able to hit the stage again! We also have a twitch channel that we hope to spend a lot more time on this fall, we were thinking some chill jamspot sessions or Q&As over a few beers might be fun. I was going to mention the D&D contest as well but then I read your next question...

AU: There is an upcoming Dungeons and Dragons game contest tied to the release of the new record (run a campaign with the band) - can you share about the story you've got cooked up, the world you will inhabit!

BS: This is going to be super fun, I think, and I can't wait. I had mentioned to Napalm that I was in the middle of writing an Adventure Guide for *Abyss* just as a little side project for all of our D&D fans, and they came up with the great idea of doing a contest to actually play through the adventure when it's done. I have some fun world-building aspects that I am excited to reveal plus some new monsters to introduce so it's going to be something really special, that's for sure! We are hoping to stream the whole game as well so keep an eye out for when we announce that.

AU: Thematically, *Abyss* is taking us somewhere. What do you want listeners to know before the release of the album?

BS: I would definitely recommend listening to *Apex* before you dive into *Abyss*, as the whole story begins there. In *Apex*, we are introduced to our main characters, The Matriarch and The Immortal. The Immortal is a powerful being that is cursed to serve whoever awakens him from his thousand-year slumbers, and in *Apex* he is awakened by The Matriarch – a power-hungry sorceress with a thirst for immortality. Needless to say, The Matriarch betrays The Immortal at the end of *Apex*, and in *Abyss* we see The Immortal

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE



finally taking his revenge with the help of a few other important characters.

AU: UTA has undoubtedly hit its swing worldwide (hell yeah – about time!) What has surprised you internationally in your fanbase last? Is there a purchase on the merch store from a mountaintop in Nepal or something, which has made you surprised by your musical reach?

BS: Haha thanks! We are super excited with how far we've come and we really just take it all day by day, happy to be here doing what we love. We don't ship our own merch out anymore unfortunately, so I don't get to see where all the orders go these days but I do love seeing who listens to us most on Spotify, and it's not surprising I guess but Sweden and Norway are pretty high up on the list. The US and Canada are in the top five of course, but it is just always cool to know that the countries that have some of the oldest traditions of heavy metal have finally discovered us and decided we are worth listening to, haha.

AU: What was your biggest, most valuable lesson this time around in the studio? Be it songwriting, gear choices, mixing... personal dynamics...

BS: Oh man I am constantly learning lessons all the time, not just in the studio, but I think this time around I definitely learned to do the song you care about the most last because by then you

are comfortable and fully warmed up and ready to lay down all the best takes!

AU: Is there a book you are enjoying and finding solace in, during these challenging times?

BS: Currently reading *The Witcher* series by Andrzej Sapkowski and I am really enjoying it. A small part of me wishes I had read the books before watching the show because now I just see Henry Cavill instead of being able to create the character in my mind myself, but other than that it's awesome. There are a ton of books in the series too so it will keep me entertained for a while, I think!

AU: Last words to longbow archers across Canada reading this magazine:

BS: Thank you so much for always supporting us and for listening to our music and for always being there for us over the years! Come hang out with us on Twitch if you get a minute. Oh and if you can, listen to *Abyss* once through start to finish, no stopping. That is how we wrote it and meant for it to be heard and to really understand the story that's the best way to do it. Put on your best headphones, sit back, relax, and let the music take you far away from here... Thanks for your time!

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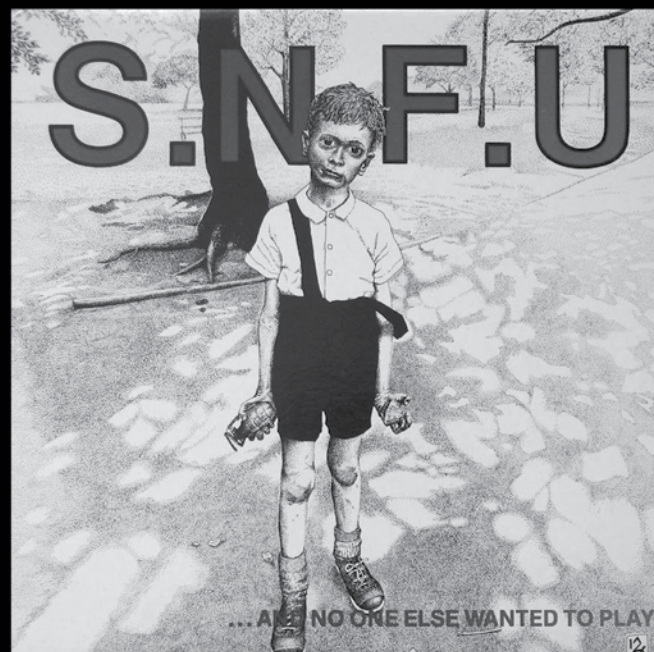
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Illuminated Minerva

Interview with Nathan Bourgeault (Guitar),
Jordon Bourgeault (Drums), Matt Petti (Bass)

Submitted by Jon Asher

Absolute Underground: Why did you form? How did the idea come to be?

IM: Brothers Nate and Jordon were both musicians growing up. They eventually formed their first project, Sequoia, which started their musical collaboration. Once they moved on and began Illuminated Minerva, the goal was to push the musical boundaries further and went in search of new members to flesh out the line-up and found Matt Petti (Caveat, Verbal Deception) and Pat Lawtey (Octillian, Kobra and the Lotus).

AU: How would you describe your sound in five words?

IM: Progressive, Technical, Melodic, Ambient, Experimental

AU: Your upcoming LP *Enigma Adamantine* is out on September 25th, how do you think it will be received by fans?

IM: Anyone who enjoyed our first LP *The Immaculate Deception* will definitely enjoy this LP. Thematically, we are touching on similar concepts, and musically we have longer style songs, however, this LP comes with a more technical edge, and higher production value. If you're a fan of music as a whole, this LP has a little bit of everything for you.

AU: What kind of listening experience will you be giving fans with *Enigma Adamantine*?

IM: *Enigma Adamantine* as a concept LP is designed to be listened as a whole, as there is a chronological order to the themes and flow from song to song, each track does have its own unique feel and can definitely be enjoyed on their own.



AU: How is the writing process for the band?

IM: Writing for us as a band is very natural, we don't force anything and have been playing together long enough to know what doesn't work. We don't set hard timelines or anything like that with writing and we just let the songs build organically. Songs usually start out with a riff from Nathan and then we as a band write together adding our own elements.

AU: Are any of the band members known on the local scene from any other bands?

IM: We have members who have been in or are currently in the following:

Jordon Bourgeault: Verbal Deception, Sequoia

Nathan Bourgeault: Sequoia

Matt Petti: Caveat, Verbal Deception

Pat Lawtey: Octillian, Kobra and the Lotus

AU: How did you decide on the tracks for this LP? How much more music can fans expect?

IM: We wrote these tracks specifically for this LP, which is our normal process and we are already writing for our next LP.

AU: What can people expect live from your band compared to other bands when we're

done with the age of Covid?

IM: People can expect a live Illuminated Minerva show to be energetic and visceral. We are seasoned musicians and all use the professional gear for the best possible live sound. Being instrumental sets us apart from most other bands as it makes it easier to appeal to a broader spectrum of people.

AU: What inspires your writing?

IM: As an instrumental band we don't use lyrics but we use archived audio clips as a form of oratory artistic storytelling.

AU: How would you describe the evolution of the band's sound over the years from your first release to the upcoming *Enigma Adamantine*?

IM: In the early days, we had a lot more of an ambient and electronic focus. As time has gone on we've leaned more into the heavier, technical songwriting. We don't limit ourselves musically or artistically so we are always in a state of growth.

AU: Elevator pitch readers your LP as a whole.

CALGARY CARNAGE



IM: *Enigma Adamantine* is an instrumental progressive metal LP based around conspiracy, UFOs, and abductions. A musical examination of modern mythology laid out with hard-hitting bass grooves, technical guitar lines, soaring leads, and complex drumming matched with audio from years past, presenting an auditory mirror reflecting our deepest fears and questions yet to be answered. An LP experience as unique as the stories within.

Illuminated Minerva's LP Enigma Adamantine drops September 25th and will be available
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Swill City

Interview by Lacey Paige



Few punk bands from the Edmonton and surrounding area have stood the test of time as well as Swill City has. Spanning well over a decade and having gone through multiple lineup changes while experiencing the ebb and flow of the local music scene over the years, Swill City is going stronger now more than ever. Working-class swillers (as they refer to themselves) Chris and Mike Guy, Jay Mitchell and Kyle Kutcher have remained dedicated to their punk rock roots; only for these guys, day jobs, family, friends and unity are the key ingredients to their livelihood and fun, unparalleled flippancy. They recently took some time away from a Sunday jam session to discuss their colourful history, music and experiences as punk-rock dads pushing 40.

Absolute Underground: Swill City has been around now for well over a decade. Let's get into a brief history of the band and how it got to where it is today.

Mike Guy: Me, [Rob] Swiller and Fatkid (Andrew Matheson) started in September of 2002. Back then we were known as the Swill City Locals. We're a Fort (Fort Saskatchewan) band, and this is our sound. Fort Saskatchewan had a rad fucking sound back in the day. The Fort had a lot of rad fucking dudes—good musicians.

Chris Guy: Pooba, The Booze Hounds, Putrefaction... Yeah, a lot of good bands came out of Fort Saskatchewan. It was a good punk scene.

AU: You guys have had numerous lineup

changes; many band members have come and gone over the last 18 years. So, how did the current lineup come together?

MG: Chris started it actually. He got this band back on the go after it was done. He is the one that got all of us back together.

CG: Yup, I got all of us back together, and I learned to play bass.

MG: Chris is the bread and the butter of the band for sure.

Jason Mitchell: Yeah, you were playing when Magnus was drumming—before me.

MG: Yup. There was me, Chris, Rob Swiller and Magnus on drums. At the time, [Magnus] was giving my son drum lessons. It was pretty fucking cool. I remember we were at the studio one night; we were all fucked up and we were jamming. Magnus showed up and he was blown away by us jamming that night, and so he joined the band right after that. Then we would jam at Myke and Shawn's place in The Fort [Fort Saskatchewan], and then Shawn joined the band. Then Myke wanted to sing, and then we got back on the go as Swill City. We never brought the "Locals." We were just Swill City from there on. Then Magnus left the band.

JM: And then Seba messaged me randomly. (He knew me from shows and stuff.) He was just like, 'Hey, we need a drummer.' But I had also known Rob Swiller for a long time. I brought some songs to the table, too. Then things started to really take shape with Swill City...

MG: Well, I'm telling you, Jay, I've never played any better shows than since we've all been together, man. Of all the years that I've been playing, the Saskatchewan tour was the raddest time of my life, dude. And it wasn't much! We played in front of maybe 10 people. But I'm telling you, the energy on that fucking stage that night was incredible. Saskatoon! Fuck, that was a rad gig! The raddest show I've ever played.

JM: Yeah, it was fun! But yeah, to answer your question: Mike Guy and Rob Swiller are basically the founding members of Swill City. But through many member changes, and there was some bad blood that happened—there were some differences between the two founding members that kind of evolved from there. The band kind of went on hiatus and went back and forth for a little bit. Finally, Swill City started getting more serious and more active regularly.

AU: As a band that has been around for as long as Swill City has, how do you guys maintain the essence of what Swill City is supposed to be, while also keeping it fresh and progressing the music?

MG: It's all about being yourself.

JM: When I met Chris (when I joined the band), I remember telling him, 'You know, I have kids, I have family and shit.' I was like, 'I gotta work around that stuff, I can't jam all the time.' That was the first thing I remember me, you [Mike G.] and Chris said: 'Family first; family's always the most important thing. Work and family come first—first and foremost—before jams.'

MG: One hundred percent.

JM: And it has been like that, always. The thing about Swill City now, compared to what it was—with members coming and going—has been finding a click. Like, the definition of a "band" is a group of people banded together through thick and thin; it's family. I've played in many bands that have come and gone, but it's about finding the right

dudes.

MG: Yeah, we're kind of picky about bringing in new members. We had a couple guys even before bringing in [Kyle]. I had thought of a couple other guys, but once I heard Kyle was up for it, I was like, 'yeah, dude!'

AU: How do you guys take the signature sound of Swill City and progress it?

MG: Honestly, it's funny because guys at work ask me this, 'you play in a band?' I've been working for, like, 15 years with some of these guys. They don't come to my shows or anything, but they ask what kind of music we play and it's hard to explain it to them. I grew up listening to The Ramones. That's, like, my 'go-to' band. I consider all my riffs kind of Ramone-sy. They are all down strokes, Johnny Ramone-style guitar parts. That's how I learned and that's how I play.

JM: That's the thing with good bands, it's a collaboration of everyone. Swill City now is the best that it's been.

MG: Yeah, with this group of guys, how I've been playing over the years, I think we've found our sound. I have a good time jamming with you guys, man.

AU: How would you guys describe your style and what other bands/musical styles have influenced you?

MG: Man, it's hard to put us in a style.

JM: It's straight up 'Drunkrock.' We're kind of along the lines of Gang Green. They're more like that skate-rock shit, but yeah. You know, sloppy punk. Lyrically wise... well, a lot of it is simple and there's no real political stance.

AU: If Swill City had a mission statement, what would it be?

MG: Have fun, man. That's all! ... and don't take it too seriously. You can have a lot of fun with a guitar, man. I have over the years.

JM: But there's no message behind it. Like, if someone asked us what Swill City stands for, it straight up would be family and unity. A lot of bands don't have that. A lot of awesome bands, you know, they fight; they only jam; they don't even hang out and talk. We're lucky that way. That's one thing I love about Swill City, is that we're all on the same wavelength. We all get along, we jam, and when we jam it's not like, 'oh, fuck, you screwed up!' We're doing it for fun. Even if we didn't play another show... I mean, before the shows and all of that, this is an excuse for dudes that all work [day jobs]—and we all lead separate busy lives—this band brings us together just to hang out.

MG: Yeah, for me it's to get away from my day-to-day life. This is a good release, man. We just go with the flow. If we can't jam a certain week because we got kids and family, we can't.

AU: You're all a bunch of old punk rock dudes in your 40s (or close to). You've all been around in the scene for a long time, so you've all seen the ebb and flow of things. What's your opinion on the differences between the current state of the punk scene vs. how it was 10 or 20 years ago?

MG: I think Jay (Jason) has definitely seen more than all of us.

JM: Out of playing shows since the beginning up until now, in different cities and in the punk and underground scenes like this, it's the same shit. It's ebb and flow. It's the same fucking thing; I've seen it up and down, and the drama—especially in the punk scene and the metal scene. I've seen scenes ripped apart and then die out from drama, and bands not liking bands. As you get older, you get sick and tired of it. I've seen it all. I've been a participant and I've been guilty of bullshit and drama, too. But I've also been on the other side, being ridiculed and shit. And that doesn't matter, especially at our age now, we're weathered. I think we're better this way.

MG: I think the scene is a little different now from how it was back in the early 2000s. I honestly do. Maybe it's because I'm older and I have to work more, and I don't see much of it. But I honestly do think the scene's different now than it was back in the day. There used to be shows almost every weekend! Venues were crazy back then.

JM: But it's coming back again, man. Like, I caught the tail end when I moved to Edmonton in 2000. Back then, there was Red Hot Lovers, Le

SHR-EDMONTON



Tabernacle, Mad Bomber Society. There was a lot of that kind of '77 style, and then street punk was there. There were a lot of all-ages shows, which was very fucking goddamn important. If you think about it, scenes have died out because it's all bar shows all the time. The best way to see a scene flourish and go on is to play all-ages shows. Let the young kids in, because that's how they get into it. The new people are the young kids, and you have to make them feel welcome. I've always said, I don't want to be the guy who's like, 'who's this poser kid?!' We all were that poser kid in the beginning. Talk to them, that's how you keep it going. Invite the kids in. If you're the older one(s), get them stoked on bands, show them. Then they're learning instruments and starting their own bands. That's what keeps shit going, man. Without it, that's how scenes die.

AU: You guys talk a lot of family being an underlying value of Swill City, can you talk a little bit more about that? Also, what's it like to be a punk dad in his 40s?

CG: I feel like an icon to my kids.

JM: Joel (he's my oldest), he's almost at that age where I'm straight up going to tell him, 'dude, enjoy the music and shit...' but this punk scene is littered with a lot of drugs, alcohol, drama, problems, etc. The music is awesome; it's the best part about it, but you have to figure all that out on your own. The legacy that I will pass on to my kids is just the music and letting them do their own thing with it.

CG: I play my music, but I've never forced anything on my kids. Vinnie (my youngest) wants to play drums, and Vayda (my oldest), I bought her a guitar last year.

JM: But if they're not into it, one thing I noticed is that they're just happy to have the bonding time. One other thing with having kids, in the punk scene, is to introduce them and teach them that punk is a way of music and a way of thinking. Punk has nothing to do with a look; it's heart.

MG: Positivity is a good fucking thing; being positive. It brings a lot of good shit to you.

AU: Swill City has recently been reportedly scheduled to play Punk Rock Bowling 2021. How did that come about?

JM: Chris set this up with the promoter. It's been confirmed, so that's our end goal. It's awesome! We're on the right path with recording and doing interviews, social media and stuff like this, and planning on making more merch. If we can pump the band enough through merch sales and through social media promotions, we'll be set. This is a trip on us, for us! We're not getting paid for it. This is a big chance for us, with one year ahead of us, to actually make an impression. MG: I want to go to Vegas, have [an album] and have something to show people. Have some merch. I don't want to go there and just jam our set, and then people wouldn't not even know who the fuck we are/were after.

AU: What are you guys currently working on? What's up and coming with Swill City?

MG & CG & JM: Our new album—finally! Covid-19 has affected our ability to play shows, but our focus is on our album and recording.

AU: Any last words for Absolute Underground?

CG: We're a Drunkrock band; we love you guys, and we'll keep on rocking into the next decade. Cheers!

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After many sightings at S.N.F.U. shows across western Canada over the years, I finally had more than a casual exchange of generic salutations with him when he rolled into the Cobalt as a respite from the mean streets. He was heavily addicted at that point. I had vowed after my own brush with hard drugs, to never be an enabler, but I knew from experience that if there was any chance for him to crawl out of that abyss, he needed to be around his people.

We spent a lot of late afternoons together, listening to music, and swapping scene tidbits while doing our assorted tasks prepping the empty club for the nights activities. Our conversations and laughter echoed through the graffitied, bleach drenched blackness.

I will miss his brash disposition, his witty as fuck zingers, and that wicked brain that held a treasure trove of zany experiences he loved dispensing, while he held court at the end of the bar at the Cobes. That is where his art cottage industry started taking off while he hustled enthusiastic purchasers with those tales of yore in exchange for a beer and a personalized, doodled, five buck sketch.

I will especially miss his standard greeting to me "hey windbag, gotta smoke", sometimes accompanied by a disturbingly moist scritch cheek smooch. He never needed the cigarette, I think he just liked collecting mine as we puffed our ciggies in unison.

trying to coordinate the seemingly 'in denial' jazz community to follow the basic rules in the venue. Seriously, some of these fate tempting boomers are just as reckless as the Third Beach drum circle crowd.

I'll leave you with one of my favorite piggly poo stories. Someone had brought a huge, cigar wrapped doobie that Chi walked up on in the smoke pit out front at the Cobes. He thought it was a cigar, grabbed it and took a giant haul off it. He coughed and disappeared. We found him an hour later staring at the gig lights reflecting off the ceiling, while lying on his back in the Cobes side stage gear area. He didn't smoke grass at that point in time, citing anxiety. Man, we laughed.

You were a character that made me smile. My thoughts are with everyone you touched.

-wendythirteen

Mr. Chi Pig.

Ken Chinn.

I've met them both. Now, we've lost them both.

Our beloved Chi passed away in hospital on July 16th 2020, after a lengthy health battle with the ravages of inebriants. He was 57.

It's been almost three weeks. We can't throw a rager memorial show. That's the hardest part. Solo grief. No hugs. No commiserating. I'm grateful for the outpouring of love I've witnessed online. I absolutely love the memorial graffiti that stormed his old haunts.

I gave him a job bussing the club. It paid peanuts cash wise and provided free beer. But the pride of earning his keep, having somewhere to be and being around the music changed his outlook and fortified the musical camaraderie he needed. The beer bottles at the Cobalt awakened his passions again. Soon, we had him host Mr. Chi-Pig-e-oke.

The art. The singing. Surrounded by musicians and fans. He was soon, once again, a viable musician, the charismatic singer and he reclaimed his soul by recruiting available talents from the scene to bring his body of work back to life.

The underground will miss the gigs. Seven worded wonders of the punk world.

I see a lot of people out schmoozing in pictures on social media but the thought of that still terrifies me as this pandemic is still active. I'm missing way too many lymph glands to chance it. I've become a bandana fiend. It's a good thing I was already a homebody germaphobe. Good practice for this situation.

News is grim for the return of live music as we knew it. Currently, health directive wise, we're still in the 'no singing' category. I've worked the door for five instrumental Jazz Trio Saturdays,



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Death of a Punk Rock Legend

I felt compelled to write this when I heard of the passing of a hugely influential man. Mr. Chi Pig and SNFU were a staple in my existence as a young punk kid from Calgary in the mid 80's. My first experience with how polarizing an SNFU album was occurred when my best friend Mark's mom found the album we had hidden, ... "And No One Else Wanted To Play". Her strict Christian upbringing was so offended with the artwork and lyrics that she took it and threw it in the trash. We subsequently retrieved it, as she didn't have the foresight to destroy it, and just found a better hiding place.

I'm writing this in hopes that I could share my experiences and highlight the far reaching effects Chi Pig and ground breakers like him have gifted my generation in particular (all you X'ers out

there!) As a teenager he provided us an outlet and the words to express our misalignment with society, the establishment, the government, schools, our parents, and all who didn't care to understand us. We were the losers who wore ripped clothes, offensive t-shirts, mohawks, studs, and Doc Martens. We rode skateboards and listened to raunchy, raw, unapologetic music. We partied too hard and studied too little and we really didn't give a rat's ass who didn't like it. The music fuelled us. It rallied us into greatness. Chi's presence touched so many. I remember his enigmatic performances well, flying around on stage like a man possessed and stirring the pot to encourage the angst of the pit. He connected with his audience. I proudly hung up gig posters with inappropriate art on my closet door and lined my locker at school. I adorned my first car with an imposing "Open Your Mouth" sticker. But that was then. And this is now. We have lost

a legend. In my introspection, I have realized that the attitudes I had formed back then, the independence and resilience, the individuality, creativity, and non-conformist beliefs have made me who I am today. This foundation has, in turn, influenced how I influence others.

I am now in my mid 40's and work as a counsellor in a Calgary High School. I encourage my students to be unique in how they approach life, not to compromise who they are for anyone and to express their individual gifts. My skull tattoos and piercings have been widely accepted, but this didn't come without a price. In my youth I had to endure public shaming, ridicule and many tough days with the parental unit. We eventually desensitized the broader view of "dirty punk rockers" into valuing the expressive, artistically inclined, pathfinding individualists that we are. I'm talking about the entire punk scene of our generation. I am also a proud founder of the

"underground" sport of roller derby in Calgary, another culture that embraces the weirdos. In this position I have been able to influence many women over the years to engage in the riotous, aggressive fun and enjoy the physical outlet it provides.

I remember how energized I was when leaving an SNFU show. At face value, Chi Pig was a rad singer in a rad band that I grew up with and still enjoy to this day. But he was so much more. When I heard of his passing I shed some tears for him, his friends and family, for us, for my youth that I loved and hated at the same time.

Chi, you were an icon to my generation and a helluva front man and party animal. Your smile was infectious. You will be greatly missed and never forgotten. I will listen to your songs until they put me in the ground. Peace to your soul

- Carla Walquist (aka Scarla Maim)



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Heatwave Horror

By Vince D'Amato

As we move into a summer that is seeing no end in sight for the unbelievable COVID-19 pandemic and is simultaneously framing the invigorating uprising of the #BlackLivesMatter movement, and while we're in the midst of what's now a near decades-long media inundation which now, it appears, to be a catalyst for a sub-pandemic of anxiety and depression in young people, my mind recalls something the late, great horror filmmaker Stuart Gordon once said during a magazine interview: that something doesn't have to literally be "horror" in order to be horrifying.

Spike Lee, a filmmaker who seems to be getting better and better with each film he makes, is getting a lot of attention lately because of Netflix's push of his most recent "joint," *Da 5 Bloods*. Some of this due attention comes on the heels of his brilliant *BlacKkKlansman* from 2018, and of course, it's no secret that there's been a surge in



interest in black stories by black storytellers, and Netflix has specifically pointed out this increase in viewership with regards to shows like *Dear White People*, *Black #AF*, and the stunning documentary *13*. But again, with all of this inundation of media (film, social, and otherwise), it might be a little too easy to forget that Spike Lee's film *Do the Right Thing* brought up the horrifying issues of police brutality, murder, and systemic racism thirty-one years ago! At the end of what is still one of Spike Lee's more famous films, a black man is choked to death by a white police officer. But like so many of these exact types of racial issues, when they were brought up by the black community, black artists, black filmmakers, people did not listen thirty-one years ago.

Since then, as a filmmaker, Spike Lee has gently swerved his career into the lane of genre filmmaking a couple of times. I think of *Oldboy* and *Da Sweet Blood of Jesus*, and of course his brilliant *Summer of Sam*, the semi-fictionalized take on racism and dangerous stereotyping over the intense, hot summer of a New York borough during the 1977 murder spree of serial killer David Berkowitz (a.k.a. Son of Sam). *Summer of Sam* holds up alongside other masterpieces of the serial killer sub-genre like *Zodiac* and *Se7en* –



only now, in 2020, Lee's *Summer of Sam* takes on an entirely new philosophical dimension of communal fear and violent overreaction as we live through our new reality of divisive social symptoms of the COVID-19 pandemic and political reactions to various health and safety measures – comparable to the underlying horrors that made *Summer of Sam* uncomfortable (in a good thought-provoking way) the first time around; and which now has suddenly become a predictive allegory for our current times. *Summer*



of *Sam* also happens to be part of a loose series of "heatwave" summer films from Spike Lee, which includes *Do the Right Thing*, and uses the oppressive heat of summer months to pressure-cook the societal stresses of his characters into intensified, and sometimes horrific events and circumstances in his stories; very much like the temperatures that famed genre author Ray Bradbury's story, "Touched with Fire".

Interestingly, *Do the Right Thing*'s director of photography, Ernest Dickerson, has more so become something of a genre film hero since taking the helm of the still-amazing *Tales from the Crypt* presents "Demon Knight." Ernest Dickerson actually began his career as the second-unit director for George A. Romero's *Day of the Dead* in 1985, so Dickerson is certainly no stranger to the horror genre. Prior to "Demon Knight," he directed *Surviving the Game* with Ice-T in the starring role, it was a "hunting humans" gory action film that at the time was overshadowed by John Woo's exciting and splashy American film debut, *Hard Target*, which also worked with the same theme; but Woo's film starred Jean Claude Van Damme,



who himself had brought famed Hong Kong actioneer Woo over to Hollywood specifically to collaborate on a hyper-stylish action movie – and *Hard Target* also had the backing of one of the biggest film studios in Hollywood, Universal. However, with the passing of time, it's actually Dickerson's *Surviving the Game* that is far more relevant, for the exact reason that Woo's film had been more popular in the early 90s – Woo's film places its importance on style, which is admittedly very exciting, but Dickerson in undoubtedly more concerned with his subtext of social commentary, which has taken more time to expel over the years since he made this sophomore effort. Both of these hunting-humans films still hold up today in terms of action and excitement, but it's stunningly clear today that Dickerson's film is more wrought

Absolute Horror

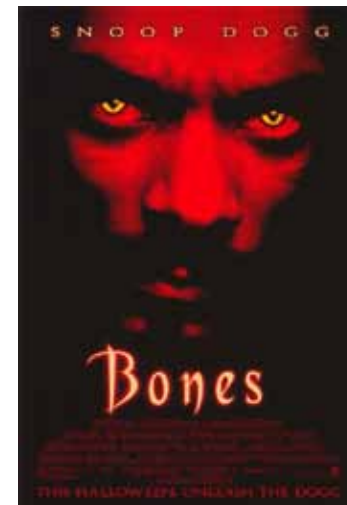


with thought and emotion.

Dickerson then went onward to carve out a wholly impressive horror-genre career in Hollywood, with his film *Bones* (2001) alongside a significant peppering of socially-conscious films of his own, including *Double Play* (2017) and *Blind Faith* (1998). Dickerson's horror career then veered head-on into television, where he directed one of the *Masters of Horror* episodes, "The V Word", before moving on to directing episodes of *The Wire*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *Dexter*, Stephen King's *Under the Dome*, and *The Walking Dead*, which would take him full-circle back to the zombie sub-genre. George Romero himself may have been proud that his second-unit director was now at the helm of the horror sub-genre that Romero himself had created, and mentored so many, in.

And while Ernest Dickerson was tangling with vampires, serial killers, and zombies, his former collaborator Spike Lee would also go full-horror and independently finance and produce a significant vampire horror film of his own, *Da Sweet Blood of Jesus*, which was a direct remake of *Ganja & Hess*, and was based on the original screenplay by Bill Gunn. *Ganja & Hess* (the original) had received a standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival back in

1973, and has now also recently been restored into a full "Director's Cut". Lee's 2014 version displays its own poetic beauty amongst its bloody horror, for something that's both weirdly similar and different at the same time.




As we fast-forward to 2020, we have the Netflix-amped *Da 5 Bloods*, Spike Lee's new film about a group of black war vets who go back to Vietnam for an emotional, psychological, and monetary journey. While this may not be a horror film per se, it's impossible not to recall author Peter Straub's horror novel *Koko* for those who have read it (and not only is it still in print, but Stephen King recently tweeted that, "Koko is one of the great novels of the 20th century's second half.") Like Stuart Gordon said, it doesn't have to be "horror" to be horrifying. But in an extension to that notion, when filmmakers like Spike Lee and Ernest Dickerson bring underlying and overlying themes and tones of social and societal discourse, political corruption, and themes of systemic racism and a pandemic attitude of racial fear to their works, then those are undeniably exploratory works of horror, even if they're not categorically in the "horror" genre.

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MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL



Although I shared with many the life changing experience of seeing SNFU live, I first actually met Mr. Chi Pig at the Cobalt in the summer of 2006. I was going to interview him for Absolute Underground, so Wendy Thirteen pointed him out and I introduced myself. He immediately drew a picture of me, then we made plans to hang out that night and do the interview in the park the following day. That evening of karaoke and laughs together would be the first of many over the next ten years, and I am grateful for every hug, every joke, and every conversation we shared. He became a friend that I never had to call – I just showed up to the right place, lonely on my regular overnights for work in Vancouver. He'd be either by himself at a table or holding court on the sidewalk, his cackle audible before he was in sight. You can't fault me for thinking that Chi liked to talk about himself, but if we were in a group, he'd always tell everyone a story about me. As I read the posts and reflections on his passing, I remember that my experience is far from unique. The most beautiful part of Chi was the time he had for others, the love he shared through his wit, his creativity, his memory, and his mischief. I know that when he wasn't performing music, part of him was missing. When he did perform, he made sure we could all feel his joy. I was pretty busted up when I realized I wouldn't have one more chance to have that dirty fur hat headbutted into my chest, but I get a great deal of comfort from being grateful for all that Mr. Chi Pig gave me.

-Justin Schneider

I was always a fan of SNFU. Being born in 86 I was a late bloomer but SNFU was a huge influence on my life. I don't know who I would be without them. I'll always remember Chi being such a witty charismatic guy. He always had time for a story or two. And never didn't have time for his fans. Never did he fail to have me laughing until my cheeks hurt. I remember the last time I saw him with my boyfriend, we asked to interview him for a Sip Yek Nom documentary, and he was happy to do it. When we sent it to the guitarist his comment was "We'll have to edit out your laughing in it" Kenny was a gem, a true beauty. He always made you feel like you were the best person he ever met. There was nothing better than sitting and



listening to a beautiful piggy tail. I will truly miss that. RIP you beautiful soul.

- Kat Jones

I used to see Chi at the Cobalt, and he even managed to make it to a few Lesbian Fist Magnet shows. I remember one of the first times I actually met Chi; we were standing outside The Rickshaw. I was chatting with friends and smoking, watching people go up to him to say hi and let him know how important SNFU was in their lives growing up. While he was smiling and nodding, he turned to me and started looking me up and down, searching my vest for an SNFU patch. I said, "I can



stop you now, old man, ya ain't gonna find one" we both cackled. Chi and I have similar laughs, one that catches people's attention, its weird and infectious. We both knew this, and that made it even better every time we did it.

A few hours ago I woke up from a dream. I was back in the DTES. Somewhere between the Cambie and Funkys; the walls were made of red brick, and the side walks were littered with cigarette butts. I was walking and came upon Chi sitting on the sidewalk next to a parking meter, with his chucks planted on the road and his fur hat on. As I stopped, he looked up at me with that scrunched up smile he always made. I reached down and patted him on the head, feeling the fur between my fingers. I said, "see ya around dude" and he nodded. My eyes opened and it took me a minute to remember where I was. I looked out the window at the rice fields; I breathed the Northern Thai air, and I smiled, wondering why I had this strange dream. I decided to check my messages; Chi had left this earthly realm that evening. I thought about how lucky I was that he decided to stop and say goodbye on his way out. What a strange and beautiful world we live in.

- Ange Trash

Fish Tits



When I was 15 I wanted a tattoo and decided on getting the SNFU fishbone on my arm.

Being too young for ink, I put that dream on the back burner. Fast forward to my early thirties, I was living with renowned tattoo artist and SNFU bass player Denis. The real estate on my arms was occupied with art by then and my SNFU piece needed to be close to the heart. In "The last of the big time suspenders" purple, I finally had Ken's design. He was thrilled and immediately and from that moment forward, called me Fishtits. He got a thrill about calling me over when he was with a group of people and saying "hey Fishtits, show these guys your tits" and without hesitation I would lower the neck of my shirt to reveal the ink (and not the peep show they were momentarily expecting) The situation became a running gag and we both played it up to new 'victims' every chance we got.

Chiconic image

We were to meet at Pub340 to take the "Have You Seen Him?" photo for Skull Skates and go out for dinner. It was my birthday, the



unfortunate December 26th. Ken was having one of those razor sharp witty days and was focused. Catching him on a good day was pretty magical and I will never forget some words he said to me. I gave him the straw hat and he said "Just tell me what to do, where to stand, and how to be. You are the artist here, Fishtits". It may not sound like much, but putting the project in my hands and to be called an artist by the artist that influenced me throughout my life and more than any other being, was a compliment that means more than I can say. We were old friends at this point and worked together a lot, but it was always so casual and sassy that I didn't expect such a touching sentiment. Dinner at the Cannibal Cafe afterwards was the icing on the birthday cake. (Fun facts: The photo was taken in front of the South window at Pub340 with Dan L holding a white sheet of bristol board as the backdrop. I still have the straw hat)

Tofino

Ken's kindness would make the most beautiful surprise appearances sometimes. I was living in Qualicum Beach and drove up to Tofino for an SNFU show. I worked the merch booth that night and had a great time goofing around with the band. At the end of the night I was saying my farewell when Ken asked where I was staying. I intended to sleep in my car and wake up early to drive back for work the next day. He wouldn't have it and insisted I stay with them in the hotel. As we arrived and settled in, I asked for a blanket to curl up in on the floor. Ken said "No way, Fishtits. You are on the bed and I am on the floor." There was no bargaining with him on the issue and we nestled in giggling about puns and jokes annoying the rest of the band who just wanted to sleep.

Thank you for putting together a lovely tribute to an incredible creature.

- Cat Ashbee

Back in July of 2005, while on tour, I had wound up with an abscess on my spine that I was told would either kill me or paralyze me. I was drugged with enough meds to stone an elephant for a year in VGH hospital and had many amazing friends come to visit me but this one was extra special. It was early in the morning, somewhere like 2am, I had a vision of a pigheaded human in a suit with a briefcase come to my bed and hug me. Without a word it opened up its briefcase, pulled out some art supplies and began to draw a picture of me. When the drawing was finished it hugged me again and whispered "I love you, brother. Go back to sleep." and left. When I awoke the next morning I remembered it but thought I must have been drug dreaming until the nurse came in and said "We usually don't allow any guests after hours, let alone that late, and dressed like that but I knew it had to be for you before he handed me the piece of paper with your name on it so I let him." I looked to the side of my bed and saw the drawing taped up next to me and knew it was Chi. When I got out I



talked to him about it and he told me how he came so late and wore the mask as he was afraid of hospitals and I swore I'd always come visit him if he ever wound up in the hospital and did everytime except this last time when due to Covid I couldn't. It really kills me as when I was on what was predicted as my death bed he was there even though he was afraid of hospitals and here when it was his death bed I couldn't be there for him. Its been a long great strong bond with me and my brother pig and he will always be remembered and missed. I bow respectfully and thankfully for his friendship and kinship. R.i.p brother pig

- Billy Hopeless

SNFU was such a high-energy band. Chi rarely touched down.

- Les Wiseman

In September of 2012, I set off on my cross Canada photography tour. My first stop on the trip was at one of my favourite holes in the wall, Pub 340. This wasn't the first time I'd share drinks with Chi, nor would it be the last. This was the first time I'd hear him sing something that wasn't SNFU, and if I remember correctly he sang "There is a light that never goes out" by the Smiths.

Over the years I visited Pub 340, I have a few distinct memories. Friends looking for Chi would often call the pub looking for him. You were pretty much guaranteed to see him down at this pub. My fondest memory, which I'll never forget, was walking into the pub to see Chi at the darts with a stack of old phone books, launching them at the dart boards.



Rest easy Chi Pig. Next time I get a chance, I'm getting a drink at ol Pub 340!

- Sean Flynn Behnson

Found out about his passing while driving down the highway a few nights ago, when all of a sudden my phone just blew up with texts, and messages. I knew his death was imminent, but it still came as a shock. Must have seen S.N.F.U. a dozen or so times over the years, got to open up for them in 96, and hung with Chi Pig quite a bit as well. The guy was such a quick witted sweetheart.

He was such a great frontman, that always looked out for people in the crowd, and gave his all. A true Albertan Punk Rock legend. R.I.P. Ken Chin

-Brent Allen



MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

I first met Chi when I was 15 years old. It was 1997, and SNFU and Bif Naked were playing the curling club in Victoria BC. I remember being so stoked to see them for the first time, having only heard "The One Voted Most Likely To Succeed" and being eager to hear more.

I remember being star struck by him, but I managed to muster up the courage to go and talk to him. I bummed a smoke off of him, then shook his hand, chickened out, and took off.

That show was nothing short of amazing. Chi was electric on stage, they played all of my favorites and stuff I'd never heard before. That night definitely set the pace, and set the bar, for what I wanted to do musically. Little did I know that years later, I would become friends with Mr Chi Pig; a hero from my childhood.

I spent a lot of time with him over the years. Some of my favorite moments were spent sitting at the bar together, having beers while he told old stories of how he first met Jon Card and touring around Europe in the epitaph days .

I used to see him daily when I lived in Vancouver. Chi's passing hit me really hard. I'm just now able to listen to SNFU for the first time since he passed. Hearing it definitely brings up a well of emotion. But now as I listen it's almost like I'm hearing it for the first time. I get to notice how beautiful it is all over again. He has had such an impact on everyone around him. Something very special.

Rest well Kenny .

- **Mikey Jak**



RIP Mr. Chi Pig! I saw SNFU play in the early 90's at Liberty Lunch. Chi's attitude and performance changed my life in how I saw the "singer"! His body along with his voice was both wrecking ball and instrument! I wanted to do That!

What ever the fuck it was, I want to do that! I have been looking forward to seeing SNFU play again. I guess if not in this life, it will be in the next! Thank You for such a life changing inspiration!

- **David Rodriguez , (Starving Wolves, The Casualties)**



Death is apart of life... the forever battle that we all must face... sadly death always wins in the end. Tho morbid I know, but truth. I cranked SNFU on the way home from work... lyrical genius and artist. When I got married and I seen Ken at Pub 340 after, he congratulated me and said "Am I happy for you, let's go do a shot," and of course I agreed!! I remember thinkin coooool that a legend of his caliber had made such a gesture.

We do the shot together and I was stoked and carried on. Then 5 mins later that bartender finds me in the pinball room and says "hey...ummmm you didnt pay me fer those shots". hahahaha fuckin' Ken... offers to do a shot with me as a congrats on our wedding then makes me pay!?!? Lol...



I laughed and laughed aaannnnnd paid...lol... a memory I will never forget!! As I sit reflecting on all the times we talked and the tour stories he shared with me at Dirty Kurt Robertson's b-day party after they finished playin on the back porch and had a little race with little electric car track that was set up on a table. Somethin I also will never forget!! So I thought I go through some photos and found these...the pool photo with me behind Ken is my fav out the bunch... I mean just look at that toothless smile!! "What's it like to be hairy, sexy and hot as fuck!!" is what he says to me just before that pic was taken.



Twas a reverse reach around yo!! ...hahahahaha...

I will never forget that either. You inspired and touched so many lives... including mine aaaaaand my nutsack!!! ...lol...

Rest in power Ken... Rest in power!

- **Brandon Crawford**

Man, this planet has felt extremely empty since last Thursday! I feel so fortunate to have shared sooo much time with that beautiful human! I would have it no other way! Totally worth it! I don't even know who I would be today had it not been for meeting him! He took me under his wing and showed me the ropes! I learnt so much from him! He always called me his daughter! He said he would have never thought he would have ever had a daughter but low and behold, I showed up.. and Chi Piglet! He taught me sooo much and was such a kind and loving soul! What a gift to have gotten to share time with such a unique individual! I don't know if there is anyone who could ever step to his charm, wit, and charisma!



Thank u Chi, for being the most beautiful friend to all! Love u! Forever and always!!!

- **Brooke Fujiyama**

I was in a band called BDFM, SNFU had taken us out on tour multiple times and we fucking loved them for thinking of us. Chi was always wicked with us. We had specific rules when we went out with these guys. 1- Do not eat Chi's cheese platter, 2- Always keep an eye on Chi, 3- Make sure nobody fucks with Chi. We loved playing with those guys.

BDFM was on an Alberta Tour with SNFU to release the Chi Documentary, I think it was John Card, Ken Goony, and Denis who were with SNFU at the time. We had two shows left in the tour and had just finished shredding the Zoo in Innisfail, Alberta. The Zoo was run by Juice at the time (RIP) who is also very much a Canadian underground icon. After the show we all headed upstairs to party in the hallways and hotel rooms. It was getting late and the sun was coming up so I decided to find a spot to crash. I found myself a little tiny single bed inside one of the dusty Zoo rooms. I remember smoking a joint trying to chill and in walks Chi. Chi says, "move the fuck over I'm lying beside you". The little Piggy crawled in beside me and said "don't be nervous, I won't grab your dick, Mark. I promise" fuck we laughed and just started talking about shows, life, skateboarding, stupid people and what music has done for us. We drank, smoked and chatted

until it was time to load up and head to Edmonton. I'll never ever forget that moment.

I missed the last time SNFU came to Calgary and played my bar Distortion. I wish I could go back in time and see him one more time, give him a huge hug and just sit and listen to him one last time. I have been honored to share the stage with so many great Canadian punk rock icons throughout the years and I never take any of it for granted. Chi was a real mother fucker and played the game of life his way. I fucking love you Homie, I can see you on your cloud with your parents when I look to the sky, thank you for being you.

Love and respect.

- **Mark Russell**



Photo: Mark Marek

I had the privilege of being able to get to know Chi pretty well over the past 25 years. I was making stunt videos for DVD and online in the early to late 2000's. Ken had somehow viewed them and sent me a note sparking our close friendship. Later in the 2000's his onstage antics (but not his presence) were slowing a little, so he often invited me on stage to contribute to the freak side show that was an SNFU gig. A couple notable "tricks" he invited me on stage were smashing a bottle over my head, à la the old Whiskey snowboard videos, in which SNFU had provided some of the soundtrack for.



This was great until I found my hand needed several stitches to close after. The crowd loved it. Another time Chi had acquired a stapler and had me staple a show poster to my tongue for the bemused crowd, which led to some tongue infections and a subsequent surgery. A great way to help celebrate the release of the documentary on his life! We had many nights to reminisce about his life and antics growing up, and one that always sticks out in my mind is the one where he had a chance encounter with "The Great One" in Edmonton in the early 80's. He explained to me that being a punk in those years was like wearing a big kick me sign on your ass anytime you were out in public... especially in Alberta. Chi was in his late teens at this time and recalled a time when he had been waiting for a crossing light dressed in his regular punk rock attire. He heard a honk from a car waiting at the red light as he crossed. He leaned in and saw none other than the future Stanley Cup Champions in the car, Mark Messier, Paul Coffey, Edmonton Oilers' chief enforcer, Dave Semenko, and Wayne Gretzky himself. Their greeting for him was one quite familiar to Chi in dealing with jocks in previous years. "Where do you think you're going FAGGOT?" Knowing they'd not have much of a chance to catch him due to waiting for the red light, Chi proceeded to tell the entire starting line for the Edmonton Oilers to "Suck his Dick." The car doors opened and Chi already has smoke coming off his heels. As luck had it, the light changed and the goons were forced back inside to take their shit train elsewhere. As misfortune would have it, Chi would end up having and even better last laugh. He had been working at a Chinese restaurant that he had dubbed the "Double Greasy" to help make ends meet. His job was

mostly to work as a dishwasher in the back. One night, a month or two after the first incident, he was working a night shift at the restaurant. After a table was almost finished their meal, one of the waitresses came to the back excitedly. "There are some famous hockey players just finishing their meals out there!" Chi popped his head out of the kitchen for a look. Sure enough, the exact same 4 guys were enjoying a nice meal in his place of work. Chi began to leave the kitchen and must have had a look on his face, because his boss told him to leave them alone, maybe thinking he was going to ask for an autograph. He said, Oh just a second, I'll be right back. He walked out to their table, Wayne looked up and instantly recognized him from their previous encounter. "What the fuck are you doing here?" It was then Chi delivered the game winning goal: "I work here. I just used the bathroom a while ago, I didn't wash my hands and I prepared the food you just ate." As the players began to wretch and head for the bathroom, Chi slipped to the back and told his boss he needed the rest of the night off and headed out into the darkness. Although both men went on to their own successes, on these two occasions, Mr. Chi Pig beat The Great Wayne Gretzky by a score of 2-0.

- **Dang Razer**

"Goodbye Ken. RIP my friend.

We first met at our show in Edmonton in 1983, SNFU was the 2nd band on the bill. I remember i was at the venue when the band started to play, and i never left my spot on the floor, frozen in complete amazement. I had never seen a front man (or a band for that matter) with so much energy just completely destroy the stage the way you did. We met you, Muc, Bunt, Jimmy and Evan (and Gubby) after you left the stage, and we drank some Extra Old Stock and shared stories. We instantly took to the band and brought you out to our next show in Winnipeg to play with us and the Stretch Marks and offered you a spot on a compilation album we were working on for our label which would include some of the best N. American punk bands at the time. Soon after that we released SNFU's first album which is one of my favorite releases still to this day.

I remember at a show, back when it was taboo for a punk band to sign autographs (that was very frowned upon as we were all just regular people and stardom is what punk rock was against) A kid came up to Chi and asked him if he would sign his flyer. Chi just stared at him for a long time while taking a long drag off a cigarette butt, exhaled the smoke in his face and flicked the butt at him and said "Ain't gonna happen, fuck face" and walked off down the alley.



I hadn't seen Chi for at least 12 years and we were on a tour in Canada with the Souls in 2009 and he showed up at the Vancouver show. We grabbed a couple beers beforehand and shot the shit and it was like we had just hung out the day before as we reminisced about our stories while he drew me one of his famous pictures. It was always so great to see Chi, he was always that same 21 year old i met back in Edmonton all those years ago. He went through a lot of struggles in his lifetime, but he never lost who he was. Everyone loved Chi, he was a good friend and great talent and he will be missed eternally."

- **Mark Stern, (Youth Brigade, Co-Founder of PRB & BYO Records)**

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MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

I was late to the game with SNFU. I was more so influenced by Disciples Of Power & The Smalls as a young prairie metalhead figuring it out. Growing up in rural Northern Alberta I did not cross paths with SNFU fans as much personally. DOP had a video on Much Music and The Smalls toured out to our small communities. It was some years later that I was exposed to the incredible influence that SNFU had as it echoed through what seemed to be every genre of the music community.

I was lucky enough to work with SNFU a number of times in the past decade within the hometown Edmonton. Cameron Noyes has been a shared friend of Ken and mine, and several years ago around 2013 or so, I got a text message from Cameron Noyes saying 'hey man, Foo Fighters are in town and Ken really needs to get a message to Dave Grohl'. Reading this text I immediately thought... 'I don't know who the f*ck you guys think I am, but a direct line to Dave Grohl is not I'. Regardless, knowing the influence that Ken has had globally, I figured this had to be true and Dave Grohl would want to hear this! Ken came down to the bar I was working at with a message written on a napkin, not the most professional means that I wish to contact the upper echelon of the industry, but hey, Its Ken Chinn writing to the proclaimed Mayor of Rock N Roll who is a guest in our city of Edmonton and this is Chi Pig's town! I wrote the Live Nation contact who I knew was working the show and I said, 'hey Dave, I know this is going to sound strange, but I am pretty sure that Dave is going to want to see this message, there's this massively influential band from Edmonton called SNFU and Chi Pig has asked me to help get a message to Dave Grohl'. I received a very polite message from Dave O saying 'I'll see what I can do', and within about 5 minutes of sending this pictures scrawled on a napkin to Dave Grohl... My phone rang, and it was the manager of the Foo Fighters saying 'how do we get Chi here?' Looking at Chi in full regalia, the felt like pig hat, pink feather boa and leather jacket, I said 'you're ready to go!' and he smiled and stood up anxious to see an old

friend. From there, Ken departed to the arena and I was just pleased to be a part in reuniting the two old friends - To be a fly on the wall that night in the Hall of Kings!



Ken's influence never ceased to amaze me, how deep and widespread he connected with people through his art. To be fortunate enough to have an influence like that shining from within our prairie province really is beyond words.

Rest easy Ken 'Chi Pig' Chinn.
- Tyson Boyd - ConcertWorks, The Starlite Room

Oh, man. This breaks my heart. Chi Pig was one of the greatest front people I've ever seen. I saw SNFU at Gilman when I was 16. I thought he was going to jump through the ceiling.

Super smart. Great lyrics. Amazing album titles. So funny. He had an amazing mask collection. Lead singer for SNFU. What a bummer. Sending love to all the Edmonton and Vancouver punks. What a loss.

- Billie Joe Armstrong (Green Day)



JUNKOWL

Making Out With My Death

AU: Introduce the band.

I (Jesse) met our drummer Dom at a show in 2016. We were both playing that night with our previous bands and I guess we just dug each other's stage presence so we decided to make a band together. The initial idea was to combine aspects of southern metal, stoner rock and hardcore, but still keep it really bluesy and kind of bare-boned. We met our guitarist Marco soon after and pretty much started pumping out songs right away, then once we found Sam we really started to find our sound.

AU: You describe your sound as Dirty, Heavy, Sexy, Southern, and Dark. You just released

your debut album "Making Out With My Death", for those who haven't heard it yet, what can they expect.

Since this is our first album I'm not really sure what to expect... But I know we're all pretty passionate dudes and we put everything we have into these songs. I'll be happy if we get the same kind of reactions, we get at our shows. We wanted to give fans an album and not just a collection of songs. Something you could have a few beers smoke a joint and bang your head off to for 30 minutes.

AU: How is the writing process for the band?
So the writing process is almost always the same, someone brings a riff and we open jam it until we find a basic structure. For the vocals, I come up with 90% of my melodies on the spot during

these open jams and a lot of my lyrics too, and then sit down on my own time and perfect everything. Basically every time we jam the song gets a little closer to completion. We all contribute our own part and structure it together from a-z.

AU: How did you decide on the tracks?
These were actually just the first 10 tracks we wrote together and we do not plan on slowing down any time soon we're already working on new material for our next release right now.

AU: What can people expect from you live?
We go pretty hard haha, we like to provide a very 'in your face' live performance that is very fan interactive. I'm usually either on top of everyone or getting shoved around by them.

AU: What inspires your writing?
Most of my lyrics are about past regrets or self-destructive behaviour and kind of indulging in negative thoughts/emotions. A lot of them were written while I was wasted. I like to think that the next album will have a much different lyrical

MONTREAL MASSACRE

theme, but hey, old habits die hard.

AU: How does the music affect the lyrics?
Well, the music definitely fuels my lyrics and gets me into a certain vibe when we're jamming and creating and I think it goes both ways. Sometimes I feel especially nasty and ask them to play something dirtier to fit the things I feel like saying.

AU: Describe the evolution of the band's sound when you began to what is offered on your debut album "Making Out With My Death"

When we started we had our vision of making a fucking heavy metal band with some southern, stoner, and hardcore influences and I think we're still trying to stay true to that original vision. We're all just getting better at our crafts. All the live shows, and the recording process

and also getting to know each other better just makes us tighter. Overall, this album is a slow dark ride, heavy riffs, big, dirty bass lines, in your face drums and gut-wrenching screams telling tales of self-loathing, confusion, and intoxication.

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OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND SAY... MR. CHI PIG

interview with documentary filmmaker Sean Patrick Shaul

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

Sean Patrick Shaul: I'm Sean Patrick Shaul, I directed and edited Open Your Mouth And Say... Mr. Chi Pig. I co-produced the film with Craig Laviolette

AU: How and when did you first meet Chi Pig? What do you remember about your first encounter?

Sean: I first saw Chi in the mid nineties fronting SNFU in Edmonton at a place called The Polish Hall. The show was absolutely insane! I saw them numerous times over the years but we didn't meet until I approached him to make the film.

AU: What was the genesis of the Chi Pig documentary?

Sean: I had just dropped out of film school and was sort of treading water, looking for something to make without much of a budget. Just for fun really. I partnered up with my friends Craig Laviolette and Neal Kennedy and we threw some ideas around. By total happenstance, one day my friend Kiley suggested I do a doc on her



OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND SAY ...



friend Chi. I had no idea his story and had remembered him as a punk rock legend, so it was a shock to hear how he was in a bad place. I didn't think he would do it, but we met and he was super open and wanted to do the doc. Within a week we were shooting the project.

AU: How many years did you film and edit the project for?

Sean: All in, it was about two years from first day to final day.

AU: What ended up being the heart of the story?

Sean: The doc is 100% carried by Chi's incredible story. His willingness to be open with me, a

complete stranger, was staggering. He and the band members really took us in and let us do our thing.

AU: The film deals a lot with Chi Pig's addiction problems. Do you think the film project had a positive effect on helping him get clean and in resurrecting SNFU?

Sean: I know the project positively affected Chi. Throughout our time with him he would regularly let us know how much it meant to him that we wanted to honour him with the film. On one occasion he told me "You saved my life" and gave me a big hug. It was a heavy and rewarding moment and it was stuff like that that made it all worth it.

AU: What were some things you learned about Chi that you didn't know before starting the project?

Sean: Basically everything to do with his personal life and his youth was new to us. I only knew of Chi from SNFU and The Wongs, so I was learning his story as I was making the film. It was as eye opening for me as it was for the audience.

AU: One thing I wish there was more of in the movie was Chi Pig performing live back in the heydays of SNFU. I was expecting more stage antics and his legendary high jumps etc... was it a conscious decision to focus more on his personal story?

Sean: It was a difficult decision to not include more live footage and SNFU history in the film, but early on we wanted to focus on Chi's story specifically. We wanted to make a personal film that went beyond a fan type documentary.

AU: What do you think made Chi Pig such an important icon in the world of Punk Rock?

Sean: Chi Pig's influence is hard to measure. He inspired people from across Canada to start bands and tour on their own accord at a time when punk was still a very underground thing. And the fact he was an openly gay, mixed race punk from the prairies meant a lot to a lot of people.

AU: What is your favorite SNFU album and song?

Sean: That's a tough one. I really dig those Epitaph years so I'm gonna go with Make Me Thick for the song, but something about the In The Meantime And In Between Time album is so incredible, so that's my album pick. Obviously the early stuff is great too... all of it!

AU: Listening back over the discography, do you feel some of the songs can be interpreted as prophetic?

Sean: Yeah Cockatoo Quill comes to mind, but there are a few.

AU: Were you surprised to hear about Chi's

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

recent passing?

Sean: I can't say I was surprised, his health was touch and go for a while. But that being said it hit me harder than I had expected. He was a huge part of my youth and then became the catalyst for my career in documentaries.

AU: What would you say to Chi if you could speak with him one last time?

Sean: I'd say thanks. I never really let him know



how much that doc changed my life.

AU: How can people currently watch or buy the documentary?

Sean: The film is available through Vimeo VOD at <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/chipig>

AU: What other film projects have you been involved with?

Sean: I've been steadily working in documentaries since that project. Sporadic updates can be found at prairiecoastfilms.com

AU: What's your latest project you want to promote?

Sean: The most recent project I put out is called Fuck You All: The Uwe Boll Story, which is a documentary on a man known as the world's worst filmmaker. It's available on many platforms, so just google it if interested!

AU: Any words of wisdom for aspiring documentary filmmakers reading this?

Sean: Just make it. Don't wait for someone to pay for it all, don't wait until you've got the perfect crew and perfect story... just start making something and things fall into place with some dedication.

prairiecoastfilms.com

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vimeo.com/ondemand/chipig



Mr Pig Has Left the Building



I've known Chi Pig for almost 40 years, but we didn't actually become friends until I pushed his skinny butt out a basement window early one morning as cops crashed the party upstairs. Sirens howled as we ran laughing down the street as police descended on the scene in large numbers. It was a true bonding moment, and over the years we'd often laugh about that crazy night the cops hauled Billy Shoe away and Mark Stretch Mark decked a cop. Good times.

A few years went by, but then I moved to Vancouver and kept running into Chi when he wasn't on tour. Eventually, I started work on the SNFU book and got to know the enigmatic little frontman even better. We did a short tour



together after the book came out, which I'll never forget. It was March and cold as fuck, but he'd never complain about anything; he'd just get in the van like the total pro he was and crack some more bad jokes. One night he was missing, but I looked out the hotel door and saw a bar in the distance. Sure enough, he was sitting in there, quietly nursing a beer. "Oh, is it time to play?" he said, finishing his beer. When his famous gold lamé pants started to get a bit ripe, I tried washing them at Keith and Heather's place in Guelph, Ontario, but it didn't help much, even though I put them through twice. The next day, I walked

down the street of some small town and into the first thrift store I saw. As if guided by some mystical force, I went directly to a rack near the back and found a pair of small black pants that fit him perfectly. The van was more pleasant that day.

But I didn't really get to know Chi until we started an ongoing project at Pub 340. I'd bring him paper, canvases, paints, pens, and anything else he needed to make his amazing, beautiful art. It was incredible to see the strange ideas come out of his head and manifest themselves on paper, canvas, or any number of odd objects. His creativity was off the charts, and although he had his off days, his output was astounding. He'd constantly be making smutty puns and jokes about being gay as he worked. Those with an aversion to gay people were invited to go fuck themselves, and he did not suffer fools gladly. I'd buy the art from him as he went, and he'd stuff cash into different pockets and have trouble finding it later. We only had a couple minor squabbles over the last five years. Like an old married couple, we always managed to work things out between us. After all, we were just two artists struggling to survive.



Still, I could see the weight dropping from him. Although his trips to the hospital became more frequent and he'd stay longer, I was in denial about his health. How could my weird little buddy die? It never seemed real, even though death was staring me in the face. But he was so thin the last time I saw him

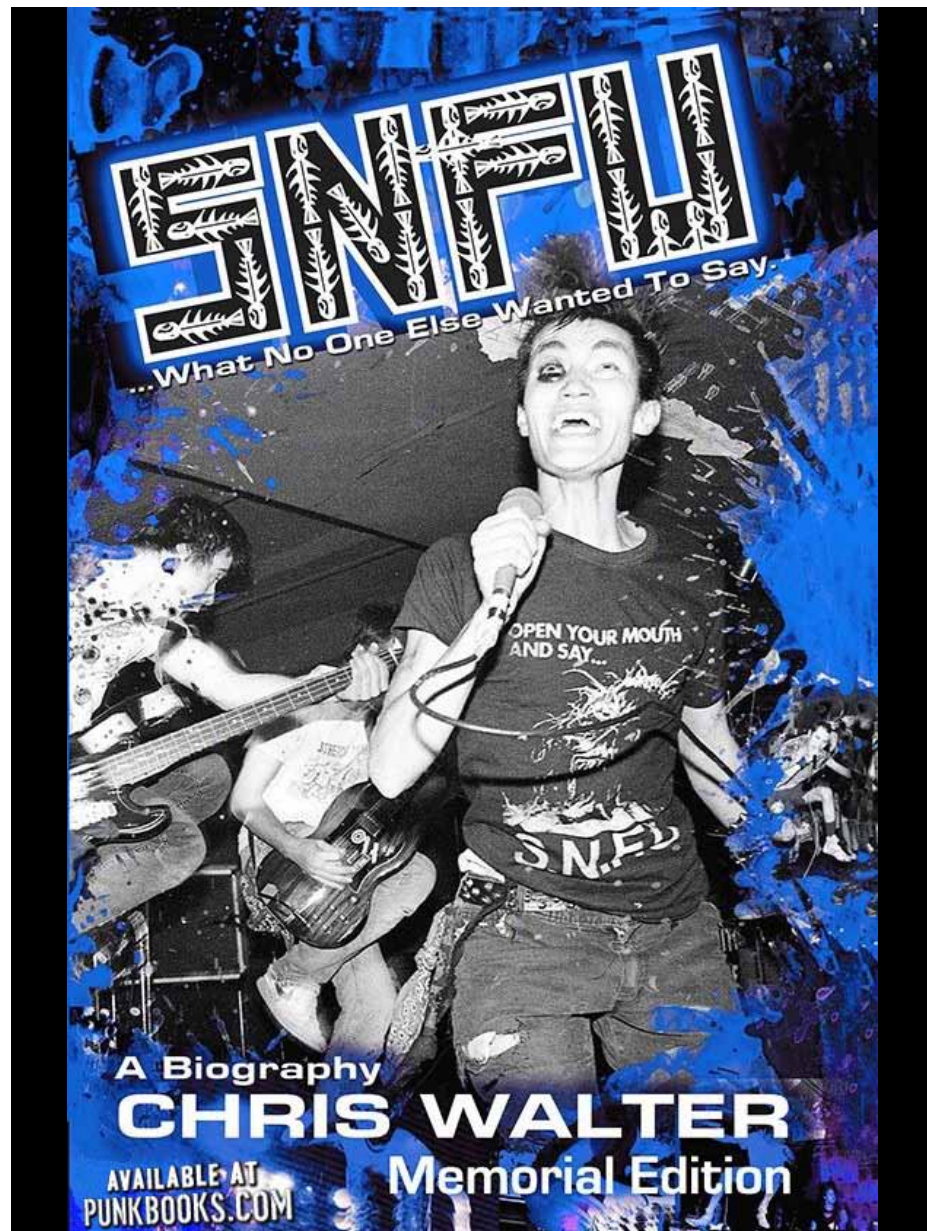


MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

that I knew the end was near. I couldn't even hug him when I left the bar on that final day because of the fucking Covid-19 thing. I'm glad I kept as much of his art as I did, and my wife and son also own a fair number of pieces. I think about him every day when I look at them. I'm crying now, so I better go.

I'll love you forever, Mr Chi Pig. Thanks so much for the wonderful music and art, but thanks even more for your friendship. There will never be anyone like you.

- Chris Walter/ July 2020



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Get Canadian Legend Chi Pig On Canada's Walk Of Fame

Canadian Punk legend Kendall Chinn, Chi Pig is not on Canada's Walk of Fame and that's a damn shame. He and his band SNFU changed Punk and Hardcore paving the way and inspiring countless bands and songs. His heart was as big as he was talented, touching everyone he came in contact with in a unique and unforgettable way. From his songs to his art to his stories, there has and never will be anyone quite like him. Sadly Chi passed on Thursday, July 16th 2020 from complications with his health. A personality full of true love, eclipsing his humble stature that will leave a crater in the souls of many.

Let's get our Piggy a maple flavoured star.

Be kind to one another. Hog On!

Keep Sharing and nominating

Petition link:

www.change.org/p/canada-s-walk-of-fame-get-canadian-legend-chi-pig-on-canada-s-walk-of-fame

Nomination link:

www.canadawalkoffame.com/the-walk-of-fame/nominate



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IN MEMORY OF THE GREAT
KEN 'CHI PIG' CHINN
OCTOBER 19, 1962
JULY 16, 2020

DAYGLO ABORTIONS
AWKWARD A/C THE GNAR GNARS
THE OLD LIMP DICKS

You know what really sucked about this past year... basically fucking everything. The virus that shut down the world, mass protests spanning countries and we lost one of our favorite fellow frontmen, Mr. Ken "Chi-Pig" Chinn (SNFU). As a friend of the almighty Chi-Pig in his memory, I'm here to give you folks a taste of the before times.....back to when our local musicians could entertain us properly while we swilled our favorite nectars and made memories with like minded scum bags. Ken would have wanted to be remembered through the art that made him widely known in the first place.

Gates:6:30pm
Dinner:7:30pm
Bands :8:30pm
Performing Bands
Dayglo Abortions
The GnarGnars
Awkward A/C
The Old Limp Dicks

On August 22nd 2020 come and enjoy some of the best punk bands the west coast has to offer, along with a handful of kickass bands, admission will include a camping spot for the night and a lovely dinner. This will be a BYOB event and we will provide Covid guidelines so everyone remains safe. Let's set Mr.Piggy on his path to the unknown the proper way and have at least one good night of live music this year. The property address will be printed on the tickets and released day of event.



MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

Larger Than Life - The Chi Pig Mural

From October 19, 1962 to July 16, 2020 the world was graced with a musical madman, a spitfire of energy, audacity, and true punk rock grit. Edmonton's beloved bastard child, Chi Pig, frontman for the legendary punk rock band SNFU is leaving behind a legacy of chaos, energy and brilliance that can never truly be witnessed again. Growing up as little punk brats in Edmonton, no performance has ever rivaled that first time seeing Society's No F***king Use live. Chi was a whirlwind madhouse, a small frame with the biggest energy, he could blow the roof off and make any tiny venue feel enormous. We lost a true legend yesterday, but his flame will never go out. We want to pay tribute to this monumental character with an equally monumental mural to celebrate the life, music and electricity of our hometown hero.

- J Fowler

www.gofundme.com/f/larger-than-life-the-chi-pig-mural



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KENDALL CHINN

"MR. CHI PIG"

1962-2020

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Ken Chinn

Interview by Malcolm Hassin

Conducted Sept, 2016 at the Smiling Buddha

AU: What's your name?

Chi Pig: You want the real one?

AU: Yeah, whatever you want.

Chi Pig: Well my my born name is Kendall but you can call me Ken and my family my bandmates call me Kenny.

AU: What's your punk rock name?

Chi Pig: Mr. Chi Pig.

AU: Where did you start skating?

Chi Pig: Ah dude, I think I was about ten years old. At the Board Club in Edmonton.



AU: What did you do in the winters there?

Chi Pig: Sniff glue and bump and ride. I'm a goofy foot. I remember me and my brother used to steal shit to get money and order stuff from Val Surf, a skateboard company in California and we couldn't wait to get that box. I met a guy that had a Logan Earth Ski, I'd never seen one of those before in my life, so I got one of those. Then I went to a G&S The Stacy Peralta, the original wooden one. Then the laminate came out so I had the number one and the number two. We had it all. Then I remember getting Tracker trucks and Road Rider 4's. We had a skateboard team that got sponsored, which meant and we got free gear. So we didn't have to steal anymore, stealing became at that time a recreational activity just to amuse ourselves. AU: When and where did you meet DD? Chi Pig: I met him in Regina, because that's where he's from. I just happened to be there and he already had a shop by then, but at that time the original name of the company was GNC Great North Country but they took that off, but that's the first time I met him.

AU: Where was the first ramp you skated?

Chi Pig: We used to make our own you know, like renegade bullshit. Like you didn't have the privilege like skaters have now. I consider modern-day skateboarders really privileged

to have something like this and spoiled. Outdoor skate parks unheard of. We'd take up a plank of fucking wood you know a 4x8, put it up against a garbage can that was our ramp for the day. We'd Scout out places that had slopes you know, and if you call me a slope head I'm gonna throw this can in your face cuz that's just fucking racism *laughs*.

AU: Did you skate much around Van?

Chi Pig: Um well I skated that big bowl out in North Van where Petey had one of his shops.

AU: Seylynn?

Chi Pig: Yeah and that's the one, and China Creek. Whenever I could, whenever it wasn't raining. Edmonton was really hard to skateboarding in because it snows six months in fucking year, so every Sunday we'd go to this parkade and there were no cars there and it was smooth as hell. We'd start at the fifth level, go all the way down, catch the elevator, go up and do it all again. Every Sunday. But then skateboarding was a totally different animal. We did everything downhill. We knew all the trails in the summertime and then hit the parkades in the wintertime but then we do freestyling, like tricks and we learned every fucking trick in the fucking book. Now people are like just limited to like one thing, not with us, our minds were open and very expansive. I remember stealing a bunch of bad lumber supplies and building my own ramp when I was 14 years old.

AU: Were the original guys from SNFU into skating?

Chi Pig: Yeah well that's how I met the Belke brothers. We were on a team called the Skiers, it was a ski shop, but the guy had a vision and he had this fucking ramp like right beside the shop and it was 12 feet wide 15 feet high with four feet of vertical, it was fucking awesome dude and that's how we learned there. So me and my little brother found out about this place so we went there and skated and he was really impressed with our skills. He said "I want to start a team, do you have any friends who skateboard?" On the south side was another place called Del Mars and it was the Dels Skate Team and those were the ones that weren't good enough to get on the Skiers Team and that was the Belke's and we beat them every fucking time. Me and my little brother would go to the contest, with a skateboard tucked under our arms. They'd fear us, they're like oh my fucking god the Chinn brothers are here and we're gonna lose, and sure enough if it wasn't my little brother who took second, I'd take first or we'd go back and forth, back and



forth every goddamn time.

AU: Did you ever come see shows at the Smilin' Buddha?

Chi Pig: No, that was before my time, the first time I was here was in 1980, but I didn't make it there, I think it was still open at that time. I was staying in a house with Mad Dog, of all people to wind up with. We came to Vancouver to see The Undertones.

AU: Someone told us you made a short film about skating in Stanley Park?

Chi Pig: Um no... it was about sucking cock in Stanley Park, it wasn't about skateboarding at all, those are two totally different things man.

AU: When is SNFU going to play at SBC?

Chi Pig: Whenever we can! I think we're doing something in the new year and when those guys get back here, if I'd choose one place should be here.



SHRED SESSION

AU: Anyone you would like to thank?








Chi Pig: Anybody that had the frame of mind and took the time and care to support SNFU in every way, like coming to the shows, like the people I met over music. You know we had a vision that we're gonna play hard music, fast for people that live fast and people that don't mind hurting themselves. That music was designed and constructed specifically for skateboarders, renegade spirits. I knew that things were gonna happen, like I saw the tattoos coming, I saw the dreadlocks coming, I saw the alternative culture coming on. I was like I'm just gonna go for and you swing with it and build a soundtrack to that and you know what, I think it kind of worked, *laughs* Maybe? I don't know.

AU: How do skateboarding and punk rock go hand in hand?

Chi Pig: It's the independence of it all, the do-it-yourself kind of credo and the aggression of it, the speed of it. Just like everyone else can fuck off, I'm going to get on my skateboard and ride far away from you and you ride away from your problems whatever is happening with the family, like fuck you guys, me my little brother are getting on our skateboards and we're gonna giv'er shit. Then you're lost in this world that no one else knows and it's just like you're free, you know? You're freestyling and the only one that controls that board is yourself, right? And sure you're gonna wipe out, you're gonna make a fucking mistake, you're gonna eat shit and you get up and do it again and try to correct yourself the next day.

To watch the video interview please check out www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOK1vjSGxpk

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The Day A Young Boy's Life Changed

By Ty Stranglehold



Thirteen is a pivotal age for most people. It certainly was for me. I had discovered skateboarding the year previous and was now in high school (Eighth Grade – no middle school in my town). I had somehow made friends with a group of older skaters who were seniors and they would often take me with them on their “ditch class skate missions”. It was on one of these missions that my life would set a course that it has yet to deviate from damn near thirty-five years later.

It was another ditch class mission. This time we bailed and skated to our friend Jeff's house. He had a sweet quarter pipe in his driveway and curb outside his house was painted red and slick because of the bus stop. A boom box came out and we were quickly ripping it up to some of the fastest, amazing punk rock that I had ever heard. To be clear, at that point I had only really heard the Sex Pistols, which I loved. I somehow knew that punk rock was my thing. Much like skateboarding, the ethos was to do what you wanted, how you wanted. So here I was hearing punk rock music that I had never heard before that didn't sound anything like the Sex Pistols. It was relentless and seemed to be the sonic equivalent of the grinds and 50-50s that we were laying onto the ramp. I needed to know more.

“Hey, what are we listening to?”

“Dude, it's SNFU. You know, Society's No Fucking Use”

I didn't know, but I surely would find out. The songs were a whirlwind of pure energy. I wanted to skate to this every day. I must not have shut up about how much I loved the band because at the end of the session, one of the guys popped the tape out of the blaster and threw it to me. My eyes must have bugged out of my head like a cartoon dog seeing a steak unattended. I looked down at the tape. The thing looked like it had made the rounds a time or two. While the writing was faded, I could still clearly read it.

Side A: And No One Else Wanted To Play

Side B: If You Swear You'll Catch No Fish

I must have looked confused. The guy who tossed me the tape said “It's both of their albums. One on each side. The second one is new.” I thought to myself that those were some weird album titles, but quickly lost the thought as I eagerly fired the tape into my Walkman and proceeded to have my young mind blown.

In the months following, I learned about all kinds of punk rock from both my new, older friends or from Thrasher Magazine, in monthly columns such as Pus-Zone, Notes From The Underground and Igor's Record Collection. My collection was growing too. I had tapes from Dead Kennedys, Suicidal Tendencies, and The Cramps among others. I loved them all, but rarely did my beat up SNFU tape leave my player. SNFU was different in that they had this enigmatic leader called Mr. Chi Pig. I would pester the older skaters for info when we were sitting on the deck of a ramp, or the edge of a ditch. They would tell tales of the guy flying through the air when they played, barely ever

touching the stage. I would create images in my head of what this might look like as all I had to base them on were these stories along with one or two grainy photos in Thrasher. Then there was the lyrics. While the anger and aggression I had come to expect from punk rock were there, the topics of the songs of SNFU were different. Mr. Chi Pig was singing about a lonely kid with mental illness (Broken Toy), a waitress getting creeped on by men (She's Not On The Menu), doing things for your self (Get Off Your Ass), depression (Black Cloud, The Ceiling), “Satanic Panic” (The Devil's Voice) and on and on. I didn't realize it at the time, but SNFU was introducing me to ideas and concepts that I still carry with me

today, all the while delivered with a quick wit and sarcastic humour that could never be matched.

Within a few months I was fully obsessed. One day I was skating in town and my jaw dropped to the sidewalk. I was staring face to face with a poster for SNFU coming soon to Kamloops, a town an hour and a half drive from my hometown. Holy shit, it was my opportunity here was the chance to see them play at what would be my first punk rock show. This had to happen!

The plan was simple. The classic swicharoo. My friend would say he was staying at my house, and I would stay at his. We would then proceed to hitchhike to Kamloops to see the show, then hopefully find a ride home at the show. How could it go wrong? In hindsight, it was like Stand By Me, except instead of going to see a body, we were going to see Bodies In The Wall.

Well, those dreams were shattered almost instantly as it became painfully apparent that no one was willing to pick up a couple of fourteen-year-old kids on the side of the highway wearing punk rock clothes and packing skateboards. Once we stood out there long enough to realize that even if we got a ride, we wouldn't make it to the show in time, we packed it in and went to my house dejected. We opted to spend the evening skating my launch ramp and listening to the tape over and over. It is a pain that I feel to this day.

The following year, the band would release their third album. I quickly picked up a copy of the tape and loved it dearly but it would appear that I would never get the opportunity to see my favorite band play live as within a year word came that the band was breaking up. At the same time, I was going through a major bout of loneliness and depression. My older skate friends were all gone now, out of school and off to live life. My friends my own age were leaving skateboarding and punk rock behind, in turn leaving me behind as well. After one to many hassles with jocks and metalheads, I made the decision to put my skateboard away. My heart was crushed.

In the following years, I solidified friendships with people that I still hold dear to this day. We were all music fans and constantly expanding our horizons. I still listened to punk rock but also a lot of hardcore rap, and what was then becoming known as “alternative rock”. It was during this time that SNFU announced a reunion tour. I was NOT going to miss this for anything. In January of 1992, six long years after falling in love with the band for the first time, I was going to get to witness the legendary live show of SNFU! A carload of us headed down to Kelowna to witness the event, and it was everything I hoped and more. The band was on point and unstoppable, playing songs from all of their albums and Mr. Chi Pig 100% lived up to the hype. Launching off the kick drum with long dreads trailing behind him, he bounced and pantomimed the songs all without missing a note. The crowd went berserk and, in the end, I left the hall a sweaty mess grinning ear to ear clutching my “Open Your Mouth And Say SNFU” shirt.

My friendship with Mr. Chi Pig began

with a chance meeting at a Rocket From The Crypt show in Vancouver in early 1993. Two friends and I had driven down to the coast from the Okanagan to see the phenomenal San Diego band and Chi was in the crowd. I decided to tell him how much his band meant to me over the years and he wound up hanging out with my friends and I for the rest of the night. In hindsight (and in conversations with Chi much later), I definitely fit Chi's “type” but I was oblivious to it at that point. We decided to become pen pals and wrote back and forth throughout the rest of the year and hanging out whenever I was in Vancouver or they were playing a show nearby.

In the summer of 1993, our friendship was solidified by two events. My friend and I drove to Kamloops to see SNFU play at an event called The Big Sweat in the arena. DOA and Roots Roundup were also playing. After SNFU proceeded to blow the roof off the place, we went to the side stage to say hi to Chi and he invited us backstage to the hockey dressing room they were given to use. We hung out with the band having a few beers before getting invited along to an after party. Chi offered to ride in our truck as long as he “got to ride on Ty's lap” haha.

Later in the summer SNFU was playing at a huge festival in southern Alberta called In-Fest. Band like the Ramones, Bad Brains, Big Drill Car and Violent Femmes were playing among a who's who of Canadian underground bands. Of course, we were going. The second night was headlined by Violent Femmes with direct support by SNFU. I was definitely more than three sheets to the wind by the time SNFU finished their blistering set and The Smalls were starting, I wandered over to the fence to see if I could say hi to Chi. I could see him off in the distance but couldn't get his attention. I couldn't so I asked the security guy to wave him over. He wasn't really impressed with the request, but for some reason he did it and Chi came bounding over. We talked for a few minutes then decided that I should come hang out backstage. We managed to convince the guard to let me climb the fence and then we proceeded to the backstage area.

What happened next is a little fuzzy. I remember Chi saying we were going to drink some of Violent Femmes' beer while they were playing. We drank a lot of it, apparently. I drunkenly turned to him and said, “How much of their beer did we drink?” and without skipping a beat he said “I dunno, Add It Up” in that perfect Chi deadpan. I consider that the point we became friends.

Once I moved to Victoria in 1994, I would easily see SNFU at least once a year as they came through town, or over in Vancouver. Chi and I would always make plans to hang out and visit. I would meet him at soundcheck and afterwards we would catch up over some food or coffee. He would regale me of stories from the old days or from their last tour. I did two interviews with him, as well as Muc and Bunt, during this time (one for Offbeat (the UVic radio station newspaper) and one for the debut of my own fanzine Mystery Meat). I began to take notice in his visual art. First it was little cartoons in the margins of the letters he would write, then it was front and center on the “Something Green And Leafy This Way Comes” album. His style was really cool and 100% Chi Pig. Bold lines and weird creatures. I asked him if he would design a cover for Mystery Meat. It took a couple of years, but it adorned the cover of issue #6 in all of its hand screenprinted glory. I cherish it along with all of the other drawings he gave me, or I commissioned from him over the years.

By the turn of the century, SNFU was on hiatus again and I didn't see Chi an awful lot. Usually when I was in Vancouver at a show, we would bump into each other and have a hug and a quick conversation. In 2002 he came to town with a solo project that was really cool to see. The Mr. Chi Pig persona was constantly evolving, and while he had been using props in the stage show for years, he was taking the theatrics and masks to new, fun levels. In 2003 my band The Hoosegow was asked if we would be into booking a show for

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL



Chi's new band Slaveco. Of course, we jumped at the chance. It was so much fun, we did it again a few months later. The band was amazing, and I looked at it as a true chance for Chi to step outside of the massive shadow that SNFU cast. Speaking of SNFU, it was around this time that a new incarnation of the band began, bringing in the rhythm section from Slaveco. Sadly, it would spell the end for Slaveco, and one can only hope that the recordings that were made will see a proper release some day (along with Chi's other non-SNFU projects The Wongs, Little Joe and the aforementioned solo stuff).

This final SNFU era that included Marc Belke on guitar produced what could arguably be their shining recorded moment “In The Meantime and In Between Time”. I saw them a number of times while they were touring this release, even getting to live out my dream of sharing a stage with them with my band opening for them.

This version was short lived, and it seemed to be the end when Muc decided to leave the band. I did not see Chi much during this time as I was focusing on being a new father. It wasn't until a few years later that Chi announced that he would be putting a new version of SNFU together with new members that did not include at least one of the Belke brothers. I was skeptical at first, but upon seeing them play I understood. It was no secret that Chi's health had been continuing to falter over the years. In talking to him he would often feel like a shadow of his former self, but when he took the stage it was like he was a lightning rod and the life would replenish himself from within. It was a sight to behold. A variety of former SNFU members as well as new people were there to provide not only a musical outlet for Chi, but a support network of friendship.



MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

INSERT SNAPPY SEVEN WORD FESTIVAL TITLE HERE

SURELY NEVER FORGOTTEN UNDULY



The X-Creeps
BROKEN TOYS
THE HAPPY SWITCH
KWE LLADA KIDZ

THE DEVIL'S VOICE
THE PAINFUL REMINDERS
FUTON TIME
THE COCKATOO QUILLS
ERIC AND THE BAD DAYS

THIS IS A GOODBYE

OCTOBER NINETEETH



KENDALL CHINN MEMORIAL HALL

something special, but things do not always work out the way they are supposed to. Obviously, there was a book written, but it was not mine. Maybe some day I will be able to revisit the project again.

In 2014 I was at Punk Rock Bowling in Las Vegas in part to promote the new tribute album to legendary skate punks Big Boys that my wife and I had released. I was really excited that SNFU was on the bill. I had never seen them play outside of Canada before, and was interested to see what foreign crowds would be like. Prior to the festival itself starting there was a large group of British Columbians (mostly Victoria and Vancouver folks) congregated on Fremont just shooting the shit and having some fun. I looked over and saw Chi out of the corner of my eye. He seemed off on his own and kind of out of place. Our group seemed to be the only people who recognized him, so he stuck close by. I gave him a huge hug and told him how glad I was to see him and was excited for the show. He smiled and called me "Fatass" like

he always did. They went on to put on a hell of a show! The crowd, many of whom had never had the opportunity to see the band before, lost it. Chi may not have been flying through the air like the days of yore, but he and the band were on point. A little later, I was watching the Descendents killing it on stage, and I looked over and saw Chi come out of the backstage area. I was going to walk over and tell him how great I thought the show was but before I could get to him, he was mobbed by punk rockers of all ages wanting to talk to him. Right at that moment we locked eyes and he gave me the biggest smile. The Piggy was in his element getting all the adulation that he deserved.



The last time I saw SNFU perform was in August of 2016 here in Victoria. I had a hard time dragging myself out of the house on a weeknight because I am now old and tired, but it's SNFU. I went and was so glad I did. Again, Chi didn't seem like he was doing all that great. We got to hug and talk briefly but that was it. Once he hit the stage, he was Chi again, but afterwards he seemed so tired... Not too tired to say "I hate to say goodbye, but I love to watch you leave, Fatass" when I was taking off.

The times I saw Chi after than were maybe one or two tops. I tried to stay in the loop the best I could with Vancouver folks and knew

things were getting bad. I planned to come to Vancouver in early May to not only see Circle Jerks and Adolescents, but to go to Pub 340 and spend some time with Chi. Even though I had told him time and time again how much he had meant to me as a musical mentor and a friend, it was important to say goodbye. Thanks to the COVID pandemic, I did not get that chance. I will always have to be satisfied that he knew how much he meant to me, no matter how frustrating either of us could be. I wanted to tell him that I loved him. I wanted his inevitable response of "If you love me so much, why won't you give me piece of that sweet fat ass?". I am going to miss you Ken. There has been and never will be another like you.

Near the end of the decade I was lost and trying to find a new creative outlet. I had been writing here and there for years, but then it struck me that I should write a biography of my favorite band SNFU. I discussed it with Chi and laid out my plans. Who better to write their story than someone who's life was transformed by their music, then went on to become friends with them? He agreed so we went about recording interviews, not only with him, but with the majority of the long roster of ex-members of the band. It was during those late-night interview sessions that I feel I truly got to know Ken Chinn as opposed to Chi Pig. We delved deep in his life and feelings. It was something that I will always hold near and dear to my heart. All I can say about this project in hindsight is that it was going to be



MARC BELKE

AU: Who you we talking to today?

Marc Belke: Hello my name is Marc Belke, I play guitar for *SNFU*. I was a co-founding member of *SNFU* and played with the band creating music and touring for over 20 years. I also played in some other bands, I was a singer and guitar player for the *Wheat Chiefs*. Those are probably the most famous things. I had another band called *Based On A True Story*, as well. We played some shows but didn't really do any recording. But *SNFU* is definitely what I'm most famous for.

AU: I didn't realize you lived in Victoria.

MB: Yeah, I moved here about seven years ago. I was in Thunder Bay and we wanted to be closer to family when we had our son. We have family in Edmonton but mostly in Vancouver, but we picked Victoria over Vancouver. It's nicer, more livable.

AU: Do you have a normal job, are you doing any music stuff?

MB: It's weird because I think about music all the time, I've started dabbling a bit. I was finishing off these ukulele songs I wrote for my son, kids songs, I guess. I was doing that and then we moved and I just lost all my momentum and other things came up. I'd like to finish off a *Based On A True Story* record. That was the band I was in before I moved to Toronto. *SNFU* had kind of disbanded and I was jamming with guys that would eventually be Chi's other band *Slaveco*. - Matt Warhurst and Shane Smith who played in *SNFU* too. We recorded some songs, but I just haven't got to it. So that's something else I'd like to do. As well as putting together some unreleased *SNFU* songs. There's five or six songs that we recorded during, *In The Meantime* and *In Between Time*, that are coming together. Brent just finished off the guitar parts on one song that *Propagandhi* played on as well. I'm waiting for Dave Bacon to play bass on a song that I gave to him. So that'll come out sometime within the year.

AU: That was such a good album, I can only imagine how good these songs are gonna be

MB: The songs are really good. Well, I would say three of the songs are really good. And then the other two it sort of makes sense that they weren't on the album, but they're okay. I mean, it's Chi's vocals and obviously he won't record any vocals again. But the quality of his vocals were all recorded at the time when he could still sort of sing, you know.

AU: How did *In The Meantime* And *In Between Time* album come about?

MB: Well the line up we were touring with at that time was a pretty good version of *SNFU* with just Matt and Shane. I was living in Toronto at the time that we started putting the album together. I was just sort of into doing stuff with *SNFU*. I mean, I've always wanted to do it and the only reason I sort of stopped doing it was because I was having health issues. My hands were falling apart and I was worried about my tinnitus. But I've always wanted to do *SNFU*. I loved doing it. So I just started demoing songs in Toronto and sending them back to Matt. Then Matt got Chi in to do the vocals on them. I remember the first set of vocals he sent back with the songs, I was just like, "What the fuck?," I didn't know what to think. Then for some reason, after a day or two, I was like "Oh shit, this is brilliant!" I guess I had some kind of expectation. I remember being sort of disappointed at first but then when you sit back and think about who Chi is, in his world, it's like, Oh, yeah, this is fucking great. It's really funny actually. So we just continued through it. Working with Trevor MacGregor. Trevor's got a really good ear for music and he's a great drummer. He was a fan and he really wanted to help us out with making the record.

When we got it done and then we couldn't find anybody to put the record out! We were so determined to put the record out that we just got it done. We got some financing from some friends of ours in San Diego that were big *SNFU* fans.

AU: When you listen to it, it's the most personal of all the records. It's prophetic and it fucking rips too.

MB: Oh, I agree. With Chi's words and stuff it was totally what was going on in his life, like with *Cockatoo Quill*. It's like if you didn't know him you wouldn't realize that these are real personal songs, he was writing about his world. Musically wise, for me it's definitely my best performance as a guitar player. Every record we made we were trying to make the best *SNFU* record.

AU: When did you first meet Ken Chinn?

MB: Kenny Chinn, I would have been a teenager. The first time we ever met Kenny was through the world of skateboarding. Him and his brother would just tear the shit out of what was like the first real half-pipe, which was beside Skier's Sportshop on 109th Street. It was a huge ramp and they would just rip it. Kenny was a good skater but his brother Danny was the best. So we were sort of in awe of them because we loved skateboarding. We weren't as good skaters as them, but that's how we first met Ken. We didn't really talk to them and they didn't really talk to us because we were like different sort of cliques. Then when we started getting into punk rock through the world of skateboarding. We started going to shows and the shows were really small. There weren't that many people there but one of the people that we saw was Kenny Chinn. So we just sort of say hello and started hanging out and started listening to records and it was super cool to hang out with him because he was cool, he just don't give a fuck. We were all very excited about punk rock and discovering records and we would share records and it was just a really exciting time. He was totally fun to hang out with. Partly because like I said, he really didn't give a fuck. So that's how we first met him and then we just started listening to records and the old punk rock movement was like, yeah, you can make a band too. And so that's what we did.

AU: What were you listening to back then?

MB: *Sex Pistols*, for sure and *The Clash* and stuff like that but there was so much punk rock stuff coming out and it was always super exciting to go to the store just trying to discover the next great thing. I remember going to Kenny's house and he had the first *Black Flag* Single the *Nervous Breakdown* EP, that was awesome. Really we loved it all and we loved a lot of the American hardcore stuff like *Black Flag*, *X*, and *Circle Jerks* and the whole *Decline of Western Civilization* was huge. British stuff too, all of it, anything punk rock was cool. At that age, your music totally defines you. There was just something about punk rock for me, that was exciting and it just felt like - this is my music.

AU: What was Ken's favorite band?

MB: I think we had sort of a common thing about bands that we liked. Someone asked me about bands that influenced me and truly the bands that really influenced us the most were the Canadian punk rock bands like *D.O.A.* and *Subhumans* and those bands that you would actually see and it was like, holy fuck, these guys are really good. They are as good as anybody, because they are right there. They're from the province or next province over and just seem so real. It made it so like yeah we could do this too. There was *Personality Crisis* and the whole Winnipeg thing with the *Stretch Marks* and *The Unwanted* and all those bands. Calgary had tons of great bands like *Riot .303* and *The Sturgeons* then later *Beyond Possession* and stuff.

AU: *Death Sentence* and *DayGlo Abortions* are still some of my favorite punk bands.

MB: Yeah, like *Nomeansno*, they're unreal, one of the best bands ever and where do they come from? Victoria. How did that happen?

AU: Was Ken the type of person that had binders full of poems and songs?

MB: Oh yeah. Books full of songs and at the ready. He always had books full of lyrics. They're around somewhere. Somewhere there's books with his words in them, he always had ideas for songs.

AU: According to punk rock history the BYO

KEN CHINN MEMORIAL

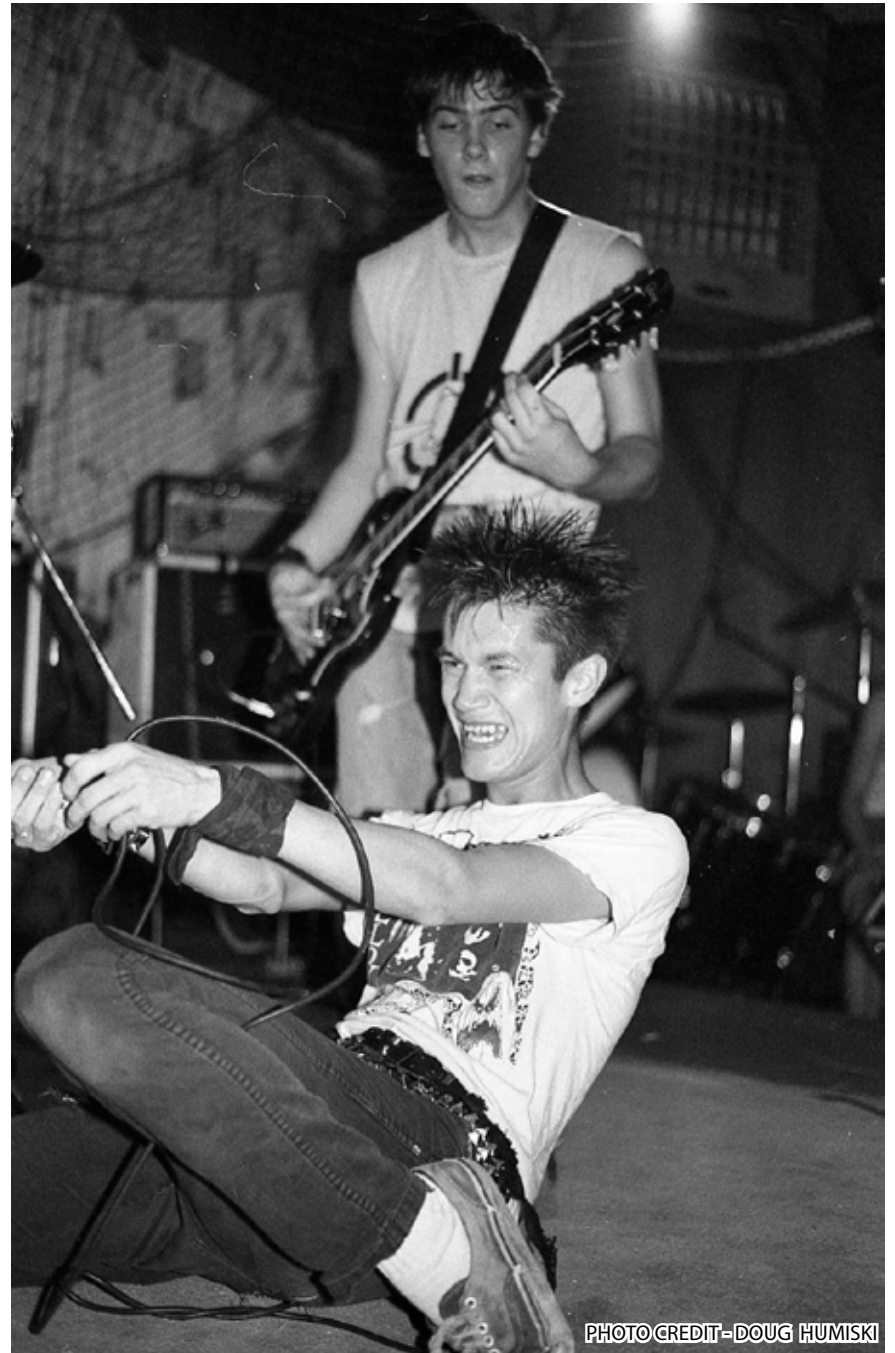


PHOTO CREDIT-DOUG HUMISKI

Records guys came through on the *Another State of Mind* tour and sort of discovered all these Canadian bands and put out that first compilation, *Something To Believe In*.

MB: Well, the tour came through Edmonton I remember it was like on a Tuesday night or something like that. It was not even a weekend and it was a very sparsely attended show there was hardly anybody there. It was *Youth Brigade*, *Social Distortion*, and very disappointingly *Vice Squad* headlined. It was disappointing because in Eastern Canada, *Discharge* had played some of the shows. I think we probably said hi to the Stern's, but I don't remember meeting with them. Those guys were were fist fighting all the time, and drinking. It was kind of hard to figure out what they were all about. They were from LA so they were just interesting. I think they hung out with *Gubby (Szvoboda)* who was our former manager. He had met them and he probably told them about *SNFU*. They came back the summer after and came to Edmonton and Calgary and we got on the bill and then we sort of befriended them at that time and then went to Winnipeg with them. We played about three or four shows with them and they were putting the album together and because they're from Canada originally, I think they loved the idea of having this North American compilation album. We were just sort of at the right place at the right time.

AU: The song *She's Not On The Menu* could be the soundtrack for the #metoo movement.

MB: Yeah, it could be.

AU: Not many punk bands back then were really caring about people's feelings.

MB: It's true. I mean Chi, he was always writing

about things that were just sort of, you know, good and bad, that were very unique. He really put an effort into it to try to have a sort of unique take on things. Not just a unique opinion, but writing a song about something that no one really tackled before. Like on *Better Than A Stick in the Eye*, *Postman's Pet Peeve*, or *Time To Buy A Futon*. It was a very interesting lyrical take, he was never short of fresh ideas. I've always respected Chi as an artist, he was never boring.

AU: How did you make the jump to Epitaph?

MB: We actually went to Cargo records after we did two records with BYO. We went to Cargo for one record, and then we broke up. When we got back together in 1989, and went on tour and had our best tour ever. Every show we did was pretty much sold out on that tour. We played in LA and *Brett Gurewitz* came to the show at the Roxy and he's like, oh come by my office tomorrow. I want to meet with you guys. He met us and he said I want to put your record out. We were so out of touch. I didn't really know that much about Epitaph. We got back from tour and dilly dallied. We're having problems with our drummer *Jon Card*. He was having health issues. This constant lineup change and trying to get a lineup together because we knew we could do a record with Epitaph and finally got a live up together and demoed songs and went down and recorded. I listen to that first Epitaph record *Something Green and Leafy This Way Comes* and I shake my head all the time. It's really not that good. I think the mixes are really bad. But we did it, we went through with it and we recorded it and that's how we got an Epitaph. We did have a three record contract and we did *Green and Leafy* and then recorded the other two. I think it got better once we figured out what we were actually doing.

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL



AU: Was it like a different world all of a sudden, because then you had music videos?

MB: Totally different. I think that was such a weird time back then. Because they had *Offspring* on their label and *Offspring* was selling millions of records. So it was like this feeling like, oh man, we're going to put out our album and it's going to sell all these records. You know, because *Offspring* did. The reality is, no we're not *Offspring*. You're not *Offspring*, you're not even *Bad Religion*. You're just *SNFU* you're this pretty good punk rock bands from Canada, with a gay Chinese man on lead vocals. It's just not it's not going to be that accepted, or on a level like *Offspring*. It's just not.

AU: Did it help with touring to have your gig posters say Epitaph recording artists SNFU?

MB: Oh totally, but we didn't really sound like an Epitaph band. I mean, hindsight is 20/20, we probably would have done things a little differently. I'm sure when we did the first record with Epitaph Brett was just shaking his head like, what the fuck, "Where's the fast songs? I wouldn't mind making some money." He'd say things like that. And we were just sort of like, "No, these are our songs, this is it." I think the mix wrecks it a bit, and there's probably too many songs. So if we had taken some songs off and mixed it better, it would be a better record. Even Chi was singing differently in that first record, he was trying to sing more. It's a different version of *SNFU* really.

AU: Chi's stage antics are pretty legendary with the high jumps off the bass drum, did that start from day one or did things slowly progress into a polished show?

MB: Oh, he developed over time for sure. But he had this sort of magnetic presence on stage. And he would just give you the unexpected, it was hard not to watch. He would laugh and he'd get pissed off. We did some shows on tour for the second album in Florida with these skinheads just like destroying everything, like total redneck skinheads, and we would do okay, because we were actually a pretty good band. They didn't kick us off the stage, or didn't storm the stage. But it was definitely something he developed over time. But by *The Stick in the Eye* record, Chi was amazing. When I listened to *The Stick in the Eye* record, I think it was the peak of his vocal power, like he sounds totally powerful and lyrically he's bang on. When I listen to it and he's so good, I think the band almost didn't play up to his level on that record. That's a high point for him, he was very dynamic on stage. He was great.

AU: There should be a Guinness Book of World Records for highest punk jump. He would be a contender.

MB: Yeah, definitely.

AU: What was your initial reaction to hearing about Chi's passing?

MB: Well, I wasn't surprised. It's something I felt like I was waiting to hear for years because I knew the state that he was in. Even though I wasn't hanging out with him, I would get updates from people. Then after I heard I was like, "Oh, I guess I'd be more sad if I wasn't already so sad for so long." Then after a couple days went by, I broke down and I cried quite a bit for the weekend after that.

AU: Yeah, it's been hard working on this memorial issue. I feel like he did get some extra years though, I feel like the documentary that they started filming about him kind of revived him and got him interested in life again.

MB: I think so, too. I wasn't a huge fan of the documentary because it seemed like a bit of a pity party. I think it would have been cool to focus more on what a great lead man he was, and things like that. But he sort of gave up. I think he just drank himself to death. I don't really know. I wasn't with him a lot in the last years, after I left the band. He sort of just gave up, you know, and it was kind of hard on our relationship, it got very toxic, and it was kind of hard for me to be around him. I wish I was a better friend for him at the end, but I just wasn't, and I can't change that now. It bums me out, but that's just the way it is. We had a lot of good times together, and I value those good times.

AU: Chi said he was off drugs for 14 years, so I feel like he might have switched his drug of choice over to alcohol, and I'm sure his doctor would have told him probably 10 years ago to quit drinking but he didn't and that might have been a part of it.

MB: Oh, definitely. When I met him, he used to drink and party a lot. Then when the band started doing really well, he did nothing, he was very straight. He didn't drink at all-- stopped drinking, didn't really do any drugs but started smoking cigarettes, which was really weird. So he just smoked cigarettes. Then like when he started drinking again, I wasn't in the band anymore, that was kind of a shock to me.

AU: What was it about Mr. Chi Pig that made him such an icon in the Canadian punk scene?

MB: Well, longevity, for one thing, when you're around for such a long time, we constantly toured. So a lot of people followed him, he had a presence and he was a unique presence. He's an unforgettable presence. You go to the show, and it's like, something that you don't see all the time. It's unconventional. And when the band is at its peak, it's like exciting music with this unconventional singer. It's cool. It's like it's a great combination. His legend is going to grow even more because his story is so fascinating, right? When you see the old pictures of this super charismatic, powerful guy jumping in the air off the bass drum to what he became, it's fascinating for people. He has a legacy. There's all the records and stuff. It's all out there. So his legend will grow, just because that's just when people do, they jump on that kind of thing. And it'll get bigger and bigger and stories will get bigger and more untrue, that's just what happens when great people pass away.

AU: What's your thoughts on his other bands? We have *The Wongs*, *Slaveco*. Do you know any others or solo projects he did?

MB: *Little Joe* was another one that he did with *Tim Chiba* and the guys from *Desperate Minds* from Kamloops. The *Wongs* happened cause we had broken up and Chi still wanted to play in a band and so he got together with some good musicians in Vancouver. *The Wongs* were pretty good but they were more like a rock band, they weren't very punk. *Slaveco*...-- I never saw them. I've heard some of their music, it's okay. And *Little Joe* I don't know if I really heard *Little Joe*. Chi was definitely the best part of all those bands.

AU: So is there still more of the *SNFU* story to be told in a book or documentary?

MB: Well, I don't know. Maybe. Some people have contacted me. My friend Matt in New Brunswick wants to do a book on *'The Stick'* record. *Ty Stranglehold* wants to do like a picture book or something like that. But we'll see, there's nothing really planned yet.

AU: Did Chi ever hit on you or try to make sweet love to you?

MB: *laughs* No, no, I remember the time he sort of came out to me. I remember that. No, he never tried to hit on me. Never ever.

AU: Was it something he tried to hide originally?

MB: Well, of course, at that time. A gay Chinese front man of a punk rock band in Alberta, in the 80s, are you kidding?! I mean, in Edmonton you'd get your ass kicked just for being a punk rocker. So you throw in those other things and it's just

like holy shit, that is living dangerously. It wasn't surprising when he told us because we spent so much time with him, you know his behaviour and the way he would react around certain people and things like that. So we just tried to be very cool about it. It wasn't that big of a deal really.

AU: Was it like a band meeting?

MB: No, we were driving back from Saskatchewan or something, probably everyone was in a really good mood. You know, we're on tour doing the thing we loved to do. Coming from the show in Saskatchewan, probably made some money and had a sense of freedom because you're on tour. Everybody was sitting there and he put his hand on like a leg and asked "how does that make you feel?" I'm like, I don't know what you're talking about. I don't remember the exact words after that. He never came out and said "oh I'm gay" or something like that...but he sort of insinuated that. But of course, it's something you want to get out there. That's not something you want to hide. Everyone deserves to be loved.

AU: Yeah, I feel like he was always sort of looking for love, just through the feelings on some of the songs, but you didn't really know about his personal life that much truly.

MB: Oh, either did we, it would only come out every now and then. But he never talked about his family. I know his childhood growing up was pretty unconventional. So, he struggled with a lot of things throughout his life. In some regard he made the best of it and conquered a lot of those issues.

AU: So they are trying to get him on the Canadian Walk of Fame and there's the Edmonton mural project that's happening. Do you know any other projects or tributes?

MB: No, I don't know about anything besides those two things. I think a statue would be fucking amazing. Like if there was like a permanent statue, him in midair with one of those jumps, you know, from the 80s, with his dreadlocks flying. That would be fucking amazing, like forever, just like, in air forever. That would

be amazing. I don't know how that happens. I don't know who would fund something like that. Maybe *Rachel Notley* can put up the money.

AU: If you could speak with Ken one more time, what would you say?

MB: Oh, I'd tell him that I love him. He knew why we didn't hang out and stuff like that. But it would have been good to let him know that he was loved.

AU: I can't help but think if he could have stuck around for another 10 years, maybe there would have been another *SNFU* album from you two, or a reunion tour.

MB: That's possible. You never know. But it is what it is, right? I hate saying that, but he's left a good legacy. He touched a lot of people and like I said before, his legend, or whatever it is, will grow with time, because people will see the pictures, they'll read about his story and it'll grow.

AU: Is there seven words that we could say to finalize this interview?

MB: Oh, man, that's a tough one on the spot. I was trying to think of a title for the last record and I have one idea, it's a thing that he said: A Blessing, But With It A Curse. Because that's something that he was saying that his mom would say to him.

AU: Any final word?

MB: I wish I would have been a better friend. Personally speaking, I'm not a great communicator and I think I've hurt a lot of people in my life just because I just give up and leave and don't talk things out. So in some regard, I feel like I may have hurt him because I didn't try hard enough to talk to him. If I had the chance, I would probably tell him that I love him and I really cherished a lot of those times when we were touring together and creating music. In some regard, those were the most golden moments of my life, like the high points of my musical career for sure. Just the freedom that we had, and creating this thing from nothing and flying our flag high, it was a great thing.



PHOTO CREDIT-VEERLE BRION



A few words about Ken Chinn...

by Murray "The Cretin" Acton

An awful lot of people that I know/knew, have left this stage for the next one. Whatever and wherever that might be. Some of them were inconsequential, others left before their time or left without making a contribution worth mentioning to the world they departed from, or worse, they left a mess behind them that others had to deal with. A few weeks ago though, a person who was much more than inconsequential, and who had made an indelible mark upon the world in which we live, got on that tour bus to oblivion and departed this realm. Where he is going I don't know, but wherever that is I have heard the worries of this world will no longer be of concern to him. Now some people have said to me that Ken left before his time. He

was almost 2 years younger than me, and I guess 58 is under the life expectancy of us privileged citizens of the first world, but I think that bar was set by someone who lived a safe sedentary life, and rarely strayed from the path of normalcy. That was not the life that Ken lived. Ken rode the beast of chaos. That's why we became friends over the years. I'm not saying I was in his inner circle or anything, but we were friends, and always had the time for a few words, and occasionally those words became deeply personal. He had some inner demons, and he was unsure of the motives of some of the people who had taken on the function of handlers in his life. I don't have the right to pass judgment on anyone because I don't know the full details of their relationship with Ken, but I was concerned for Ken regardless. I have a friend who was quite close to Ken. He is an established artist, and visited with Ken from time to time. He wanted to get Ken making art again and attempted to get him some work in Victoria that was going to pay quite well, but one

of Ken's handlers decided that my friend was only trying to exploit Ken

and put a stop to it. That bothered me because I know that my friend has mass respect for Ken, and is a person of unquestionable integrity. That just made me wonder about the integrity of Ken's handler. Enough of that though, these things I talk of are nothing but worries of the material world, and apparently they are no longer the worries of Ken. I will remember Ken for what he accomplished, and what he was capable of. Ken was an incredible performer, and one of the best singers in any genre. While my authority on the calibre of a singer might be questionable, Ken was one of Mike Patton's favourite singers as well and I think he qualifies as an authority on the subject. The talent that Ken had, that has at times brought tears to my eyes, and at others times made me laugh, was his abilities as a lyricist. He was a genius. He could write a love song that would crush hearts. Once upon a time, out on the road, I ended up staying at a friend's house that Ken was also staying at. He was out doing a solo tour and had played in the same town as me, and the shows were promoted by the same person, who's house we were staying at. It was the summertime and it was nice outside (I think I slept in the backyard that night) and there was a lot of people there and some of them were smoking pot (something that Ken didn't like much..."Hippy shit" he called it. So we grabbed an acoustic guitar and went out into the backyard. That was when I found out how good of a lyricist that Ken really was. He pulled out a book of lyrics he had written for a solo project he wanted to do. They were all love songs. Songs he didn't have music for yet. It was essentially a book of poetry. There was something very sad and lonely about the poems, but they were beautiful, and they were written by someone who knew what love was and longed for more of it in their life. That is the way I will remember Ken. The artist, the performer, but mostly the writer of beautiful poetry about his desire for love.

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL



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ACROSS

1. '74 musical starring Lucille Ball
5. Large number (informal)
10. Egyptian goddess of healing
14. Some TVs
15. Jargon or slang
16. You won't find her on this
17. They can swing US elections
18. Loa or Kea in Hawaii
19. Scorch the surface
20. "_____ Catch No Fish"
23. Some appliances
24. Spanish sun
25. They get up close and personal at US airports
26. You can do this to a trade
27. Perfect
28. Gear setting (abbr.)
30. These often get iced
33. Someone not to believe in?
39. Vigoda and Lincoln
40. Toxic gas
41. Green and leafy (prefix)
42. SNFU's 21st century home
44. Don't f*ck with this band
45. Have
46. Largely obsolete recording format
47. Not-so-formal intro to 1-down
50. Boxing regulator
52. A workout can produce a nice one

53. Wellness centre
56. "...and _____ to Play"
60. Bone (prefix)
61. Town with a man's name southeast of Saskatoon
62. Solemn promise or swear word
63. Lapsang Souchong and Oolong
64. The E Street band's _____ Steve
65. Yugoslavian strongman
66. Once once
67. The magical number for SNFU album titles
68. In song, he had a bad day

DOWN

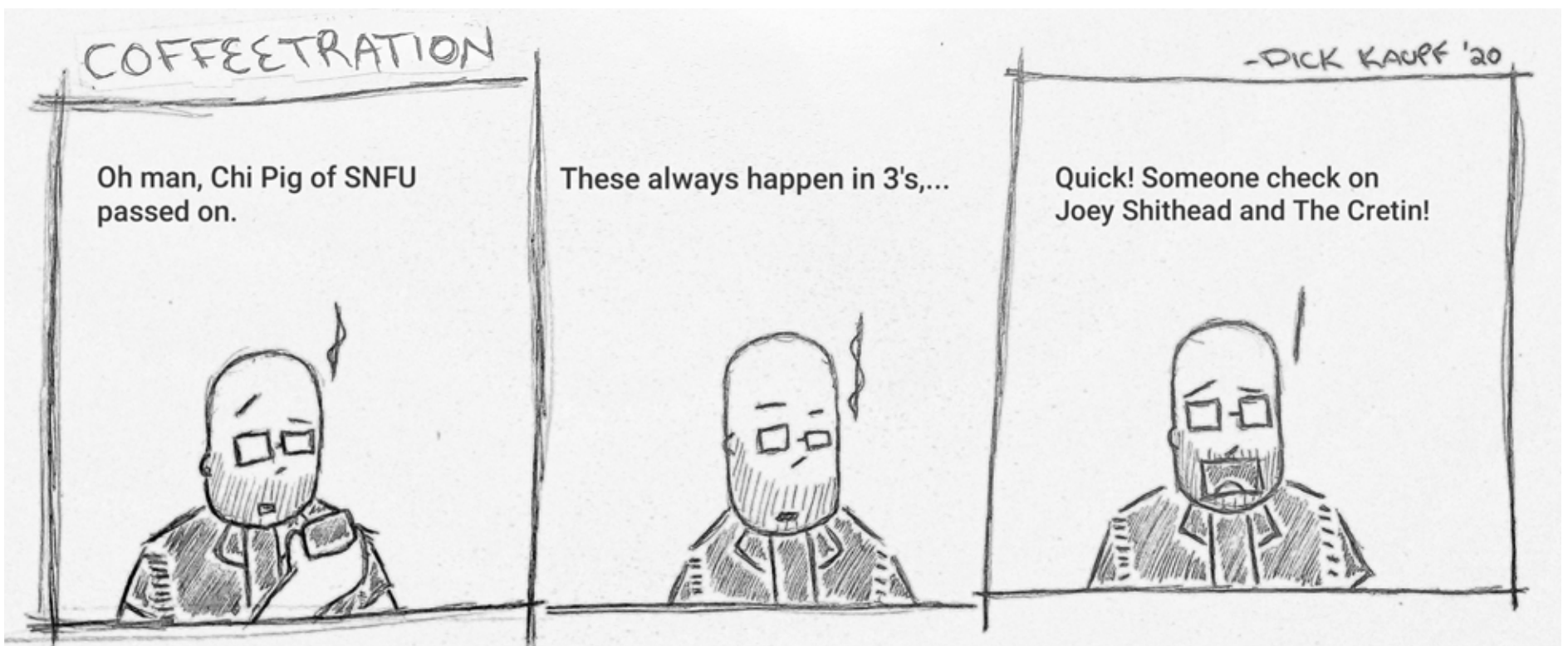
1. Formal intro to 47-across
2. Where a cannibal may consume a cappuccino
3. Store with a parade
4. Canadian gas giant
5. Long-haired biblical strongman

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CROSSWORD NO. 26

AUGUST, 2020

6. Pretenders "Learning to _____"
7. Feverish illness
8. Actor who played Mr. Chips
9. Many a denizen of Dallas
10. "____ Bored with the USA"
11. Welcome to an attic apartment
12. Total
13. Grumpy
21. Utilizes
22. Display boredom
27. Vee of The Meatmen
29. Chunk of turf
30. Cleveland player, for short
31. US lawyers' group
32. Real name of 47-across and 1-down
33. High-quality audio file
34. Miners mine it
35. "Peace" in Russian
36. "____ Arcade"
37. Often one of a dozen
38. It can be hi- or lo-
40. Rays
43. A kid's boo-boo
44. Int'l drug org. based in Montreal
46. "_____ the Tube Station..."
47. A hundred bucks
48. Bob or Doug McKenzie
49. Tiny amounts
51. Stan's comedic partner
52. Mayor of NYC in the '70s
53. It includes a tread and a riser
54. Skirt under a skirt
55. Improvised
57. Tree house?
58. Much of Eastern Europe and Russia
59. Musical marking



M. Chi Pig



MISFORTUNE
DEVILS VOICE
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1ST PLACE
I KNOW MORE
CIEING
FUTON
GRAVE DIGGER
TEARS
DISARRAY
MENU
HAPPY SWITCH
LEGS
BLACK CLOUD
I FORGET
BODIES
CANNIBAL CAFE



PHOTOS BY Ben Davies,
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Pouly Harbore, Malcolm Photos,
David Leavelle, Sarah Mac,
Richard Murray, Sam Sang, Out Of
Snap Productions, John Warnock,
and thanks as well to anyone we
may have missed.

MR. CHI PIG MEMORIAL

Interview with D.O.A.'s Joe Keithley

AU: When do you remember first meeting Mr. Chi Pig?

JK: Keithley: It was in Edmonton and I think it was in '82 or '83. A young SNFU, featuring a young Chi Pig, they opened for D.O.A. at a community hall on the north side of Edmonton called the Spartans Club. There was very spartan surroundings lets just say, if you know the north side of Edmonton at all. They were great and we ended up doing the same thing again the next year. They opened up for D.O.A. again at the same place. So we played there in '82 and '83 with them.

AU: Was it a standout show at that time? Was Chi doing all the high jinks and the jumping?

JK: Probably some of it but it's just so long ago I don't quite remember. So I couldn't put it down to a yes or no. I saw that more in the mid 80s when they started getting popular and the shows got bigger. Obviously he got famous for that. One thing we always noted about Chi was, we would say "You know Chi, you may be able to stand on top of a base drum and jump off but that's because you are a skinny fuck." I would break the base drum if I stood up there.

AU: Any funny Chi Pig stories that you can share?

JK: One thing that was really fun. We took them, D.O.A. was going to break up in 1989. So our crew consists of Chris Crud as a roadie, John Wright from Nomeansno as a roadie, and Chi Pig as the merch guy. So they're kind of like your all-star road crew type thing right. SNFU had broken up at the time and Chi had started back on The Wongs and he was the worst merch guy ever. People would come up and try and buy a D.O.A. shirt and he'd go, "Oh, don't buy that shit, here take a Wongs sticker instead." We'd catch him doing this. I mean people still bought other stuff but so finally towards the end of this 10 day tour, we said, "Okay Chi, you've crossed all of D.O.A. And we all want to kill you." You know, in a friendly sort of way, semi-friendly sort of way, but we're all too big, so it wouldn't be a fair fight. So Chris Prohom was about 120 pounds, and Chi Pig was about a 120 pounds, so we figured that would be a fair match. So we set him up for a battle royale death match that was supposed to happen but for some reason or another got cancelled at the end.

AU: Any backstage Chi Pig antics you remember?

JK: Chi Pig was an amazing guy backstage. I'm sure everybody says that. He had a really great sense of humour. He always had a story or a joke. I mean, if you knew him well, or if he was a friend of yours, I guess I fall in that category, he was just waiting for somebody he knew to come along and tell like, some really raunchy and/or funny story to. He'd always open the conversation like that, or he'd be really good at just ridiculing the person, he loved to do that with me. But like I said, he was too small to break his neck.

AU: It seems like he became friends with almost everybody he met.

JK: Yeah, I would say so. I mean, one of the things that I noted with people that talked to him, towards the end, and this is not in the happy category. They'd say "Man I talked to Chi, I've met him like three times and every time I meet him, he just doesn't remember who I am." So that wasn't considerably great but he'd remember his friends that he knew. But I don't know if he kind of blanked out a bit and stuff like that as time was going on. His health hadn't been really great for quite a while, say at least five years or something like that. That never stopped him from being

courteous to those people and rambling them with stories and stuff like that. So yeah, a really good guy, he's going to be really missed.

AU: What was your initial reaction to hearing about his passing?

JK: Well, I mean, it's kind of one of those things when you know that the end is not necessary very far away. It's kind of like, "Shit, it finally happened."

AU: I feel like he got some bonus years after they started filming the documentary about him. He sort of cleaned up his act, but he sort of switched his drug of choice to alcohol. Then I sort of felt like everyone wanted to say hi to Chi and buy him a beer, but I felt like they weren't actually doing him any favours.

JK: Yeah, it wasn't doing him a favor at all. It would just feed that, so it's unfortunate. Every punk that I grew up was like "There's Chi Pig. I'd like to talk to him, man. What a fucking great band. What a great inspirational performer, can I buy you a beer?" That was probably the last thing he needed. You know what I mean?

AU: What was it about Mr. Chi Pig that made him such an icon in the Canadian punk scene in your opinion?

JK: I think just the whole showmanship of it. Getting out a slingshot and shooting hot dogs across the the dance floor. Jumping off the stage stand, off the bass drum. His art design and sometimes his lyrics would just have kind of a brilliant absurdity to it. To make you go okay wow. Really creative artists come up with the strangest stuff, right. Other people who are not creative, try to come up with creative stuff. That's not creative. You know? I mean, that's the difference. He was creative.

AU: Do you remember when Chi first moved from Edmonton to Vancouver after SNFU had initially broken up?

JK: I think that's when we hired him to be the roadie. In '89 or '90 because he's in Vancouver and he's playing with a future D.O.A. drummer Brien O'Brien and they had this band called the The Wongs. I think Brien O'Brien was in The Wongs. I never saw the Wongs play so I can't remember exactly. But I do remember he came on and was the world's worst merch guy

AU: I feel like Wendy13 and the Cobalt really helped him out by giving him a job there.

JK: Was he employed there?

AU: He was the busboy.

JK: Yeah, okay. Well, why not? It's good to be gainfully employed.

AU: What do you remember about the Another State Of Mind tour with Youth Brigade and Social Distortion with the BYO Records guys that discovered so many Canadian bands. How did you first get involved on that early compilation?

JK: I don't remember anything about the tour. Just that it came out West. I guess the tour went on and then the film was out. So we really didn't have any connection with it. For the BYO comp, well the Stern brothers are Canadians. We had met them at their sort of record company distro house in Hollywood.

AU: There's a couple things in the works for Chi, people are trying to get him on Canada's Walk of Fame and there's an Edmonton mural project.

JK: I heard about the Edmonton mural project, that sounds great. The Walk of Fame would be in Toronto? Well, that would be great if it happens. It's too bad people in Toronto can't figure this stuff out before somebody's dead, you know what I mean? That's one of my pet peeves, that people in Toronto are tone deaf to the really creative music scenes that have gone on out West and a lot of times have produced a lot better bands than they have in Ontario. You can quote me on that.



AU: If you could speak with Chi one more time, what would you say?

JK: I don't know. I don't think I have an answer to that.

AU: He visited me in a dream, like two days after he passed away. I gave him a couple hugs, and we had some Chinese food.

JK: Cool.

AU: It's funny, in the new issue, you might not think it's funny, but there's a comic strip, and it says something like, "I just heard that Mr. Chi Pig passed away... these things seem to happen in threes..." And then it says, "Quick! Somebody check on Joey Shithead and The Cretin!"

JK: Ha ha yeah, well I think I'll probably live until I'm like 90 or 95 or 100, like my father. I think I'm in good shape and knock on wood I'll be here for a long time.

AU: How has life changed for you now that you're the mayor of Burnaby?

JK: I'm not the mayor. I'm a City Councillor. Well, a lot. I mean D.O.A. is not playing but I still have a job. I'm a City Councillor for one thing. That's been super busy because of all the stuff we've had to deal with COVID with the city. From procedures with bylaws, and public hearings and our city's employees. But it's good because I've initiated a lot of stuff like the city taking a really strong stance on working towards eliminating GHGs (greenhouse gas emissions) so we have our climate change plan in place. Working on affordable housing, it's pretty gratifying actually, I really like it.

AU: I feel it's good to have that punk work ethic and mentality being represented.

JK: Yeah, it's experience that you get and not just me but somebody who has been a musician or an artist of some sort, and spent a long time at it. You get a wider point of view of the world. And if you did get elected into a position like this, then hopefully you use that accumulated knowledge in a wise manner.

AU: Any advice for people to stay safe and sane in these crazy times?

JK: Yeah. Stay away from people. Stay close by calling them or emailing or texting them. But don't go hang out and party with your buddies. We've seen what happens with Kelowna, that's an example there. There's pockets of this all over the place. And get used to the fact there's no live music. It's killing me and my band-mates. But one of these days, who knows how long, we'll be playing

again and touring again and all that kind of stuff. So people have to be patient. And I realize that's a really easy thing to say and a hard thing to do.

AU: I'm worried about so many smaller venues.

JK: I am too. But I think a band like D.O.A. will always find a place to play. But if you have a lot of small venues go under then there will be a lot of bands that are still working on getting there, that aren't going to have a place to play. I think then you might see more like underground stuff like Back Lab or places like that. That might be the alternative, where you get a new generation of punk bands that just play there because the little pubs of gone out of business and stuff like that. Because the government has seemingly helped almost everybody except for the people in the music business.

AU: You guys will have to be playing behind plexiglass like those Vegas lounge shows.

JK: Yeah, I can't see it. People are proposing these shows where you have 50 people in the club. To me that's not my idea of why punk rock is exciting and why I've been involved in it for 40 years or more. So yeah hopefully we get the vaccine and people can go to like a crazy punk rock festival like Rebellion or Punk Rock Bowling or go see a super crazy show at the Commodore, or The Rickshaw, or Logan's.

AU: Well, thank you for your time today and I'll let you get back to official business.

JK: Ok, take care.

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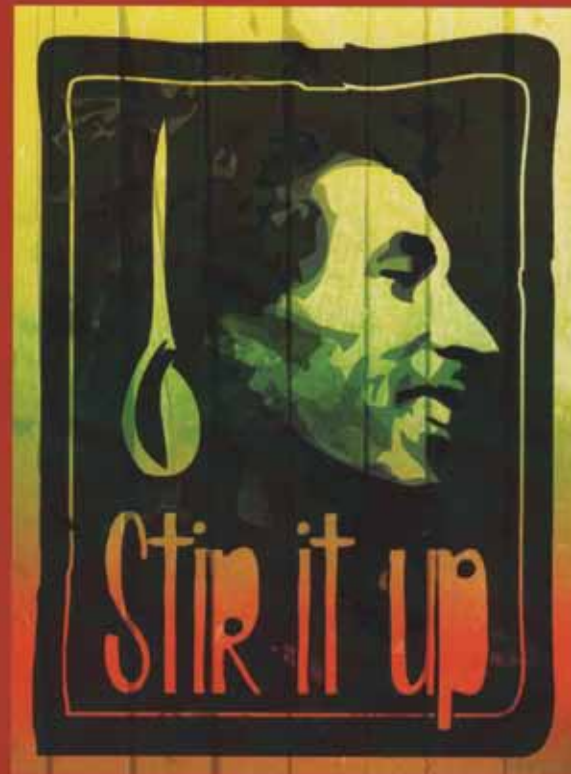
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BEST CHI PIG INTERVIEW EVER
Chance Meeting In Gastown



interview by Coleman & Nate – January, 2020
 transcription by Erik Lindholm

A chance meeting with Ken Chinn aka Chi Pig lead singer of S.N.F.U. while skating through Gastown Vancouver, B.C. Ken speaks about life and death, suicide, and his long performing career. Ken is a strong person with a big heart who never quits. It was an amazing encounter, we will never forget him.

AU: Tell us about your family.

Mr. Chi Pig: I have five brothers and six sisters. Six boys. Six girls.

AU: That's a huge family, wow. You're 56 and second-oldest?

CHI: Second youngest! Yes!

AU: So, you live down in Gastown?

CHI: I live a block that way. [points up the street]

AU: What do you feel about this area, with all the change?

CHI: You know what, it's terrible. Assholes and fake people. You know, the tourists have no idea what's going on here.

AU: It's a culture shock.

CHI: I went to The Old Spaghetti Factory to eat.

AU: Was it any good?

CHI: It's good, it went up in prices. I like The Sardine Can [points down the road]. They know all about punk rock music. And they are my buddies. They give me a discount there, they treat me well. And that pizza joint right there, I trade him a beer for a slice of pizza.

AU: Now who is getting a better deal?

CHI: He didn't care if I bought pizza! He just wanted beer. But I'm safer now that its quiet. I've know these people since they were kids. And they all grew up with SNFU and skateboarding.

AU: Ya?

CHI: Ya! I'm known in a lot of places. Especially Edmonton. It's a bit of a privilege. And sometimes it can be a pain in the fucking ass. That cop even knows my name, my real fucking name!

AU: What's his name?

CHI: Ah, fucking cop.... Somebody walks me home, walks me right to my door. To make sure I'm okay. My mom always told me I was born with a gift. But she said "keep in mind, the gift comes with a curse" and she was right. Cause she said "you don't like being recognized". But look at me! It's totally fucking impossible.

AU: It's impossible!

CHI: You guys recognized me and I don't even know you guys! A block away! But you guys seem pretty cool. I can read people pretty well. I've been all around the world. Like over ten thousand shows with the band.

AU: Do you have any highlight shows? When was the first time in LA you played?

CHI: Ah, that was 1985, Whiskey A-Go-Go. I remember everything. Lemmy was there. He signed my book. And, playing with Nirvana was one of my highlights in 1990. I got to kiss Kurt Cobain. I kissed Kurt when he was only 22. He was

dead five years later. I played with everybody. You name a band, I'll tell ya I played with that band. Fifteen years, people come and go. It changes with time.

AU: Have there been a lot of SNFU reunions? People coming back and forth?

CHI: Oh ya. They have kids and they are married and shit like that. Move the way we move, and we are who we are. It's just a matter of time. We'll get together again.

AU: [Mr. Chi Pig is recognized by a fine young member of society]

CHI: It's totally impossible.

AU: Especially being downtown. In this area.

CHI: No, it happens everywhere. No matter, wherever I go.

AU: You have that iconic look.

CHI: Yeah, well, that's the curse.

AU: Tell us about the artwork you are creating?

CHI: I'm drawing about ten pictures a day. And I sell them. Yeah I did about thirty drawings in the last three days. And I'm proud to say I'm drug free for fourteen years.

AU: Hey good job, that is fantastic dude!

CHI: Well, I almost died seven times. And yeah I just came out of hospital. After my second blood transfusion. And my doctors said I'm not going to see my next birthday. What a fucking asshole!

AU: Don't believe a word he says!

CHI: I couldn't sleep for a week after that. Look, I'm fifty-six and I'm fucking withering away man. Well when this doctor tell ya you only got fucking two more months to live... I say... fuck you!

AU: Just ignore him!

CHI: I believe in angels. And doves. Stars. Planets. Aliens. Spaceships. UFOs. Gravity. Longevity. All that... I tell my bandmates this all the time, I'm ready to go. Like I wasn't born here. I was landed. I'm a fucking alien man. I'm waiting for the mothership, the spaceship, to come and take me away. Home. And I always have this vision. I'm going upstairs man. I'm already in Hell. So I'm going upstairs. To meet two people. To reunite. And there's one pillow cloud, and a second pillow cloud, and when I get there, there is going to be a third one. I'm going to be in the middle there. It's gonna be my mother, who is dead. She is gonna be beside me, on the right, and my dead father on the left. And I'll be right there with them. I can't wait. I've been waiting for this thing for all my fucking life.

AU: Stairway to Heaven!

CHI: Or beam up. It's morbid to talk like that. My bandmates don't like it. But I'm like "hey man, anybody says they've never contemplated the concept of suicide is a goddamn fucking liar." Full of shit. I think about it every hour. And then, trying to figure it out. How do I do it? OD? Hang myself? Jump off a building? Shoot myself in the head? I think about this every fucking day. Every hour. And I've always been looking at, the one thing that keeps me here. That holds me here. That's for me, I found it.

AU: What is it?

CHI: That's for me. It's myself. The only thing, the best thing, and the most important thing, that I wake up to every morning – is me!

AU: What's your favourite place around here?

CHI: Well, I drink at a place called Pub 340.

AU: And you sing karaoke?

CHI: Yeah!

AU: Anything to add?

CHI: I got to meet some of my heroes. And my peers, I played with em all.

AU: That was your path. It was meant to be.

CHI: Yes, I knew it was. I saw it before it even happened. I just gotta follow that. It started when I was eight years old. That's when I started writing songs and singing. And drawing. Music is the universal language. And I saw a life through skateboarding and hardcore punk.

To watch the video of this interview go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hv3fF8n8vY8&t



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DON'T SLEEP

Turn The Tide

interview with vocalist Dave Smalley



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

Dave Smalley: My name is Dave. Haha, that's a loaded question. Hmm, I would say, depending on who you ask, for vocals for ALL, Down By Law, DYS, the Bandoleros, Dag Nasty or Don't Sleep. Or, maybe for my knowledge of Marvel comics and utter geekdom immersion in *The Mandalorian*, *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*.

AU: What first got you into music?

DS: Into music in general was my dad, who was super into Big Band music like Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller, as well as classical music like Beethoven and Mozart. I learned a lot about layering, melody, cadence, crescendo, phrasing, all that stuff, just by listening to it in the car while my dad and I would be driving. He's the only guy I've ever known who could whistle along to an entire symphony. Also, my parents would take me to musicals in local theaters or we would watch on VHS tapes, like *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* or *Singin' in the Rain*, and I loved that stuff. Pure happiness. In elementary school, I sang in church choirs and school plays. Then I discovered rock and roll in middle school -- Alice Cooper and Sabbath and Skynyrd and Kiss and Judas Priest, and then Peter Tosh and ska in high school, and all of that just impacted my brain and heart, and life changed forever -- metal and hard rock and reggae and southern rock and ultimately punk rock and hardcore, it all shaped me and changed me and I never looked back. I still love exploring different music. These days it's interesting -- I'm back to my reggae and ska roots, playing hardcore in Don't Sleep, and listening to a lot of Jimmy Cliff and the Wailers and Desmond Dekker. The other day my playlist was the Wailers and the Allman Brothers. Musical ecstasy.

AU: What was the first band you were in? What was the music scene like where you lived?

DS: I was in a small rock band in high school that never played out, plus I played in a folk group that performed for senior citizens and special needs kids. My first real band was DYS in Boston. That was an incredible time to be in Boston, to be with some really powerful personalities and take on the world that hated hardcore and wanted to crush us. We were a tight group and did a lot together.

AU: Tell us about your career highlights:

DS: So many memories but I'll say at least one memory for each: For DYS, practices at JD Furst

beneath the piano sales floor, and then going to Captain Nemos and getting pizza and playing Ms. PacMan. And hopefully not getting jumped by jocks when I was riding home on the T. For Dag Nasty: our first tour with the Descendents, and the true magic of the *Can I Say* lineup. It was truly special. For ALL: Living as a full-time musician for the first time, eating at Alfredos with my band brothers and then going back and writing and playing music until two in the morning. For Down By Law: headlining festivals for the first time and making videos -- so fun; I loved it. DBL is still going strong!! The Bandoleros: Pure fun and musical fire, combined with meatballs in Cadiz. And for Don't Sleep, really an incredible musical spark in this group, so powerful -- this record explodes.

AU: How do you think you've evolved from band to band?

DS: I think I've grown as an artist. It makes sense, in a way, because whatever you do in life, whether you're an accountant or a plumber or a whatever you do, you're hopefully always working at your craft, and as long as you keep your heart on fire, you combine the fire with more experience and you should hopefully be getting better. Challenge yourself. Set new aspirations every day.

AU: I've always thought you've brought an intelligence to punk rock and many of your songs are very relatable. Is this something you are consciously working towards?

DS: Thank you. Honestly I just write as the music inspires me. I'm all about being who you are. So for instance, just recently Don't Sleep did a really hilarious interview with Spencer Wayne -- he's a genius. But he said to check out Smash Mouth. And I don't think he was kidding, although with him I never know. So I did check them out, and they do what they do really great -- nothing that I could ever do. Because they're just that perfect California fun relaxed sound and beat and vox and vibe. It's who they are. I downloaded a bunch of their songs. So the key in whatever you do as an artist is honesty. My approach to music is to be encouraging, to fight for what's right, to oppose what's wrong, to be loyal to friends, to encourage introspection and caring, and try to make the world a little bit better. And that can all take many forms.

AU: Wikipedia says you are known for your influence on Pop Punk music and your early contributions to the Emo genre. Do you agree with that?

DS: I am appreciative for kind words and support. I don't know anything about labels. I'm just a musician trying to surf a wave of notes every day. When I catch a wave and ride it all the way to shore, I paddle back out and get right back on the surfboard.

AU: What is the meaning behind the longevity of punk in your opinion?

DS: I think a lot of people discovered it as young folks and, like with me, it changed us. Hearing the Ramones and the Pistols and the Jam and the Clash and the Undertones -- those moments are part of our lives and who we became. So it is more than just background music for thousands of people. It's life-defining.

AU: What do you remember about the ALL reunion that took place at Punk Rock Bowling a few years back? Any crazy Vegas stories to

share from the past?

DS: That was so much fun and incredibly special. The band sounded great as always, and I'm grateful to have had the chance to play with those friends and fellow musicians again. No real stories of Vegas that I would share. I do like Vegas a lot, though. It's fun.

AU: How have you been spending your time during the current Covid situation? Any thoughts on how to best get through this with your sanity intact?

DS: You know, as weird as it sounds, there's been some good things in all this terribleness. One good thing is that we're all spending more time with each other, with our families. That's a good thing. And we're listening to more music. And there's less traffic on the highway. And people are discovering new ways to communicate like Zoom and Teams. Watching more movies. So just take advantage of the time at home. Because before you know it, we'll all be in the rat race again and wishing we could get that extra hour of sleep again or have that time with our families and pets.

AU: Which of your many bands can still get together for shows and tours once things go back to normal?

DS: I think DYS, Down by Law, the Bandoleros and Don't Sleep.

AU: I read you are a weekly contributor to a paper out of Virginia. What would be your advice for punk zines out there to survive the current financial crisis?

DS: Oof, that is a tough one. I wish I knew, truly. I can only say: Try to hold on, because this period will end. I think sometimes we all forget that this is not forever. So try to hold on and survive. And be innovative. Maybe print editions can't come out right now but try to maximize online editions. I don't know. I love punk zines, in print or online, and am thankful for what they do to keep people up to date on all the great music out there. So I encourage everyone reading this: Support independent music labels and zines!

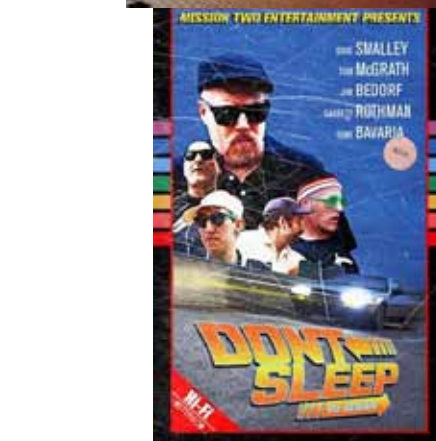
AU: What was the genesis of one of your newest projects, Don't Sleep?

DS: I got a FB message from a guy named Garrett who said they were big fans and wondered if I would listen to their band. I did, and they were great (they were called Very Americans). Garrett and I quickly became friends, and then we played together when I did a solo show in Harrisburg, PA. That turned into us playing shows together as a band. Then they wrote some songs specifically for me to sing, and those songs were great! So I said yes and there was some real magic in those recording sessions. From there it grew.

AU: What's Don't Sleep all about? What can you tell us about the new album and some of the stand-out songs?

DS: It's what our website says: Five friends playing hardcore and trying to make a difference. This album is called *Turn the Tide*, and it's pure fire and energy. It will make you want to get in the pit and take on the world. I never like to tell people what are the stand-out songs because that's going to be a journey for each person to make their own discoveries and find joy special for them. I will say that I think this album is something very special and has a great karma. Come join us!

AU: What sets this band apart from others



you've been involved with in the past?

DS: I think this band is the rage of DYS, the melody of Dag Nasty, the songwriting skill of Down By Law, the playing skill of ALL, and the pure spirit of the Bandoleros -- all mixed into one album of intense melodic hardcore (with several big surprises) in Don't Sleep.

AU: Anything else you want to promote?

DS: In the Covid era, Don't Sleep is making some really good videos. Please check them out and enjoy.

AU: Parting message for your Canadian fans?

DS: Thank you for many years of musical solidarity and fun, and here's to another couple of decades together. Stay free.

dontsleepband.bandcamp.com

Band Photo Credit: Dani Fresh





SNFU

Interview by Jenna Talia

32 years since their initial formation, over 5000 shows, 3 hiatuses, 25 or so members, 9 full-length records, and several EPs Canada's S.N.F.U. are at it again. Almost ten years after the last record and

the departure of founding member Marc Belke in 2005, a new record has emerged. In the last few years since the reformation of the group, a documentary about frontman Mr Chi Pig, documenting his struggles with mental illness and addiction has come out, as well as a book chronicling the band's history. Sticking to their seven-word album titles, the new one is called "Never Trouble Trouble, Until Trouble Troubles You", and is set to be released this September on Cruzar Media. Absolute Underground caught up with guitarist Ken "Goonie" Fleming while he prepares to return from Japan to do a western Canadian tour this July.

Absolute Underground: After almost ten years without any new material from SNFU, did you guys feel pressure for such a highly anticipated record?

Ken Flemming: Well, the response to that would be yes, there was great pressure on myself personally because on the last record Marc's guitar playing is killer, and the songwriting was brilliant. So that being said, it pushed the band

and me to write and record something that was great, and well-planned.

AU: Who did you record with?

KF: We recorded with Steve Loree, of the Junior Gone Wild Boys. He's a great producer that's done records for Corb Lund, Axis of Advance, The Real Mckenzie's, Ian Tyson, and many more. His approach to this record was brilliant in terms of the live energy, no over-dub, dated crap sound; it brought a fresh energy and intensity to all our songs. All in all, Steve is awesome at what he does and I just let him do what he does, which in result is a great S.N.F.U record.

AU: Over the years, this band has had 20 some-odd members, and an amazing catalog to draw from. What's the current band?

KF: The current band is Chi Pig, Sean Colig, John Card, Ken Fleming, and Jimmy Krunk. Since the reformation of this, it feels the most relaxed and chill, "just rock out have a good time together". And we write great songs together, there is a great chemistry to us being in a room together, this is key.

AU: Mr Chi Pig is one of punk rock's most unforgettable characters; he's had a well-documented tumultuous life, how does that inform his lyrics?

KF: His lyrics for this new record, in my opinion, are as good, if not better than previous records. He still has that frightening fast wit and smarts to him. You won't be disappointed, believe me.

AU: What can fans expect in future for SNFU? Is this a last hooray or can we expect more music?

KF: What you can expect for the future is this band touring the world time and time again, and representing the S.N.F.U. name with respect and pride. By no means is this a last hooray, this is the first of what I think will be a string of new EPs and full-length releases to come, I'm thinking, very soon. So 'till next time, thank you Absolute Underground for your support and keep on fighting for punk rock.

Cheers, Goonie from motherfuckin' Kochi, Japan
More information at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/SNFU>



A Visit from Mr Chi Pig

February/ March 2013

By Rod Rookers

As a person who, like many Albertans, grew up skateboarding and listening to the first couple of S.N.F.U. albums relentlessly, it was a great honour to spend a whole lot of time with this punk rock legend.

I was sitting at home one day doing computer stuff like I am today when Jodie (my DV8 partner in crime) called me from the bar and told me that none other than the man himself just strolled in and wanted to hang out. I didn't know he was going to be in town, or that he was in town for the purpose of recording the vocals for S.N.F.U.'s 13th album *Never Trouble Trouble Until Trouble Troubles You*. He came to town with Dan from Cruzar media, whom I had only met briefly

in the past (while he was delivering Absolute Underground to the bar) and Dan showed up that evening to discuss the battle plan for getting this album recorded.

They had a few options, one was seeing if they could record the vocals in the church across from Cam Noyes's place, which would probably have been tricky, or renting studio time somewhere in the area, which would have probably been a costly undertaking. I was playing it cool and was sort of listening in when I jokingly offered up the DV8 basement for the recording if they didn't mind the mess down there. Much to my surprise, Mr. Chi Pig thought it was a great idea and two days after, Steve Loree (who has recorded artists such as Corb Lund, Ian Tyson and The Real Mckenzie's) was loading in his gear... this monumental event was actually happening right in our basement. The recording process started on a Sunday and lasted until Thursday and, according to Chi, was one of the most gruelling recording

sessions he had ever done.

Steve was doing a stellar job of motivating the enigmatic vocalist and going for gold with the project and it seemed to me this was the perfect guy for the job, with a great sense of humour, a clear vision of what had to be done and plenty of patience.

Another neat thing that happened at DV8 on this visit was the decision to do some acoustic shows around town, turning a trip that was suppose to be for a few days into a trip that lasted for roughly a month and a half.

Dan played the acoustic guitar for these shows at Wunderbar, The Black Dog, Permanent Records, Slumland Theatre in Red Deer, and somewhere in Calgary, ending the mini tour at DV8 on Sunday March the 3rd.

Mr. Chi Pig was the guest of honour at our house for the entire time, crashing in our dining room (which we don't let many people do) and it was fun having him around for an extended visit. We drove around town a lot going to a few of his old haunts such as The Bulgogi House and The Double Greasy (a.k.a the Double Greeting Wonton House) and he told me a lot of stories about writing songs there in his youth and one amazing story about having Personality Crisis and D.O.A. crash at the Nosedive

one chilly winter's day in the 80s and they all went there wearing brand-new S.N.F.U. toques for lunch to stay warm. Even with the "Open Your Mouth And Say Mr. Chi Pig" Documentary and Chris Walter's amazing book, "What No One Else Wanted To Say", there is still so much to Mr. Chi Pig that he is still remains a mystery and a treasure of a human being that has sincerely done more cool shit than most people could do in four lifetimes. We talked about Personality Crisis, we talked about The Circle Jerks, he told me about playing a show with The Damned and letting The Damned share their dressing room... That was one of countless "Pig Tales" I was lucky enough to hear from Chi during his visit, and he has so many cool stories (about meeting Andy Warhol, and seeing G.G. Allin live etc...) that every lunch date was a fascinating punk rock history lesson. Another

amazing experience was rounding up the notorious Evan C. Tadpole Jones and being a fly on the wall as these two old friends and bandmates sat at DV8 and tied one on, laughing, crying and talking about old times...you can't put a price tag on an experience like that, and if the cameras were rolling it could have easily been one of the best rockumentaries ever about this amazing band. Anyway, this article is getting pretty drawn-out but, long story short, it was an honour to have Chi around for a visit, drawing pictures and writing songs at the bar and in my dining room - the man has made so much history with everything he has done in his life and if some of those tunes do make it to the studio in the future, I will fondly remember him sitting on my couch and reading them to me.



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REBEL PRIEST Shock N Roll

interview with frontman Jayme Black
by Erik Lindholm

AU: Where do you find yourself on this fine day? Set a scene for the reader:

Imagine, if you will, a place where there are recurring whirlpools in the midst of milk white walls, a waterfall commanded by the a wave of the hand with purifying lotions. Welcome to the toilet zone. (ominous music)

AU: What is your role with the band, both on and off stage?

I slappa da bass, shoot cheap talk on stage. Off stage I'm a songwriter, designer, tour booker, promoter, artist, lyricist, media coordinations, whiskey yōkai, poster dude, occasionally sound guy and manager (when things need to be managed), you know all around jack of all trades you might say!

AU: What has been most surprising to you about starting your band and launching into this particular rock 'n roll journey?

Well coming from past experiences and learning what isn't necessary, it's been a lot less stressful and more enjoyable than previous jaunts into rock n' roll. I'd say the most surprising thing was getting three misfits from three different bands and mindsets to get together and the immediate chemistry that happened. Some bands find it hard to write, we literally have to stop writing to focus on rehearsals and other business - hahaha

AU: For the uninitiated, what can be expected from a live show from Rebel Priest? The

hallmarks:

Benny doing his best Tasmanian Devil impersonation while trying not to break his knee again, Nate looking like Animal from the muppets with less red hair but just as furious, Me doing my best to show you my Adam's apple while sweating on my fretboard to get that funky slide sound.

Someone once said it was like if the Ramones, Motörhead, and Van Halen were in a Hell in the cell match.

AU: Tell us about the latest record "R'lyeh Heavy"! What was your mission with this release, and what were some themes you wanted to explore musically?

The obvious one is our love of sci-fi, fantasy and horror. The homage to our faves has been a recurring theme in the band, some nods more tongue in cheek but some more like a deer in the headlights. It was a wicked time recording with Cecil English (Nomeansno, DOA, SNFU ((RIP chi pig <3)), he was a genius in grabbing that early 70's raw sound, we did it all live off the floor so it sounds honest to what we were trying to do, album has been getting killer reviews and lots of buzz worldwide, took us to japan, but unfortunately because of COVID all our



tour support got suspended. Hoping to hit the road and get everyone a taste of R'lyeh Heavy soon!!

AU: Since COVID-19 virus has hit the world – how are you staying active, musically, creatively? Give us some of your tips!

Get as much art in as you can, you'll likely never get this much time off again, cheers to the front line workers for keeping the lights on, appreciate that they don't get this time and use it wisely! As for band stuff, first two/ three months were just solitary writing, once we got an appropriate situation dialed in we started rehearsing again and coming up with an attack plan for when this lifts. We have been working on our instruments making custom stuff, making more merch ideas, keeping in contact with people around the world and doing lots of press! Grind it out!

AU: How are you feeling your scene is holding up? We've seen people around the world adapting to "the new normal" with different degrees of success for sure.

I'm not sure I agree with "new" and "normal" being together haha

Growth and adapting to new environments is how we survive, normal is stagnation to me, and new is just tomorrow. With that said I think the scene is doing well as ever and when shows are in full swing people will know what they missed and pack the venues! It's really given people time to reflect on important issues and address them with 100% and I love that. Clear minds create change and I'm stoked on the new open eyes and getting to the bottom of the rot in our society's.

AU: A classic album in your collection, that should be in everyone's collection, is this:

George Michael - Faith

AU: Last words to the rock n' rollers reading

SLICE OF SLEAZE



this magazine:

Keep them freak flags a flyin'! Don't let em keep ya down!

When in doubt, look to Lemmy, there's an interview, quote, video for anything you might have a question for.

Haha seriously I've tried!

Shazbot Nanu Nanu

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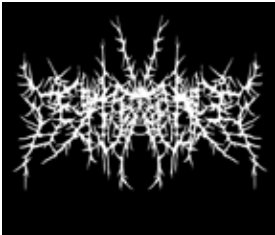


Needle Contaminated Pork

Brutal Death Metal's Answer to the Pandemic

By Ryan Dyer

COVID 19 has brutalized the music industry. For months now, gigs have been either postponed until next year or outright canceled. Clubs who relied on touring bands for revenue have been forced to close and artists, unable to tour, have had to resort to doing live streams instead of facing a crowd of people who are exchanging germs in a sweaty mosh pit.



Leave it to Japan, with its history of cutting edge concepts, to have a solution for the future. Enter Needle Contaminated Pork - "The World's Safest Death Metal Act," who

has been prepared for a pandemic of cataclysmic proportions since 2005.

At a concert last year in China as a part of the Brutal Fest series of shows, I bore witness to the vaccine needed to keep artists and concert attendees safe from deadly bacteria. The show opened with a cheery, bizarre ditty from a vintage Japanese cartoon. When it ended, a musician emerged from the backstage area and through the crowd. Bearing a gas mask and protective outfit, he stepped foot on stage, bellowed out an indecipherable growl, and began thrashing around his guitar like it was infested with microscopic bugs. The man pointed his guitar to a sickly looking lad headbanging in a Dying Fetus

shirt as if it were a syringe zoning in on a sick child. Out of the club's PA system, the riffs from his device were deafening enough to melt ear wax. Like the doctors in the hospitals around the world during the COVID 19 pandemic, Needle Contaminated Pork was suitably protected for the show, but like the doctors, there are some discomforts, "I just can't play for such a long time, or I'll suffocate."



The cold, stagnant environment of Niigata Japan was ground zero for the insemination of Needle Contaminated Pork. The unknown assailant was inspired by the bands Gorevent and Patisserie, who are both from Niigata. He explains, "With Gorevent, I noticed the importance of the groove in the music rather than the blast beat. As for being a solo act, it was the one-man goregrind project Patisserie, an American who started his activities in Niigata, which inspired Needle Contaminated Pork. I listened to his demo CD *Pathogenical Forensology*, and I felt unlimited possibilities were available to me. Being a one-man band is to be free. I can do what I want."

As for his stage costume, it bears a resemblance to the gun wielding government agents in the George Romero film *The Crazies*; Japan's history of incidents involving radiation such as the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident or even the events in Hiroshima during WWII could also inspire an outfit such as this, but the answer is

more grounded in the brutal death metal and grind scenes and his peers which share similar costumes. "I started putting on the gas mask and protective suits in 2007. I was actually inspired by Butcher ABC, a Japanese death metal band who were already wearing gas masks."

Being a one-man project has its advantages and setbacks, with song arrangements, creative freedom and self-made set times being an upside. "There are disadvantages of course. Making a song takes a lot of time, especially the drum programming, and for live shows, my vision is really narrow and I usually can't breathe."

Because his identity is kept under wraps, any side project announcements or additional work with other bands will forever be classified information. "If I play in another band, it will not be announced."

These days, since any upcoming shows have been canceled due to the ongoing pandemic, Needle Contaminated Pork can be safely listened to in the comfort of your own home with albums like 2017's *Early Porks* and 2014's *Impregnated Through Pathogenic Agony*. Granted, the proper way to experience the pork is during the frenetic live show. Being used to suiting up for live events, one could imagine a show in the future with both the musician and attendees wearing the protective suits



and masks. But don't try to remove his, "One time during a gig, I dove into the audience, and a drunk madman tried to remove my gas mask. I swung away. If I find him again, I will impale him."

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



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WALTER LURE The Last Heartbreaker

L.A.M.F. - Part 2

(continued from Absolute Underground #87)

interview by Ira Hunter and Jason Matthew Shane Maher



AU: What was the first gig you played with Johnny Thunders and the Heartbreakers?

Walter Lure: I joined in the spring or summer of 1975 or something like that. So we start rehearsing and then I do the first gig. I think the first gig was the fourth of July festival at CBGB in '75. So it was like a Thursday to a Sunday of all the new punk bands. So we'd been rehearsing, and that was a whole other story in itself, because you know when I got into the Heartbreakers, I'd heard rumours of course, but I realized that they were all junkies. So before we'd go to rehearsal we have to go to either Richard Hell's apartment down on the Lower East Side or someone else's apartment to load up on drugs, stuff like that. And of course I end up getting into it as well. Like an idiot, you know, but it was the drug du jour at the time. But they were still pretty much together back then. John didn't get the craving out of his mind and refused to play if he didn't have drugs. If he ran out of money he would still show up to rehearsal and play. Jerry as well. They liked to get high before the gigs but they didn't always do it and they were pretty much together. The drugs didn't really run their lives at that point, not until later on. But it was definitely getting worse.

So the first gig comes up at CBGB's fourth of July festival. On the Thursday night I played my last show with *The Demons* because they were getting another guitar player but they still needed someone to fill in for this gig. We went on at like one or two in the morning and there was like maybe 20 people in the audience. Then the next night was the first Heartbreakers show as a four piece, and when I got to the club I couldn't believe it, there were lines outside of the block. There were people in there hanging from the ceilings. I've never seen CBGB's that crowded before. I could barely make it through the audience to get to the backstage. John was with this guy, who I thought was the ugliest guy on earth, and he said "Oh hi, Walter. I want you to meet someone, this is Ace Frehley". And I'm thinking "Who the fuck is this monster?" His face looked all pockmarked and his skin looked like oatmeal. But I had never seen the guy without his makeup so I didn't know it was Ace Frehley from *KISS*. So anyway, the show went off like gangbusters. There were a zillion people in the place and they all loved it.

So literally overnight, I went from being in just another rock band in New York City to being in one of the best and biggest bands in New York, which at the time was our whole universe. It was the only place where new music was happening. So that's how I got in the band basically. I could go on for hours about that.

AU: So the one album you guys put out L.A.M.F. (Like A Mother Fucker) was released forty one years ago. What do you think it is about the album that keeps appealing to new fans generation after generation?

WL: I don't know actually, because when the album came out it was such a bad production. I guess it's the songs, they are just great rock songs, so it's still fun to play them to this day. I

mean not every song on the album is a big hit in my opinion but there are a lot of great songs. Between Chinese Rocks, One Track Mind, Born To Lose and stuff like that. They're all like great rock songs so it's amazing that I can still keep doing this shit, you know 40 years later and people are still paying to come to the show so it's cool for me.

AU: So you're touring and playing the L.A.M.F. album in its entirety?

WL: No, it's gonna be a little different. It'll have L.A.M.F. songs, but it's not going to be the whole album. Some stuff I just don't wanna be bothered playing anymore so I'm going to put in some later Heartbreakers stuff. It will be spiced up a little bit with some different stuff like a Slaughter & the Dogs song or two.

AU: Besides Mick Rossi of Slaughter & the Dogs who else will be with you?

WL: Well, it's Mick's band that he has out in L.A., it's not his original Slaughter & the Dogs, they're all in Britain I guess, but Mick lives in L.A. now.

AU: What are some of your fondest memories of Johnny Thunders and playing beside him in the Heartbreakers?

WL: There's a lot of wild memories. John was a character to play with, we used to like constantly making fun of each other on stage. Stuff like that. John was always good with a quick reply to sort of make me look stupid and I would do the same thing to him. We used to laugh at each other on stage, in front of the audience. But that was fun. Probably one of the best things, I have a book coming out and will explain it more in the book... But in the old days of rehearsal, John had a sister who lived out in Queens. At the time I was living in a house about five miles away from there in the next county, Nassau County. So for some reason I stayed over night one, because I had an apartment in Brooklyn Heights. But in any case, we met in the city for rehearsal and I had this bottle. I'd come across a bottle of pure quaalude powder. It was like a big bottle, it was about six or eight ounces of pure quaalude powder. I forget how I got it, but I got it somehow. So, I wasn't really into down and stuff like that, you know? Quaaludes are like sedatives. So I brought it to rehearsal and you know everyone wanted to try some. The taste of it was so bad you had to wrap it up with something. So of course the rehearsal lasts about ten minutes because everyone got stoned and was stumbling around. Anyways the rehearsal was in Manhattan but John ended up at his sister's house in Queens. He went out there with his girlfriend at the time. And as we were leaving rehearsal John had pulled me aside and said "What did you do with that bottle of quaalude powder?" I said "It's in my bag, why do you want some more?" He goes "No give me the bottle and I'll take it out and I'll sell it and I'll give you like a hundred bucks tomorrow" or something like that. And I said "Yeah, okay, why not?", so I forget how we got out to Queens from Manhattan. I dropped them off and went to my parents house or someone else dropped off, I think that's what happened. But anyway we were scheduled the next day to do a photo session, the first photo session for the band. So I ended up going out to pick Johnny up out in Douglaston, Queens. But I'm hearing that apparently John got into a big fight with his brother in law, blah blah blah, so he's all beat to shit. So it turned out John was stoned out of his mind - John was when he was on downs. He'd get really loud and obnoxious, stuff like that. So him and his girlfriend, went to his sister's house and he got so fucked up he started wrecking things, so his sister's husband was a big muscled truck driver, so he just beat the shit out of him and took the bottle and flushed what was left of it down the toilet. I went to pick John up for the photo shoot and his face is all like totally all black and blue and knocked out of shape, the eyes are all swollen up, there's lumps on the jaw.

So John said "oh we got to stop at my mother's house on the way into Manhattan for the photoshoot" the mother lived in Jackson Heights or Flushing or something like that. It was on the way back into Manhattan. So I said ok, we'll go there and John was a wreck but you know we're going to the

photo session. He still had his long hair from The Dolls days, so they could use that at the photo session to cover up all the lumps and bruises. You have to look really close to see the misshapen face. So we stop at his mother's house and I walk in with him. You know this is the first I've ever met her, he goes, "Wait here Walter I'll be back in a few minutes" and his mother's staring at me like I'm some sort of a murderer or something like that, she's looking at me with this scared look on her face. And I'm thinking what is that all about, but whatever. So John comes out and goes "okay let's go." It turns out he had told his mother that I was some big drug dealer and if he didn't get the money to pay me for the drugs, I was gonna kill him. So I'm going what the fuck is all this shit about. So John comes up in the car. He's got the money to pay me what he said he'd get me for the bottle, and he had got extra money out of his mother. So the first thing he does is go and get high somewhere, you know.

Then we go to the photo session and we go through it and he uses hair to cover up his face which looked like he's been hit with a bowling ball or something like that, it was awful. That was what I had to deal with with John because he would make up these stories. Even Jerry had asked me as we were leaving the rehearsal space "What did you do with that bottle?" and I goes "Oh I give to John, John said he was gonna go sell it" and Jerry goes "Are you fucking nuts? Never give Johnny anything, it'll be all gone in the morning he'll be dead!" So I had no idea. I just thought it was like normal people acting normally but little did I know. So that's the kind of things you got into with John, because John was like...he was crazy. I mean he could be a nice guy when he wanted but he was just like drug crazed. Especially towards the later years of life, he constantly had to be on some sort of drug. There'd be times, oh god, a couple times, where he was too fucked up before a show to get on stage. I remember once at the Irving Plaza he had gone up and down the line outside of the concert hall just asking people for drugs and they would give him whatever they had in their pocket, you know, pills or powder, you know and he'd just take it and eat, he was just fucking nuts. So of course by the time he's supposed to come out of the dressing room, he just collapses on the floor and there's like bubbles foaming out of his mouth, stuff like that. We thought shit, we're not gonna get on stage in this state and so we ended up going on stage without him. You know we go through a song or two and all of a sudden I see the little disturbance in the front of the audience and there is Johnny walking through the audience and he gets on stage and he plays. It was like, this happened like three or four times and he would never fail to make the



Photo by Amanda Lawrence

stage even if I thought I was going to be dead in the dressing room. It looked like he was dead. He had always managed to get on stage, we would make it through a song or two but he'd always show up somehow. There was once or twice when he was still so fucked up by the time he got to the stage that he couldn't even play and he was just standing and drooling and we had to pull the plug on his amplifier, he would just be playing the wrong song and stuff, but those were the exceptions, all the other times he would always manage to get on stage and play, which is an accomplishment for all the amount of drugs he'd be plowing through.

To Be Continued...



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The Getmines

Interview by AU Editorial

AU: Who are we talking with?

Cliff Thiessen: We are Dave, Mike and Cliff of The Getmines. And if you asked someone who's seen us play a show within the last couple years they would probably say, "Those are the dudes with the shiny jackets with the loud show."

AU: Give us a brief history of the band.

CT: We've been jammin together for like seven years. All have had or presently have other bands. The Getmines started kinda like a side project that was still standing strong when the honeymoon phase was over. Cliff and Dave used to frequent an afterhours boozecan in East Van and just thought it would be cool to play there. Each played in other bands, and neither wanted to play that late. So, we just decided to start a band in order to do it. Cliff mentioned he knew a kickass drummer, Mike, who played in some raucous bands back in the day. So, the three of us got in a jam space, clicked right away, had a few laughs, and the rest is history.

At the end of the day, we get along well and all like Pilsner, so here's to another seven!

AU: Who's in the band? What other bands have you guys been in? And what would their Tinder profiles say?

CT: I was in Man The Wolf a few years back. I joined We Hunt Buffalo to take over on bass and recorded the latest album with them, *Head Smashed In*. I have another side project, a band called Chunk I started a couple years back.

Mike Kott is our drummer and he was in a punk band called Hi-Test back in the day. He called the Piccadilly his home.

His tinder profile would probably just be a bunch of sleeveless shirt pictures of him wearing ridiculously big hats, doin the dude version of duck face while holding minimum one, and a maximum three Pilsners.

Dave Barroqueiro is our lead singer and guitar player. He has flirted with other bands, most notably as a replacement vocalist for The Electric Demons, but found his niche -- and got to play guitar -- with The Getmines. His guitar style has really shaped the band's flavour and this guy churns out riffs like it's the industrial revolution.

If I were to describe his Tinder profile, I'd imagine it would be immaculately written, with a good mix of classy Dave and greasy Dave pictures. I mean, this guy is an all around good time. That's not a line that would be in there... but he is!

AU: What are The Getmines all about?

CT: Pilsner, loud music, and giving it your all. If you aren't smiling, a little bruised, or hammered drunk by the end of our set, we aren't doing our job properly. We try not to be confined by genres or labels too much - it's rock n' roll at the end of the day, and that's supposed to be fun, however it comes out. Silly, but not stupid. Irreverent, but not aloof.

AU: What are some of the songs about?

CT: We sing about a wide variety of things, and it really runs the gamut. Sometimes we get a bit dark even... OK, maybe a lot dark. "Creepier" describes the simultaneous delight and torment of a Jekyll/Hyde type character; "Lookin' Cool" is a sneering critique of a social media-obsessed, quick-dopamine-hit culture, consumed more by the image than what lies beneath it, such that the sign becomes more real than the signified; "In the City" is about the alienation and temptation that underscore the urban existence; "Deeper Than Hell," where Cliff's and Dave's callback verses are separate, but complementary, is the inner monologue within the deteriorating mind of a once idealistic soldier. "Gapfiller" is literally about filling a gap.

Often we name the song before writing the lyrics. A whole story can come out of a song title and I enjoy letting it happen that way. Our songs evolve over time - seldom does one of us walk in with something pre-written, ready to go. It usually starts with a little riff or bassline we think is tasty, and we build out -- backwards and forwards -- from there. It's all very organic. Whole Foods ain't got shit.

AU: What style of music is it? Can you describe your sound, for those who've never heard you before?

CT: This will always be one of the toughest questions. Punk rock has been, and still is, a big influence for us, although we've all been captured by different eras and subgenres of it. And 80s metal, from glam to thrash, and everything in between. And stoner rock from the 90s, like Fu Manchu-kinda stuff.

It's as if Ratt, Kyuss and Thee Oh Sees had a gender neutral baby, and their favourite band is Green River or Slow, or something.

AU: What else does 2020 have in store for you guys since Covid fucked the world?

CT: Well we're still jammin' every week so we keep writing songs and keeping everything fresh. Sure miss playing shows, but when we finally get to play again our setlist is gonna be so dang polished!

AU: What do you remember about the last show you played before Covid hit?

CT: I remember it was extremely close to complete lockdown around the world and not many people showed up... haha.

AU: Any stories or thoughts to share about the recent passing of SNFU's Mr. Chi Pig?

CT: I've seen him around and heard many stories but didn't know him personally. It's a shame for sure and he's been a big impact on a ton of people. A big piece of the very deep history of punk in Vancouver.

DB: I would see him around all the time back at the old Cobalt, and chatted with him a couple of times -- a sweet guy. Undoubtedly talented as an artist and entertainer, and a huge influence on kids in Vancouver, Edmonton and way beyond. He'll be missed."

AU: What's the state of the current state of music in Vancouver? Who are the other wicked bands in town?

CT: Well that's a bit tough at the moment, but there's tons of talent in the local scene. There always has been really. Music in Vancouver is doing fine; there's a creative energy about the city that just breeds it. Having places to play in a city that is becoming increasingly out-of-touch with its spirit, not as much -- but the music never ceases in Vancouver -- it just moves. The Fomites are a band everyone needs to check out for sure. Great dudes, great



band.

AU: What else should we know about you that we don't already? What don't you want your mother to know?

CT: All the deep and dirty stuff comes out at shows, I would not want my mother at a Getmines show. But all mothers are welcome.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

CT: Thanks for reading! When the time comes for it to be safe to be back out watching live music, make sure you do it. We hope, if anything positive can come out of a shitstorm pandemic, it's an appreciation of the incomparable buzz that comes from going to a kickass show. Support local musicians!

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Here We Go Again: Reynolds Rocks with Pink Steel

Interview: Jason Flower



Members

Peter Campbell: Vocals

Jeff Carter: Keyboards/piano

Jim Mazerolle: Guitar and vocals

Dave Robbins: Drums

John Robbins: Vocals

Tim Russell: Bass

Dean Shea: Guitar



Absolute Underground: Who instigated Pink Steel, and why did the band grow to have so many members?

Pete: Though the band was ostensibly started after a night of pot-fuelled improvisation, Pink Steel's aesthetic was founded upon some basic premises that just happened to resonate with certain aspects of punk rock. All the founding members were involved in the drama department of Reynolds Senior Secondary School in Victoria. Tony Burton, the head of the drama department, was a mentor and a source of inspiration – he always insisted we give our all to any endeavour.

Jeff: Pete, Ian Muir and I decided to follow through on the improvisation-fuelled band concept and had a jam session on a Saturday afternoon in early October 1978. I had taken piano lessons in grade school, and both Pete and Ian had just that week rented a guitar and bass respectively, yet they had absolutely no experience playing them. Still, the afternoon produced a two-chord song, "We Get High on Music." This song began with a "sex and drugs and rock n' roll" refrain that had nothing to do with Ian Dury – someone we had never heard of – but rather was a phrase I had overheard in the high school hallways.

At the end of the school year, we moved to the



rather small and rocky unfinished basement at Jim Mazerolle's house. Ian had fallen into some difficulties, and his forced absence proved fortuitous as Chel – a somewhat older local mailman who was also a bass player – sat in for a few weeks and assisted our rapid improvements. In mid-August 1979, with Ian back, we recorded our entire eight-song set onto a 1/4" two-track reel-to-reel recorder for our first demo tape.

A few months later, after a friend had taken the demo to a local music promoter/booking agency, we performed an audition of sorts in the late afternoon in someone's living room. The agency folks sat on the couch and were bemused. We were at that time playing house parties, often uninvited.

The Victoria scene takes off

Jeff: It happened very quickly. We played with Infamous Scientists for the first time Labour Day weekend 1980, and the audience was mostly friends from high school. That December we teamed up for shows at the downtown roller rink and, a few nights later, the first show at the Norway House, where we saw a lot of new faces, and it became evident there was probably a fair number of like-minded young persons scattered across the city. A month later, a multi-band show held at the OAP Hall presented exactly that. The Victoria punk rock/new wave scene was created by and experienced by an eclectic mix of teens and even pre-teens.

I remember the March 7, 1981 gig at the Ray Ellis Dance Studio as being the touchstone event, even though Pink Steel was not part of the lineup (it featured Twisted Minds, Infamous Scientists, and the Neos). I had the distinct impression of being one of the older members of the audience, yet I was just 19 at the time. If the recognition of like-minded strangers was tentative in December/January, at this show it appeared as a full-fledged active subculture.

Pete: The show at the Norway House (December 23, 1980) was one of the first hall gigs in Victoria. We were all too young to rent the space so my brother Gord stepped up and signed the papers. I walked into the hall mid-set, just as the Scientists hit their stride. The joint was packed with kids pogoing exuberantly, going nuts really.

The EP – A Taste of Pink Steel

Pete: I read all about a Victoria new wave band called Easy Money and their self-produced debut single "Getting Lost / High Fashion." The A-side was super-catchy, a great song by any measure. The members were in their mid- to late 20s, fine musicians and good singers who really knew what they were doing. When I read that article I immediately thought, "We should do that."

After playing a multi-band gig at the OAP Hall, I tracked down Easy Money's lead guitarist Rob Lifton and peppered him with questions about the record. Where did they record it? Where did they get it pressed? Would he be interested in helping Pink Steel record some songs? Rob came to our jam space and listened to our tunes. He then agreed to help us produce a four-song EP. He explained how recording was usually done. There were "bed tracks" where the basic rhythm instruments were recorded all at once, live off the floor in the same room. After that, vocals, lead guitar and, in our case, piano were added as "overdubs." This was all completely new to us but we took the ball and ran with it.

Tony Moskal ran Legacy Studios where Easy Money had recorded its first record and Pink Steel would do the same. Tony played in a band called Stack with his sister. They were a costumed, makeup-wearing band something along the lines of Kiss. I believe they once played at one of our high school dances. He had a fully equipped studio and seemed to know how all the gear worked. Recording day arrived and we were very amped and ready to rock. We recorded the bed tracks in one or two takes each; all of our practice had paid off. The record sleeve was also an in-house affair. John Robbins was quite a good artist and did the drawing on the front. Jeff was involved in the graphics department at Reynolds and knew how to use Letraset so he did the lettering. A couple of months later, after getting the lacquer master made at IRC, a Christian

record-pressing place in Vancouver, Pink Steel had a four-song 7" EP. We thought that was pretty fucking cool.

"Won't Come in Your Hand"

Jeff: "Won't Come in Your Hand" was in fact a very early Pink Steel song with a long gestation. I maintain that "it won't come in your hand" was another phrase overheard in the high school hallways, and it meant something like "rewards don't arrive automatically." The lyrics transferred to paper very quickly, in one frantic spurt so to speak. Jim volunteered to add music, maybe his first composition for the band, and he introduced it to everyone on his acoustic guitar as we lounged in his backyard during a rehearsal break two years earlier in July 1979. It was strange and loopy, kind of wondrous actually, but it took a long time before the band was capable of actually performing it.

This second 7" represents Pink Steel at its best, I believe. This is crystallized by the contrasting lead guitar parts in both songs (with Dean playing "Won't Come in Your Hand" and Jim playing "Some of the Things that You Do"). They are very different in approach but completely organic within the respective songs, representing the diverse approaches we always took. Our recordings are something of an anomaly in that they are consistently good. Outside the studio, Pink Steel was a bit unwieldy and could easily veer from very good to kind of bad, sometimes in the same song. We were comfortable with that.

AU: Was Pink Steel punk?

Pete: Pink Steel never did don any of the fashion elements associated with the punk movement. Not that we didn't love the music. As with most kids my age, one listen to the first Clash record or DOA single made most of my pre-punk record collection immediately obsolete.

Jeff had raved to me about the Clash early in 1979, while we were still in high school. A couple months later I bought their second album, *Give 'em Enough Rope*, and played it a few times, thinking it was pretty good but it didn't blow my mind or anything. One night, my friend Derek Berthiaume and I were hanging out, smoking some pot and listening to some tunes. My dad was a musician and a bit of an audiophile so we had this cabinet stereo system that had great sound. I put on my new Clash record. After a few tracks, Derek looked at me, walked over to the stereo and cranked the volume with this admonition: "You don't listen to this record like that ... you listen to it like THIS!" The opening chords and snare drum blasts of "Tommy Gun" shook the room and shook me to my core. I was sold. The search for records by bands like the Sex Pistols, Buzzcocks and the Ramones soon consumed most Saturday afternoons. My friend Mark Beaudoin was totally into the bands coming out of the Vancouver punk scene. He insisted DOA was the greatest band on the planet. After listening to their records and seeing them play live it was very difficult to argue that he was in any way incorrect. The great Vancouver bands like the Subhumans and the Young Canadians just seemed to me like superior rock bands. They rocked harder, had more energy and their songs were on a completely different level than what we were used to hearing on the radio.

Authenticity and being true to yourself seemed to be a theme of many of the songs that I related to the most. After a while, I was pretty punk rock on the inside, or at least I thought I was. So why didn't I put on some ripped jeans and safety pins, and spike my hair? Why didn't any of the other members of Pink Steel don the punk-rock uniform that would show our allegiance to the "movement"? I can only speak for myself, but a lot of the reason had to do with my background in theatre. Actors wore costumes. Being a poser was the worst insult you could call a wanna-be punk rocker. Dressing punk would've felt like putting on a costume. And this whole new world of art and music was way too important to me for that.

Controlled collapse: The beginning of the end

Jeff: By the summer of 1982 I figured we had played out our string, and that Jim Mazerolle's new *James Jazz* demo was more dynamic than anything Pink Steel could've mustered. Saying that, it felt like Pink Steel had experienced a full



lifecycle – from the crude enthusiasms by which we began, through developing a huge sound, the recordings, the participation in the burgeoning Victoria scene, and then organically moving into a definite late or mature phase with softer, quirkiest and perhaps more self-conscious material.

Pete: Jeff and Dave would soon leave the band to study in different cities, but not before Pink Steel went into the studio to record one last song. During that period, Jim's songwriting reached full bloom. He showed up at pretty much every jam with a new song or two. They were quirky, they were catchy, they rocked, and they popped. His lyrical voice was fully developed and singular.

Dean had won a studio raffle at a party, so we got a chance to get one more Pink Steel tune down on tape. We decided to record one of Jim's best new songs, which we did on April 25, 1982.

Saying goodnight to Pink Steel

Listening to it now, "Say Goodnight," sounds exactly like what it is: mature Pink Steel. On some days, "Say Goodnight," is my favourite Pink Steel recording. But it was too little too late. We played a few gigs, including the Alandhiscar Christmas Party at the F.O.E. Hall on December 22, 1982.

Pete: I can't even recall where we played the final Pink Steel show (January 1983). I just remember it being a very uninspired set. Onstage, I announced that Pink Steel was over and mentioned that John and I were starting a new band and were looking for a drummer. Later that night, a familiar face walked up to me and said he wanted to jam with us. It was Murray Jackson, the original Infamous Scientists drummer. He would also be the first drummer for the Wardells.

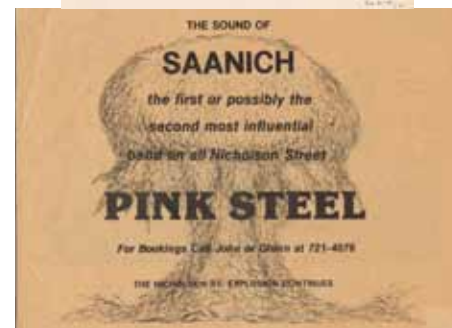
R.I.P. John Robbins, 1961–1999

"our city is in ruins"

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Help the Victoria Cannabis Buyers Club get an Exemption

In an attempt to gain an exemption from Health Canada, the Victoria Cannabis Buyers Club needs letters of support from individuals and organizations. This exemption, whether granted by Health Canada or the courts, will hopefully allow the club to transition its retail and processing facilities into the legal system without compromising the quality and prices the nonprofit society has offered for years. Given all of the pressures and complexities of the situation there seems no other way for the organization, and its members that depend on it, to survive.

After being raided by the Community Safety Unit in November 2019, the VCBC received the full support of city council to obtain an exemption from the province. Instead of responding to the mayor and council, the CSU raided the club again eight months later on July 15, seizing a substantial amount of medicine. Fines and other punitive measures are expected to follow, as the province is intent on shutting down the so-called black market to make room for profit driven recreational stores.

We now need help collecting persuasive patient testimonials, getting written support from politicians of all levels of government, organizing affidavits from expert witnesses from various scientific and academic fields, obtaining evidence from those working in the cannabis industry about the difficulties inherent in the legal medical and recreational cannabis schemes, and convince other non-profit societies to give their support in a letter.

Letters of support from members should include the following information:



Photo Credit: Matt Love Photography

- A: Medical history
- B: History of cannabis use
- C: Relationship with club, when you became a member
- D: Benefits of club compared to "black market"
- E: Benefits of club compared to legal market
- F: Immediate impact if club is shut down

Efforts to obtain letters of support for an exemption from Health Canada will also be sought from many politicians and political entities. Certainly we expect our mayor and council to follow up with another letter of support to the federal government, and we will be hounding those politicians who have verbally supported us but not yet put anything in writing. Letters from politicians in opposition parties will also be sought along with elected officials.

There is a wide range of expert evidence we will require to provide a solid foundation of information upon which to argue for an exemption. This includes experts in cannabis and cannabinoids, economics, constitutional law and poverty-related issues. Luckily the cannabis community has cultivated relationships with many expert witnesses in cases like the recent Howell decision but we will also seek others not asked to be involved in this fight before.

Obtaining evidence from individuals that have worked within the legal system in various aspects will be a critical aspect of our proposal.

Documenting many of the flaws as seen from people attempting to work within the restrictive Health Canada regulations will assist the courts, if it comes to that, in understanding how problematic the regulations are from every perspective. Diving into problems inherent in the fledgling legal system will highlight why our club would go bankrupt attempting to immediately fully comply and how patients would be forced to deal with fewer options of lower quality products at higher prices.

Finally, we will be seeking the assistance of other non-profit organizations that serve our membership in other aspects. We will be seeking help from a variety of agencies, from local organizations that help the poor and marginalized, to national advocacy organizations. Hearing from the broader community that helps people struggling with addictions, disease and poverty will give Health Canada and the courts a better context for why we need to continue working as the legal cannabis system evolves.

We need help to complete this task. Many members are unable to write their story in a way that clearly articulates their issues, are too old to use a computer, or may have physical reasons they cannot use a computer. It would be very helpful if those with excellent writing skills were able to help out those who may have stories that are particularly relevant but cannot write themselves.

Convincing insiders in the cannabis industry to write in support will be critical. Some that have been frustrated with the systematic failures within Health Canada's programs will be reluctant to

express their experiences on paper for fear of repercussions but others will be happy to explain the nuances of the problems they have experienced. Collecting stories of individuals and businesses that have suffered unnecessary, and at times devastating, restrictions, delays and sudden hurdles from the legal medical and recreational schemes will highlight many of the reasons why attempting to comply with the law would have resulted in the ruin of our compassion club and the demise of our patients.

It will take an extraordinary effort from members and staff to get support letters from agencies like AIDS Vancouver Island, the Action Committee for People with Disabilities and Together Against Poverty. These organizations and others like them will only provide us assistance if our mutual members pressure them into taking action. Getting these letters will be the most difficult but they are critical if we hope to provide the full context for the reasons we need an exemption.

Please let us know if you are part of an organization that might be able to assist us so we can combine our efforts.

This is a daunting task. After getting all of these letters, Health Canada might still turn down our exemption request and we will be forced to take them to court. However, the better we do now the more difficult it will be for the government to reject us and the more prepared we will be for court, which is the most likely outcome.

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Entropy

Thrash legends Entropy's new album "Force Convergence" with vocalist Ger Schreiner and guitarist Danny Lauzon.



AU: For those unfamiliar with Entropy, give us some background on you guys.

Ger: I formed ENTROPY with Dan Lauzon in Toronto, in the late 1980s. I was just fired from the band Assailant, which was a new offspring of the band Savage Steel. I was frustrated with writer's block at the time. When I met Danny, he cured that instantly. The musical chemistry was intense, and amazing. The songs flowed like wildfire. So here we are, 30 years later, with "Force Convergence". It's our best ENTROPY album yet, the band can still BRING IT, ha ha.

AU: You describe your sound as Story Driven, Progressive Thrash Metal. What can fans expect on "Force Convergence"?

Ger: Those that have heard it already all say they love it. No negative feedback at all so far. The love for this album so far is amazing,



and I am grateful. This is the album everyone wanted after our 1992 debut "Ashen Existence".

AU: What kind of listening experience are you trying to give fans with this album?

Ger: It's a concept album, a story. Definitely a cinematic type experience, lyrically and in my mind's eye. I wanted to bring metal fans a sci-fi horror experience with the album story. The lyrical inspiration is from bands like Rush, Queensrÿche, Voivod, Iron Maiden, and also from films like Aliens, Predator, War Of The Worlds, Independence Day, Invasion Of The Body Snatchers. There is also a sprinkle of war scene themes throughout the story, like Apocalypse Now, Platoon, and Starship Troopers, mixed in for fun.

AU: How was the writing process for "Force Convergence"?

Ger: Danny writes the songs as guitar music structures. I write the lyrics and vocal lines. Our bass player Oscar contributed a beautiful classical guitar intro to start the album, and wove his creative bass lines throughout the songs. Blake composed all his own drum parts; his playing on this album is brutal and elegant at the same time.

AU: As metal veterans, what other bands can fans recognize members from?

Ger: Danny plays with E-Force with Eric Forrest ex-Voivod. Oscar played with Annihilator, and plays guitar in Operus. Blake plays with Your Last Wish and Hollow, in Quebec.

AU: How did you decide on the tracks for this album?

Dan: This album was born in my basement with

Blake and hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of jams and hangs. Like most guitarists I know...I am a riff pack rat. Every jam gets recorded. Playing with Blake is effortless; it's like he gets my guitar speak even though he smashes things haha. The 1st two tunes written were Ripzone and Force Convergence.

AU: What can people expect from you live?

Dan: This is the best Entropy since the early 90's. The band is tight as fuck and the contributions Blakey and Oscar bring are quite noticeable. We have always been known to have a high energy show. We are having a blast and it shows.

AU: How would you describe the evolution of the band's sound over your 30 years?

Ger: I don't see the compositions as evolutionary. Each album stands alone as its own body of work.

TORONTO TRASH

All four ENTROPY albums sound completely different.

AU: Any last words...

Dan: Force Convergence is a 30 minute metal rip-ride! It's a fun album that flows with power, melody, aggressiveness and meaning. Like any great album or film, it has a complete story with a beginning, middle, and satisfying ending.

www.entropy-metal.com

Entropy's new album "Force Convergence" drops August 28, 2020 and available on CD at www.entropy-metal.com/ and all digital platforms.

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Sexy Old Guys

Iron Throne

Micawberism

DAFA Club, Tianjin China, August 9, 2020

Absolute Live Review

Due to the ongoing pandemic ravaging the



live music scene around the world, I am betting this may be the only live review for this issue of Absolute Underground. Since China has pretty much gone back to normal after grabbing the coronavirus by the throat in the early months of the outbreak, live shows have started again and Sexy Old Guys is something I needed to cleanse the palate- a two man slam outfit set to pulverize any last traces of a cheeky virus.

Before they could do that, though, the fans piled into the small, punk decorated shipping container known as DAFA Club. Short for Drunk At Friday Afternoon, it is the go-to punk and metal venue in Tianjin. Some wore face masks as it is still the custom to wear them outside even though the level of emergency was at a low point.



Since the pandemic began, new bands have formed out of boredom and already existing bands have

altered their sound or switched members. A new band were openers Micawberism, who play a type of emo punk. Their singer is Japanese, who struggled speaking Mandarin to the Chinese crowd in between songs. Iron Throne, who originally played a heavy folk style of Chinese metal played next. The band has somewhat changed their sound, adding slam dynamics while keeping folk elements for certain tracks. This change in sound pleased the blood thirsty death metal and slam fans in the audience, who helped squeal into the microphone at opportune times.



Sexy Old Guys are actually two young guys. Finding information on them in English is impossible, so this review will be the first printed about them in English. Their name in Chinese actually translates to "old man back scratcher", so take that as you will. A vocalist and guitarist, they play a groove oriented form of slam accompanied by electronic drums. While the sound is brutal, the drums sounded muffled on the venues speakers and a live drummer would benefit their show immensely.

Hopefully this sets a precedent for things to come in China. As for the rest of the world - the bands in your city are no doubt itching to get back out there, so whenever shows begin again, make sure to go out and support them.

- Ryan Dyer

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the SLACKERS

interview by Chuck Andrews & Esther Wurley

Absolute Underground: Why as a ska band, have you chosen to be on a typically street punk label like Pirates Press, same as when you were on Hellcat?

David Hillyard: Because they also love reggae. They are fans of what we do as a band. And they are trying to do righteous things in an unforgiving world. It's similar to Hellcat, it's an alliance more than a record deal. We believe in each other and thus work well together.

AU: Would you re-release any Nods stuff now that you're on Pirates Press?

DH: The Nods was a label that got put on early Slackers stuff when the Hellcat stuff came out. Never really existed as a separate entity before that. Never say never, but.. it's not a priority/ the whole point of being on a label is that they get you on a deeper level... it's beyond style. It's about substance.

AU: Would you release any more Slackers back catalogue on Pirates Press (*Wasted Days*, *wink wink*)

DH: We did *wasted days* around six years ago. So this copy just went out of circulation. I would say *Close My Eyes* is a more likely candidate. Especially because we have found more tracks from that era from the dat archives.

AU: What brought about the cover of The Nods classic, "*Sleep Outside*"?

DH: It's a Slackers song. Like I said, Nods was never the real name. Vic saw the homeless situation. We all have. It's been growing and growing since we were kids. And the last 10 years have been awful.



He felt some of the lyrics were poignant and needed to be said again.

AU: You released a brand new song along with "*Sleep Outside*" called "*Nobody's Listening*." is this a hint that a new full length is about to be dropped considering you've just been signed to a new label? If so, what can we expect? Classic Slackers, or have you changed anything up in terms of your sound / style?

DH: Right now we are just doing singles. The next one comes out in October. After the election we will see if there is an America worth staying in and releasing records in.

AU: How did the Victoria Ska Reggae Fest online show come about? How did Dane get that off the ground for you guys? Have you felt that online gigs have been well received?

DH: Dane had a little budget for us to film some music. We are lucky we have had five of six band members living close enough geographically that we can play together.

So once we have been able to do band events we started doing it. Before that we have done individual and duo livestreams. It takes a lot of preparation. You have deal with the latency between the camera images and the sound.

PIRATES PRESS RECORDS

That being said, the two livestream gigs we have done have been close to the energy of a live gig.

AU: What are your hopes for the future of live music? Do you think it will go back to basement shows and sort of DIY punk roots and regrow from there?

DH: I don't really have much hope right now. I'm hustling. I'm fighting. But until we get to the other side of our political and medical crises, not much is gonna happen. Live Nation got a

bunch of money from the Saudis. So they are gonna survive. In terms of the rest of us, who knows? DIY is what I've done for decades. It's fun to play. You don't got to "get paid" all the time. But if you aren't getting paid enough over time, then you can't tour.

AU: What is the future of live music venues looking like in New York?

DH: Bleak. There is nothing major going on. Barely any outdoor gigs. When it gets cold again... gonna be rough.

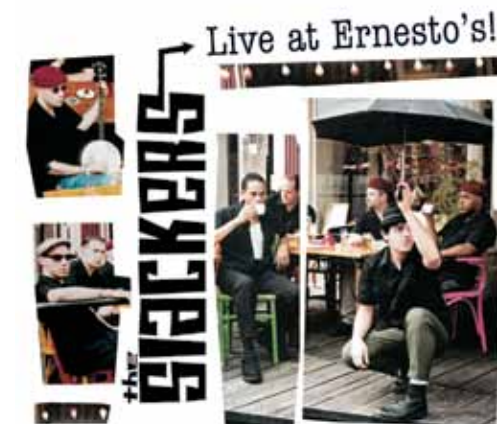
AU: What are some of your favourite Canadian ska bands?

D: Jory Kinjo and The Relays. King Apparatus. Danny Rebel.

AU: How many straight years have you been touring for, with the exception of 2020?

DH: 15 years of 100 gigs or more per year. I've been touring regularly since 1988, so 32 years.

www.theslackers.com
piratespressrecords.com



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Matthew Bishop
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Orrie Tetoga Palesau
July 3, 1988 - March 31, 2019



Brendan Sloan
April 9, 1986 - July 18, 2018



Vic Horvath
August 26, 1991 - August 18, 2018



Sean C. Dowdeswell
December 13, 1984 - August 5, 2020



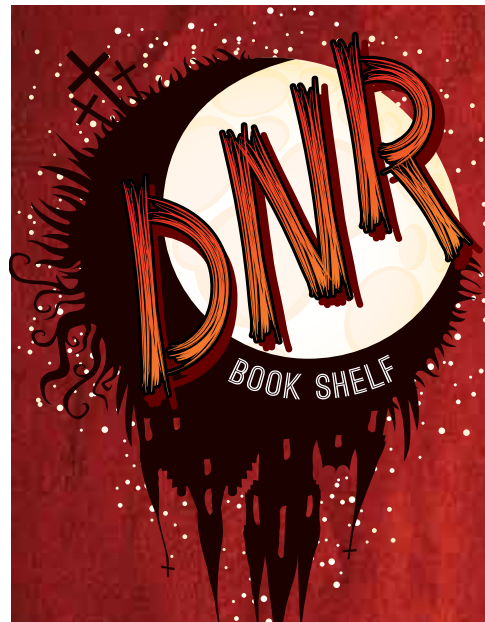
Daniel Kingsbury
February 18, 1987 - June 1, 2015

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DARK ASSEMBLY



Aron Beauregard
Independent
June 10th, 2020

I've been reading Aron's work now for a little bit, and this has to be the best selection of short stories that he's put out so far. Aron's stories have always read, to me, like a collection of Tales from the Crypt, if the Crypt Keeper was about 10 times more hardcore and there were no limits in what he could weave into his stories.

The following stories are included in this novel:

"The Baptism" - An incredibly bleak look at postpartum depression

"Population Control" - An ingenious way of eliminating the scum from our society

"Rotten Eggs" - Devil's Night has never been this depraved

"Some Girl" - One of the strongest stories in the collection involving a very nasty case of the worms

"The Procurement of Purity" - A different take on fatal attraction

"Last Days in Honduras" - In my opinion, this is the strongest selection in this collection. There should be a strong trigger warning going in here. If you're the type of person that gets offended and needs their horror to fall in between definable limits, then don't read this story.

In my opinion, there wasn't a weak story in this collection. I had so much trouble putting it down that I read it in about a day and a half. I'm also happy to see that Aron has several projects that he's hoping to release in the near future because these have become a bit of a guilty pleasure for me.

Michael Cushing

THE MAGPIE COFFIN



by Wile E. Young
Death's Head Press
March 23rd 2020

Not the first horror-western mash-up I've ever read, but definitely the most graphic! Considered splatter western, this one is the first in its series of 10 by DHP. Absolutely beautiful cover

art by the talented Justin T. Coons.

Taking place in 1875, the focus is on our nihilistic and violent main character, Salem Covington nicknamed "The Black Magpie." His mentor, a Comanche shaman, DeadBear has been murdered and Salem is very busy carving a bloody trail of vengeance across the western territories with the preserved DeadBear in tow, finding and murdering each man responsible in horrible and hideously creative ways, most described in great detail. The dialogue is incredibly entertaining bringing to mind spaghetti westerns and B-movies, with the backbone of one hell of a revenge story. Easy to churn through because it's so damn entertaining, fast paced and brutal. In between the heavy duty, we also get incredible snippets of reflection where we get to know Salem and his ride-along, an old army scout Jake Howe. The two, hard and soft, balance well. A bloody revenge ballad that I can't wait to read more of this sure to be epic series.

Demonika

MOTHER MAGGOT



Simon McHardy
Amazon/Independent
February 26th 2020

A solid 4.5/5. What a fun, fucked up adventure! Sick, twisted, disturbing content that I thoroughly enjoyed. This one has it all! It made me cringe, hard. I gagged, I laughed, I wondered what was wrong with me for liking it. The characters were wild, the plot was unique, and the ending was great too. I devoured this story like Mother Maggot devours cock! Definitely grab this one if you are a fan of extreme horror, along the lines of Matt Shaw & Edward Lee. This is up there!

Vicki Gray

BABA LENKA



Sarah England
Independent
JUNE 8, 2020

How do you write a review for a story that you really don't want to talk about, but just want people to read? This is one of those novels that if you really do study and

believe in the pccult and what goes on in the shadows, away from the eyes of the general public, you will absolutely love it. Personally, I think this is Sarah England's strongest novel to date.

It concerns a family curse that spans across generations. The story starts in an icy Bavarian village during the funeral of Baba Lenka, Eva Hart's grandmother. The story is shown mainly from two different viewpoints. Baba Lenka's, which occurs in Germany during the 1930s, leading up to World War Two, and Eva's, which takes place during the 1970s / 1980s in England.

If you are educated in the occult, demonic possession, satanic rituals, and its acolytes, then this novel will hit you over the head again and again. Sarah gets it right on just about every point. It honestly left me cold and numb because I've experienced and seen this world. What happens here has been very carefully researched and documented. It's a home run for me and will be on my list of Top 10 favorite horror novels.

Michael Cushing

THE SOUTHERN BOOK CLUB'S GUIDE TO SLAYING VAMPIRES



Grady Hendrix
Quirk Books
April 7th 2020

New this spring, it hit the horror shelves with vengeance and was on everyone's to-read list. It seemed like horror book fans wouldn't shut up about this one, and I see why. A super easy, exciting read even at 400 pages, and I have to comment on the coffin and floral print design on the inside of the hardcover, beautiful book by Quirk.

This book stole my heart because it takes place in the 90s, in suburbia and is so clearly characterized and illustrated in that era. We see a diverse group of well-to-do southern super housewives who create a book club that focuses on trashy true crime and thriller books to give the ladies some inspiration in the daily grind of taking care of it all, including our main character Patricia Campbell, whose life is particularly difficult in also caring for her live in, elderly mother-in-law. Wishing for titillation, they of course get more than they bargain for. James Harris arrives on scene and the roller coaster begins its ascent into the hearts and wallets of the community. Strange things begin to happen and Patricia, along with her cohorts, begin to put it together all the while being constantly shut down by the husbands. While being light hearted, it still manages to tackle socio-economic divides, gender roles, under-appreciation, sexism and much more. The clash of the women vs. the men, and vs. James Harris is astonishing and if you have ever wondered if a housewife could take on a vampire, here is your answer. 100% yes, they know how to get blood out of white carpet.

Demonika

WARM, DARK PLACES ARE BEST

Mike Duke



Amazon/Independent
March 27th 2017

This book came highly recommended, and why? I'm not sure, but I'm guessing people wanted to support an indie author and that is where a lot of the high ratings came from. One star at best for me. There

was no meat to the story, it was very rushed along and badly written. The climax didn't even seem like a climax - it started to get there but then it dropped. It just wasn't done right. It makes me wonder if his other books are worth reading. I don't think I will waste my money finding out.

Vicki Gray

'EVERYBODY IS A BOOK OF BLOOD: WHEREVER WE'RE OPENED, WE'RE RED.'
CLIVE BARKER, BOOKS OF BLOOD: VOLUMES ONE TO THREE

Submit your inquires or reviews to:
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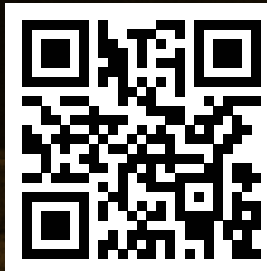
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U.S. IMPORTS

Bootblack - The Jealous Star

By Ed Sum

Bootblack's new single "The Jealous Star" is set to not only appear in their fourth album, *Thin Skies*, out October 9th on Artoffact Records, but is now available to stream!

It can be found over at <http://orcd.co/jealousStar> and for those anxious for a full trip into the cosmos, fans can prepare to get on board at <https://bootblacks.bandcamp.com/album/thin-skies>

Bootblack's hometown of New York City is integral to *Thin Skies'* sound. The band's name itself is said to be derived from novelist William Burroughs' description of the dark underbelly of glitzy NYC. Vocalist Panther Almqvist states: "It's an energetic city and people have all the reasons in the world not to give you the time of day. I think our music has been shaped by that in many ways."

"I was fascinated with this tradition of the wanderer's poem, like "Ozymandias." I wanted to contribute my own version to this theme, the eternal traveler, the rolling stone. In the last couple of years I experienced that dichotomy, alone on the road, anxious at home. So "The Jealous Star" is about the disorientation of travel. How it forces you to live outside of yourself and makes you appreciate the places and people you leave."

Thin Skies, Bootblack's first album for Artoffact Records, zooms forward where its predecessor, *Fragments*, left off. The nine songs combine a driving, dancefloor pulse with soulful, melodic post-punk, yielding results that are positively anthemic.

Produced by Jason Corbett of Artoffact



labelmates ACTORS, *Thin Skies* evokes scenes of dark days and reckless nights in the urban jungle – a marriage of post-punk emotion and clubland sweat. Panther Almqvist's brooding voice captivates as it veers from detached cool to deep vulnerability. Guitarist Alli Gorman's hard jangle "channels the trademark delay techniques of [U2's] The Edge," in the words of Post-Punk.com. Keyboardist Barrett Hiatt's arpeggiated synths are the life force pushing the songs relentlessly forward, as Larry Gorman bashes a mix of acoustic and electronic drums with power and perfection. Backing vocals come courtesy of Shannon Hemmett (ACTORS) and Kennedy Ashlyn (SRSQ, Them Are Us Too).

Tracklist:

- 1) Traveling Light (feat. Shannon Hemmett of ACTORS)
- 2) The Jealous Star
- 3) Thin Skies
- 4) Hidden Things
- 5) Parallel
- 6) Nostalgia Void
- 7) Brouhaha
- 8) New Lines (feat. Kennedy Ashlyn of SRSQ)
- 9) Inextinguishable

Dead Quiet - Truth and Ruin

By Ed Sum



Be prepared for some *Truth and Ruin* by Dead Quiet this September! Not only is their single "Partial Darkness" streaming on all major platforms, like Invisible Oranges (<https://www.invisibleoranges.com/dead-quiet-partial-darkness>) but also fans can pre-order the album at <https://deadquiet.bandcamp.com/album/truth-and-ruin>

Dead Quiet frontman Kevin Keegan says: "Partial Darkness" was a term I used to describe a period in life that was superficially prosperous and productive but in reality was quite bleak. Behind the scenes, paranoia and distrust can manifest themselves in destructive ways.

But, always trust your instincts. People are capable of completely ruining your life. Don't let them."

From Vancouver, Canada, Dead Quiet delivers arena-ready, proto-metal bacchanal with power and flair. Dead Quiet's dramatic, organ-heavy songs are saturated with respect for the hard rock and heavy metal titans of the late 70s and early 80s – there are

traces of blazing Deep Purple jams and hellbent Judas Priest bangers – but the band rocks with a prowess all its own. Dead Quiet respects its elders while fully owning its own craft. It is a fine balance, which brings to mind Ghost, among others.

Vocalist Kevin Keegan, formerly of Metal Blade band Barn Burner, has range and charisma in spades – in 2018, Metal Hammer declared that he might be "The next great stoner rock visionary." In league with Keegan are guitarist Brock MacInnes, also of Ancients, newest member Mike Rosen on keyboards, and the rhythm section of bassist Mike Grossnickle and drummer Jason Dana.

Album Tracklist:

- 1) Atoned Deaf
- 2) Forever Unsong
- 3) Of Sound and Fury
- 4) Truth and Ruin
- 5) Partial Darkness
- 6) The Sign of a Sealed Fate
- 7) Cold Grey Death

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November 14, 1951 - August 20, 2020

WALTER LURE
April 22, 1949 - August 22, 2020

PETE WAY
August 7, 1950 - August 14, 2020

RIP
Riley Gale

Social Distancing & Campfire Etiquette

by Brydon Parker

COVID 19 may be, to our generation, the beginning of a routine. There is not an epidemiologist out there who has not been saying this loud and clear for a generation, wash your hands and sanitizer is a must. This shit is just around the corner. Well, here is another taster of our future. If I go to see Ozzy Osborn concert, if he lives through this (I believe he will, he has made a deal) does that mean I could potentially get Covid or some other disease of who-knows-what other nether Hell from Ozzy's bat biting spit, or sweat that happily lands on me or what about that the mosh pit? What about mopping the floor with a skinhead? Fuck man, I do not want to lose this. We live in a free country and if I want to risk my life attempting to mop mosh pit floors with skinheads, I should be allowed. Well, us Cobble Hillbillies are developing a similar social distancing etiquette starting with the hockey stick rule. Always carry one and use it to judge distance from your opponent. Two, stand upwind of the campfire so as to limit your micro-bial transfer



BAD!



GOOD!!!

and to get out of the smoke. Diesel on the fire sure as shit will kill viruses. Three, dirt biking is a good way to move about and get fresh air and get from campfire to campfire. No sharing of weiners. This has been a standard rule for a while but seem pertinent to mention now. But perhaps the biggest loss to our generation could be the sharing of joints. Having a smoke with buddies could very well be a thing of the past, passing the dodgie on the left hand side is going to join the dinosaurs in the extinction column. On the bright side, weed is plentiful and smoking a whole joint to yourself is never a bad thing. Strangely, head toking your friends for fun is still ok. A fun fact, viruses can't live in a smoky environment

so smoking is cool again and smokers' life spans have shot up on a global scale. So the hotter the fire, the better. The more distance between people, the better. The new normal, I hope not, but if being standoffish is going to save Grami and Grumpa from drowning in their own body fluids, the I say hell yes, back off bro, if I can smell your breath, you are too close.

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SONS OF BUTCHER Back For Seconds

interview with Trevor Ziebarth a.k.a. Ricky Butcher
by Ira "Zombie Jesus" Hunter

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

Trevor Ziebarth: I'm Ricky Butcher, from Sons of Butcher and I'm infamous for the song 'Fuck the Shit', which is like a global hit and still to this day, gets a ton of listens on Spotify and every other platform. It's the number one song people want to hear when we play live. So I consider that my best hit. I even have an award from the Howard Stern Show: Best song of 2007.

AU: Fuck yeah. How did you originally start the cartoon Sons of Butcher? How did you first get it on the TV?

TZ: It's really weird. Me and Dave (Dunham a.k.a. Sol Butcher) were in college together and we came up with a stupid concept and we shot ourselves on video and my brother's like we should make a show where it's like, photographic heads and we just move the mouth. I was working on The Red Green Show at the time so I brought the concept to Max Smith, the son of Red Green himself, and he was like, "I like the concept, but could it be video heads?" and we're like, I don't know how to do that. But we kind of made our own pilot demo thing and we liked how it looked, it looked kind of cool. So then we brought it to Teletoon because Max introduced us to S&S Productions. They knew all the people, and so a couple of suits and ourselves, we all went there together and showed Teletoon the look. They were like, we like the look, we don't love the writing. So we made another one over the course of a year, I think we had done a few. Then they were finally like, alright, this is cool, Let's



do this. So they gave us a green light to do one episode. We did it and they loved it, and then they greenlit the whole season. It took about two or three years, back and forth before it actually got launched. Season two happened right away when season one ended. Then we thought we're gonna keep going forever and then of course, when season two ended they cancelled it, we were like, oh...crap.

AU: What's currently happening with the Sons of Butcher animated series?

TZ: We are trying to reboot, we got the rights back recently. So we're trying to make our pilot and then pitch it.

AU: Someone else had the rights?

TZ: Yeah, Teletoon and the production company had the rights for a decade, and then Teletoon gave them up, but the production company held on to them for a bit longer. Then they ended up saying "We don't need this," last year, I think. So we immediately started a Patreon and started to amass a bit of money to make a pilot ourselves with no additional people, just the four of us. So it's taken a year, but we are pretty much done with the pilot, I'd say 75% complete. We're going to release a brand new scene shortly, probably before the end of the month. We're going to probably give it to some Execs that we know from the biz and maybe they can pass it on, they can pitch it to Netflix or Comedy Network or Teletoon even for that matter, there's a million platforms now. So, gotta get the guy in the suit to bring it to them, you know?

AU: Yeah, totally. I think it would still fly.

TZ: Yeah, I mean, we just have to update the humor a little bit. Back in the day, that kind of humor does not fly by today's standards. We're just like, you know, also super old now. Like, I'm 40, I was 20 something at the time of The Butchers. So we have a little bit of different sensibilities now. But I think that the show is still pretty funny, the new scenes that we've done. We've got new characters, all video heads. Now we kind of rebooted the show, because it's more doable this way because it's less animation. So shooting people's heads on the green screen. It's super easy. Now we've got real characters, we got B.A. Johnston from Hamilton, he's an artist from Hamilton who is awesome.

But I think that the show is still pretty funny, the new scenes that we've done. We've got new characters, all video heads. Now we kind of rebooted the show, because it's more doable this way because it's less animation. So shooting people's heads on the green screen. It's super easy. Now we've got real characters, we got B.A. Johnston from Hamilton, he's an artist from Hamilton who is awesome.

AU: We love B.A.!

TZ: Yeah! And, fans have sent their heads in, in this first scene, a couple fans play the cops, so it's kind of neat. I even have a stretch goal idea

that if The Butchers could ever tour again, we could get fans that come to the merch booth and shoot their heads right there on a green screen, and then immediately they'll be in the show in a crowd scene or as extras, whatever. It's just good to have all the fans involved.

AU: That's brilliant.

TZ: Yeah, exactly. My brother was doing that. One of the tiers of Patreon you pay X amount of \$ and you would be a character in the show. So a handful of people did that. And now we're just kind of thinking in terms of a crowd scene. You need a lot of heads to that point. So it's like how do we do it? Get every fan involved!

We actually did a new video for lockdown phase one, we asked fans to join us on a Zoom call and we would play the track. All we asked is that they just rock out and then afterwards I had them all shoot themselves individually and send me those as well. I made a huge gallery Zoom video kind of thing where it's like Sol Butcher in isolation and he joins the video dance party and he invites friends and then all the fans pop up on the Zoom.

AU: That sounds pretty cool. What does your brother Jay use for the animation now?

TZ: I think he uses a tablet and just draws directly now and he's super fast at it these days and it really looks better. I can't wait for you to see the new shit. I mean some fans prefer the old look, because with the new look the heads are HD quality. You can really see the faces, smile lines and whatnot. Reactions are better now. But a lot of fans like the blend better when it was more cartoony, but we like this. The backgrounds look way better than the old show because our backward artists had more time to do them and I just think it pops a lot more and surprisingly no one else has done the video heads cartoon bodies thing in all these years. So they're still ours.

AU: How have you been surviving the Corona quarantine?

TZ: It's been really productive for me because I'm always starting a million creative projects on the side of a very busy job in television. I'm a freelancer but I do a lot of different jobs, like I shoot for the Olympics, I work on Big Brother, I work on all kinds of shows and I do props and sets, so I'm always super busy. But on the side I've been doing recordings and starting projects such as my other band Moonlight Desires, we do 80s covers, but heavy versions of 80s pop, so I did an EP for that. All these things were kind of like in the fire and then when lockdown happened, I lost my job immediately and I had nothing going on, but I have a recording studio in my house. So I immediately set to task of completing all of the projects that I had started over the last five years, which was a Ricky Butcher solo album called Fuck the Album which is coming out in August. Then Moonlight Desires At The Movies EP coming out next month. Then the Sons of Butcher EP Lockdown In Steeltown which kind of happened by accident really. The way that kind of happened was just kind of organic as can be, like I just wrote a quarantine song just for the hell of it because it was Earth Hour and I had to turn off all the lights and I had my acoustic so I wrote "Quaranteen". It was kind of funny and I put it out as Ricky Butcher and just as whatever, but then people started to like it and wanted me to play it acoustically on some COVID benefits and stuff. Then my brother was talking about all the conspiracy theories going on and that Doug Borski would be all over that shit. So he wrote lyrics to a song called Fucking Confused, which is all about dealing with the information explosion out there and what to believe. Then I was like, I'm gonna do a cover Speaking Mostly because I heard that track from the kid in Edmonton, Alberta. He made that Justin Trudeau speech into a meme thing, which became a really huge song and video. So I just did a



heavy cover of that and it turned out really cool. So we had the makings of an EP. So then I just contacted Dave and said, are you down to do a couple Sons of Butchers songs, he was like, "yeah, I got nothing going on". Since we're all just in our homes, which is the best time ever to rekindle and we had just been talking about getting the show back on its feet and meeting and shooting the show and doing weekly live streams on Facebook for the Sons of Butcher fans so we're kind of all back together again because of the lockdown. So it all culminated in the EP.

AU: Amazing. How do people get the EP?

TZ: Pretty much available on all platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, iTunes, Pandora. It's on Bandcamp, sonsofbutcher.bandcamp.com also we have a bundle for people who still want CDs. Which I thought nobody did, but I announced that we were going to do a bundle that has a Sol Butcher face mask, Doug Borski virus wipes, Ricky Butcher Corona condoms. Just all pandemic lockdown items and that includes a CD with it. Because fans were like, where's the CD? So you can get all the merch bundles on our Bandcamp.

AU: Yeah, I definitely got to get that stuff. It sounds awesome.

TZ: We got like crazy response to the Speaking Mostly video, we posted it natively on Facebook and holy crap, like a 6000 person reach and a 20 plus thousand views and 300 plus shares. That's like crazy numbers for us. We don't do that well usually.

AU: You've gone viral in a global pandemic.

TZ: Yeah, from our couch. It's like the biggest thing we did since Fuck The Shit.

AU: Any tips for surviving the Apocalypse?

TZ: Oh, my whole thing was just literally not going outside. I didn't go anywhere. I just did inside recording like a maniac for three months. Now, I'm ready to play live, but I mean, who knows what's gonna happen. But I think if you're going out and if you want to survive, you should probably get yourself one of these pandemic bundles because it has everything you could possibly need. You can put the condom on and just walk around with it just in case, now that's for sure protecting you, the virus wipe for whatever you touch and the mask is awesome. It will even accommodate the biggest beards.





AU: Have you been surfing the CERB?

TZ: I got to look into that actually I thought my EI was just about to run out so I started to look at whatever TV jobs are coming up but I really have been loving the creative explosion, just focusing on music and actually talking to my brother and Dave and Max a lot more and seeing them a lot more. We always work super well together. So it's neat to be reacquainted and talking on a weekly basis and meeting and shooting stuff, like it can only lead to more stuff. There's definitely something there when the four of us come together.

AU: Did you buy stocks in any toilet paper or hand sanitizer companies?

TZ: No, I did not, none of us did. We weren't smart enough to see that coming. The best we could do is make our own masks. That's sort of the small amount of pandemic gear we could do. I didn't actually think the toilet paper was gonna be such a huge thing as it was because I mean, there's never going to be a shortage of it. So I didn't know why people were going to buy so much of it because like, it's still there. Like it was always there. Even when it was gone in one store, other stores still had it. There's no need to buy 10 big pack of it. But hey, I thought for sure I'm gonna be home maybe eating more therefore probably double the use of toilet paper. So yeah, that's for everybody.

AU: What are your tips for flattening the curve?

TZ: Yeah, Hamilton had a couple outbreaks, one at a hospital nearby where I live, but mostly it hasn't been too bad. I just have been staying out of it. I have the Sons of Butcher mask I can wear if I do go for something but I literally have been trying not to do it. Luckily I live near a lot of little stores. So I just walked to the variety store to get stuff I need and usually it's pretty chill there. The Hamilton farmers market has been a go to, it's a big, vast open space. So there's not a lot of like six feet apart to worry about, so we've been just totally fine. Hamilton is pretty cool that way. To be honest, I think I got the COVID in January I had a really bad flu like all the stuff that you think including my lungs filling up with mucus, which still happens to this day, even though I'm well over it, just like it's this hang around pain in the ass thing. So I can't definitively say I had it, but definitely seems like something I've never had, really crazy shit.

AU: I feel like it was in Canada, before they even knew what it was, so people didn't know how to diagnose it.

TZ: Yeah, and the weirdest thing of all that happened was I got a blood clot in my leg and the doctors are like, "I have no idea how you'd get that" and then later on I read that it's a possible side effect of COVID. And I was like, oh God, maybe means I did have it because this is really strange thing to get, so who knows

AU: So you mentioned that B.A. Johnston was going to hopefully be in season three of Sons of Butcher.

TZ: Yeah, he's awesome. And we've always been fans of his. And lately, we're just thinking, oh, that'd be super cool to have him, he's like the king of Hamilton, that guy, so it'd be nice to have him represented on the show. And luckily, Max went to high school with him. They didn't know each other very well. But I think Max hit him up and asked if he wanted to be a part of it. And he was like, "Yeah, I'll try it out. Sure", so he just came over, never met any of us. We just came one day to the studio, we sort of just did the scenes and he added some great stuff. I look forward to writing with him because he's hilarious. Got a great brain. Going forward, I want him to be a part of the

show, like a writing part of the show, like write music and be the fifth member, you know?

AU: Do you think if things go well, and the season happens that you guys would maybe tour with B.A. Johnston once the venues are open?

TZ: Yeah, that's the dream. The ultimate dream is a new season, new album, new tour, B.A. Johnston opening, B.A. Johnston also performing with The Butchers for certain tracks. There's also a couple new characters, Lita Solsolido Butcher, it's Sol's daughter. She's in the new show, and she sings, so she might factor into the whole music thing as well. Then there's Reuben Sangwich, who's B.A.'s lawyer in the show. He's this, awesome, big black dude singer. He's just hilarious. So he's another person that could probably be a part of the live show, maybe he could play Made Love By The River with Sol or something.

AU: Is Sons of Butcher Quality Meats open to the public now or is it still shut down?

TZ: They're only serving people in twos probably until phase two gets fully rolled out. It's like, it's just been a shitty time. Like, surprisingly not closed. Even though, you know, Ricky was literally sneezing on pork chops. But, the Mayor is well aware. We're on thin ice, I'd say.

AU: Have you guys ever returned to Meatlantis?

TZ: The last time we returned to Meatlantis was in the episode "Spinnin' the Yarn" and then of course the album about it. But I mean, Meatlantis is just a thing of fable as completely made up by Sol Butcher. I think it's like some kind of deep seated thing from his drunken days of chugging ripple and it's just some kind of psychedelic mushroom dream that Sol had, and he is convinced it's real. He's been trying to make us believe that shit, since we were young. I think it all stems from Arpo who had a snow globe that had a town inside it made of meat, and we never knew where the hell one would buy this thing, you can't find it online. It's probably born out of that, the deep cockles of his memory, he remembers that snowglobe of Meatlantis.



AU: Is the song "Bad Touch" Trump's theme song, or is it "Panty Dropper"?

TZ: I think it has to be "Bad Touch", like for sure because the "grab her by the pussy" thing is for sure a bad touch. If it's from Trump.

AU: Are you in any other bands?

TZ: Yeah, well Of The North is the other band I have with my brother but it's been pretty quiet there. We did an album in 2012 and I have plans to do another one. But the main bands right now are Sons of Butcher and Moonlight Desires and the Ricky Butcher solo project, which is coming

out in August and that's probably the first thing that's going to play live other than Moonlight Desires. Sons of Butcher is going to probably wait until the show is launched again and then the live shows might happen to promote the show. But the band probably won't play in support of the EP because I'm probably going to end up playing in support of Moonlight Desires EP and the Ricky Butcher solo EP, which is me and Doug Borski.

AU: Did you see the werewolf sex scene in WolfCop where they use the song Midnight Desires?

TZ: Yeah, I did a heavy cover of Strange Animal, I sent it in and I tried to get the song into WolfCop 2 (Another WolfCop) where there was another sex scene between werewolves and they were going to use Gowan's Strange Animal and I was like, oh God, please maybe I can get my hat in the door and try to get my cover in it. But as a result my version of Strange Animal will come out on another Moonlight Desires album sometime in the future. Moonlight Desires got asked to play live at the theatre when they launched WolfCop 2 (Another WolfCop) premiere, it didn't actually happen. But that's what made me contact Gowan's son, Dylan to drum for Moonlight Desires, because we were in a pinch, so for a brief time, we had Dylan Lawrence Gowan in the fucking band. It was awesome. He's a great dude and great drummer and just mind blowing that he's the son of Gowan, who is the whole reason this band exists.

AU: As an owner of a meat store, what is your opinion of vegans?

TZ: Well, back in the day we used to be a lot harsher, when it wasn't so commonplace. I thought it was dangerous for the body to not eat meat. But as I've seen over the years, it seems to be alright, a lot of people seem healthier and thinner without it and I honestly dislike butchery and all that, I do not like the death of animals. It's kind of a huge conflict for a butcher. But they're so cute, the pigs and cows, but yeah, they taste awesome. So it's just like a shitty thing. It's like I maybe should explore the vegan side of things, but that seems crazy to me. I'm a big heavy dude, I need big heavy calories. I feel like I've tried eating like that and I never feel full until I eat the thing that was once alive. Then I feel good.

AU: So how can people support getting season three produced?

TZ: So far we have the Patreon which is currently paused. We had it going for a year, just to build the episode but we find it hard to produce content on the regular just for Patreon. So we're starting to pause it and just kind of release stuff and unpause it when we have stuff to put out so that people can get something for the money like every month but if you want to support like the first year the Patreon is the way to go. But also going on the Bandcamp and picking up the record and

if the Ricky Butcher experience comes to your town. We'll be selling all the same Sons of Butcher merchandise and will be playing Sons of Butcher songs as well as the Ricky solo stuff.

AU: Final words of wisdom for Canadian fans?

TZ: Just gotta keep moving forward, and don't listen to too much of the shit that's coming across the socials. There's a lot of crazy info out there. Keep your head up, while keeping it down, and hopefully this all passes and you'll be getting Pepperettes and deli meats thrown at you in no time by some spandex clad rockers.

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Absolute Film Reviews

WHITE RIOT

Rock Against Racism Movement Documentary Film

As cinemas are roaring back into business with the oldies and goodies, White Riot is going to revisit the late 70's and the Rock Against Racism movement which threatened many emerging talents from out of Britain. This documentary by Rubika Shah cuts to the chase very fast.

The 80 minute runtime is comprised more with archival material than new. We have, with no surprise, The Clash's London Calling as the national anthem which begins this work, and this editor doesn't hold back. We see how far the bigotry went. We even have mentions of Bowie and Eric Clapton, and how involved they got into this situation.

As a single watch is not enough to understand how reaching this protest went. The new interviews sheds light to how people see this poignant time when the National Front was on the rise. I'm glad this release is through on



WHITE RIOT

directed by RUBIKA SHAH produced by ED GIBBS
2019 / 80 min / UK / English / Documentary

demand services, and for as long as the ticket allows—usually three days—I can absorb and try to make sense of all that went on. It's best not to dwell too much about this time, but for any music historian who wants a clear view of what happened, this documentary is heavily recommended!

-Ed Sum

www.filmswelike.com/films/white-riot



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ONSLAUGHT

Generation Antichrist

interview with guitarist Nige Rockett

AU: Who are we talking to today?

NR: Nige Rockett: My name is Nige Rockett. I'm the guitarist and songwriter for the UK thrash metal band Onslaught.

AU: Give us a brief history of the band?

NR: We formed in 1982-83, started life as a hardcore punk band. Released our first album in early 1985, which was I guess was the very early days of thrash metal, with a slight tinge of hardcore punk in it and a very dirty dark sound. The rest is history from there we released a follow up in 1986, *The Force*, which kind of took us international. We sort of built and built from there and here we are 2020 with our seventh studio album, and in my opinion our best, ready to go.

AU: What were some of your early influences?

NR: Discharge was the main influence for the band, I guess. *Discharge, GBH, The Exploited*, but also obviously *Motörhead* played a big part in our early days also, as they did for Discharge as well. I think that those two bands have been very influential in the whole thrash metal scene over the years. I think if you talk to *Metallica, Anthrax, or Slayer*, they'll all cite those two bands particularly as influences for them also.

AU: What was the Bristol music scene like when you were starting out in England?

NR: It was very, very good. Bristol has always been a very good city for punk music. Even when I was like 12-13 when it first started there where always big crowds in Bristol. That's what really helped the band get off the ground. When we started, a friend of mine was putting on a lot of shows in a venue in Bristol. We were getting a lot of the big national bands and a lot of American bands came to play also. So what he would do, he would put us on as one of the early supports on the shows and we got picked up by a local guy who started up a brand new record label. So I think we'd done about six or seven shows in Bristol. Lots of big crowds, lots of good bands, and he offered us the first sign up for his new label. It all took off very quickly from there. The label was called *Children of the Revolution Records* and our first release was *Power From Hell*. It got licensed with a big company in Brazil also and it just flew in the first year. It was incredible, we'd gone from like just starting off and rehearsing in youth clubs and stuff, to one year later and pretty much having an album out ready to go. It was crazy.

AU: Where you were always called Onslaught? Even when you were starting out more in punk and hardcore?

NR: Yeah, the names never changed, it's always fit the band whatever stage we were at really. So yeah, always been called Onslaught from day one.

AU: Did you guys have the spiky hair and stuff like that and then go to the long hair later?

NR: Ha-ha! Yeah, yeah, spiky hair and Mohicans. The guys clothes very much the same, it's just the haircuts that are a little bit different really.

AU: So you are the one founding member that consistently stayed with it the whole way through. You've had some interesting singers

along the way. I noticed that Steve Grimmatt from Grim Reaper was on the album *In Search of Sanity*.

NR: Yeah, that's right, I'm the only one from back on day one. We've had our fair share of lineup changes as have many bands in this genre for some reason. I don't quite understand why but if you look at the likes of *Exodus* and *Testament* and *Anthrax* and *Onslaught* and *Destruction*, everybody's gone through so many members and I really can't put my finger on why. We've had a few different singers *Steve Grimmatt* being one of them for the *In Search of Sanity* album. Which for me, it should have been a very high point in our career, but it turned out it was kind of a death knell for the band, the first time around. We made some bad decisions back then and the band ended up splitting up not long after that release. So when it should have been really good times and the band should have been on a high and moving up, it kind of killed us.

AU: Maybe it was his outfits that Beavis and Butthead were making fun of.

NR: Ha ha ha maybe.

AU: Tell us about the new video you just put out for the song *Religious Suicide*.

NR: Yeah, slightly contentious, getting a bit of flack from certain parts of the community, we shall say. People are saying "Why did you write the lyrics like this in the song?" But for me it's personal, it's a very anti-religious song. I'm a very anti-religious person. I never hide this fact. I have my reasons. They date back to when I was a young kid. So there's no kind of gimmick singing about this stuff for me. I've gone in a little hard this time, shall we say. We've had some bans on Facebook and YouTube because of it. But the song is flying, it's absolutely flying at the moment. The streamers on Spotify are insane. The comments that we're getting from the fans and the feedback from journalists has been incredible so we must be doing something right. It's a hell of a brutal track as I said, with very contentious lyrics and now people are picking up on it. It's going so well and as long as this keeps snowballing towards the rest of the album it would be amazing.

AU: Yeah, I wouldn't worry too much if you're upsetting Stryper.

NR: Ha ha. We haven't had any comments from them yet but I've had a lot of comments from some other religious people. That's fine. I mean, everybody's entitled to their own views aren't they.

AU: What else can you tell us about the new album, *Generation Antichrist*?

NR: Before we started writing we like to plan things out. We sat down and we discussed what kind of direction we were going to go in with *Generation Antichrist*. Because the last two albums have gone quite technical, I would say, in terms of thrash metal maybe. Lots of busy riffs and lots of time changes and stuff like that. Which has been great. They've been amazingly received. Lots of comments said it's some of the best work we've done. But I never want to make the same album twice. So we said maybe let's take a couple of steps backwards to take maybe four or five forwards. So we looked at what we'd done in the early days, and looked at our early influences. We decided to go about it in a bit more of a raw and more openly aggressive route. Simplified the tracks a little bit, cut the time lengths down, opened up the riffs a little bit, changed some of the chord patterns, and it's really worked. I think we've got the absolute perfect guy to mix the album. Because our request is just can we please try and get the sound of one of the most aggressive thrash metal records ever made? And Daniel (Bergstrand) says, "Yeah that's fine, I can go with that." So that's what we have kind of done. We looked at our album *The Force* (1986) a lot when we were doing it. I mean obviously, not copied it in any way. But I think it's brought a new freshness to the band and it's just much more raw and open and very powerful.

AU: What record label will it be released on?

NR: *AFM Records* we've been with them since 2010. We've actually just signed a new extension to our contract with them. We're very happy, it's like being with a family label. As we were back in the day with *Music For Nations*. We all get on very well. We all know each other personally and it's a nice place to be, it's a good label to be with.

AU: What does your new vocalist Dave Garnett bring to the album?

NR: A lot of energy and more aggression. I mean Sy Keeler had an amazing voice, a very thick rich voice, but Dave's really uped the aggression. He's not too dissimilar to Sy in many ways which is good because we didn't want to radically change the sound of Onslaught because we have good back catalogue, which the fans really do love a lot. So to go out there, especially live and play these songs, any differently than what they're expecting, I don't think would have been a good move. Dave does really do the old stuff very, very closely to how they should sound. The new record was I think it's just a new lease on life. It's a change, but not radically different, but up the aggression from where Sy Keeler wasn't and with the extra aggression in the overall sound of the band. I think it works perfectly.

AU: What are your thoughts on the protests happening in the US right now? Is anything similar happening in the UK?

NR: Yes it's had a knock on effect here, as well as in a lot of places across the world. Some of it's right, some of it's wrong. Who's to say? I mean, we've all seen the footage of what happened to the guy on TV and that was obviously seriously wrong to hear that guy begging for his life and it's just terrible. But it's kicked off protests which are also getting out of control. It could have been or should have been a way to put a lot of things right but other people are using it for different purposes, especially in the UK. And it needs to be sorted out. I don't know how. It seems to me that both of our governments are very much losing control of all the situations that they're having to deal with at the moment and if anything, they're kind of antagonizing things and making things even worse instead of calming the situation and making things better for everybody. So I really hope they do get a grip soon before anything really goes badly wrong.

AU: For the song *A Perfect Day to Die*, was that an homage to Lemmy?

NR: Yeah, for sure definitely. As you can hear the track has got a very *Motörhead* influence on it. It was *Motörhead* really in a way that broke Onslaught. They took us out on tour with them in Europe in 1987 on the back of *The Force* album. It was probably the most memorable and probably the best thing we ever did. It was certainly one of the most fun things we ever did that was for sure. I remember very clearly the first day we played was in Zurich in Switzerland. We've not met them before that at all, we just rolled up, set our gear and immediately Philthy Phil came out introduced himself and said, "Right, I'm introducing you guys every night before you go on stage." and that was the way it was from then on. They just looked after us all the time, it was an amazing tour. We had full use of the PA for use of the lights. It was just like, amazing. If anybody could ever learn anything off a band, it was learn off of those guys, you know, because they did everything in a perfect way. So yeah, the song was definitely about Lemmy and he's sadly missed.



AU: You guys played Hellfest in 2015 Do you have any fond memories of that one?

NR: Yeah, I love Hellfest, for me it's one of the best festivals in Europe. Absolutely love it. It was just such a chilled atmosphere. We had a great show there and a great time at the bar after. Such a cracking festival. I just can't wait to do it again. So many of my friends go there every year, rather than to other big festivals. They just love the chilled atmosphere in France. So yeah, definitely one of the best festivals for me.

AU: Did you guys have any festival plans this summer that were interrupted by COVID?

NR: Yeah, it's decimated our tour this year unfortunately. We had a lot of big festivals in York. We had some festivals in the US. Our tour was scheduled for Us and Canada in October-November, which has obviously been cancelled now. We had all the work visas in place and everything. It's just completely torn everything apart. Luckily, all of the festivals have been rescheduled for 2021 which is good. Even the ones in America and European ones are saying we are on those next year. Mostly we've got to go back now and re-book the tours that we were booking. That's the major problem sorting out all the work visas once again, it's just just an absolute nightmare. So we're not going to be back on the road unfortunately till next year.

AU: Anything else you want to promote?

NR: We've got a new single coming out on July the 17th. A track called *Bow Down To The Clowns* which is going to have a full production video with it. That's going to be our main lead up to the new album *Generation Antichrist* which is coming out on August 7. Obviously no shows or tours to shout about so we've just got to push the album as much as we can. So the music can do the talking for us and keep things flying high until the shows come back.

AU: Bow Down To The Clowns?

NR: That's the track, yeah. It's got kind of political opinions to it. It's very fitting to what's going on.

AU: Any final words for Canadian metal fans?

NR: You guys are amazing. We've been to Canada twice and had such incredible times. A beautiful country that we really, really can't wait to come back to. Had some great times there, crazy times as well. So we're for sure coming back as soon as we come back over to North America, we'll be doing Canada without a doubt. So yeah, can't wait to see you guys again. And thank you very much for your support and I hope you love the new album, *Generation Antichrist*.

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SDCC @ Home Virtual Recap

By Ed Sum

COMIC-GEDDON

This sampler list is not complete. Saturday had perhaps the best panel for horror television fans. Scary Good TV: A Conversation with Horror's Top Showrunners featured Nick Antosca (*Channel Zero*), Meredith Averill (*Locke & Key*), Don Mancini (*Chucky*), Greg Nicotero (*Creepshow*), and Jami O'Brien (*NOS4A2*) talking about what makes their critically-acclaimed shows special. I'm amused that *Supernatural* is not on the list, but there's a reason for it. It's reached the end and the last episodes are set to air this fall.

A few quick takeaways include:

- The Walking Dead's* season 10 finale is set for October 4th. The spin-off, *World Beyond*, is delayed but it will eventually make it to screens.
- Bill and Ted Face the Music* can handle the Covid-19 crisis. It's set to premiere online and in theatres Sept 2nd!
- The New Mutants* has yet another date, and the two minute tease of the film's intro suggests the Demon Bear arc will be the focus.
- Hulu is getting spooky by dropping a trailer for *Helstorm*, a series loosely inspired by Marvel Comics.
- The Dragon Prince* is getting four more seasons! *Game of Thrones*, look out!
- MST3K* is coming back!

As for whether virtual conventions will become the norm, that depends on the state of the world next year. Some people will remain cautious assuming Covid-19 is still lingering around. Others will be guarded and have masks and hand sanitizers at ready. But for the adventuresome, perhaps we will see smaller events offered year round to help reduce the numbers. This way, the conventions won't be as jam packed. Exhibitors can decide on which shows are best to be at to best launch that new book, movie, TV show, toy product, etc, according to their timeline rather than a festival's.

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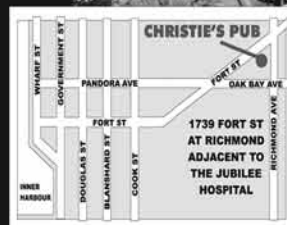
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40th Anniversary of Ace Of Spades

40 years ago the rock n' roll locomotive that is MOTÖRHEAD bitch slapped the punk, heavy metal & rock community with the lionized ACE OF SPADES album. Renowned & considered Motörhead's most notable LP by the general public there's no denying that this was a massive landmark for the 'head.

To commemorate this 49% motherfucker & 51% son of a bitch BMG is dealing out a royal flush with a Deluxe Collector's Box-Set & Special 40th Anniversary Edition of "Ace Of Spades". Now I know this bad boy doesn't ship until October - but there is no denying how rad this thing is, especially if you're a hardcore Motörheadbanger like me (member #3088 to be exact).



Motorhead '79 released last year you understand how amazing the unreleased live recordings are. Fast, raw, mean & some of the absolute best stage banter from the "classic-era" Motörhead line-up. As an added bonus Ace On Your Screens: A DVD compilation of rare TV appearances from 1980-81 & a live concert from 1981 is also included for those of us who still own a digital video disc system.



First off, we are being graced with not one, not five but FOURTY TWO unheard tracks. Madness!!! If you were lucky enough to get a copy of

Secondly, they have loaded us up with Motörhead literature. The Ace Of Spades story. A 40 page book telling the story of Ace Of Spades through previously unpublished interviews with the people that were there. The Ace Up Your Sleeve tour programme, I'm lucky enough to own an original of this & I don't know about you kids but I LOVE shit like that. Last but not least the Motörhead Rock Commando comic. Distributed exclusively at their Bingley Hall gig on the 26th July 1980, The Overwhelming Motörhead in Rock Commando was written by Klaus Blum with a write up from Alan Burridge of Motörheadbangers. This comic also contains a Q&A session with the band as well as a comic strip adventure featuring the Lem, Ed & Phil in a futuristic England & France.

Lastly in true outlaw fashion this physical celebration comes neatly packaged in a wooden dynamite box that also doubles for a game board. Perfect for the 5 Motörhead engraved dice that accompany it. Go the extra mile with the "Super Deluxe" edition & get the deck of Motörhead playing cards, bespoke Texas Hold 'Em poker mat &



Motörhead casino chips. Wash down your financial sorrows with a few whiskeys from the branded shots glasses that top the "super" version off.

As you can see this is a massive set that can only be attached to a massive album. A true edition for true Röd Crew lifers. Who knows when someone is gonna shoot you in the back, so why sit on the unused vacation funds this coronavirus season? Bite the bullet!



Stay clean!
Shel Byer MHB 3088
- Sheldon Byer

Absolute Film Reviews

Hotel Paranormal T+E



Dan Aykroyd is the host and spokesman behind T+E's (Canada) *Hotel Paranormal*. In the States, it recently debuted on Travel Channel and the media is all abuzz about this Ghostbuster's involvement. His family was part of the Spiritualist Movement in Canada, and their interest is genuine. But I doubt his involvement goes beyond that. If he was an executive producer, he'd most likely demand a better approach curtailing interest in the supernatural. The focus is more with frights than offering valuable insight on why these hotels are haunted or how the victims have been coping since. Had more of the latter been at the forefront, then this show would be a hit, but for now it's barely making the grade. Viewers do get to witness some help being offered to those who have been victimized. But four episodes in this series is a mixed bag. There's really nothing new to enjoy, and given the fact these scare fests take place at hotels, it's not surprising not all accommodations are revealed unless the managers want to be liable for those booking a stay in those rooms and wind up getting hurt. Just how much of Aykroyd's voice are his opinions versus those written by a professional script writer is a detail no producer will reveal. It'll be kept under *Locke and Key* until a whistleblower tells all! In a paranormal investigation, that's what we want to uncover. This program does little to offer results—whether the outcome is good or bad. This TV series needs to offer online a history of these haunted hotels (when possible), along with the uncut original footage so we can judge for

ourselves if we want to stay at that venue. Thankfully, not all haunted lodgings are like *The Shining*, otherwise those who choose to stay there would get possessed!
-Ed Sum

Invasion Earth (The Vintage Tempest) Midnight Releasing



Not to be confused with *Blackout*: *Invasion Earth*, the similarity made work, *Invasion Earth*, by writer/Director James Twyman originality came out 2016 and is more about the people and their lives than the fate of the planet being saved by freedom fighters. The juxtaposition is light. Perhaps the actual threat is about them as ne'er-do-wells. Trying to break free from their demons is just as difficult as getting ready to deal with an alien threat.

The official trailer suggests the space invaders are omnipresent throughout, but that's far from the truth. What's out there is visualized like *Colour Out of Space*—in vivid blues and purples. It's a good way to contrast between the slow parts (in regular colours) and the high action.

Johnny Pearson (Jon Paul Gates) is our eye to this world. He thinks the therapy these people are getting is a scam and is out to expose Doctor Carson (David Shaw). The fear is that these kids may be part of a new Heaven's Gate cult.

A shorter run time would've helped the pacing. When the title suggests aliens are coming, perhaps audiences should question the definition. The Greys attacking Earth adds to the hostility that we can sometimes face (either as an observer or an affected) when confronting uncertainty. Perhaps the onus is on these people in need of healing more than someone else—aliens included—asking them, "How are you feeling?" By the final act, I empathized with them instead of cheering for the finale. To say "Cheerio, it's over," is not quite in the cards yet.
-Ed Sum

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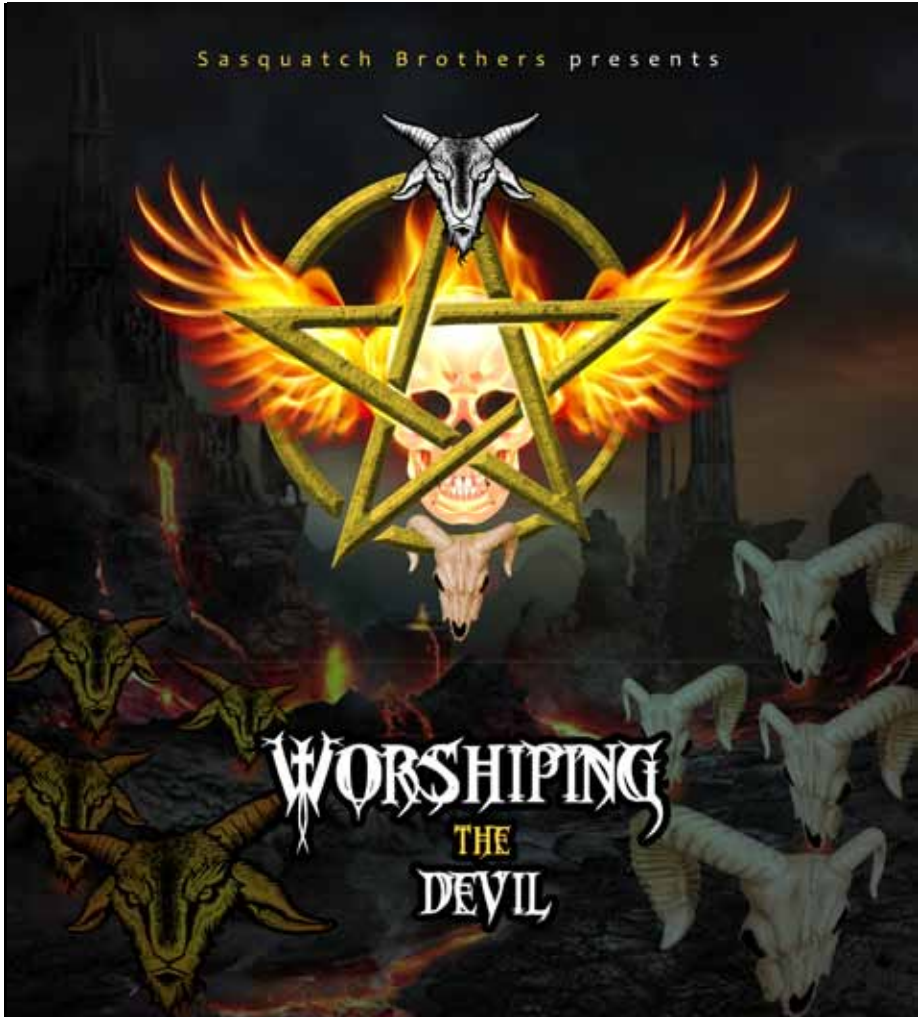
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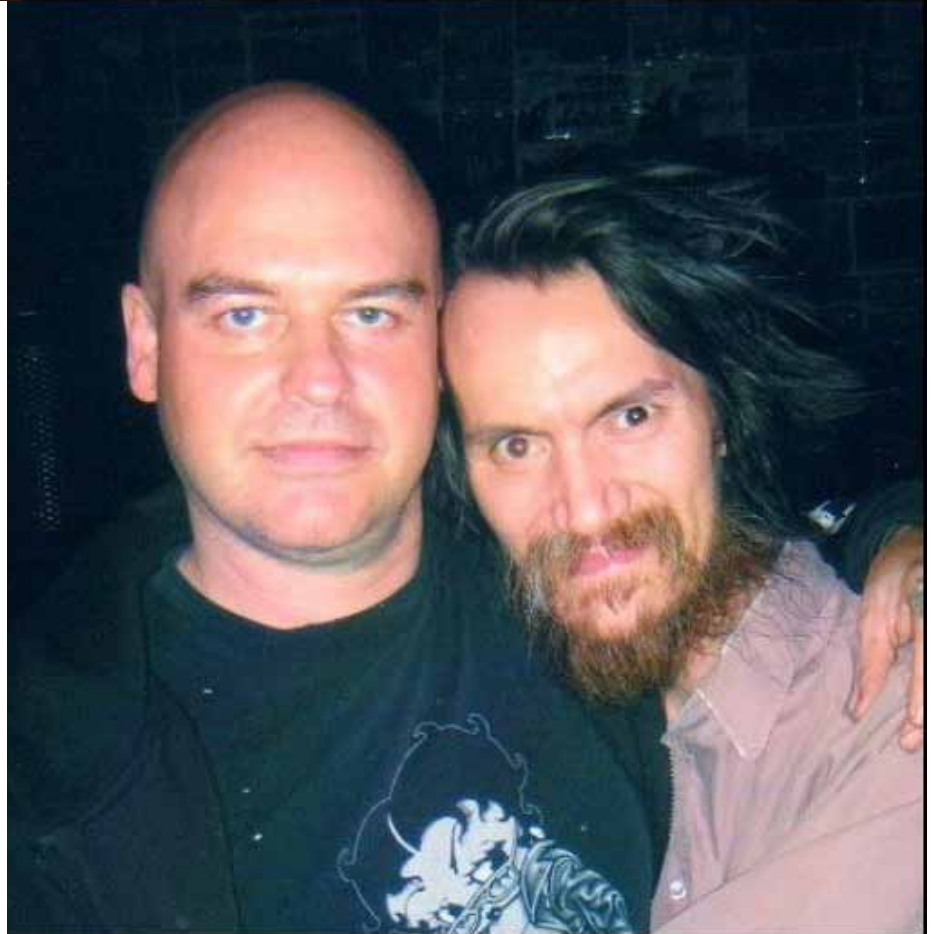
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CROSSWORD NO. 26

AUGUST, 2020



Fan Favourites

Interview by Mike Allen

Absolute Underground: Ben, how is it going today? Mike here from Absolute Underground.

Ben Wolchuk: It is going good.

AU: Ben, can you talk about Fan Favourites for a bit? How long have you been here? And what do you sell?

BW: Here, at Fan Favourites, we sell games and movies and related fun stuff. We have been here almost seven years, at the same location - in downtown Victoria.

AU: Also, I saw you at the Victoria Comic and Toy Fair, last year. How much does a convention like this drive sales or increase brand recognition for you and your store?

BW: The Toy Show is excellent for awareness, or for people to remember Fan Favourites. It is a really

great promotion. It is also a really fun time. It is a great time. That is the main reason we go.

AU: There are lots of fans there...

BW: Yes, it is just a great time.

AU: Okay, with so many streaming services coming online each month, or each year, how does this affect your DVD or Blu-ray sales, or sales in general?

BW: It can affect things from time to time. But, availability online changes so much that people might sell something out of their collection, because they think it is safe, because it is online streaming. But then, it disappears and they have to get it again. So, it actually tends to sharpen what people need, or don't need in their collections. But, people will always have an interest in owning movies, or getting stuff that you can't get anywhere else. Not everything is online.

AU: This is why I have a film library.

BW: Absolutely.

AU: Sometimes, it seems like retailers need to find a niche in business, in order to not get steamrolled by big businesses like Walmart or Amazon. Would you agree with this statement?

BW: I do agree with that, which is why we primarily have second hand movies and games. We really don't see that being offered at big companies, or online. Big box stores don't have a lot of used items. And, all of our stuff is cleaned and tested and guaranteed. We do try to curate our selection, so that it is the best.

AU: Do you have a niche in the film genres, at all?

BW: We try to get some of the more obscure titles, or hard to find things - like Criterion, or niche horror, or anime. But, stuff like that sells so fast.

AU: Because it is so popular. I wanted to ask a question about the whole pandemic, Covid-19 thing. How did this affect you? I think you were closed for a couple of months.

BW: We were closed for two weeks, actually.

We closed down around the middle of March. And then, we changed it up and re-opened in early April, with an online store and a pick-up counter, at the door. And, we operated it that way until just this week (June 20th).

AU: Do you sell exclusively on your site, or through Ebay?

BW: We don't do Ebay or anything. We just sell directly off our website and at our store, during the pick-up hours. We were doing direct sales off the counter, too.

AU: I just want to ask a couple of closing questions here, Ben. What stands out about Fan Favourites in the DVD, Blu-ray marketplace, or the gaming marketplace?

BW: I think what stands out about us is our unique selection and the quality of everything. Everything is cleaned and tested. We try to keep everything sticker-free.

AU: And, do you take returns, if something goes wrong?

BW: We do guarantee everything we sell. We also offer trade credit, too. So, if you bring in the old stuff you don't want, we offer that.

AU: Are there any shows in 2020 that you are thinking of going to? I know everything is still kind of still shutdown, right now.

BW: Yes, I wish! We really hope that there will be events.



AU: Maybe in a few more months.

BW: You know? But, safety first; that is the priority. We look forward to there being events, in the future. I wish we had something. There was supposed to be a Toy Show in October.

AU: At Pearkes Arena?

BW: But, I don't know.

AU: Is there anything I missed, or anything that you want to mention about the store?

BW: No, I think that is pretty good info. If people have any questions, they can always come by.

AU: Or, they can visit FanFavourites.ca.

BW: Or, they can call us, or drop an email.

AU: Thanks Ben for doing this.

BW: No problem and thank you.

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Absolute Album Reviews

The Last Reign - Evolution Independent



"Evolution of a Decaying Race" offers up some extreme breakdowns and slamming melodic death metal riffage that is sonically very enjoyable. Add to that a 55 minute concept album detailing humanity's uncertain future due to natural resource depletion and you've got a very well-rounded melodeath thrill ride.

The grooves hit a peak on "The Hourglass," where dual harmonized guitars and wide spectrum chord progressions work to add urgency to the proceedings. A ripping solo eventually pulls the lever on self-destruct and a brooding breakdown changes the pace with some expressive drumming. "Terminal Threshold" has the heaviest riffage as low-tuned blasts of stop/start aggressive bleed into a neck-breaking chug section and an excellent scream out chorus howls forth with the words, 'broken but not beaten'.

This science fiction tinged epic is a great amalgamation of latter day metal heroes and as a new band this debut shows a unique sound taking shape. Their next evolution should be highly anticipated.

-Dan Potter

Bedsore- Hypnagogic Hallucinations

20 Buck Spin



Using considerable imagination, this Italian based group paints the canvas with bloody cinematic death metal. The general atmosphere throughout is reminiscent of a Dario Argento film as inventive horror fused themes and feelings ooze out of the slash wounds inflicted by old school templates such as Death's first album. Untamed barages of crooked diminished scales look to draw blood early on as the first couple tracks are full on tyrants engaged in a brutal crack down. An intriguing ambience develops midway on "At the Mountains of Madness". This is where the monsters are unleashed from the TV screen and into your house as epic passages of dread play out like a final scene in a classic slasher flick.

The harrowing screams delivering tales of unprovoked insanity seem like they are coming from both victim and assailant. This highly deep metaphysical underpinning doesn't just want to frighten but welcome you to an all-encompassing world of absolute gore from which you'll never return.

-Dan Potter

SVNTH - Spring in Blue Transcending Records

Fusing atmospheric black metal with elements of 70s classic rock and 90s shoegaze movements, this highly unique band creates worlds of shifting dimensions that will make you think someone spiked your wine.

The eleven-minute epic "Erasing

God's Towers" takes its time getting started by baiting you with neo-psychedelic purges that Syd Barret would have been very proud to conjure up. Whipping into gear, things get speedy fast as blackened chord movements are brutally stroked out with the dueling guitarists channeling early Bathory. Double kick drumming and weeping guitar treatments finish off this magnificent track with stunning vampiric thirst.

Captured and mixed by underground visionary Colin Marston, the wild dynamic shifts bloom forth like a poisonous flower on "Wings of the Ark" where voids of sub-zero rage



get doused in warm tropical ecstasy. Overall, this album caters to the alien within.

-Dan Potter

Incantation - Sect of Vile Divinities Relapse Records



For over thirty years, this band has been pummeling listeners with vile inflammatory musical creations yet the hunger never ceases as twisted corpses scarred by unrelenting death metal are offered up with gleeful pride.

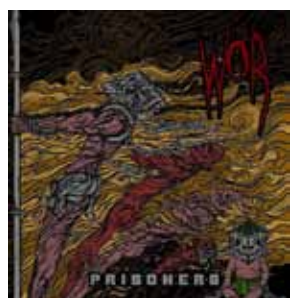
The guitars are huge, taking the old school cauldron of abominations and serving up heavy frequencies from the modern era. Each track is a funeral dirge dedicated to various 'evil' cultures that have appeared throughout history. With song titles like "Entrails of the Hag Queen," and "Chant of Formless Dread," they definitely have dialed in a trip of blackened intellectualism. This record is a shining example of 'no frills' death metal conveyed in all its brutal wickedness. Fans of big production mixes will surely dig the massive heft committed to audio file, which presents every murderous escapade in horrific detail.

-Dan Potter

WoR - Prisoners

Bungalo Records/ Universal

With the catchy refrain of "I swear to god I'll kill you," this aggressive groove metal beast rips shit up in



a down and dirty way on "Kill You." Bringing forth swirling nuclear grade riffage on "Caged" pushes the sonic brutality over the threshold of heavy. These guys are a new band that has been fermenting their brand of ridiculous super-aggression for only

two years, but they sound amazingly tight, like they've been together for fifteen instead. Combining the rhythmic complexity of LOG and Deftones with the arm swinging heft of a Vein inspired moshpit they let loose on "Sirens" a song where extreme only just begins to describe their manifesto.

There is not much retro about this release, save for the scorching Offspring cover "Come Out and Play." The modern warped goodness on this debut LP is played with brutal laser precision and lots of guttural screaming highlights.

-Dan Potter

Titan To Tachyons - Cactides Nefarious Industries



New York based avant/instrumental metal trio spawns fluid grooves that meet surrealist passages of bizarre experimentalism. Metallic flurries led by pounding blast beats play with the lurching waltz guitar riffs until complex irate fret-board tapping licks spew out in anger on opening track "Morphing Machineminds."

Featuring members of Secret Chiefs 3 and John Zorn this band plays through the weirdest stuff they can come up with on "The Starthinker is Obsolete" as delirium inspired stop starts and dissonant soaked jazzy elements will further erode your trust in the idea of genre.

On display are a lot of inventive approaches to making heavy music that personally reminds me of the Italian experimental-metal scenes that produce some of the wildest stuff out there. These three highly trained musicians don't rely on their music textbooks a whole lot, resulting in an expansive mind trip of the third kind.

-Dan Potter

Nuclear Winter - Stormscapes MMD Records



Low-tuned, grinding guitar riffs combine with electronic fractals and wretched out vocals on "Hearts of Stone" which is a groove heavy track full of intriguing combinations.

Ethereal singing punctures the grueling hell-scapes on "The Wide Water" as Bach inspired guitar lines soar out of the relentless chugging. A melting pot of metal influences, "The Northern Winds" starts out like a more evil Fear Factory with crushing drums and howling tremolo picked guitar abominations before showing its blackened roots later on. I rate the vocals quite high as I can make out all the lyrics loud and clear which really brings forth the complex storylines that complete each track.

Ending off this inventive EP are cover songs that you wouldn't expect a metal guy would be into playing: Sinatra's "New York, New York" and Toto's "Africa."

Wasn't expecting that!
-Dan Potter

Kruelty - Immortal Nightmare Creator- Destructor Records



Deep frequencies barrel out of the underground labyrinth bringing massive low-tuned chugging and enraged screeches. "Desire" brings the power of hardcore and the thunderous roar of sludge metal all stuck together with abominable amounts of death metal.

Sharing a truly unique sound, this Tokyo based group has been very prolific since their recent formation in 2017 as they have released several demos, an EP, three splits, and their debut LP, "A Dying Truth." This three-track surprise gets straight to the point and blows your brains out with full on hostility, which continues on "Narcolepsy" via ominous ascending guitar riffs, and on the brink of losing your mind sounding screams.

And top all this fury off with a cover of death metal legends Grave's classic, "Into The Grave"? Perfect!

-Dan Potter

Voidceremony - Entropic Reflections Continuum: Dimensional Unravel

20 Buck Spin



Ancient death metal rips out of the rotting carcass of the California underground and on this debut album searches for a new host to sink its memory hooks into. To provide life to this form of parasitic entity is my pleasure as precise drumming and wailing fretless bass playing display a topnotch level of venom spitting aggression.

On "Sacrosanct Delusions," the wolf growls sound like the moon has turned blood red as whirling masses of tormented guitar riffs tremolo pick themselves into a murderous frenzy. Think the early diabolical diatribes of Morbid Angel melded with the rich musicianship of mid-career Death and you've got this six-track pyromaniacs wet dream.

"Empty, Grand Majesty (Cyclical Descent of Causality)" is a thing of warped beauty that encompasses all that is beloved of the tortured beast known as death metal as its eight minutes offer up an endless trip through brain busting riffage and distorted harmony.

-Dan Potter

Deathnoisefrequency - Horrid Dirge Independent



This noise metal duo from Saudi Arabia spews a tornado of interesting textures on their debut collection of tracks. Doomed shrieks and ominous spoken word surf the waves of sand that echo out of the desert like voices beckoning those with a thirst for metal that's more tantalizing than fully realized. I find this musical experiment in all its dark and depressive atmosphere, very beautiful, as this world they have created where noise and death metal are smashed together with reckless abandon offer an angle on hard music that is unique and arty.

These two tracks are like an appetizer to wet your appetite for a full length that will emerge later this year. Judging from the vicious pummeling of "Chapter III Horrid Choirs," it's going to be a wicked thrill ride.

-Dan Potter

Trial -1 Independent

War beats and grungy fury seethe forward with sonic malice on "Eyes Against Infinite Suppression," where this British industrial unit blackens out all the light sources in favour of a six by six by six prison cell. Drum machines are set to severe piston torture as thumping snares and kicks whip up the rage into an acidic froth.

This austere instrumentation brings the misery in very effective ways like on "Colony of Trial," where stripped and gutted guitar riffs have nothing but the crackling distortion to their name.



The brutality is suffocating and made viciously apparent throughout this five-track offering as gothic leanings pummel the early Judas Priest riffs turning the fist pumping into a night of blood drinking.

-Dan Potter

Power Trip - Live In Seattle 05 28 18

Dark Operative

On Power Trip's surprise live album choice cuts from their discography including "Executioner's Tax (Swing of the Axe)," "Conditioned To Death," "Firing Squad," "Manifest Decimation," are blasted out with the full intensity of being in front of a seething moshpit.



Their breakneck tempos are relentless throughout the forty-three minute set and the sound is big and beefy and as someone who has witnessed their live performance first hand, I'd say this is a great testament to that experience. The mix is right in your headphones like you are plugged straight into the mixing console, I myself love the brutality of a soundboard recording because it's all heft and no wanky applause roll.

With all of their tour dates cancelled because of the bat virus this is a great gift to the fans and you should all show your support by going out and getting it.

-Dan Potter



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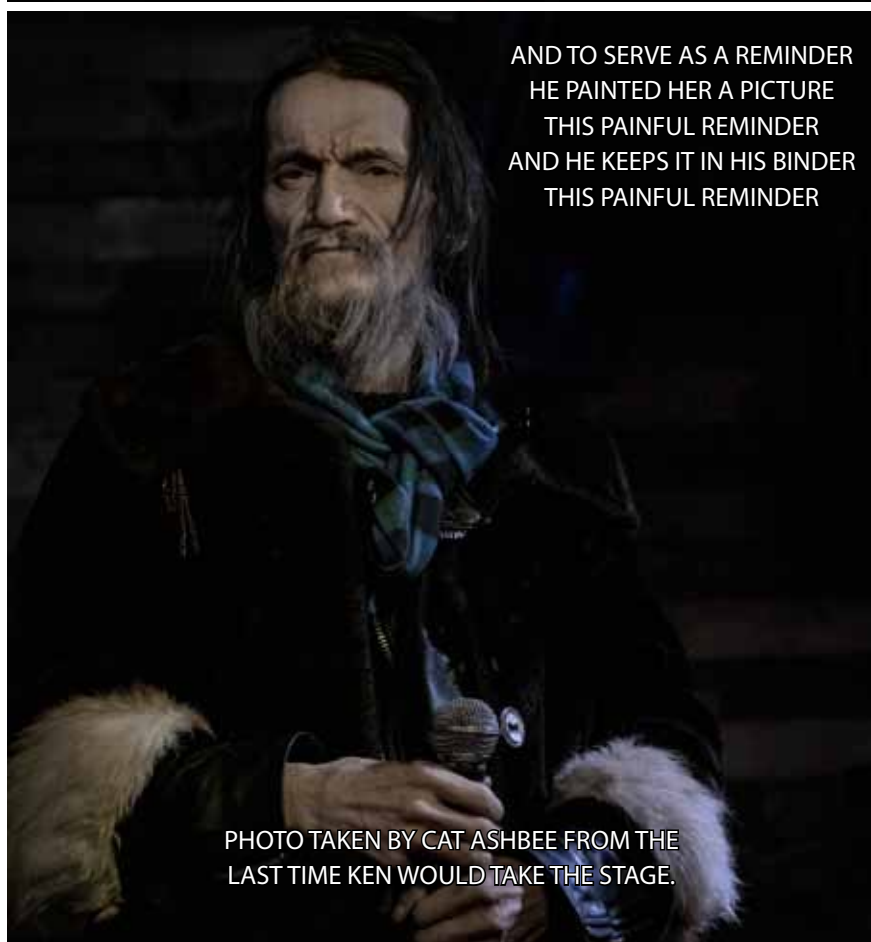
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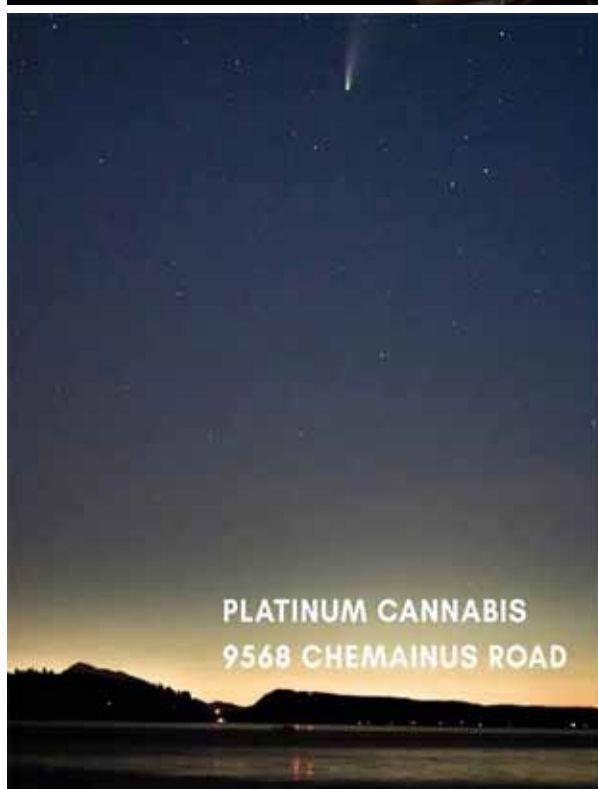
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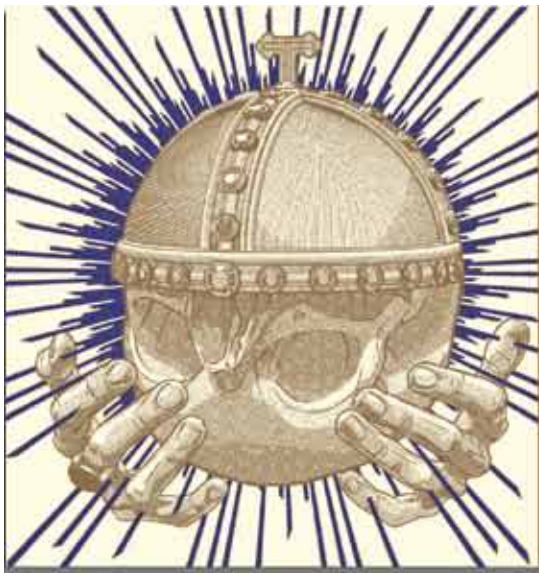
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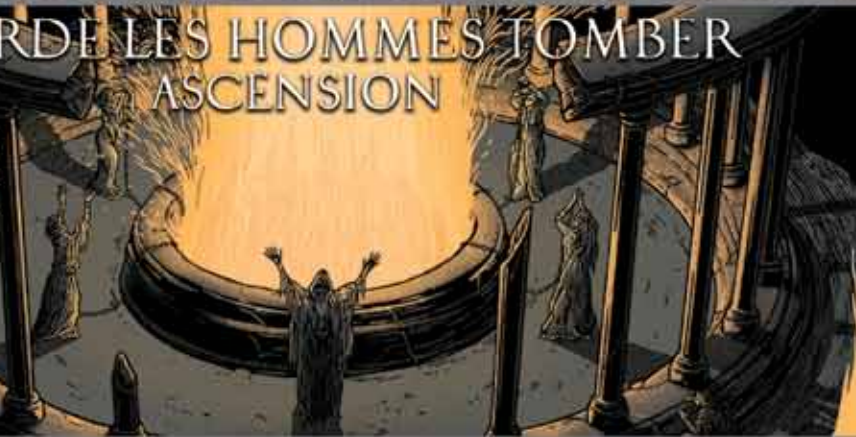


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