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ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

Vol. 9 - #2 - Issue 50 - February / March 2013

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50TH ISSUE

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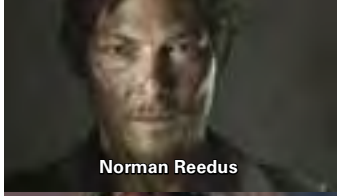
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Sat Feb. 2nd FTW III night 2 SPITTIN' COBRAS, The Stockers, The Injectors, Island Monster 15\$ at the door.
Thu Feb. 7th Milk, Guests TBA 8\$
Fri Feb. 8th A TRIBUTE TO GRAM PARSONS: Return of the Greivous Angel Carolyn Mark, MD Wren, Dylan Stone, Dan Wisenburger, Cluny Macpherson, Chris Van Sickle, Geoff Howe 8\$
Sat Feb. 9th FROM THE STREETS OF EAST VANCOUVER... Scarebro, Class of 1984, SPEED GARBAGE 10 BUX
Thu Feb. 14th Have a Blue Valentine with Black Valley Gospel, Guests TBA 10 dollars
Fri Feb. 15th Mendoza, Buzzard 10bux!
Sat Feb. 16th The Fifty Fifty Valentines Party ft. The Himalayan Bear, Goose Lake, Le Rat 10\$
Wed Feb. 20th SKATER'S LIFE FREE
Thu Feb. 21st Northern Night-Yukon meets Greenland ft. Diyet, Nive Nielsen, Speed Control 8\$
Fri Feb. 22nd TWO YEARS AND COUNTING CD RELEASE! Two Years and Counting, SYN(A)PSE, Body Politic, Acolytes ov Impurity
Sat Feb. 23rd BISHOPS GREEN, The Keg Killers, The Role Mode 12\$
Thu Feb. 28th Dance o Rama Showdown of the Century Steve Barrie and his Vagabond Troubadours, Mike Wren and the Sick Kids 8.00
Fri Mar. 1st The Dyeing Merchants, The Backhomes, Automatic Planet 7\$
Sat Mar. 2nd Psych Night in Victoria with The High Arctic, Black Valley Gospel, Moths and Locusts, Colliding Canyon 10 dollars
Sat Mar. 16th B.A. Johnston, Needles/Pins, Babysitter 10\$
Sat Mar. 23rd ANCIENTS, Black Wizard, The Shrine, Dirty Fences, 9pm. 10\$

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VICTORIA'S LOCALS ONLY



Sweet Leaf

An interview with singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Chris Jones of Victoria-based party band, Sweet Leaf. Formed in early 2012 when Jones responded to a Craigslist ad, Sweet Leaf has firmly planted itself as an energetic force in Victoria's vibrant music scene.

By Michael Luis

Absolute Underground: Give a brief rundown of who you are and what Sweet Leaf is all about.

Chris Jones: I'm Chris Jones, singer/guitarist of Sweet Leaf. We could be considered a ska/funk/reggae band, but we're more of a dance band with hopefully what is perceived as a positive message.

AU: On top of ska, reggae and funk, what kinds

of music are you guys influenced by?

CJ: Man, we have a lot of influences. Ever since Napster, I've never had any boundaries in what genre of music moves me. Hip-hop, funk, ska, punk, jazz, soul, and bluegrass - really anything that's original, and by original I mean whatever's not a rip-off of something else.

AU: You guys sport a three-piece horn-section. How important is this to your sound?

CJ: The horn section takes our energy to a whole new level, not just with our sound projected on the audience but on each other as well. We get amped-up quick.

AU: What's it like being a part of Victoria's historic ska, punk, and reggae scene?

CJ: Victoria's ska scene and music scene in general is so supportive of new talent. I love it. I love the bands in this town and all the people that come out to move their feet.

AU: What's the origin of the name, Sweet Leaf? Do you guys like tea, or is that in reference to... something else?

CJ: Oh yeah, we're all avid tea drinkers, especially [bassist] Zack, who came up with the name. I think he was drinking an herbal vanilla-spiced matcha rooibos latte while listening to some 70s metal band when the name struck him. With a surprisingly strong bong toke from some bottom-of-the-bag schwag, he looked up and said, "Whoa, that's some sweet leaf."

AU: Yeah, I can buy that story. Anyway, I've seen you guys live and it's shit-loads of fun. How would you describe the importance of a good live show?

CJ: Man, now that the days of making money from recordings are over, a live show is a band's bread-and-butter. No matter how big of a room or

how many people are in it, you have to give them every bit of your love and energy. We've been writing lately to keep our performance pedal-to-the-metal without letting up for our entire set. No matter what slot we're playing or [the] quality of the accompanying acts, we are going to strive to steal the show. We want to be the ones you leave talking about, waiting for our next show. Anything less sends me back to the drawing board.

Check out Sweet Leaf Feb.9th at The Reef restaurant for Bob Marley's Birthday Bashment. And for more information, you can check out Sweet Leaf online at sweetleafmusic.com and [facebook.com/sweetleafmusic](https://www.facebook.com/sweetleafmusic).

Michael Luis is a writing/journalism major at the University of Victoria. To hear him complain about pop-music and football, you can follow him on twitter: @MichaelACLuis.

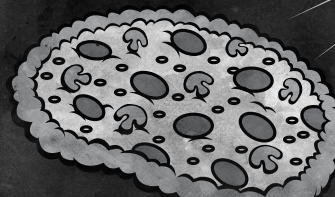
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Ancients

Interview with guitarist Chris Dyck and bassist Aaron "Boon" Gustafson of Ancients

By Allison Drinnan

There is no better name for Vancouver's latest metal export than Ancients. The band has a certain epic and mysterious feel to their sound, while keeping a balance of sincerity and grittiness in their music that they have become known for. You can feel the weight and power of past gods and kings roaming the earth, thousands of years ago, as their riffs come rolling and rushing into your ears.

Locals aren't the only ones noticing the band. Ancients – comprised of lead vocalist/guitarist Kenny Cook, guitarist/vocalist Chris Dyck, bassist Aaron 'Boon' Gustafson and drummer Mike Hannay – were recently signed to the very popular label Season of Mist, and have been receiving glowing reviews across the board for their 7-inch release, "Snakebeard".

With the highly anticipated full-length "Heart Of Oak" being released in just a few short months, Absolute Underground was lucky enough to catch up with Cook and Dyck via e-mail.

** Answers edited for length

Absolute Underground: For those who don't know anything about Ancients, can you tell us a bit about how you guys formed?

Kenny Cook: We formed through the breakup of a previous band that Aaron [Gustafson], Chris [Dyck] and myself used to play in called Sprædeagle. Our good bud Eugene also played in Ancients at that time, but it wasn't quite his vibe.

That's when we found our child drummer Mike [Hannay] in the summer of 2010, who was 18 at the time.

AU: Tell me about the name Ancients. Where did that come from?

Chris Dyck: We all wanted a simple, bold name. Something kinda mysterious? Earthy? I'm really into ancient civilizations and secret society imagery, so when it came up we all agreed fairly quickly.

AU: I noticed some black metal artists listed under your influences. How would you say black metal has influenced your sound?

CD: I've been into black metal since the mid 90s. It's a huge influence on me personally, and there are elements of it that just make sense to put into our music...Like the moodier stuff, adding kicks when called for, frosty epic riffs – classic black metal things that you instantly recognize, I guess. Kenny has a very good black metal-esque vocal style also...Kenny and I are huge Craft fans and I know the other guys like some for sure, but I have always been



a big fan of Celtic Frost, Mayhem, Gorgoroth and Dissection, for example.

AU: Are there any artists that people would be surprised to find out have influenced Ancients?

KC: There are probably lots, haha: Steely Dan, the Allman Brothers band, the Seattle grunge scene, King Crimson and Mahivishnu Orchestra.

AU: You guys put out the 7-inch "Snakebeard" as physical copy. How important is it to put out a physical copy of something as opposed to just digital?

CD: We were bored and unstoked about having nothing to give away or sell. One morning I phoned Charlie at War on Music...we had a little deal going in like 15 minutes...It was a crucial time to have something to offer, just as we headed to Noctis.

AU: Why did you choose to release a 7-inch instead of going straight to a full length?

CD: Our full-length has been recorded for a while. So this was just to help keep the buzz going, and bide our time, but it worked rad.

AU: "Snakebeard" has had some really positive reactions all over Canada. Why do you think people have been responding so well to your music?

KC: I'm not exactly sure. I think there is something for everyone within the songs, from clean acoustic sections to evil heavy sections, and everything in between. I also think it is different than a lot of

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

stuff that is out there at the present time.

AU: Tell me about how the deal with Season of Mist came about.

CD: Our manager, Sean Palmerston, is good friend with the new label head in North America. We had another offer from a smaller less "metal" label. He brought this to us, and we knew what we wanted to do. To be honest, SOM was my first choice for the band personally. I am so fucking stoked to work with them...for real. Our record isn't even out yet and we have made some really, really good friends there...amazing people.

AU: What can we expect from the much-anticipated debut full length?

CD: Well, it's like the 7", only more grand, more organic. Same vibe as far as song length. More psychedelic/mythical lyrics, and Kenny's vocals are insane. In my opinion, the guy is leaps and bounds better than when we did the 7", which is saying a lot. The last track is gonna fuck people up...promise.

AU: What is your opinion of the Vancouver scene and how do you think Vancouver influences the type of music you make?

CD: It rules. Everyone is rad. Fucking period.

AU: What are the future plans for Ancients?

KC: Well we signed a deal with Season of Mist, so we plan on touring as much as we can afford, and writing music we love to play. That pretty much sums it up.

AU: Is there anything you would like to add?

CD: Our album, "Heart Of Oak", will be available through Season Of Mist on April 16th. My b-day, CD/Vinyl release show, is gonna be April 19th. This will get rad!

For more information, check Ancients out online:

<http://www.facebook.com/ANCIENTS>

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

EPI-DEMIC

By Allison Drinnan

Three good friends creating tunes together simply for the love of music seems rare these days. When the amount of Facebook likes you have, or the number retweets you receive, begin to define your band more than the power of your riffs – you’ve got a problem.

Calgary’s Epi-Demic, featuring bassist Kyle Hughes, guitarist/vocalist Adam Buttrey and drummer/vocalist Aaron Beaton, are crossover-thrash vets that have been doing what they love for nearly a decade. This means, according to the band: “No gimmickry. No bullshit. Just the music.”

In 2005, the three comrades came together with one inspired vision, according to Hughes: “To create violent crossover in the vein of the Crumbsuckers, DRI and Wehrmacht.”

Since then, Epi-Demic have released the 2006 demo, *The Plague Begins* and 2011’s full-length, *Madness*. These releases created a buzz in the local Calgary scene and the group was invited to play last year’s prestigious Noctis Metal Festival, rubbing elbows with legends such as Pig Destroyer, Venom and Manilla Road.

“It felt great to get on that stage and we savoured every second of it,” says Buttrey.

“We’ve put a lot of work into this band over the years,” he continues. “The bottom line is that we are committed to delivering our music in the way that we think it should be delivered.”

That delivery includes chaotic riffs and vocals “...spewed from a rotten, sickening place,” according to Hughes.

“We play loud. We play blisteringly fast, and we play crushingly slow,” says Buttrey.

Although Epi-Demic has been classified in genres all over the map, the most common term their name is associated with is crossover thrash.

Crossover is a lost art in the Alberta heavy music scene. Although there are both strong punk and metal communities in the province, there are few bands who can meet the needs of everyone somewhere in the middle.

Similar to their namesake, Epi-demic’s brand of crossover thrash is a type of music that mutates and changes over time, with the ability to accelerate rapidly into different areas, or genres, and spread.

“We play music with the no-quarter attitude of punk and combine it with the technicality and structure of metal,” explains Hughes. “This is all we can create.”

“Punishing songs that will incite fits of violence and force the crowd to withstand an insufferable showcase of noise and unflinching pain,” adds Hughes, describing how the sound translates live.

Fans of these fits of violence and abrasive showcases of noise have had to wait many years in between releases from Epi-Demic. Hughes explains that, like their sound, nothing in this band is forced.

“We like to write in a natural way, we never set aside time specifically to ‘write songs,’” says Hughes. “We do not rush things and we release recordings when they are to our standards and the album feels complete.”

CALGARY CARNAGE

Good news for fans – standards are beginning to be met by the group.

“We are working on finishing up songs for a new, as-of-yet untitled release. It is definitely our best material yet, in terms of songwriting and overall execution,” states Hughes. “It is a continuation of what we started with *The Plague Begins* and elaborated upon with *Madness*, but has a distinct sound.”

As distinct as the band’s sound is, so is their choice to keep moving forward as a trio. With many bands growing in size and cramming stages, three isn’t even nearly a crowd.

“We find playing as a three-piece provides us with the ability to make each instrument stand out as a separate entity. We would never consider adding any members and would never replace any,” says

Hughes. “We have found a happy medium that works for us and do not plan to change it.”

Staying true to their vision, Epi-Demic has made a strong name for themselves in Calgary after all of these years. According to Hughes, looking back or forward – they’re happy.

“[With] many shows, a demo and full-length behind us, we are continuing to spread our unique brand of metal/punk all these years later.”

For more information or to hear Epi-demic’s music, check them out online:

<http://epi-demic.bandcamp.com/>

<http://www.facebook.com/theplaguebegins13>



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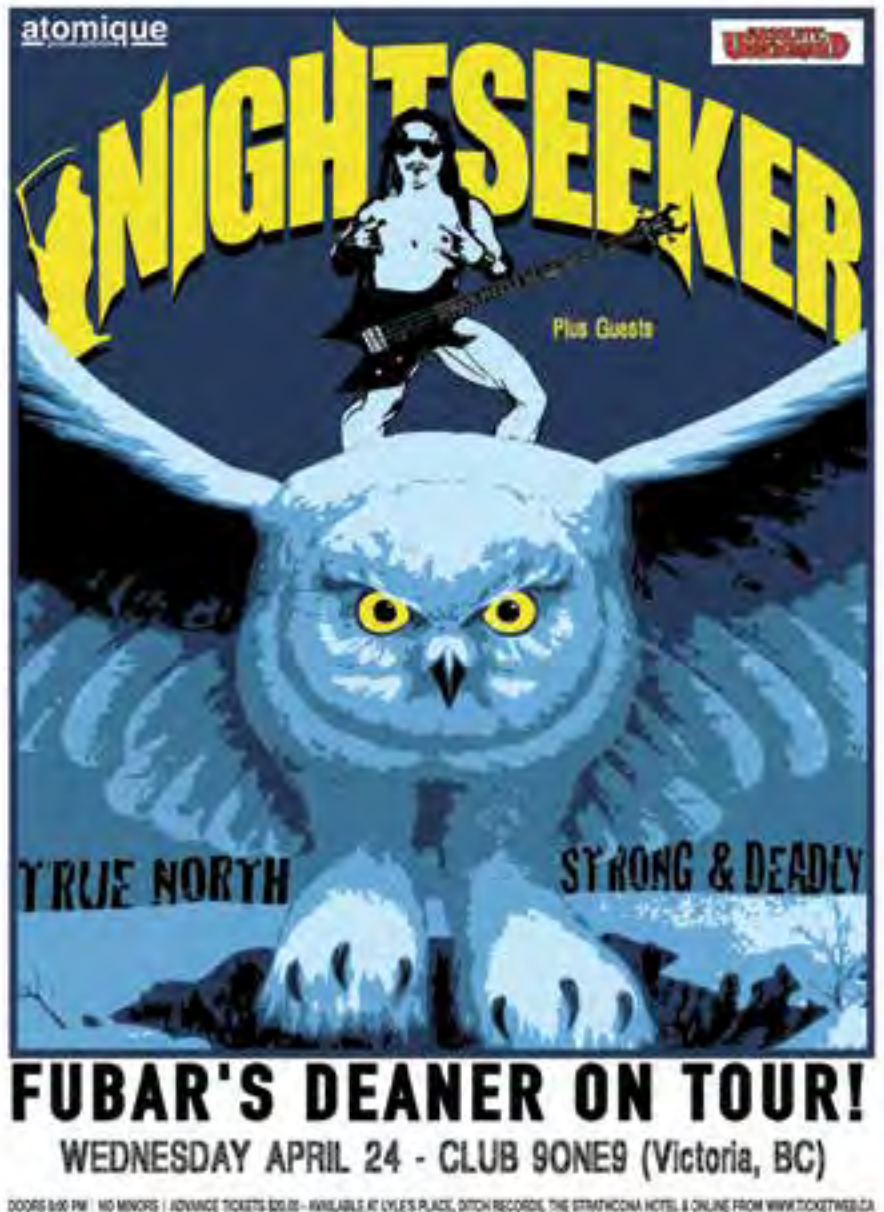
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INK SLINGERS



MN: It's a form of art that really immortalizes my artwork and peoples' ideas so it's a really long-lasting art form, and since I'd been into art from such a young age it was kind of a no-brainer for me, to rebel against everything everyone wanted me to do and do a good job at it.

AU: Do you have any particular artistic influences or inspirations?

MN: Art as far back as I can remember... simple things like growing up watching that Bob Ross guy on TV. Everything inspires art, all you've gotta do is open your eyes, really. I don't try to let any one style guide me, and that's why I tattoo the way I do, anything from portraiture to landscapes

to neo-traditional pieces, new-school pieces, there's not any one style that I only do. There's a huge influence in my artwork from Asian culture in general, as far as my tattooing goes, even if I'm doing like traditional-style tattoos I always tend to kinda end up adding a little bit of Asian flair to it, flows well with the body and whatnot. So you'll see a lot of that in my artwork.

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AU: You're currently tattooing at The Fall Tattoo & Gallery... what makes this place special, why do you like it?

MN: The Fall stands above the bar for most of

your traditional commercial tattoo shops. We're all pretty much custom artists... it's a huge space down here and a huge pool of talent. We all work well together, we cover from one end of the spectrum to the other as far as styles, from your black-and-grey portraiture to large-scale Asian pieces. Having the piggyback business thing here also with the art gallery downstairs is another huge selling feature to this place for me, because not only are we pooling our talent up here but downstairs we keep a pretty good flow of quality artists, all local artists for the most part... Lots of cool, different things going on here, the print shop downstairs brings in its own little side of clientele as well. The location's great...it's big, it's comfortable. Got a really good crew of people down here.

AU: What sort of music do you like to listen to while you tattoo?

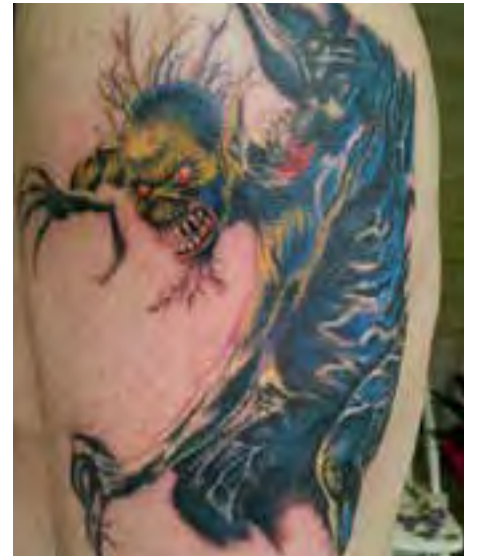
MN: Anything but rap, hip-hop and R&B. I'll listen to anything from folk music to country, metal, here we listen to quite a bit of metal, and classic rock, lot of reggae. Don't hear a lot of rap, definitely not on my playlist.

AU: Do you do any other kinds of art other than tattooing?

MN: Oh yeah, paint, drawing, art, portraiture. All of us down here are pretty much multi-faceted artists but a lot of us don't have the time to sit down and play with canvas but a few of us do. Emilio [Hidalgo] and I, we've got a couple canvases on the go, like compilation pieces that we're working on together. Right now we're doing kind of a charity fundraiser show where we're doing some tattoo-inspired artwork on some white Converse that they're going to auction off, it goes to a children's charity.

AU: Is there one tattoo you'd do for free? One you've always wanted to do?

MN: I've pretty much hit all those, which one do I want to do the most? I'd say the next one. The next big, bold custom tattoo. If I could choose anything it would probably be a real smart-ass slap in the face to tradition. You've got to go so far outside the goddamn box to do an original tattoo... I have a dripping, flaming, toilet-bowl ass-serpent on my arm and as crazy and unique as that is, I guarantee you that someone somewhere has another goddamn snake coming out of a toilet bowl. So I tell people, if you come up with something that I would feel comfortable



saying had never been done before, I'd probably do that one for free.

AU: What's the craziest tattoo request you've ever gotten?

MN: Again, it would be impossible for me to pick the craziest... I've tattooed inside eyelids to assholes and everything in between. I mean, people getting their junk tattooed, you always get throttled a little by that one but it doesn't phase me in the least, it really doesn't.

AU: Any future plans?

MN: Travel. More inspiration, make my world a little bit bigger, a little bit brighter... It's been a crazy ride for the last 20 years and I'd like to see the next 30 or 40 with just as many adventures. Become a better artist, you never stop growing in the art world.

AU: Any advice for aspiring artists?

MN: Work your ass off. Draw, draw, draw, don't

rely on the internet to give you everything that's existing, use your imagination. Try to become that one-of-a-kind artist, it's a huge world of artists out there... Get outside the box and draw your asses off!

Mike@TheFALLTattooing.com

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MIKE NASSAR

The Fall Tattooing and Gallery
Vancouver, BC

Interview by Willow Gamberg

AU: Who are you and where are you from?

Mike Nasser: I am Michael Nasser, the where I'm from part gets a little long: I'm Canadian, born in Montreal, but raised in South Texas... so the first 20-25 years of my life was in Texas.

AU: How long have you been an artist?

MN: As far back as I can remember, like drawing stuff in the sand as a small child... but tattooing, better part of 20 years I've been in or around the industry I guess.

AU: What got you interested in tattooing?





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D.O.A.

The Final Interview

By Anita Fixx

D.O.A... what self-respecting punk hasn't heard of them? Or been to one of their shows and sang along to classics like "Fucked Up Ronnie"? Now, after over 30 years of practically non-stop touring, Joey "Shithead" Keithley is bowing out to try his hand at provincial politics. I wish him the best of luck. Here is what may very well be one of the last interviews where he talks about a new album and the state of punk rock today. So sit back, read and absorb the words of wisdom from a veteran of the Vancouver punk scene.

Absolute Underground: You guys have been around since 1978 playing shows, so why are you stopping now?

Joe Keithley: Well, I'm entering into formal politics, running for the NDP in Coquitlam, which is a suburb of Vancouver.

AU: Related to that, was this something that you ever thought of doing before? Years earlier?

You know, before I started D.O.A., I went to Simon Fraser University to become a civil rights lawyer. And obviously by the time I was 20, I got sidetracked playing music for the next 30 years or so. But I've always been political, since age 16, and I believe in trying to change the world to be a better place. So D.O.A has been one way of doing that... if I do get elected that would be a natural transition, to try to make some positive change in this world.

AU: So you studied to be a lawyer before starting a band?

Well that was my goal throughout high school, to become a lawyer. It didn't last long because it started to get successful with the band very quickly, right? So I didn't even come close to finishing my degree but that's what I wanted

to do all through high school. But I loved music so that was fine. I have a fresh perspective on politics which a lot of politicians don't have, right?

I've been trying to change the system from outside the mainstream and now if I do get elected it would be my chance to change it from the inside.

AU: So getting back to the music side, you guys have toured all across North America and beyond, so what shows or memories stand out the most?

JK: Probably the best thing, the fondest memories, would be some of the benefit shows that we did. For example, BTO did one in 1990 to raise money for an ambulance in Soweto, South Africa. You know, apartheid was still going on. There was a lot of people getting hurt fighting

the police and the army so we raised money to buy an ambulance through Oxfam directly to that town. And we did another with Bryan Adams, the pop star, and that helped with the government changing the rules about pollution in the pulp and paper industry here in B.C. So just stuff like that, I could go on for hours but I'd end up losing my voice.

AU: Cool, so I wanted to ask, what do you think of punk nowadays? Is it still relevant?

JK: Sure, certain parts of it. To me, you get what you might call "mall punk" or commercial punk that they play on commercial radio stations. That's

not all bad...I mean, a lot of it doesn't have that much heart or much guts to it. My thing is not so much caring about the music particularly; I like all sorts of music. But I think the cool thing about punk is the attitude that you gotta think for yourself and effect some positive change and also of course, do-it-yourself, the D.I.Y ethic. Punk did all sorts of good work with helping people out, protesting wars and militarism... that kinda thing. It's definitely alive and well. The commercial side

of it is a lot bigger than the underground side of it. Back in the early days when we were starting out there was no commercial side to it. It was all underground, right?

AU: Are you going to continue with the record label?

JK: Yeah, the record label is still going, for sure.

AU: I also wanted to ask, in the new album you collaborate with artists like Jello and Hugh Dillion so what gave you the idea to do that? How did it happen?

JK: Well, I wrote the song "We Occupy" and Biafra is an old friend of mine so I sent the track and asked if he would sing on it and he did. Then he sent me one of his tracks, it's called "Shock-

upy". It's on the new EP by The Guantanamo School of Medicine so my vocals are on there. I thought it would cool...people like to hear different voices. And there's Billy Talent, he did a really good job on "Do You Wanna" and of course, Hugh Dillion. He's great on "Boneyard" right? So we just thought it would spice it up. Make it more interesting.

AU: So you've written songs like "Occupy" and "General Strike" so what do you think of the new grassroots movement Idle No More?

JK: I believe that these movements like Occupy and Idle No More are great things for awakening people to what's going on. These movements may not last or likely will transition into an offshoot movement, but they give a much wider public platform to issues of great concern.

AU: What do you think of Canadian politics right now? It seems to be more polarized with the Liberals hardly existing, so what do you think of that?

JK: I don't think it's that extreme. I think you get more extreme politics in the United States.

The problem is you get one party that's in the centre and the other one, the Republicans, are all the way to the right! Obviously the Conservatives are right-wing...but you know the Prime Minister is not a good Prime Minister at all, Stephan Harper. He lacks compassion and he lacks the ability to listen to the people, which I think are two great prerequisites for being a politician so he's failing miserably at both of



those. He's destroying environmental laws and I'm an environmentalist so that's terrible. They're running ads around the clock because they get donations from oil companies. So he's terrible. But on the left side the NDP are not extremely to the left. They're just middle of road. The Liberals

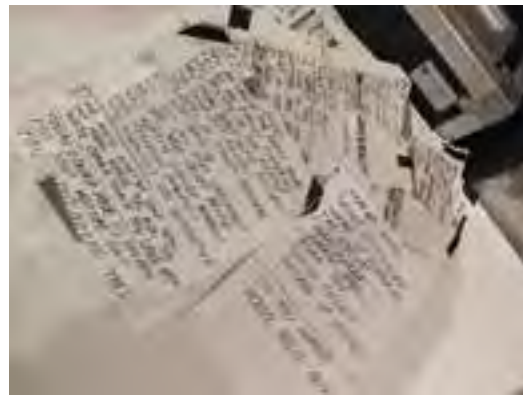
will probably make a comeback of some sort. Probably not all the way but still if they get Justin Trudeau as a leader...whether he knows anything or not. Because I don't think he knows a lot. He's living off his dad's name.

AU: Any last words you want to say?

JK: Be your own boss, think for yourself and try to effect some positive change in this

world. In other words, talk minus action equals zero. And if people want to keep track of what I'm doing they can visit SuddenDeath.com

Farewell, Mr. Shithead!



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Absolute Underground's Erik Lindholm talks to drummer Keith Sierra of New Orleans-based metal band haarp about their new album, Husks.

Absolute Underground: First and foremost, thanks for taking the time for the interview. Set the scene for the reader, where are you and what is on the go?

Keith Sierra: Right now I am in New Orleans preparing to hit the road for 9 shows in the U.S. We will be joining Down and Warbeast on the road. Our album, "Husks", came out on September 18th, so we will be playing the entire album at the shows.

AU: Speaking to the animal theme of the song names on the record... as a listener how should one approach the record, what is the concept?

KS: Thematically and lyrically, this album is about awakenings and realizations. It features several characters that have reached or are reaching a crucial moment in their lives and how they deal with that moment. Self-perception, accepting of one's self, including flaws, and being realistic about who they are. The themes tie in with a poem and a short story. There are a few clues in the album's art which will lead to the poem and the short story has a very similar title.

As for people who are not into that aspect of music and do not care about any message but only want to listen to the music, we hope they just listen, take it in and of course, headbang!

AU: The cover features a prominent tree in the centre of a field, looking foggy and ominous.

Where is this, and what significance does it hold in relation to the record?

This tree is located in a field in St. Bernard, Louisiana, outside of New Orleans. Trees can be found in the lyrics for each song on the album, as well as the poem and short story.

The tree from the cover stands alone in a foggy, dreamlike state. That ties into the awakenings of the characters and how they alone can choose their path.

AU: This record was recorded at "Nodferatu's Lair" in New Orleans, with Phil. What did this studio environment add to the record and the writing process for you as a band?

KS: The album was written outside of the studio in our own practice room. As for recording, The Lair is a great environment for working because of the calm, stress-free nature of the studio. There is little in the way of time constraints and pressure which actually leads to us finishing more quickly and efficiently. It is relaxed, friendly, and has a fun atmosphere. There is also always plenty of beer!

AU: Since touring the last record, how has the exposure and knowledge of the band changed?

KS: We have gained new fans in each city we have played. Judging by merch sold and the increase in the activity on our band's internet page, we have done well. With the new album, there was a good

deal more interest and buzz behind the album's writing and release.

AU: Who do you want to tour with next, and where do you have your sights on?

KS: We leave soon to go with Down and Warbeast, and that is always a great time. Besides being good friends, we get to watch a great show every night. As for other bands that we would like to tour with, the list is possibly endless. We would like to hit the west coast in the U.S. and are really itching to go to Europe.

AU: Spiritually, morally, financially, are you healing post-Katrina, post-oil spill, post-fucking-everything?

KS: Yes, we are all doing fine. You have to have thick skin to get on down here and fortunately, we do. Everyone works together and unites

two albums, while worlds apart, both capture a very specific feel through their music, lyrics, and artwork. They each create a small world which you can get lost in during the album's play. They ebb and flow musically, they draw you in with their feel and lyrics, and the artwork reflects the mood. Just overall well-thought out, complete albums!

AU: Europe is the new Vietnam, according to EYEHATEGOD. Any plans to invade the "New Vietnam" in the near future?

KS: We'd love to play Europe as soon as possible and are working on that for next year. As for response, we receive orders and compliments through our band's computer page that makes it seem that Europe enjoys our music and wants us to visit. Hopefully we get to do so soon.



through the common misfortunes. We're no different than anywhere else, our trials are just of a different variety. It would not be fair to people anywhere else for us to hang our heads and feel sorry for ourselves. So, we continue on and enjoy the things we have.

AU: Name an album which in full concept (ie: packaging, art, lyrics, liner notes, distribution, music) has captured and enamoured you in recent memory and why.

KS: Recently I'd have to say Porcupine Tree's "The Incident" and U2's "Rattle and Hum". Those

AU: Shout down to the fans and metalheads... Parting words?

KS: To all fans of metal - Keep listening and enjoying metal! Headbang like it's the last song you'll ever hear!

AU: Much thanks to haarp for the music and the interview!

-Erik Lindholm

For more information, check haarp out online:

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Edge of Attack

Catastrophe C interviews Grande Prairie's Edge of Attack on their new album, life as they know it and death if they had to choose.

Absolute Underground: Tell me about the band, how did it all come about?

Edge of Attack: Jurekk started the band about four years ago and it kind of evolved like a puzzle. People came and went: Roxanne joined about a year and a half ago, and then Dallas around 9 months ago. Things finalized from there to the point where we're releasing our new self-titled album on February 19th.

AU: Your new album is on Spread the Metal Records, how was that whole experience?

EOA: It was nice that we were able to record it (relatively) slowly, because Jurekk has the studio / equipment at home. It took about two months,

which may not sound like much from start-to-finish. For actual recording time, it's more than a lot of bands would take when they're just going into a studio for a couple of days. We're also really excited to have worked with some guest vocalists on the album. Ryan Bovaird is a good friend from Hallows Die. They were around on tour and we thought his style of vocals was perfect for "The Damned". Our collaboration with PelleK came about because we were watching the DragonForce auditions and were really impressed by him, so it was really exciting to have him on vocals for "Set the World Aflame".

AU: How about shows? Where did you play last? What will people hear at a show?

EOA: Our last show was at a place called The Studio, in Edmonton – it was a lot of fun. Dallas hadn't done vocals in a while and we told him to stop if he wasn't feeling it but he just kept going which was great. There are definitely some songs

we play more often in concert and some songs we hardly ever play at all. For instance we don't typically play those songs that feature guest vocalists. If we could play those songs the same way without them, then we wouldn't have sought guest vocals in the first place.

AU: What's coming up next for EOA? New songs? Tour plans?

EOA: Yeah we have pretty much... almost another full album worth of newer songs, in addition to the album we're releasing now. We're constantly writing new material and coming up with new ideas.

We're also releasing a video we made for "In Hell" and planning a Canada-wide album release tour; it will probably start sometime in late April and run into May.

Exact dates and locations are still TBA, but we're going to try and visit all the major cities in the country – play at least 4 or 5 dates in Ontario for instance. We definitely want to play at Spread the Metal's festival in Halifax this summer.

AU: Death by electric chair, lethal injection, firing squad or hanging?

Dallas: Firing squad
Denver: Lethal injection
Jurekk: Hanging
Trevor & Roxanne: Electric chair

AU: Any famous last words?
EOA: You'll Never Take Me Alive!!
-By Catastrophe C

SHR-EDMONTON

For more information, check out Edge of Attack online at:

<http://www.edgeofattack.com/>

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WILT

'Colder than the Coldest Cold Times Infinity'

Interview with Brett Goodchild & Jordan Dorge by Charley Justice

Winnipeg is cold – colder than your town. Don't

even try. And so by definition we must make the most blackest of black metal – right? Hmm... well a definite maybe. Winnipeg has always seemed like it should rightly be essentially the BM capital of the universe...but a glance at the past comes up rather conspicuously empty (with a few obvious and definite exceptions). Not for some time has anything genuinely black or boldly grim hovered terrifyingly over this frozen plain. Wilt – a newly-emerged and quickly prominent black metal duo – are here to change that. Having just recently unleashed a self-titled debut album that is soon to be released on vinyl, Wilt are treading the early grey months of 2013 with an ominous

momentum...

Absolute Underground: Paint the picture - a brief history of Wilt?

Jordan Dorge: Wilt came to be around 2010, as an idea... At the time it was just me, but as the months progressed I had been watching Brett's projects and really enjoyed his writing style, so I asked him if he would be interested. We started as a DSBM but we quickly shifted gears to make something that we both enjoy. Now here we are in 2012 with a well-received debut, it's overwhelming, all the positive response we have received with this album. It makes us eager to record a follow-up.

AU: Categorize your music as specifically subgenre as possible.

JD: Atmospheric Black Metal...though we've been called Cascadian Black Metal

AU: Describe the writing process, what's the creative dynamic between you two?

Brett Goodchild: I'll basically sit down and write the songs, put them together and Jordan will let his imagination run wild.

AU: Describe the coldest, most unfortunate possible situation.

JD: We actually wrote a song about this haha, the song "Cold Misfortune" is about a guy who is over-prepared for the worst case scenario survival situation, but ultimately the cold, frozen forest becomes his tomb. I personally think that would be the ultimate swan song of sorts.

AU: Any story behind the name?

BG: The story behind the name is simple; I wanted the music to make you feel melancholy and feel a sense of loss. So I thought "Wilt" would be perfect, in the situation of a flower dying and wilting away...it's relative to our songs.

AU: Namedrop some main influences?

WRETCHED WINNIPEG

BG: Woods of Ypres, Winterfylleth, Worm Ouroboros, Sunn O))) and Pelican.

JD: Pallbearer, Loss, Bell Witch, Antediluvian, Mutilation Rites, Swallow the Sun and Insomnium (many, many more).

AU: I notice the record is dedicated to David Gold...

BG: David was a friend of mine. I had done some artwork for him, for his label and Woods of Ypres. We had a working relationship as well as friendship. The song "Autumn Veil" was written as a result of his death and as my way to deal with losing a friend.

JD: Yeah, the 2-3 times Woods of Ypres came to town, I let them stay at my house and they were great company. I chatted with Dave about a lot of stuff and we connected on a personal level. Fantastic guy, we will miss him dearly.

AU: Describe black metal in five words or less.

BG: Cold, deprived, sorrowful, hopelessness

AU: Plans for live shows? A tour?

JD: The plan for live shows is minimal, but that's not to say that we don't plan on doing it. We intend to do small festival tours and one-off shows in various cities.

AU: And in 2013 for Wilt...?

BG: In 2013 we intend to continue work on our full-length album, which will feature some tracks from the current album but re-recorded, and then with 3-4 additional tracks and hopefully more vinyl releases.

To hear tracks from Wilt's debut album, check out their bandcamp: <http://wiltmanitoba.bandcamp.com/>

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An Interview with

AMANDA MCLEOD

By Matt Gordon

Absolute Underground: What's your favorite skatepark?

Amanda McLeod: Good ol' Lang Park, it's my other home down the street... cuddled that concrete to sleep on a few occasions.

AU: Haha, I knew it... What's a trick you're stoked on right now?

AM: Oh jeez, I'm all about the backside flips but I'm trying to get backside nose blunts back right now.

AU: What's the best thing about skating?

AM: Having a good time at the same time as surrounding myself with rad people. Landing a trick to get the boys stoked is also a sweet feeling. Haha, it just makes me feel good all around.

AU: How long have you been skating?

AM: Around four years now I think, it's hard to keep track when you're having fun.

AU: Nice. How many skate trophies do you have?

AM: Haha oh yeah... I remember you going off about those when you were at my place. I don't even know, six I believe, and a few medals.

AU: That's dope, sounds like you're the Queen of Langpark. Ever punch anyone out at the park?

AM: Getting into the dirty stuff eh... well I have had a few encounters at the park, almost punched out an guy for harassing me, and some sixteen-year-old broad tried to fight me for "looking at her" last summer, but I'm better than that.

AU: That's badass, the last fight I was in was just before Christmas and it was more like me getting punched in the face for running my mouth... I thought the guy was still 10 feet away when I hit the ground... What's your favorite sugary treat?

AM: Ohhh anyone that knows me knows I love candy, the sugary stuff, cotton candy, sour keys and sour mandarins. Mmm, I need to find my stash now. Oooh and pop rocks!

AU: I feel ya on the sugar thing, I'm like cookie monster. I could always sympathize with his addiction. I mean, I'm pretty sure cookies are the strongest shit they have on Sesame Street. How long have you been reading Absolute Underground?

AM: Aside from flipping through the pictures to check out the BC SmokeShop babes, I pretty much just read your interviews in there. Don't get me wrong though, I'm a real good reader, but I'd much rather go out and skate.





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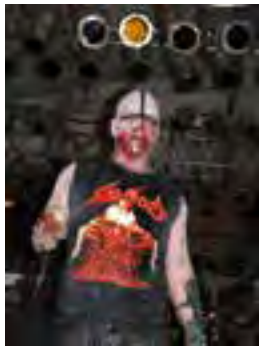
in the hot tub at midnight with female black metal fans. Sipping a martini while taking in live death metal... yes, the combination works.

Miami: Stillborn birthplace of death metal

The AU experience started in Miami, on the 2nd of December with a wild show at Central featuring headliners Municipal Waste and Napalm Death

as they finished out a long tour throughout the States. Your AU crew for this whole adventure is Brydo, Mike, Ira, Erik and Sarah. Nestled deep in a shitty area of Miami (it was no South Beach) there were people from across the world arriving for the Barge and local metal fans were sizing each other up and making connections. "Terror Shark" for full effect. Both bands blew it up large!

After a quick trip on foot to photograph local graffiti and get harassed by meth junkies, we returned to the hotel for some 3 a.m. delivery beer and pizza. And before we knew it, we were ripping down the highway at top speed in our rented Mustang GT with calypso on the stereo and pulling into the glory of the largest cruise ship pier on the continent.



Set It Up, Knock It Down

This was a magical journey into uncharted musical territory. It goes like this: take a full-size cruise ship, fill it with 40 extreme metal bands (each playing two shows) and crew, put 1200 rabid fans in the mix, a few thousand litres of alcohol with five star food and send it into international waters for a five-day experience across two countries. Sound like a good show so far? Damn straight it does.

Starting in Miami, Florida and winding up in Nassau, Bahamas before doubling back to the States, Barge to Hell explored that delicate balance of cruise ship luxury and circle-pit aggression. You can't quite put your finger on it: the decadent food and accommodations against the deafening sound and headbanging. Lounging



Day One: Your Papers, Please.

After passing through the maze of lineups and security checks, showing passports and being issued our "bar card" (which will get you in your room and buy you drinks 24 hours a day throughout the ship... dangerous!) we set sail. Now, keep in mind this type of event with these type of bands has never happened on this scale before. The staff and the fans are anxious - waiting for someone to set the tone. The lines are cast off; the ship sets sail in the early afternoon. After a practice abandon ship drill, where we wind up sitting next to SEPULTURA, it's time to kick it off.

Come 5:30 p.m., the ship is rolling back and forth in open seas, and Rob Dukes and EXODUS open the festival with a sick thrash set in the inner stage. The combination of drinking, circle-pits and movement of the seas is too much for some rookies. The cleaners move in as soon as the smoke clears.

KAMPFAR is next with black metal style at the tiny lounge stage. The crowd migrates throughout the ship, grabbing beers from numerous bars along the way. This is the theme for the rest of the cruise... movement to the next band,

the next stage, the next beer! ENSLAVED delivers a spacy set, SODOM brings classic thrash, and BEHEMOTH tears it massively. This is the band to witness on this cruise. Unmatched synchronized vengeance, all are in awe. Frontman Nergal is coming back from cancer with something to prove. All-star grinders LOCKUP and Brazilian deathers KRISIUN follow before faceplanting into bed, in a haze of Foster's Lager and jet lag.



Day Two: Full-Speed

Look at it this way: bands start at 10 a.m. and finish at 5 a.m. daily. There is free reign of the ship. There is no "VIP section" - it's all mixed in with cabins, bars and food. The whole ship is a fucking "VIP" section. No elevator music to be found. Bolt Thrower and Carcass on the PA. Merch section is huge; all bands repping shirts and one-offs. You'll see me in MUNICIPAL WASTE shorts. There is a great sense of community to this setup, as bands can interact with fans and check out their favourite influential bands.

Want to have a beer with that drummer and ask questions? Go for it. Party as hard as you can. Try it.

Waking up at some point, eating buffet, and it's time for MORGOTH, LOUDBLAST and SACRED REICH at the pool deck in the afternoon. You don't even have to move to see tons of bands.

The rest of the day follows with scheduled video interviews with all kinds of bands. Hell, you can catch most of 'em walking around and pull them aside anyways. Topics of conversation range from being a vegan on the road (Barney from NAPALM DEATH), legalizing marijuana in Colorado (thanks HAVOK), to what keeps you focused and razor-sharp in life (SEPULTURA). Signings provide opportunity to get signatures on just about anything you can think of (records, shirts, boobs) with all bands available.

Shows follow with CORROSION OF CONFORMITY running classic crossover on the pooldeck, NAPALM DEATH grindcoring everything, grim black metal gods MAYHEM fogging and feedbacking the shit out of a grateful crowd. Down tools for a minute and listen. AT THE GATES' "Slaughter Of The Soul" is a "top 10 metal record" and when it's live, it's showing you just how death metal should work. Vocalist Tomas Lindberg destroyed the crowd under the moonscape, with twin Bjarlers windmilling amidst red lights. As we were still standing, SEPULTURA brought both "Arise"-era and new material to knock the crowd down. They are tight as a nun in yoga class



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– even “post-Max”, you complainers. In case you managed to stay awake, POSSESSED, deadly Swedes GRAVE and ROTTING CHRIST delivered. It’s 4 a.m.

Day Three: Bahamas Dreaming

Nassau, Bahamas is the port of call. The AU crew is scheduled to check out a snorkel sailboat adventure in the afternoon with the morning devoted to exploring. Breakfast finds us eating spicy sausage and grits at the local cafe located past the lines of tourist stores. The heat hits; it’s 35 degrees of sun. We just came from winter Canada and have lost the fight with liquor for two days straight. Amidst 19th century colourful brick buildings and a giant funeral procession (for Olympic gold medallist Thomas Augustus “Tom” Robinson, we later find out) is the outstanding pirate museum. Piracy and slavery run deep; Nassau is blooded and based in grim, murderous history. Worth a visit.

Next move: snorkel boat. A full-size catamaran takes us off the coast of the island to listen to reggae, enjoy the sun and swim with the fishes. Diver Brydo put his GoPro to good use with awesome footage of girl bikini butts along with clownfish, parrotfish and other brightly hued creatures. After drying off and heading in for port, the 151 rum came out and



the fruit punches went down. Before you know it, the stereo is pumping and we have Erik and fellow metalheads giving our best “Gangnam Style” alongside five of the Caribbean crew members, to great effect. If you thought you could take yourself seriously and be elitist on a cruise metal vacation, have another drink and think again.

After buying an owl carved from a tree limb, we finish the trip with fresh conch salad and some strong-assed custom coconut drinks at Senor Frog’s. An impossible fun machine; you simply plunk down 20\$ and a crafty bartender takes the top off a coconut with a machete, drains the juice and fills it with a litre worth of custom rum, punch and juice mix, which takes all your edges off. We collaborate with fellow Bangers on the bands to see before getting back on the boat. Saxophones play. Where next to conquer?

Before you know, we are at sea again and night has fallen. MONSTROSITY and MORGOTH launch us back into orbit. Two awesome live performances follow: the rare doom of PARADISE LOST and classic heavy progressive SANCTUARY of Seattle. The voice of Warrel Dane is haunting and killer! I let him know with vodka shots post-show. Catch half of thrash upstarts BONDED BY BLOOD’s set; together with HAVOK and MUNICIPAL WASTE, we’ve got the modern American thrash movement aboard.

Look at the time... AT THE GATES v.2 – so good. SACRED REICH covering “War Pigs” and superb Canadian black metallers NECRONOMICAN round out the night. After hitting the casino and watching drunk fans butcher 1980s pop songs at karaoke stage, it’s time to crash out.

Day Four: Break your Neck

Waking up to buffet breakfast and more interviews,

we chat with KRISIUN (Brazil 2014 soccer trip!), HOLY MOSES (they spill liquor all over the ship’s grand piano, whoops), MUNICIPAL WASTE and legends C.O.C. It’s the last day of performances; artists are fully loving the unique experience: it feels like a vacation instead of the grind of touring. Probably the best attended event of the whole Barge is the bellyflop contest. They take the biggest guys and make ‘em jump into the pool. Makes Seaworld look like a joke with the thunderclap of bellyflesh smacking the water.

ROTTING CHRIST round out the afternoon before it’s time for a four-course dining experience with choice prime rib and fine champagne. AU and our Barge friends crack into a deluxe feed! As soon as the last dessert fork hits the plate, we are off for more beers and shows: SOILWORK, HAVOK, SEPULTURA, BEHEMOTH, SODOM!

Just like they started it, EXODUS is the band that finishes it. Those crazy fools rented tuxedos from the ship and brought thrash on the pool deck while looking handsome. “Bonded By Blood” - bonded by metal!

Day Five: Depart

Some very sorry-looking fans and artists alike are forced to depart by noon. Everyone is hungover and haggard; and saying goodbye is tough. New friendships were made for everyone onboard. And the thousands of empties are offloaded just in time for the ship to reload and depart that afternoon for a “normal cruise” with regular people. This experience set the bar for cruise lifestyle and after this, the idea of a “normal cruise” is out the window.

We roll through South Beach and Cuban Town in Miami while killing time before the flight. Art deco architecture and sick cars, fake-titted blonde women and high-end hotels: Miami is just like the movies.

Finish Them

While the turnout could have been larger on the boat (capacity crowd would have been 2000), the festival was a huge success, given how much co-ordination had to take place for the international bands, press and fans to unite for five days of real metal. What incredible camaraderie and fast friendship is rapidly achieved by being at sea and united by common interests (loud music and cold beer). This write-up does not come close to doing it justice. Cheers to the organizers: Andy Piller and Ultimate Music Cruises team for masterminding the original and obscene event and to Allison Painchaud for getting AU onboard. Hardworking press co-coordinator team David Hartmann and Björn von Oettingen of cmm GmbH. Prost!



5 days, 40 bands, 80 shows, 600\$ on the bar: girls, booze, metal, snorkeling, moshing, gambling, t-bone steaks – figure it out. See you next year.

-By Erik Lindholm

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Changing Of The Guard

By Pauly Hardcore

This marks the 50th issue of Absolute Underground; mad respect to Ira Hunter, Chad Persley and everyone involved in getting this little paper off the ground, and into the hands of the underground from coast to coast. It started and has remained a freely available publication and for that, the crew behind it truly is deserving of praise. What started as a way to bring the underground music scene in Victoria to the attention of those unfamiliar, has now turned into 50+ pages of features on bands and artists from across the country, who you would be hard pressed to find coverage on in any other circulated paper. It is truly a labour of love and by maintaining the "freely available" format, they are making innumerable sacrifices by way of both the volunteering of time, and also the up front costs

only the generous support from all sponsors and advertisers in order to maintain that format. It is a delicate balance and the AU crew walk it like an experienced tightrope performer.

When I began writing for this publication 5+ years ago, I noticed that, while "hardcore" was in the header, I rarely ever saw coverage on this scene. Before I could even suggest it, Ira bestowed upon me a "section" in the magazine devoted to hardcore, of which I could curate to my liking. Over the years I have featured so many bands now that I have trouble recalling them all. Some of my highlights would have to include interviews with both Damian and Mike [pink eyes & 10,000 marbles] of Fucked Up, Phil Anselmo, Russ Rankin of Good Riddance and all the amazing local bands I have had the privilege of working with as both a promoter in Victoria with the Vancouver Island Hardcore Punk society and with the magazine.

It all goes hand in hand, and it truly feels like a community working together. At times there are definitely struggles, and unfortunately for the last few years interest in the

live music experience is waning. It is hard to put a finger on exactly why we are having this drastic drop in attendance to shows, most noticeable when our annual Festival rolls around. Constantly rising transit/ferry costs coupled with increased restrictions on venues that try to accommodate "all-ages" events (just recently, legislation was passed that any liquor-primary licensed establishment is now restricted from hosting all-ages events) which, in a city where there is already a severe venue crisis, eliminates numerous options once available and places an immense amount of pressure and overhead costs on something that, in my years of experience, rarely manages to break even and if it did, it's a huge success.

This year, I have experienced so many changes in my life that I have had to come to the decision of resigning my position within the VIHC Society and to permanently discontinue further show

HARDCORE ALLEY

wishing more information on the Vancouver Island Hardcore Society I urge to visit the website at www.vihc.net and contact Troy Lemberg [dalamar501@gmail.com] for information on becoming more involved in the scene here in Victoria – he is the current president of the VIHC society and also curates "the action Index" on CFUV 101.9 fm Thursday evenings from 6:30-8pm. I also hope that the annual festival, VIHC Fest continues to take place and I am sure any help in the organizing and execution of this event would be greatly appreciated. The time I spent with my friends organizing VIHC Fest 5 through VIHC Fest 8 generated memories I will cherish a lifetime, and wouldn't trade them for anything in the world.

Hardcore is something I will always hold dear, and continue to support and write about. Hopefully the younger kids will feel a sense of urgency in coming together, taking the torch and carrying on by starting bands, organizing shows, volunteering time and resources in order to keep this scene alive. I strongly urge anyone reading this who has any sort of inkling to volunteer and take part, to not hesitate to do so. I plunged myself in the deep end when I got involved, and met some of the most passionate people and am proud to call them friends. The relationships that were built will last a lifetime and, despite my absence from the hands-on organizing, I will always feel a long-term connection to Van Isle Hardcore and only hope to see more fresh faces, and more amazing concerts for years to come.

I've heard rumblings of a few real killer hardcore shows that may make their way to Van Isle in 2013, so stay tuned on the website/forums at VIHC.net or check out the facebook page for the VIHC society - www.facebook.com/pages/Vancouver-Island-Hardcore-Punk-Society/ for all the latest news and info regarding happenings within the VIHC.

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Dead When I Found Her

Exploring "Rag Doll Blues"

By Ed Sum

Dead When I Found Her's second album, "Rag Doll Blues" is a modern tour-de-force of musical expression—an electronic industrial sound—by frontman Michael Holloway, an artist based in Portland, Oregon. His main source of inspiration is Skinny Puppy, though other early favourites that shaped his music include Project Pitchfork, Kalte Farben and Haujobb.

To compose for movies is "the next level" up, a common goal for many industrial musicians. And it's a hard bracket to get into. But for his faithful followers, he says that there is definitely a fear of just playing the same set to the same people over and over. Eventually, they may get sick of it.

Ed Sum of Absolute Underground speaks to this artist about what else helped propel this musician to where he is now.

AU: What can you tell me about yourself that hasn't been said before?

Michael Holloway: My life outside of industrial music is pretty varied and all over the map. I worked for years doing residential mental health counseling, but now I work in Immigration as a case manager.

Absolute Underground: How has that permeated into your work?

MH: I think it's inevitable that it shapes or changes your outlook on life in general, in innumerable ways. It certainly creates a new sense of relativity about what is 'normal' and what isn't. I think it's possible that my professional life has, in some ways, shaped who I am, which inevitably will then play a role in how I express myself artistically.

AU: The emotional depth that you explore in the album "Rag Doll Blues" is spectacularly wild. From the haunting opening track, "No More Nightmares" to the pop track, "Lesser Light," what made you decide to go for this range of exposition?

MH: When it comes to making my own music, I'm looking to do the same thing—to make something expansive, something you can get lost in, though I think that the understated style of the vocals can make the songs feel cold and distant. But even detachment as a constructed, artistic expression can be a powerful thing—Kraftwerk certainly showed us that.

AU: How did you come up with the album title, "Rag Doll Blues"?

MH: It started as a play on the song "Road House Blues" by The Doors, but became its own concept after that, since I could connect it directly with the childhood themes of the album.

AU: What is so special about the "old school" industrial sound that you like?

MH: The best old-school industrial always walked this line between musical beauty and inaccessible horror. Take "Love in Vein," it's both a dirge-like slab of suffocating darkness, but also intensely beautiful, with gorgeous musical elements that creep in and carry the song into a heartbreaking climax.

AU: What can you say is unique in your sound, for new listeners?

MH: The DWIFH "sound" has the old-school feel, but approaches it with a lot of "pop" structures, too. My songs always have to have a very musical, melodic element to them. In fact, it's hard for me to write truly "heavy" music. My instincts always force me into adding a hook melody or just something that softens things a bit.

When I wrote "New Age of Reason", I was specifically thinking that this song is the most accessible—something immediately danceable and catchy.

AU: What would you say makes going to one of your live performances special?

MH: The shows provide a chance to hear a 'vintage' style of industrial performed today—a sound that isn't being played anywhere else these days. The horror-movie clips add to the flavor. I usually like to add some details to songs that weren't there [before]. So far, it's worked quite well, but there is a lot of room to expand and evolve the live shows, for sure.

For more information on Dead When I Found Her, check them out online:

<http://dwifh.com/home/>

<http://www.facebook.com/deadwhenifoundher>

ARTIST PROFILE



connoisseur of the dark manipulation world. He has been known to combine beautiful images with sinister undertones to create hauntingly beautiful masterpieces.

"I first became interested in photo/horror manipulation when I started seeing the work of Patrick Byers showing up in my hometown," says Nic. "He was the first person to introduce me to Photoshop."

Nic believes a natural talent and true connection to one's self are needed in order to create art.

"A true connection to yourself is needed before anything else."

Nic believes that a person can achieve anything they want to if they believe in themselves. He is a strong supporter of dedication and passion as vital tools for any artist.

Nic's biggest wish for his art is that it inspires others and helps people when possible. His one piece of advice for up and coming artists is, "To not create art for anyone other than yourself."

I got a chance to ask Nic how it feels to be inside his head and how things in his daily life are affected by his need to create the dark, twisted art we all adore.

He said, "I cannot do anything without it triggering some kind of response that is created by being an artist or from being so buried in my art."

He draws inspiration from everything- from the editing of a magazine cover to the color temperature of the lights in the produce section of the grocery store. This is a man who is fully and completely entrenched in his art.

So how does he do it all? I had a chance to chat with him about his process and here are a few words:

"I'm really laid back and try to keep my shoots really chill so everyone can bring out their most creative sides. I don't like to take hundreds of photos per shoot, I like to take a couple then change what I don't like and build from there. This process usually leaves me with less than 20 photos per shoot. To me, Photoshop is an extension of my camera and, more so, my mind. When I plan a concept,

I usually already know what I want to add or do to the image. I refuse to use the premade actions or presets in Photoshop," he continues.

"I like the up-close, hands-on detail, and the individuality each image takes on by not using a formula or preset process."

Nic is constantly looking for new collaborations. He welcomes a quick email with an idea and works with people from there. He responds to my question about his favourite project:

"That is a hard one. I'd have to say my collaboration with Andy Hartmark earlier this year, as he has been a huge inspiration since I started. And the other would be my recent shoot for Oddmonton.ca. It was amazing to see, hold, and learn so much about such interesting stuff."

Nic has worked with many of the talented individuals in Edmonton and all over the world as well. He is always



drawing up new concepts and ideas. If he had a chance he'd love to work with "Iska Ithil" - but he has a big list. His hopes to see his work allow him the chance to travel and shoot with more people in more places. He also plans to spend this coming year focusing on video projects.

If your fancy is tickled by the work of Nic Burgess, please make sure to check him out online and keep updated on his upcoming projects.

Links: Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Photography-and-Photo-manipulations-of-Nic-Burgess/123089557712416> Website: www.NicBurgess.ca Tumblr: <http://nicburgess.tumblr.com/> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/nicburgessart>

The Photography and Photo Manipulation of

Nic Burgess

By Danailya Reese

Do you have a taste for horror and all things off-beat? Do blood and gore really get your blood pumping? If the combination of beauty and the grotesque is your thing, then the twisted work of Nic Burgess is probably for you!

Nic uses his exceptional talents in photography and digital media to deliver sensational art that is sure to leave viewers with the best kind of goose bumps. As a self-taught artist, he is a





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East End Radicals: Punk's Not Dread

By Anita Fixx

In the following interview, The East End Radicals mention their tourmates the Dreadnoughts as having the "best live show". Right after this interview I saw their live show and it must be reported that they were right. It was definitely one of the craziest shows I've seen. There was a guy in a bunny costume who batted out doughnuts to the audience with a 14-inch dildo. They discovered a pull-down screen on the stage and performed behind it for one song. The violinist sang the last song hanging from the ceiling. Those are just some of the highlights of the evening. And The East End Radicals? They rocked as well and clearly have had some good (or bad depending on your point of view) influences to guide them down the punk rock road.

Absolute Underground: Ok, let's start with a basic question. How is the tour going?

Scott: Tour's going great! We're on tour with the Dreadnoughts right now. They're also on Stomp and we just had our album come out on Stomp and it's been an awesome time. We've been playing a lot of good shows in Montreal, Ottawa and here tonight in Toronto. It's been fantastic.

AU: Cool, so how did you guys get started as a band?

Matthew: Actually, through Craigslist and we met at Fofones Electriques, which is a bar in Montreal.

Matthew: So we rented a jam space, had a few jams and it worked out well. Started writing songs and here we are.

AU: So here's a loaded question, what does punk mean to you?

Scott: For me, there's people who are gonna tell you what it is and if you don't agree with them,

they're like, "You're not punk!" and I don't play that. To me, it should mean something different to everyone. For me, I like the D.I.Y. part of it. Just doing it yourself and the fact that it's music made by people who just want to make music. You don't have to be the best guitar player in the world or have the best equipment or anything. You can just go out and do it with the people who want to do it with you. For me, that's what I love about it.

Eric: You wanna say something, you say it your own way and that's what punk's about. Having fun doing it, that's it!

AU: And why do you choose to play this kind of music?

Matthew: Because we grew up on it. That's pretty much why.

Scott: When I was first introduced to it...my friend played me...Matt Freeman, Out Come The Wolves. The bass line at the start...They played "Maxwell Murder" and it's well, that's it!

Eric: "Roots Radicals" by Rancid was my first kick into punk and it was like "Oh gawd, it's over now!"

AU: So what would say your influences would be?

Scott: Rancid...unabashedly! I don't care what anyone says.... "They're rip-offs." I don't care!

Eric: A lot of people have said we're a clash between Rancid and Dropkick Murphys; just because we've incorporated a lot of folk into it. But there are so many bands that have influenced us, Social Distortion...the list can go on for awhile.

Scott: We sort of jump through different punk genres: there's the Celtic, then there's the more straight ahead punk stuff. I like that we can incorporate different styles within our band.

AU: Okay and you guys have songs about the negative effects of consumerism and capitalism. So how can we avoid being a part of that since it's what we live in?

Matthew: It's impossible! It's all around us right? So you can't avoid it. The thing is, you have to be aware of it so you can distance yourself from

it. That's how I see it anyway, because to get completely away from it...it's impossible.

Eric: You also have to understand there are things that you need and things that you want. People abuse what they want. Not to get all political but it does exist.

AU: What is the meaning of that song, "Last of the Free"?

Scott: It's a tricky song. The lyrics are kinda stolen from...this documentary about the history of Scotland and there's this character from one of the first written histories about Scotland. He was a chieftain, his name was Calgacus...The Roman historian made up this speech for Calgacus, "We Are the Last of the Free". He's trying to pump up his warriors to fight against the Romans... It seems like a cool message that I apply to the modern age where there's so much pressure sweeping upon you to conform or to be something else that you don't necessarily want to be and you can resist that. For us, playing punk music that is a bit of a resistance; [it's] opposed to what the popular music is today. People are like "Oh you're in punk rawk band, what's that?"

Anita: Or they think it's dead.

Scott: Yeah, that's the worse. "Oh punk's dead." I'm like fuck that! There's 200 people here, that's dead? Screw you! I mean, this year we're gonna go all across the country to play shows so if that's dead I don't know what the fuck other people are doing. So I hate that when people say "Punk's

MONTREAL MASSACRE

dead". That's such a selfish thing to say because they have no idea. It's probably someone who's not involved in it. So screw those people!

For more information, check out East End Radicals online at:

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The Mormon Trannys

Interview with The Prophet Josephina Smith of the Mormon Trannys from Portland, Oregon.

By Mr. Plow

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

Josephina Smith: My name is The Prophet Josephina Smith. I am the creator, founder and perpetrator behind The Mormon Trannys and The Church Of Latter Day Skanks. I sing the hymns and I lay down the panty-dropping bass lines.

AU: What is a Mormon Tranny?

JS: A Mormon Tranny is a former Mormon who has come to fully embrace their true sexuality, gender and identity. We were all raised in the traditional Church Of Latter Day Saints, however we were always chastised for what we were: young, sexy and rebellious. The conservative ideological constraints of the Mormon religion, as well as all mainstream religions, cannot accept us or others like us. That is why I started The Church Of Latter Day Skanks. Anyone can become a Faithful Swallow as long as they accept us, our congregation and ya know, swallow our beliefs. You don't have to be a Mormon Tranny to be an

accepted member. You just have to accept our members.

AU: What do Mormons think of you Trannys?

JS: Mormons hate what we stand for: freedom, equality and rock & roll. Their minds have been brainwashed by hypocritical religious ideals. They are too scared to accept us for what we are because they are afraid they might actually like it.

AU: What do you Trannys think of other Mormons?

JS: We pity them. They, along with all blind religious fanatics, live in a close-minded missionary-style world that tastes like the blandest vanilla and smells of Febreze. The hypocrisy of the Mormon Church is repressible. We spread our message, hymns and legs in order to set their brainwashed minds free.

AU: How are things at the Church of Latter Day Skanks??

JS: Things are going great. The Mormon Trannys were recently nominated as one of Portland's best emerging acts of 2012. We came in 3rd in the polls. We also just released our new EP, called Prepare Your Holes For The Second Cumming. We're converting new Faithful Swallows every day and we're always getting sexier.

AU: Portland is filled with hipsters and scenesters, how do they react to your song "Hipster Hate Fuck"?

JS: After we pull their head up from the pillow they always beg for more.

AU: Any plans to tour to the promised land, a.k.a. Utah?

JS: We were exiled from there. However, we have blossomed into so much more than we could have ever become in Utah. I would like to see the

look on their faces and the bulges in their pants if we were



men with multiple husbands, transsexuals with multiple whoever they want. We wrote a hymn about it called "Post-Op Polygamy".

ever to return.

AU: What are your thoughts on polygamists?

JS: We're for 'em! However, we're also for equality. The Church Of Latter Day Skanks allows anyone, not just boring white men, to engage in polygamy. Women with multiple husbands,

MR PLOW'S PICK

AU: What can one expect at a Mormon Trannys show?

JS: An anything-goes, punk-rock sex circus. We bring the sexy fury to any place we play. Our hymns incite the Faithful Swallows into a crazed state of rock'n roll exultation that is best combined with booze and sin. Also there are a lot of fishnets.

AU: Shamelessly whore out whatever you want to whore out here...

<http://www.reverbnation.com/themormontrannys>
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Mr. Plow, that is my name, that name again is Mr. Plow. Check out Mr. Plow at <http://www.myspace.com/mrplow> <http://radio3.cbc.ca/bands/MR-PLOW/>

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Sleez In The City

I believe the expression "Fake it 'till you make it" is often a relevant one. It's meant to encourage and aid people in working through their fears, insecurities and lack of self-confidence; to help them move towards a goal. It's viable advice when it comes to things like starting a new job or performing in front of a crowd or even wearing a "diamonelle" ring until you're able to afford a real rock. However when it comes to sex, the phrase should lose its validity.

Unfortunately, some women are still "faking it" between the sheets. The National Survey of Sexual Health and Behaviour recently published a study where 85% of men claimed that their partner had experienced an orgasm during their last sexual encounter, yet only 64% of women actually did. In fact, lack of desire and inability to orgasm are the two most common female sexual complaints. There's even a disorder called anorgasmia (the inability to orgasm), that a small percentage of women suffer from. So why fake it? Why not just be honest?

I suppose these women feel that they're doing it for the benefit of their partners, although in reality, it is actually a disservice to them both. What they need to realize is that "faking it" has the potential to stifle any improvement of the situation. Let's face it, most men don't excel when it comes to deciphering between whether our orgasms are real or fake. For all they know everything's great just the way it is and it's not as if they can ask (Guys- trust me here- never ask a woman if her orgasm was faked. It may end up being the last opportunity you had to try to give her one).

My advice?

Don't be a faker. Keep things open and honest from the beginning of any relationship- especially an intimate one. Sincerity is a crucial element of any successful partnership.

So what should a couple do once they already are (or suspect being) caught in the cycle of

artificial orgasms?

Well... If you're a woman who's been feigning pleasure for either the sake of your lover's ego or for your own reasons entirely, unfortunately as much as I like to promote honesty, in this case I don't suggest that you just stop the drama cold turkey or risk crushing their self-esteem with the truth. Your best option is to relax and play catch-up (with yourself). In other words, if you're in too deep and "faking it 'till you make it" has been your regime, you'll have to ride it out.

Take matters into your own hands (literally). Catch up with your ruse by learning how to make yourself orgasm. After all, if you can't please yourself, how can you expect your lover to? The good news is that a woman's threshold drops after her first one. It's like they say, the first time is always the hardest. Once you've figured out how to make yourself climax, bring your new found knowledge back to the bedroom by sharing it with/showing it to your partner. Just

like everything else you do, sex (or masturbation) gets better and cums easier with practice.

Although if you've already tried this to no avail and the problem remains, I suggest that you should speak to your doctor, as it could be caused by unknown medical issues. It could be a symptom of something as common as stress, or medicinal side-effects or simply fatigue or, it could be a sign of a serious illness like kidney disorder or atherosclerosis (the narrowing of arteries due to cholesterol buildup). The problem could also be rooted in psychological issues. For example it could be caused by something like your own poor body image.

If you're a guy who suspects a faker, try not to take the deceit too personally. Her drama may have nothing to do with you. Take this as an opportunity to advance your own sexual skills. Bone up on the latest tips and techniques. There's a ton of advice and information on-line from medical journals to men's magazines. This is a chance for you to switch up your regular routine, to try being more receptive to what she seems to physically respond to during sex. Cater a little more to her needs with extended foreplay and direct stimulation. Any improvement in your sex life will benefit you both and your efforts will not go unnoticed. Just don't expect a grand orgasmic change overnight, (Although if you do see one... well done!) Depending on her underlying issue, the process could be a long one, so be patient. At least you'll enjoy the journey. Besides, a woman can still enjoy sex without experiencing an orgasm, although she's definitely missing out.

Have a question for CJ Sleez concerning Sex, Drugs or Rock n' Roll? Email them to CJSleez@Hotmail.com. If your question is used or printed, she'll send you a free copy of her latest CD "Valley Of The Shadow". For more info on CJ, check out her band site @ www.CJSLEEZ.com



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bigger stage and already sold out, so we're very excited.

AU: So the new album, "L'Enfant Sauvage" has been well-received all over the world... How do you guys feel about it?

MD: We feel very proud... the fact that we worked very hard for this album and we had such a great response, we feel like okay, we did something important and didn't work for nothing. The feedback is very good and yeah, we feel happy about this.

very proud... the fact that we worked very hard for this album and we had such a great response, we feel like okay, we did something important and didn't work for nothing. The feedback is very good and yeah, we feel happy about this.

AU: Do you feel that your style has progressed since "The Way of All Flesh" [2008]? And if so, how?

MD: I don't know, it's maybe less technical and more mature, more atmospheric. There is less violence, less aggressiveness, something more... yeah, atmospheric I would say. We try to go straight to the point. Each album is a new step... so yeah, this album is less complex and more adult, maybe something like that.

AU: Was that difference also reflected in your lyrics and themes? Did you have any particular influences in the writing of this album?

MD: Each album is unique, each album has different influences. For this one Joe wrote all the lyrics, my brother, so I know he is very close to the meaning of the lyrics... they are a reflection of

his personal life in general, so for this time, for L'Enfant Sauvage, I think Joe tried to talk about his relationship between himself and society. Also, we want to express that it's important to stay wild, to a certain point, to keep some innocence, and to stay naive also. So L'Enfant Sauvage is a reflection around all of this, the relationship you can have with people in general, with society. Each time,

it's very introspective, we don't talk about politics... it's all kind of spiritual and introspective. L'Enfant Sauvage is talking about humanity, and emotion.

AU: That seems to be reflected in the title; "L'Enfant Sauvage" translates to "The Wild Child" in English... is that why you chose it?

MD: We have a very famous movie in France called "L'Enfant Sauvage" also, and it's about a child who grew up in a forest. He lost his parents and so he grew up with the wolves, and someone found him when he was 15 years old, so he was almost not human but he was someone, without a name, and this aspect is very interesting. This little boy was not like all the other humans... so I think there is, like a flame that we connected with, in this statement.

AU: This is your first album with Roadrunner, how has that been?

MD: It's been going very well. We needed a bigger platform for the band, because we stayed independent for a long, long time and it was very hard to make the name famous. With Roadrunner we feel

ABSOLUTE METAL



Interview with drummer Mario Duplantier of Gojira, backstage at the Vogue Theatre

By Willow Gamberg

Photos by Milton Stille

Absolute Underground: How's the tour going so far?

Mario Duplantier: The tour is going well, it's the fifth show of the tour so we are kind of warming up... we stopped touring for one month, so it's always a new step when you jump on stage for the first time after a month... but now for the fifth show we feel warm. The response of the crowd is amazing, very positive.

AU: I was up on Broadway today and there was a huge lineup outside Scrape Records- turns out you guys were doing an autograph session or something right? How did that go?

MD: It was incredible, it's always surprising because we are a band from France and each time we learn that people are waiting for us, it's a good surprise. Even here in Vancouver during the signing session, I felt something strong, you know? I felt something very emotional to see all these people waiting for us, so it's always good.

AU: You've played in Vancouver before... How do you like it?

MD: Yes... we played at Richard's on Richards [in 2009]... Last time it was a good surprise also because there were 500 people or something like that, so today is a new step for us because it is a



drummer, I brought a lot of drum patterns and also a lot of melody. I always have my phone with me and I sing a lot of ideas all the time... then I propose it to my brother, because we are very close and it's very easy for us to compose, we love it. So on this album particularly, I brought a lot of ideas and dynamics of the songs, and Joe knows how to translate my ideas into his guitar.

AU: Since you guys are just starting out on the tour, do you have any hopes for it?

MD: I hope every show will be sold out! Haha, the pre-sales are amazing and we want to do a good show with a lot of energy and we have a little bit of production on stage and we hope people will enter the atmosphere of the show and enjoy it, but I'm sure they will because we are proud of this show and we worked very hard to do it.

AU: What can we hope for from Gojira in the future?

MD: I'm sure for the next two years we will be on the road all the time... Europe, Japan, Australia, everywhere. And after that, of course, we will start composing songs. Even on the road, we are already always composing, always trying to think about the next album.

AU: Anything else you'd like to tell our readers?

MD: We really love Canada... we did a lot of sold-out shows in Canada and thank-you very much!

like finally we've got it, we have a strong structure and they don't want to change us. They don't try to do anything with our identity, even from an artistic point of view, they just give some advice sometimes but we have the last word. It was very interesting, they really love the band and want it to stay the same.

AU: What can you tell us about your songwriting process... how do you guys work together?

MD: On this album, I felt very inspired as a

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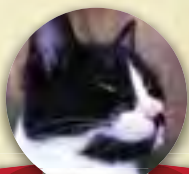


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Absolute Film Reviews

Terror Train (Blu-Ray)

Scream Factory

1980 was a great year for horror films. We got Cannibal Holocaust, Friday the 13th, Mother's Day and The Shining, to name a few, but we also got some lesser-known titles that are just as obscure today as they were 32 years ago. One of these flicks is Terror Train, directed by Roger Spottiswoode and starring Jamie Lee Curtis. The film starts out with some college kids on New Year's Eve pulling a prank on one of their peers. The prank ends badly and the victim ends up in the hospital. Flash-forward three years and the same college kids are having a New Year's party on some kind of rental party train. I must have missed this fun fact growing up in the 80s because I've never heard of a party train that kids could rent out for a shindig. The train is equipped with a magician, a full band with a dance floor and fully-stocked bars. This is definitely a place that any horny teen would want to end up on New Years... or is it? An unknown killer decides to join these frisky college co-eds for the festivities and hops the train at the last moment before it departs. The rest of the film is a very straight forward slasher with a few exceptions: there aren't any on-screen kills and I don't believe we see any boobs for the duration of the film, which is very strange for a horror of this type from 1980. If you look at some of the films that came out in the same year, most are filled with boobs and blood, while Terror Train seems to go in the opposite direction. Aside from the lack of nudity and blood, there are still some enjoyable aspects of the film, like David Copperfield as the hired magician, Larry Cohen as the front man of the band playing on the train and of course, Jamie Lee Curtis doing what she does best! Terror Train is definitely not Jamie Lee's most well-known film, nor is it a masterpiece in horror cinema by any means, but the fact that Scream Factory is putting out these little gems is fine by me. The transfer is good and there are some nice supplements on the disk making it a fine purchase for any horror collector. I just can't wait for Scream Factory's next couple of releases, including Terror Vision and The Video Dead.

This isn't my favourite slasher to have come out in the heyday of horror but it is a nice Saturday evening date-night film that you could share with someone you like.

-Cody No Teeth

Godzilla vs Biollante

Echo Bridge Home Entertainment

I'm a giant Kaiju nerd! I love Japanese cinema, and I especially love the films that feature giant monsters either destroying model cities or fighting other giant monsters. So of course I'm a sucker for all 28 Godzilla films, not including the horrific 1998 American attempt at doing a monster movie (which shall remain nameless). Being a huge fan of these types of movies, I try my hardest to collect every type of Japanese Kaiju film that makes it onto North American DVD or Blu-ray. Now this can be a hard task since not all of these movies have been released over here or the ones that have are only available in English with no Japanese language track. Like for example when Paramount had the rights to Godzilla, they released some of the 1990 Godzilla films (heisei series) in double packs but only in English. So I'm always happy when a new version of a Godzilla film gets released with the original Japanese language track and English subtitles. And the latest one of these to get a new release is Godzilla vs Biollante, which is the second film in the heisei series and also the second last film in the series to come out on DVD. And this is, in my opinion, the best Godzilla film to be put out on any format. The transfer on the Blu-ray is spectacular and the extras included are some of

the best I've seen on any Godzilla DVD to date. I mean, even the menu screen is beautiful and that's saying a lot because who ever watches the menu screen? Now I'll explain what the "heisei" series is a little before I dive into the review:

The final film in the original, or Showa, series was Terror of Me-chagodzilla 1975, and the king of monsters didn't return to the silver screen until almost 10 years later. In 1984 Godzilla made his comeback in Japan with The Return of Godzilla and was then recut and shown in theatres here as Godzilla 1985. This marked the first film in the heisei series and the 16th Godzilla film overall. There are 7 movies in the heisei series, which ran from 1984 until 1995 and ended with the "death" of Godzilla at the end of Godzilla vs Destroyah. Godzilla 1985 was just the big guy stomping on buildings and fighting the Japanese military and it wasn't until 1989 that Godzilla met his first Kaiju villain in the heisei films, Biollante.

Biollante is a hybrid of human, flower and Godzilla cells engineered by a lonely scientist whose daughter was killed by a rival medical company. These cells eventually grow out of control and escape from the lab they were being kept in. The giant plant-like creature finds a home in a nearby lake and starts to take root until Godzilla shows up with other plans. Godzilla in this film is on the lookout for any kind of nuclear energy he can get to make himself more powerful and while on his rampage, he runs into the Biollante plant. Godzilla makes short work of Biollante in the first encounter and then lumbers off to wreak havoc over Japan once again. The military is sent in to try and stop him with little effect until they come up with a plan on how to stop Godzilla forever. They plan to take Godzilla cells mixed with Biollante cells to produce a kind of poison and inject it into Godzilla to hopefully kill the big beast. Meanwhile the local psychic realizes that Biollante isn't dead, just in time for the second battle between the two monoliths to begin. This time, Biollante is in his final form and gives Godzilla a run for his money in what is easily one of the greatest kaiju battles ever caught on film.

The filmmakers wanted to put the ante in this film and set the standards for the next bunch of movies, and in doing so have proven why the heisei has some of the best Godzilla films in the entire series. Biollante is one of the most interesting and creative monsters ever to battle the big G and this release is an amazing way to relive Godzilla in his heyday. The only downfall to this great Blu-ray / DVD is that it hasn't really shown up in Canada. In fact, I had to go to New York to buy my copy because no stores in Calgary were carrying it. So if there are any true Godzilla fans out there reading this, I'm sure there are ways to acquire this movie- you'll just have to do some investigating. But I highly recommend picking this up for anyone of any age who loves wild and wacky rubber-suited monster flicks; you won't be disappointed.

-Cody No Teeth

Puppet Master X: Axis Rising

Full Moon Entertainment

The Puppet Master series has evolved to become a product totally different from its first few films. Instead of the murderous dolls that many fans loved in the first three films, now released to Blu-ray in a less-than-stunning transfer, they are still humanity's saviors in Puppet Master X: Axis Rising. The devotees who have followed the series should know that the sequence of movies is not in chronological order. They are not yet the 80s terrorists that they will become. Back in time, they were fighting for an American cause. In the latest two movies, the era is

still the 40s. This new subset of "Axis" films makes Danny Coogin (Kip Canyon) the new Puppet Master. He found the puppets that Toulin left following his suicide. Where this new narrative goes is in the direction of exploring the web of subterfuge that existed in what looks like dirty San Francisco. The Nazis and Japanese are plotting to undermine America's wartime efforts! The story continues where the last movie, Axis of Evil, left off. Ozu (Ada Chau) left the theatre with Tunneler in a burlap bag. She offers this puppet to Moebius (Scott Anthony King), a Nazi commander, in hopes that he will spare her life. But his meeting with a puppet is far from auspicious. He realizes the potential of what these little soldiers can do and he knows nobody can live to link him to what he can do with this marvelous piece of scientific discovery. This film does a better job at putting together the occult elements from the earlier films, which felt ludicrous, and making it believable. Practically all the puppets fit right in to this era better than the modern one. Although older versions existed for the lead puppets: Blade, Leech Woman, Pinhead and Jester are more symbolic of the fears, prejudices and vices of the '40s. The retro puppets symbolized more of the insecurity of WW1. With WW2 in full swing, the new puppets, namely Bombshell, Blitzkrieg, Wehrmacht and Kamikaze, represented everything the free world back then feared.

Even the villains are hilarious. All the stereotypes, puppets included, are played up for laughs, and no Full Moon Features product can be complete without some buxom bombshell gracing the screen. Stephanie Sanditz has some fun in her role as Uschi and Scott King hams up the role of being Kommandant as well as Sergeant Schultz from Hogan's Heroes. Both are very blind to certain facts. The only difference, Moebius is angrier! More movies will no doubt come, and maybe this time, viewers will get more puppet-on-puppet action. To see the puppets fight in this film was short and unintentionally funny. To see Bombshell fight Leech Woman requires waking up the child's side of the imagination, or hope that Band can up the budget so the newer puppets in to-be-made films can be as fierce as Chucky in Child's Play. While the real war is breaking out, even the puppets have to choose sides. Just who lives, who dies and who is control adds to the weariness the dolls and audiences must be feeling. Eventually the puppets will turn away from humanity and turn into the monsters that they will one day be. The catalyst will come in the final movie of this franchise.

-Ed Sum

Victoria Film Festival '13 Preview

The Victoria Film Festival is back for its 19th year, to offer up a new round of movies for the film enthusiast and connoisseur. It runs from Feb. 1st to 10th, with a wide selection of films playing every night at three different venues: Empire Theatres, Vic Theatre and Parkside.

The Canadian opening gala film is "Jackhammer," (Feb 2) a locally-made product that features the talent of Rob Wells (Trailer Park Boys), Nicole Sullivan (Mad TV), and Pamela Anderson (Baywatch). This film is about an actor who finds himself blacklisted by a casting agent, and he has to make ends meet in the world of stripping. This comedy looks very engaging with a lead character looking just as flamboyant as Freddie Mercury in his heyday.

But the genres this festival explores are not limited to just the funnies. A variety of docu-dramas will be featured, like "The Occupation," (Feb 7) which is a look at the Occupy Vancouver movement from both the perspectives of the politics within and outside the camp. Animations

like "Suicide Shop" (Feb 9) will bring some of that Tim Burton / Addams Family charm back to the silver screen. And character-driven drama rounds out the rest, like "Ouwehoeren," which looks at the life of sex trade workers.

Also, music fans may well want to look at "ChristCORE," (Feb 4) a film that takes a look at how heavy metal and Christianity can fuse together to create positive messages. Fans of the tale of terror will find a different selection this year--instead of a Little Shop of Horrors, a variety of eight short films, "Little Horrors," will be screened at the Vic Theatre Feb 9th. If some locals think the offerings this year are light, this theory is far from the truth. The list is diverse; even the comic book aficionado may find some insight in the documentary, "Wonder Women! The Untold Story of America's Superheroes" (Feb 6), while fans of the supernatural will be intrigued and curious as to what the movie "Thale" (Feb 3) is all about. Set in the Norwegian woods where two best friends enter a quiet cabin in the woods, what these boys discover will be nothing like The Evil Dead. Instead, if the movie posters are any indication, the creature they discover has the likeness of a succubus. But this story is based on a beast of legend, a Huldra, from Scandinavian folklore.

As always, the Victoria Film Festival lives up to its promise to have a bit of every genre for even the pickiest of cinema hounds.

-Ed Su

ChristCORE

Victoria Film Festival

"I Mosh for Jesus"

Christian punk rock music has existed since the 80s and its influence in the music scene is like a growing caterpillar just waiting to blossom. In ChristCORE, the scene is explored in current context by following two bands: Messengers, who are new, and superstars Sleeping Giant, as they work through the bible belt of America. They are there to spread the word of God that should appeal to the younger generation of today, especially the rebellious ones.

This film is a fascinating look at a world that not many adults and conservative people may understand. The perspective from the band members shows what they have to face to make a name for themselves but yet stay true to the messages being sung. These modern-day singing monks have traded in the gospels for a grungier sound. And for filmmaker Justin Ludwig, he has placed his faith in the hopes his film will open the eyes of orthodox moviegoers to the unorthodox.

He has succeeded to a certain degree. To see whom these musicians have affected by virtue is more enduring than the segments showing the 'faith healing' that Tommy

Green, singer of Sleeping Giant, believes he can do. The latter serves no purpose other than revealing the conviction he has with the Lord. To see how these two bands are redefining the hardcore movement would be far more interesting if this film was only more tightly edited.

Instead, this documentary is more like a loose-knit collection of interview-style vignettes. Had this film provided some historical context in its build-up to looking at the modern scene, perhaps a better understanding of this genre could be found. ChristCore feels more like a chapter in a larger book that stills needs to be written.

-Ed Sum

Animus

Q. Davis Films

Directors: Quin Davis and Wade Stai. **Writer:** Quin Davis.

Cast: John Bernath, Megan Davis, Caitlin Singer, J.A. Cuffs Bratten, Brandon Lee Pittman, Tiffany Ann Bicheler, and Trinidad Amaya.

It is amazing how many film-makers start in horror with their first feature film. Both directors Quin Davis and Wade Stai are getting their feet wet in this slasher, titled Animus. Thankfully, their first attempt at horror is an exciting time. In the story, a killer awaits five film students in an isolated asylum. Unfortunately, only Maya, played by Megan Davis, has any backstory or depth of character. The minor characters are underdeveloped and they barely serve a purpose in the picture. Other film elements, such as the shooting style, brings quality back into this picture. Well shot, Animus is an entertaining horror picture that will satisfy indie fans of the bloody slasher sub-genre. In the film, college student Maya sets out to make a documentary for her final film project. She recruits four of her classmates: Angel (Caitlin Singer), Daniel (Brandon Lee Pittman), Mekalia (Tiffany Ann Bicheler) and Lucas (J. A. Cuffs Bratten) to film the project and record sound. They set off for the local insane asylum. It is here where an illegitimate child was tortured and killed by a local staff doctor. Now, Isaac's (John Bernath) ghost haunts the asylum and the film crew. This film crew is unable to stop Isaac's swinging blade and mute wrath. Soon, this film project is put on hold, when there is no one left to hold the camera. Quin Davis' first script creates an interesting story; yet, Davis partially forgets about his characters. Most of the characters are un compelling. Daniel is a coward when the chips are down. He runs at the first sight of blood. Angel, Daniel's casual girlfriend, is given a little more attention. Angel enjoys supernatural television shows and getting freaky



in the back of the film crew's van. Lucas is just along for the ride and Mekalia only gets in a scream or two before finding the sharp end of the blade. A few of these minor characters could have used an additional line of dialogue or two to fill out their characterizations. The minor characters are not fleshed out enough and the actors have little to do but deliver their lines in an artificial way. Thus, the acting on this film suffers. Filmmakers Quin Davis and Wade Stai are best when behind the camera. Both directors shoot the picture in a visually appealing way. There are exterior and interior shots. As well, they use a harness on the protagonist to show her desperate emotions. The inside of the asylum is especially well shot, as the crew uses just enough shadow to keep the film unsettling. One shot involving a pool of blood creates some much-needed horror, late in the picture. Angel is trapped in this grimy water with floating heads and flesh. Do heads float? Much of Animus is shot with a superb shooting style, which enhances the visual appeal of the film.

Animus is a solid entry into the slasher genre. The cat-and-mouse scenes late in the picture are reminiscent of John Carpenter's characters: Laurie Strode and Michael Myers. The darkened set of an abandoned mine creates for a great finale. As mentioned, directors Quin Davis and Wade Stai take great care with their visual style, while the gore onscreen is fairly consistent throughout the final act. Animus is a stylish indie slasher that will leave many with nightmares! Overall: 7 out of 10.

-Michael Allen

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Absolute Album Reviews

Shooting Guns-Born To Deal in Magic: 1952-1976 Teargas Recording Tree

So the story goes like this: after class one night the boys and I go for drinks. Lots of them. Six or seven pitchers later, me and the only other stoner in the most-drunk club retire to my place to smoke the bong. I say, hey I've got this new album that I haven't listened to yet, we should check it out. Enter: Shooting Guns.

Ordinarily I would say: no vocals? Instrumental metal? I hate it already. But man does this album defy my expectations. Massively bass heavy, and full of synth generated distortion - Born to Deal in Magic is dark, loud and deliciously post-apocalyptic. Caustic and primeval drifts create a soundscape of muffled drone and murmur, which intensify to vicious levels and then morph into aphotic metal convulsions with squalid rhythmic swells. Shooting Guns debut album is perfect background music for booze and drug fuelled gatherings. It's a hazy psychedelic rumble you can easily talk over - since you don't have to compete with a vocalist to be heard, it's not overly intrusive. Tell that to my neighbor whose walls were rattling and showed up banging on my door in her fluffy pink housecoat, to tell me in no uncertain terms that my two-person party was far too raging for such a late hour on a weeknight. The verdict? Everyone who's heard this album at my place that night and since, thinks it's awesome. Be loud, be unapologetic, piss off the neighbors, and check out Shooting Guns!!

-Catastrophe C

Between The Buried And Me- The Parallax II: Future Sequence Metal Blade Records

What's next? Incomprehensible screeches and blast beats? An ambient interlude? Perhaps, oom-pah-ing tubas and tinkling glockenspiels? When it comes to the latest record from Carolina death-proggers Between The Buried and Me, the answer is "all of the above."

Since entering the public eye with the 2007 masterpiece, Colors, there may not be a more original band in the world of metal. With vocalist/keyboardist Tommy Giles Rogers' combo of devilish growls and sweet alto cleans, Dustie Warren and Paul Waggoner's explosive guitar, Dan Briggs' jazz-influenced bass, and the rhythmic orgasm that is Blake Richardson's drumming, this is a band that could get by on technicality and talent alone, but what makes them special is their knack for mind-blasting song writing.

Future Sequence is the continuation of 2011's Hypersleep EP, creating a conceptual duo of albums focusing on a space-themed Armageddon story line. For the attentive fan, the story is fun and interesting, but because of the growled vocals, it can be difficult to decipher what's going on. Lyrics aside though, this album could rely on musical variety and quality alone.

Musically, this is BTBAM's most ambitious album— scary, considering the scope of past efforts. After an acoustic intro, the album bursts into "Astral Body", which essentially sounds like Rush playing death metal. This is a

good thing, trust me. "Telos" might be the best thing they've ever done, and "Bloom" might be the goofiest, featuring bouncy piano, warbled vocals and poppy sha-na-nas. It would be a waste of time to describe each individual track though, because this album is basically one long track, a la Colors. There is a lot going on, yes, but the variety allows the 70-minute run time to feel comfortable, not exhausting.

With its seemingly endless twists and turns, this album is a journey. A journey through space and time? Maybe not, but do yourself a favour and hop on board.

-Michael Luis

Gojira- L'Enfant Sauvage Roadrunner Records

It's very fitting that the first track of the album is titled "Explosia", because this album does exactly that: it explodes. Their combination of polyrhythmic grooves and unorthodox guitar tones can almost get overwhelming, but this audio assault is one worth preparing for. Clear the streets, Gojira is coming through town.

After 2005's excellent From Mars to Sirius, these French metallers took a slight regression with 2008's up-and-down The Way of All Flesh, but L'Enfant Sauvage sees a return to form for these progressive metal masters. The title track offers displaced backbeats and screaming guitars, while "The Axe" takes the listener on a journey through ambient buzzes and gang screams. It's all trademark Gojira, and there isn't a

lot you haven't heard before on past albums, but it's the way these ideas are arranged that makes the album fantastic.

Not only do all of the tracks shine individually, but as a full piece of music, the record soars. The word "epic" is thrown around way too much nowadays, but plenty of moments on this album evoke images of the hero slaying the beast at the end of the story. Another unique moment is the mellow fifth track, "The Wild Healer", which features grooving guitar and minimalist drumming. It provides a much-needed breath of air before diving back into the abyss.

Like the Tokyo-stomping dinosaur with which the band shares its name, Gojira is on a destructive path, attacking your mind the same way the monster attacks the city. You may need a bigger weapon.

-Michael Luis

Adrenochrome- Hideous Appetites Self-Released

Wipe that snot from your nose; the obnoxious punks in Adrenochrome have something to share with you. Their hybrid of old-school metal, intricate prog-rock breakdowns and anarchist attitude are going to make you punks dig metal and you metalheads dig punk. Perhaps this has happened already, but hearing this cross-over influenced set of tunes will definitely be enlightening.

The precision and attention to detail this album exudes is more than a little unsettling, especially coming from a couple of lads from small-town Ontario. I kid; they are clearly wounded mutant beasts who show no pity and are proud of it as they come off sounding like an 80s-era James Hetfield fronting Propagandhi.

The track "Six Guns" takes an amazing turn as country-flavored unison guitars scream and shout like a mean banjo duel is taking place amongst the hot-rod thrash insanity.

All this style-swapping calls to mind modern metal's obsession with outside influence, but nonetheless, Adrenochrome still keeps their priorities straight. With a consistent reliance on memorable songwriting and enough double-kick drumming to make any boy a man, this debut album definitely takes its rightful place amongst the mightiest of steel titans.

-Dan Potter

Chariots of the Gods- Tides of War Self-Released

Beholders of modern world discontent, they are. COTG throw down some lethal melodic death metal like we are in the final countdown to a battle royale. Their wicked, head-banging instrumental breaks and stadium-sized sound prove they are here to conquer with no questions asked.

The track "Revullusion" serves up fire-breathing metal with all the trimmings. A skeptical world view is the center of this anthem of unrest, where the earthlings have been betrayed by mankind's so-called good intentions. Huge guitar riffs and lockstep drumming carve out a landscape whilst flashy solos and thunderous gang chants make you feel like you've traded your lead boots for fists of lead.

Tides of War offers up intense metal mastery, the likes of which we know from such immortal acts as COB, Maiden, LOG or even Rush. And just to top things off are hazy doses of mellowness that take shape in the form of majestic acoustic guitars, airy piano and creepy electro-glitch. Thus proving they aren't afraid of the light either, COTG's inclusion of quieter elements serves to bulk up the heaviness so when it does find you...you should be ready and waiting.

-Dan Potter

Kamikabe - Aberration Of Man Unique Leader Records

A runaway freight train full of hydrogen tanks is bound to lead to unfathomable casualties. The few opening tracks from "Aberration Of Man" set the scope of the tragedy and I began to expect the pile-driving intensity, dished out in the similar vein of



other notable acts like Suffocation or Brutal Truth. I found out early on, this decidedly narrow vision of only allowing the metal that reaches 5000 degrees Celsius on the album works to their advantage.

When I order up some death metal, I like to order it up by the ton, meaning I like it strictly refined up to its heaviest denominator. This band puts the pedal to the metal and keeps it there, offering up furious blast beats that meet scorched gallops with razor sharp stop/starts and neck-dislocating breakdowns. The screams consist entirely of a dialect commonly associated with cave trolls; bowel-releasing growls and murderous, spiteful barks.

I love old-school beastliness like this; nothing too frilly, just the stuff that is made to clear mountains out of your oncoming path. This acidic wasteland of man's consequence sounds pretty damn cool, if you ask me.

-By Dan Potter

Krisiun- The Great Execution Century Media Records

Holy shit, I found my new favorite band after interviewing Alex of Krisiun on the Barge to Hell. Not having any knowledge of their music, my interview swung to his personal thoughts on being on the Barge to Hell, and about the metal scene in Brazil. Turns out Alex is from Sau Palo and really is articulate. (Check out the video interview on absoluteunderground.tv in an up coming episode). Krisiun's music is also very articulate; the lyrics are easy to make out and steeped in dark energy. I could feel the power or the drums from the opening salvo. The guitar screams pure metal and the face-ripping basslines make me want to charge into battle like a mad Viking. All I can say is I want more. If I have to go to Brazil to get some, well, that's a small price to pay! Well done!

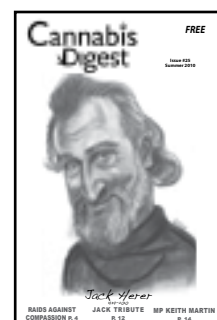
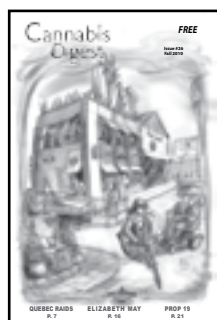
-By Metal Baron Parker

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Absolute Live Reviews

Savage Henry

The Borderguards

Kroovy Rookers

Jan 11th- DV8, Edmonton

Jan 12th- The Palomino, Calgary

Yours truly turned 37 on January 9th and was fortunate enough to have one hell of a great birthday weekend. It's a real ball-buster, getting older, but I must admit that since I started at DV8 the birthdays keep getting better and better, 'cause in this biz I am making new friends every weekend, and it's been 4 years give or take at this point.

When Kroovy Rookers started out in 2004, we started playing the occasional show with The Borderguards. When we were starting the band, we threw a little basement show in Springbrook (on the outskirts of Red Deer) and some of them actually made it down from Calgary to check us out...as far as Oil in Alberta goes it was a night to remember.

The Borderguards, who classify themselves as a Street Rock, Oi-a-Billy punk 'n blues-core band (wrap yer heads around that one, fresh-cuts!) play a great mix of all these genres at once, and have written some amazing, AMAZING songs since forming in 1999 after some of the members were in a previous band known as The Spartans. One of my favorites, titled "Rock N Roll" offers a catalog of their biggest influences including Chuck Berry, Angus Young, Joey Ramone ect. The lineup has changed a bit over the years (We miss ya Stogie!) but with Vic and J-Dog still at it and Chris Schwartz (from Berzerker, Off The Rails, The Knifedogs) on vocals, The Borderguards are back and sounding great.

Savage Henry is one of my all-time favorite bands since we met them a few years back in Saskatchewan, and it was fantastic having them come out this way for the weekend.

Savage Henry is an amazing rock n' roll band with some of the sleaziest, funniest and catchiest tunes I have ever heard...if you are a fan of Sloppy Seconds, GG Allin's good stuff and high-energy party tunes, Savage Henry will find a place in even the blackest of hearts. Much like The Borderguards in Calgary, Savage Henry is legendary in Saskatchewan and deservedly so...it's hard to forget them when they take the stage in their white ski-masks, longjohns and killer tunes. Abuse It Or Lose It, The Second Coming Of Savage Henry and The Infamous One Pounders are among my favorite albums of all time so if you get a chance to pick them up, do so...

Savage Henry has really made their mark at DV8, and they rocked The Palomino on this tour as well. The DV8 show kicked ass and the turnout far exceeded my expectations, as did the show in Calgary. This was my first time at The Palomino and I was really impressed (if not a bit envious) of what a cool venue it is. The upstairs is a really cool BBQ joint with a rock n' roll / cowboy culture feel to it and looking around you can see signed plates from bands like D.O.A., S.N.F.U. The Matadors...pictures of Tex Ritter, John Wayne and Brett "The Hitman Hart" so in short - I thought this place was awesome as soon as I got in. The gigs take place downstairs and it's a nice room with great sound and a lot of cool people. Spencer, who does the booking there, did a great job of helping with the promotion, which is a key element in having a good show...you get a lot more out of a show if the bands and the promoter do their part in spreading the word.

I had a blast to say the least. I think Kroovy Rookers went over well on both nights, we have been borrowing Rob Salter from the Knifedogson occasion to fill in for Remi Rooker on bass and he's been great, it's nice to have a ringer available when schedules get in the way of playing ass-whoopin' shows like these two.

-Rod Rookers

Zero Cool

The Mange

Practical Slackers

Jan 19th- DV8, Edmonton

This was another birthday bash at DV8 and it turned out to be a great night.

A fella named Phil who is good friends with The Mange set this one up more or less with the bands, and it made for a great Saturday night shindig.

Zero Cool and The Mange do a lot of shows together and it always works. Both bands can play epic sets if they want to on any given night, and it's never an issue who is headlining or opening, which is great - that's the beauty of having shows with bands that are all friends and just wanna tear it up without any drama or douchebaggery over the lineup.

Zero Cool ended up headlining this one so I will start with them. Zero Cool is usually on the scene when I have bigger bands come through because they always put on a great show and people in the DV8 community dig what they do. Over the years, they have stepped up on short notice and saved the day for many unknown touring bands hoping for an audience, and helped some great local bands gain a foothold in the scene as well.

It's not one of those bands that you never hear from until you have a big act coming in - or a band that will drop a your show at your venue like a molten glob of microwaved excrement to do the big dance on the big stage every time the opportunity comes a knockin', and I will always hold them in the highest regard for all they have done for us over the years.

Zero Cool is bit edgier than most of their peers, favoring the old-school, less melodic stylings of bands like The Germs, Black Flag, Adolescents etc...and they have a hell of a lot of songs that are fast 'n loud to keep you on your toes.

The Mange is also a local band that we have been doing a lot with in the past few years and it is always a treat to have them play DV8. They are a very polished band musically; some of their stuff is pretty smooth and catchy but this is no candy-ass band...it's a band that could be a big deal without acting like a big deal, and if they continue to do what they do (rocking the house on a steady basis, and having fun doing it) who knows where the "tail" of the Mange could be in a few years. They have surely payed their dues around town and from the sidelines as a promoter their "stock", as I would put it, has stayed a hot commodity, while their turnouts on average are pretty damn good.

Since DV8 doesn't moonlight as an f'n dance club it's great to have guys like The Mange every couple of months to keep the party rolling.

Practical Slackers is a great local outfit and

leans a little more towards the Oi! / Street Rock side of the Punk Rock spectrum, so this band didn't take long to get in my good books. They have some great rock n' roll elements and vocalist Brett's rough-and-tumble attack on the mic, coupled with Joey Ramone's mic stand moves makes for a pretty great live show. Practical Slackers are fairly new on the DV8 scene, but it's been a great run so far and they have been keeping busy with cranking out new stuff and playing shows.

One thing all three of these bands have in common is that the new songs are as good as the old ones, so I am stoked to get some of their new stuff to give it a better listen.

-Rod Rookers

Bunchofuckingoofs

The Dirtbags

Bogue Brigade

Oct 28th- DV8 Edmonton

I was pretty stoked when Willy Jak messaged me about Bunchofuckingoofs playing DV8.

It was a Sunday show, which can really gear things down on occasion but as far as Edmonton goes it was a great lineup of bands and I enjoyed myself quite a bit. I remember having the Bunchofuckingoofs on cassette when I was just a little goof in high school so naturally, it was a pretty neat twist of fate to be putting on a show for them all of these years later - I had never seen them "back in the day" so I was looking forward to this one. The revamped lineup of Bunchofuckingoofs featured Steve Goof, Eda Dick with Willy Jak and The Cretin from the legendary Dayglo Abortions, so I couldn't help being in awe of having this crew in the bar. As much crazy stuff you may hear from the older crowd about BFG in general, I heard nothing but good stuff about "Crazy" Steve Goof and I thought they put on a hell of a good show... luckily the building was still standing when they left.

Both The Dirtbags and The Bogue Brigade did us all a great service for making it out on a Sunday night to support this show.

The Dirtbags are and have been one of Edmonton punk's favorite sons for quite some time and they always put on a great show. With Halloween right around the corner they made the effort to

track down some super hero costumes which made this set a memorable one... Cody and Dirty Dave stopped by the other night and played me some of their latest recordings, so fans of The Dirtbags will be pleased to get their hands on this stuff when all is said and done.

The Bougie Brigade was a late addition to the bill - we had them play DV8 for the first time on Oct 20th. Being Jak's dudes I figured they would be into lending The BFG's some local support and that they did. Bogue Brigade is a hard hittin' skate-core band and lots of fun to see live.

By the sounds of things at this point we might be seeing Bunchofuckingoofs back at DV8 in August of this year as part of their fall tour with The Last Of The V8 Interceptors so keep your eyes on the DV8 facebook page for the official scoop on this one. In the meantime I will have to hunt down a copy of "Dirty Drunk And Punk", a book that traces some of the Steve Goof and BFG's exploits and the life and times of the punk scene in the Kensington Market area of Toronto in the 1980's; I heard it is an excellent read.

-Rod Rookers

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