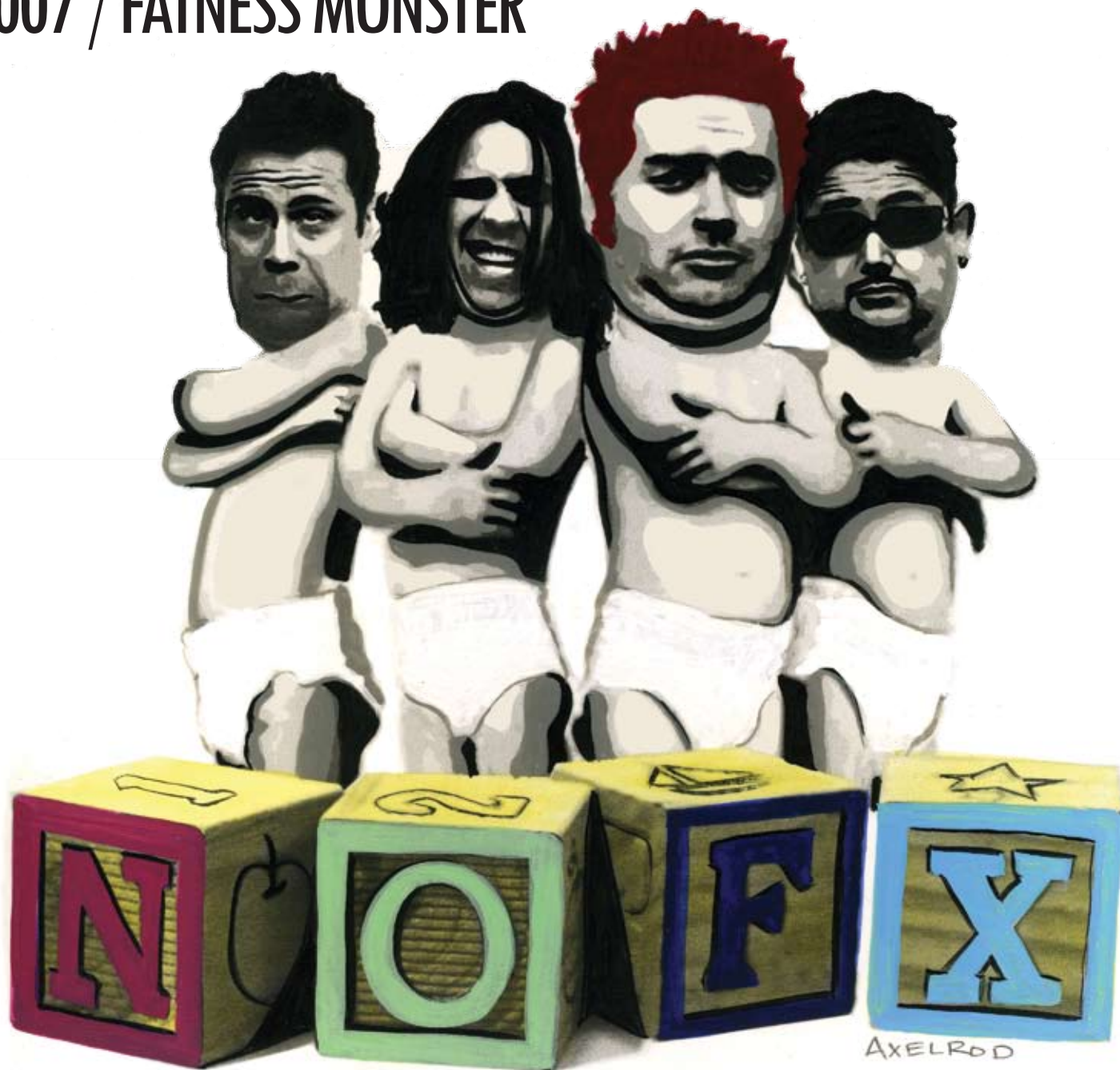


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MY TWO SENSE

It was coming down to deadline crunchtime, and in addition to cursing the NBA for an unwarranted suspension of Jerry Stackhouse, I found myself expressing to our Managing Editor Micah Lashbrook my concern with the incredible insanity-inducing workload that we seem find ourselves dealing with. What he told me as I deliriously sat there staring into the future will stick with me forever:

"Hang in there and keep putting one foot in front of the other. Any problems are hardly that unless you want 'em to be. Real problems will overtake you when they come around. Literally. Just remember, these aren't really problems even though they feel and seem like it. Enjoy your day as much possible while

you're running around like a maniac."

Micah's mother was recently diagnosed with cancer. Micah and his siblings are taking care of her 24/7 as you read this. As I write this, I am being informed that he is rushing to the emergency room once again to be by her side. We weep.

This one's for the Lashbrooks, especially Alicia...so we can all find the strength to keep fighting the good fight!

Looking forward...

Wasim Muklashy



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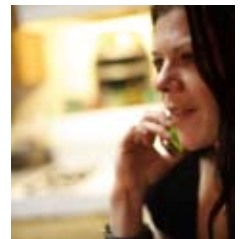


VIOLET FEWES

Violet earned her artistic wings by scribbling dirty things on notebook covers and being the first person to ever make sketches by taking hair and molding it into forms on shower walls. The steam has lingered ever since and now the fuse burns brighter than ever as Miss Fewes tears up the page, using everything from pastels and ink to crayons and ash, bringing us the haunting and remarkable. A flower and a four-alarm fire all wrapped up in the body of a little girl.

SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Shana Nys Dambrot is an independent art critic and author based in Venice, CA. Her fine art & design reviews and features have appeared in Modern Painters, ARTnews, tema celeste, Artweek, Angelino, Art Asia Pacific, Intersection, TimeOut LA, Lifescapes, Juxtapoz, One World, Set Décor, Fiber Arts, Venice Magazine, Hot LAVA and Coagula Art Journal. She is currently the LA Managing Editor at Flavorpill.net and a Contributing Editor at its affiliate publication Artkrush.com and at Artweek.



MOLLY HAHN

Hello, my name is mollycules. I like to draw cartoons. I am assisting Kazu Kibuishi with his latest graphic novel entitled AMULET, which is being released early next year. I become volatile around certain substances such as cheese, pearl jam, boys, and other peoples ice cream. I spout words and doodles at www.mollycules.com and at myspace.com/neopolitanhat.

DANIEL KUTNER

Daniel Kutner is your run of the mill angelino-slacker-nerdcore-hipster-mac-owning-photog-animatin'-writer with a penchant for bullshit, brief-relationships, hyphens, and Ford V8s. ASIDE - to the girl who wrote "I ♥ Dan Kutner" on the door of the first stall in the women's bathroom at Barney's Beanery - CALL ME, I like your penmanship.



WILLIAM BROFEE

William Vergil Brofee is a secular cult leader who works a very esoteric job in electronics. After hours Brofee toils as a nature-loving polygamist with a roster of pasty minions who all bring him Kool Aid at the drop of his hood. This is his first time writing since the ill-fated Vergil Manifesto of 1999 which, sadly, ended up at the bottom of the Long Island Sound. He is not happy, but then again, neither are you. Read his words.

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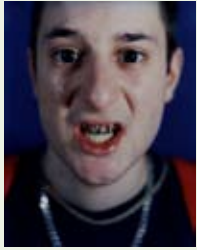
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P|O|W|E|R|P|E|L|L|E|T|S

Quite a few new faces will grace the lineup of Jam Cruise 5, including Derek Trucks Band, Drive-By Truckers, and Los Amigos Invisibles. They will join Jam Cruise favorites Galactic and Dirty Dozen Brass Band. Each artist will play multiple shows during the cruise and will be accessible for autograph signings, casual interaction, and music workshops. For more details: www.jamcruise.com



Uber-experimentalist Harmony Korine (Gummo, Julien Donkey Boy) is hard at work on Mister Lonely, his first traditionally-narrative film. 'Lonely' finds a Michael Jackson impersonator living in a commune with

disgruntled celebrity impersonators and falling in love with Marilyn Monroe. Korine, who swore off any allegiance to his contemporaries and their techniques, is no longer working with friends, lovers, and non-actors. 'Lonely' is set to star a roster of It-personalities from Diego Luna to Samantha Morton. Harmony is harmful once again.

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The monthly independent film subscription service Ironweed Films has released a DVD curated with movies that explore the Middle East conflict in creative and different ways. Each

month, you'll get a unique, members-only DVD packed with award-winning independent documentary and fiction films that explore important issues of the day. www.ironweedfilms.com

July 29-30 will see Union Park, Chicago overrun by radical fans of radical music with the Pitchfork Music Festival kicks off. Noted music commentator Jim Derogatis said of this of the Festival: "Easily the best outdoor music festival I've ever attended."

The web's leading independent music resource is confident that it will top anything they have done in the past. Line-up and additional details are forthcoming. Make like Alexander de Large and keep an eye peeled.

<http://www.headcount.org/>

Matt Friedberger, songwriting component of bro & sis group The Fiery Furnaces, releases his first solo album this summer. Friedberger plans to drop this on us as a double disc entitled "Winter Women / Holy Ghost Language School." If The Furnaces' April release "Bitter Tea" was any preview of what's to come, then we're guaranteed to have our brains scrambled and our feet turned to putty.



No introduction necessary! Pink Floyd have announced the release of their long-awaited two-DVD set "PULSE." The live performance of their seminal recording The Dark Side of the Moon will be available July 11th and documents

their 1994 Division Bell Tour. Hey you! Look for it!

Gregor Kvetch, aka Captain Jackass, lead singer of Long Island-based punksters Captain Jackass & The Assholes, was released on \$300 bail on May 26th after stuffing a jar of beets in his rectum in the middle of a public shopping mall. As he left lock-up, Kvetch looked down at his personal affects and reportedly hollered, "Hey, where are my canned vegetables?!"



David Lee Roth plans another comeback. Nobody pays any attention.

Dudely nympho-rocker Peaches drops her third LP on us. With a title like "Impeach My Bush" it seems like it's the perfect time to scoop that shit up. Viva La Resistance! Caveat: We at Kotori Magazine do not discriminate. Though we prefer our women to be trimmed or shaved, we admire the modern woman who can rock the 70's crotch 'fro. And I like Peaches!

Hal Hartley, the ever more self-reliant of indie "auteurs," is taking a page from

Richard Linklater (Before Sunset) and writing, producing and directing a sequel to his late-90's underground hit Henry Fool. The follow-up, titled Fay Grim, marks the second film for Hartley's Possible Films (www.possiblefilms.com) that will be fully-financed by his production company as well as self-distributed.



September 30-October 1st will see the legendary Weekend of Horrors spooking the solemn inhabitants of smoggy Secaucus, New Jersey. Highlights include a screening of Lloyd Kaufman's latest Troma entry "Poultrygeist" and a panel on "Snoop Dogg's Hood of Horror" with Winston Zeddemore himself--Ernie Hudson.

Hitler returns from the grave, asks to be exonerated...claims Holocaust was a sociological experiment that "admittedly went a little haywire."

Marilyn Manson will take the plunge into filmmaking with "Phantasmagoria: The Visions of Lewis Carroll," a quasi-fictional biopic concerning the warped life and imagination of the Alice in Wonderland scribe. Manson, who also wrote the screenplay, will star as Carroll alongside god knows who else. This isn't the first time Manson has written a script (he tried and failed to get funding for Holy Wood, a script he based off of his 2000 concept LP) and, hopefully, it won't be his last. His big top tricks will always make us happy!

Kevin Smith pitches The Weinstein Company on



"Jay & Silent Bob Vs. Bill & Ted in the Menlo Park Mall of Death 3000." Harvey races to pick up the phone...balances his checkbook.



G.G. Allin rises from the grave with mouth still covered in shit...proclaims "I forgot to bring my Mentos."

September 23rd, 2006 San Francisco, CA. The tip of the Peninsula is wet with lascivious gusto and the wind whirls around like a Dervish as Adam takes to the tongue and people don their fun beads. All in preparation of the most beautiful beat-driven bacchanalia of the 21st Century. Yes, it's that time again. It is time for SAN FRANCISCO LOVEFEST: A DANCE MUSIC PARADE & FESTIVAL.

Revolution Mother (the new band fronted by pro-skateboarder Mike Valley) will release its debut EP, "Enjoy the Ride," on August 8th through Valley's own imprint Mike V. Revolution Mother offers up an arsenal of blues-based overdriven riffs, punishing hardcore rhythms, dynamic vocal deliveries and an uninhibited thirst for raw energy.

www.davaginacode.com

Description-defying Pittsburgh act Black Moth Super Rainbow collaborate with The Octopus Project this summer on "The House of Apples & Eyeballs." Their won't be a calm neuron left in your body once you've heard this kind of crazy. Check em: www.blackmothsuperrainbow.com



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Speaking of...Slayer are set to release their new disc "Christ Illusion" that same date. Guitarist Kerry King described their first release since 2001 as a "good mix of fast, brutal music" and

adds that it's "pretty intense." I know what you're thinking and, apparently, so does Mr. King. "It sounds like a damn Slayer record."



If you're in the Chicago area on July 22nd and/or July 23rd, then you better MOVE! It's time for the 2006 Chicago International House Music Festival, being held at the new lake-front Charter One Pavilion. MOVE! unites an International melting pot of people of all races, ages, and sexual preferences as well as aficionados of House music. Featured artists include: Derrick Carter and Danny Tenaglia. www.chicagohousemusicfestival.org

The End of the World has officially been pushed back from June 6th, 2006 to an undisclosed date. God was worried that the potential success of The Omen would hurt his box office returns.



D.U.E. YOUR HOMEWORK

BY: WASIM MUKLASHY

In all my 15 odd years of attending shows and events, never have I come across such a ridiculously perfectly orchestrated success...on their first attempt! When we first got involved with Dive Underground Entertainment, I must admit, we were a bit leary of how they were going to pull it off with such intricate precision. But as soon as I walked up to the Hangar 1018 in Downtown L.A., I first thought I entered the wrong spot. It was 9pm and the place was already packed...that doesn't happen in the city of 'fashionably late.' The diversity of the crowd was awe-inspiring...everything from punks to club hoppers to clod hoppers to cons.

With artists including Chase, Nathan Matthews, and Bue, and photographers such as P.R. Brown and Daniel Cristol showcasing their work alongside two stages of live beats and tunes courtesy the Weather Underground, The Spores, The Chills, Lady Sinatra, DJ Dan Merlot, and DJ Unconventional Science (and about 15 more) in an unusually comfortable and roomy space that accommodated well over 500 people without a single ding in the bumper, D.U.E. Your Homework proved a perfect blend of aesthetics, art, provocative thought, music, and people. Oh, the arts and crafts and the open bar certainly didn't hurt.

Bravo to Avatar, Nicki, and the Dive Underground Entertainment crew. They've managed to tap into a successful format of future mingling, where all walks of life came together, left behind the pretention and kept their minds open...all in a hangar in downtown L.A. Wow. We were extremely proud to be a part of it and can't wait for the next one!!

"I think music is really the place to introduce culture, and that's what I'm doing."

TIGARAH

JAPANESE KITTY SAYS HELLO TO AMERICA

BY: MICAH LASHBROOK

Japanese artist Tigarah is an enticing symbol of musical globalization at its finest. A torrid MC who raps in both her native tongue and English, she's sauntered up to the frontline of a burgeoning baile funk scene stateside by embracing rumpshaker vibes from a myriad of trans-oceanic sources - all without a record contract or full-length album to date. Dubbed "New Generation," Tigarah discusses her music in a socially conscious tone.

"I think music is culture," she declares in her staggered yet assertive English vocab. "My music is a mix of many cultures; my beats are hip-hop, UK grime, crunk, Baltimore club, baile funk, and also Japanese, I'm Asian! And I love the Brazilian music in my style too, so I mix it all up to create something new."

"I think music is really the place to introduce culture, and that's what I'm doing."

The beats are the brainchild of her co-production partner and live deck

handler Mr. D, who's currently in the studio with Tigarah fondling her first album (stroll her website for 8 streaming jammers to hold you over). Tigarah met Mr. D a few years back during consecutive visits to Sao Paulo and Rio. This is after she had heard her first baile funk song and experienced her subsequent epiphany at a house party in Tokyo with some Brazilian and Japanese mix friends. "It was *big*, and *loud*, and it made me *soo* dance! I've never felt that kind of feeling to music before, so I thought I could write something myself and I've been doing it ever since."

Her songs are an amalgamation of feminine rappers the likes of M.I.A. and Lady Sov, whom she cites as inspirations, while the music blurs blaringly, gyrating in similar sonic seduction. Yet Tigarah's delivery is all her own - on tracks like "Roppongi-Dori" and "Girl Fight!" her cadence is varied and fresh, sometimes emoting goo goo ga to me if only due to my uni-language Americano tradition.

Perhaps the 24-year-old Tigarah is most akin to M.I.A., the Sri-Lankan born political refugee turned musical activist, in that before picking up the mic she studied sociology and poli-sci at Japan's esteemed Keio University. Ambassador aspirations gave way to artistic revelry when the "system's" pervasive corruption sullied her altruistic dreams, if only for a moment. Luckily for us she's found another medium to make the world a better place. "The media is powerful, more powerful than politics now. So I thought music would be the way to let people know that we have to change the situation of the world."

After all, who listens to the President anyway?

◀ listen to soundbites at www.kotorimag.com
① www.tigarah.net

PHOTOS: AMY WALLENBERG





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daKAH: LARGER THAN LIFE

BY: RACHEL KANN, PHOTO: MICHELLE SCHWARTZ

“A 70-piece hip-hop orchestra? Watching them live is like tripping without drugs.”

In an oil-slicked sea of Clear Channel doldrums, daKAH is a gigantic homemade pirate ship, filled with happy chanty-singing badasses. A 70-piece hip-hop orchestra? That's epic-huge. Watching them live is like tripping without drugs; it's complete sensory overload. You've got to appreciate the scope.

daKAH is so much greater than the sum of its parts. In Los Angeles, it can be rare to find people who are down for creating something larger than themselves, who are down for a project from the jump. Putting thoughts of cash and self-aggrandizement on the back burner. Here, you have 70.

Simultaneously, daKAH evokes the also-rare discovery of an “only in L.A.”-type project. Where else could daKAH even exist? Nature always creates a balance. For all the falsity in L.A., the underground goes that much

deeper. Where could you find so many skilled, experienced, classically trained musicians with tons of the funky stuff in their souls? Sure, big cities. Like New York...but then, where would you get the rehearsal space? The time? There is a magic inevitability that mixes with the rarity of something like this, grown from deep Los Angeles roots.

Despite outward appearances, L.A. is home to a loving family of musicians and artists that I am proud to count myself among, just under the surface, digging our way to the light of day.

Here's the thing about daKAH: someone had to be the magnet drawing all these shiny pieces into one harmonious mass. Someone had to dream it up. A huge hip-hop orchestra? Who'd attempt such a thing?

Enter GG (Geoff Gallegos),

dreamer extraordinaire. He's the conductor, the composer, the creator of daKAH. A literally larger-than-life character, GG conducts his crew in a tux with tails and basketball shoes, like this is what he was born to do.

Sometimes GG lets me come and join the party. It's transcendent, uncontrollable in that *good* way, prompting moments like this: At Disney Concert Hall (where daKAH was joined by Rahzel on stage for their Roots set), daKAH emcee David “Leggo” Rojas came up to me backstage after he had been out there, looked at my awesome super-high heels and said, “Lose the shoes. It's so intense, you are totally gonna fall over if you walk out in those.” So I did, and I'm glad. Barefoot at Disney Concert Hall? Better than a spastic swan dive into the audience, right?

Check out daKAH. Superdooper-size your booty shaking music.

You can see them live for free at California Plaza in LA on July 28th.

Their latest album, *III X 13*, will hit the streets concurrently. GG tells me he has recently found himself deriving inspiration from such disparate sources as Fibonacci and The Beatles. Music to my ears. Throwing math and magical mysteries into the mix can only be a good thing, and *III X 13* will demonstrate that in spades, no doubt.

Meantime, check out their live albums recorded at California Plaza and The Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco, and their studio album, *Unfinished Symphony*, all available from Kufala Recordings.



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GETTING BAKED: AN INTERVIEW WITH ELEANOR FRIEDBERGER

BY: VIOLET FEWES

This past Memorial Day weekend, after the beer went on ice but still hours before the first would be cracked, I spent some time smoking two bats of hero hashish—one for me and one for my fallen Homeboys—and with my needy bunny at my side, I was ready to go ear-to-ear with one Eleanor Friedberger (no, the other Eleanor Friedberger; see: the vocally-gifted and decidedly sweet copilot for the Fiery Furnaces). Along with brother Matthew, Eleanor has delighted and distracted, dazed and dazzled countless bipeds of all sorts and stripes (count both of our mothers as fans).

The band's newest album *Bitter Tea* dropped in April and a little crow told me that Matt's solo album is due at the end of the summer.

"Where are you?" I asked.

"In the Galaway part of Scotland,"

came Eleanor's reply. "It's just very beautiful. It's very green...it's seven o' clock at night."

"Everything's purple and sticky where I'm at," I said. "Yeah, we're baking in the sun at two over here." I took a hit and waited for her response.

"There's been sun showers all day so the sun is shining yet it's still raining...It's nice. I'd like to get back to it."

Her voice was soft and deferential...a far cry from the haunting, crestfallen vocalization of the Furnaces' music.

"Where are you?" she asked.

"Long Island. Actually, I think you've been here." I laughed.

"W-w-what do you mean?" She seemed bewildered.

"Well, on one of your tracks you mention Metro North, Aquaduct and LIRR."

"Oh, right," she said. "No, that's pure fiction."

The Furnaces had just wrapped a three week tour that ended in an All Tomorrow's Parties Festival, an hour south of London. The tour was resuming the following week and Eleanor had stayed on for the remainder. She mused about the difficulty involved in their latest recording endeavor and the set-up of the latest tour.

"It was a really hard album to make...the longest we'd spent in the studio. It was hard for me because Matt had written most of the songs beforehand and didn't make demos. So I had to sing them for the first time as we were doing it. Tough to make something out of stuff that I didn't know."

Eleanor was happy to report that the songs held more meaning for her now that she had performed them live, something of a delayed pay-off. As for the tour...

"It's not very theatrical. There was a while there where we were playing a medley-style, performing for fifty minutes without stopping. Now we're playing whole songs...there's no dramatic light show or anything." Then she added, "Maybe next time we'll have some special costumes."

The thought of the Furnaces in matching capes or day-glo spandex led me to my next question. "If you guys were comic characters what would yours be about? Would you guys be in one together or would you have your own?"

"Are you really into comics?" she asked suspiciously. "...I have no idea."



"Matt would love to spend the whole year in the studio...this was the longest we had ever spent on a record."

of the FIERY FURNACES

Fair enough. "Do you guys have any crippling addictions?"

"Not yet," Eleanor intoned. "Matt is addicted to chewing gum. Maybe I'm just being conceited...I don't think I have any. Finding whole foods wherever we go, that's become an obsession."

Another is Matt's obsession with the music. Although their last LP (*Rehearsing My Choir*) was done quickly, *Tea* was recorded over a month. "Matt would love to spend the whole year in the studio...he's into working long hours," Eleanor explained. "This was the longest we had ever spent on a record."

"I listened to it since I got it," I said. "And I've had some beautifully horrible nightmares since then. I gotta say, 'Thank you.'"

"Nightmares?" Eleanor asked, again confounded.

"Yeah, they're harmless, they're beautiful. Just a little scary. Listening to it makes me jump up and down mentally."

I fell silent for a moment and Eleanor heard the bedlam. "Everything okay?" she asked.

"Yeah, I'm sorry. I'm outside. We've got an Air Show...I have a needy bunny at my side."

Needy Bunny: Ask her about the truffles, darling!

"What was that?" Eleanor asked.

"It's my needy rabbit. Sorry about that."

Needy Bunny: I need some tea!

"Shut up," I hollered at him. The interview resumed. "You use some really specific places in the songs..."

"Most of it is totally made up," Eleanor admitted. "*Nevers* is about France, but Matt wrote that and he's never spent any time in France...Matt tends to just not write from personal experience at all...Borneo, we've never been to Borneo."

"Matt's such a great writer," she continued. "He's written children's books...and books of prose that he should have published. I'd love for us to do more music for children...I think that would be a good thing to do in old age. It's so much better than performing for adults because you see so much more of an honest reaction."

"What if you guys want to do something separate? Do you discuss that or do you go to blows? Do you have an understanding?"

"Yeah," Eleanor said. "We don't really talk about it

much. Matt did a solo record that's coming out. As long as it doesn't interfere with The Fiery Furnaces. Or if it does, whatever! It hasn't been an issue yet."

"Pardon the heavy," I said. "But where do you think you want to be when the glaciers melt and the lights go out in the sky?"

"Right where I am at this moment...about two hours south of Glasgow...I was just looking at a rainbow. I can see the end of it now. It seems like a pretty good place to be. I don't think it'll even be affected by the end of the world."

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▶ listen to soundbites at www.kotorimag.com
📍 www.thefieryfurnaces.com



"It's like having two knives in your hands... and you're chopping up your children..."

DJ KRUSH: THE HIDEAKI ISHII REMIX

BY: PIERCE JACKSON AND ASHA AZHAR

"It's kinda scary you know. It's like having two knives in your hands..." says DJ Krush as he shakes himself from a near lethal dose of Tokyo - NYC jet lag. "...And you're chopping up your children to make something new." The ringleader of Japanese Hip-Hop has carefully retraced his steps of the past 15 years to bring us a 'Best of Compilation' with a twist. *Stepping Stones - The Self-Remixed Best*, a two CD package, revisits classic tracks from Krush's extensive catalogue and sends each groove on a ride back to the future.

For *Stepping Stones*, he has challenged himself to rework a consortium of his favorite productions from the past so that they stand-alone from their original counterparts. Artists like CL Smooth ("Only the Strong Survive") and Mr. Lif ("Nosferatu") remain, but while the names of the tracks may be familiar, the sound they carry is anything but. "I wanted to do something more," he explains.

Krush has worked with an unbeatable line-up of artists from Black Thought of the Roots, to Guru of Gang Starr, Mos Def, DJ Shadow, and many other esteemed hip-hoppers, but this time he worked without any of their input. "Usually when I work, there's nothing painted. I start from scratch and work with [the] artist. But this time it was different. I already had everything in my hands and I had to do something with what I had." He admits that the process of morphing his own work was at times difficult. "I felt sometimes that the tracks were so complete that there were really no changes

that I could make to them."

The Album opens symbolically with the dark warning of *Only the Strong Survive*. Futuristic tribal drums, a looming synth, and a Japanese flute screaming out in the distance sets the eerie ambiance while CL Smooth's voice weaves itself harmoniously in and out of the instrumentation.

With an 8 CD discography under his belt, each production has been a building block, eventually molding him into the force he is now. "One step at a time" as Krush puts it. "I can create the world that I want to create." While 1995's *Meiso* was the first of albums that included vocals, he purposefully stacked vocal tracks and instrumentals back-to-back to prove that they could stand up to one another. But on *Stepping Stones* he decided to separate the two. "One thing I wanted people to know is that Hip-Hop could be Hip-Hop without rappers. It could be an instrumental and still be Hip-Hop."

As his career established itself, so did Krush's confidence in his beliefs. He explains that it has less to do with time and context but has more to do with personal growth. Strongly. "Hip-Hop should be open, wide open to accept different elements. People tend to think this is what Hip-Hop is or this is what Hip-Hop should be. I like to look at it the other way around."

Krush jumped from Japanese gangsta' to bedroom DJ before finally falling into the coveted category of internationally acclaimed 'global DJ.' A lot has changed since the beginning and

this album gives Krush a chance to look at what he has done. "I'm looking at steps I walked in the past and steps I'm going to walk in the future." But this album is not about second chances. Krush doesn't need any. He's pushed his pulsing, space-orbiting beats from the ground up and has shown us that Hip-Hop doesn't always have to be what everyone else is doing.

His first encounter with Hip-Hop was at a mall where he found a live action *WildStyle* (the movie) showcase displaying the different elements of Hip-Hop. There were B Boys, graf writers, MCs and DJs. The very next day, he purchased turntables, a mixer, and a sampler, and hasn't looked back since. Krush worked exclusively producing instrumental tracks and is recognized as the first Japanese DJ to work with live musicians.

In a 1997 interview, Marc Wiedenbaum compared DJ Krush to influential French film directors Goddard and Truffaut. It is said of the two that due to their poor grasp of English, rather than focus on the dialogue, they watched and focused on the film techniques and styles that were employed. In Krush's case, he was unable to understand the lyrics in Hip-Hop or the explanations from people involved with the culture, so instead of focusing on the products of Hip-Hop - the dance moves, the songs, the scratching - Krush concentrated on the processes and what it takes to produce these elements. This allowed him to spend more time on fine-tuning beats rather than simply emulating the aesthetics of Hip-Hop that the US already created.

Krush found that working with

English speaking rappers posed a bit of an issue. Although there is a translator present when he works in the studio, it is still hard for him to understand the rapper's message. "When I work with American rappers I still have to translate it to understand it," he explains. But when "collaborating with Japanese rappers, it is simply interesting because it's all in Japanese...everything [the rapper] says goes straight into my head and I can really relate to it."

As Krush has gotten older he's included more Japanese elements in his music. "I think I've become more down to earth," he offers. "For Japanese kids, when you turn on the radio, you don't really hear Japanese music, it's all American. Including Japanese instruments with Hip-Hop was something fresh to me, cause you know, you don't normally bang your head to traditional Japanese sounds."

The completion of *Stepping Stones* coincided with the M3 (Miami Music Multimedia) summit, a showcase during the Winter Music Conference in Miami, where Krush performed a set featuring his new material. Following M3, Krush has had a busy tour schedule taking him through Japan, Europe, and the Americas. When asked what keeps him motivated, Krush laughed and replied, "It's the only thing I can do!"

Good enough for me.

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WELCOME TO AMERICA, NOW DRINK UP AND LEAVE

BY: SONNY KAY, LEAD SINGER OF YEAR FUTURE & FOUNDER OF GSL RECORDS

Year Future just returned from a 5-week tour of the U.S. After covering all our expenses and paying our booking agent 10% of all the money we were paid for playing, we came home with \$84.00. There are four of us and it hardly seems worth dividing, but honestly, I'm just grateful we broke even. I've been touring almost every year for 14 or 15 years and the economics of it have *never* been as meager as they seem to be in 2006.

Part of the problem, money-wise, was that two of those five weeks were in the company of the Italian hardcore band, With Love, our invited friends whom we paid exactly half of what the "package" earned each night. Seeing as how the workings of the "underground" touring circuit in the U.S. are essentially a cold and mean-spirited insult compared to the genuine hospitality afforded American bands in the vast majority of European countries, it was the least we could

do. It's not like we're talking about much money, anyway; a good night was five or six hundred dollars to split between us, and there were *not* that many good nights. To a European, I can only imagine how needlessly penny-pinching and selfish everything, even "punk" or "indie" culture, must seem in this country. Don't get me wrong, none of them nor any of us have delusions of grandeur or any unrealistic expectations. We met a number of kind-hearted, hospitable and sometimes even inspiring people on this last tour, and saw a lot of friends from previous trips, old bands, etc. Some of those great people were even promoters or club managers, and some of them even put us up for the night. But, overall, they were few and far between. Hospitality - the real meaning of the word, not the icebox full of Bud nor the hummus/veggie tray (both of which are a comparative luxury, at times) - is simply not a part of the culture of

touring here. Here, in the United friggin' States, where logic would suggest it can be "afforded" more than anywhere else. Sure, you might each get a ten-dollar cash "buyout" for dinner upon arrival at a venue, or if you're lucky the place might even have a restaurant that'll hook you up. But once the bar's closed and you've been paid, you're on yer own.

In Italy, as with everywhere else we've traveled across Europe, touring bands are treated like visiting 4-star generals or long-lost relatives. Load-in and soundcheck are typically followed by a meal of what we here would consider white tablecloth quality and variety (this usually after you've gorged yourself on exotic cheeses, fresh-baked breads, fruits, chocolates and crates of beer and mineral water in the dressing room). It is routine for the venue or promoter to arrange accommodations for you for the evening, be it a hotel,

immaculate mansion-like squat, or a massive empty garage filled with clean mattresses, fresh sheets and piles of clean towels. In the morning someone will have made you a hot breakfast, or maybe you'll get a pile of fresh-that-morning baguettes and half a dozen things to stuff in them. This goes for pretty much ANY touring band. And you're usually getting paid at least 100 Euros (about \$110), just for showing up, in most cases quite a lot more. Of course, there are truly punk, community-minded - dare I say *anarchist* - people, venues, etc. in the U.S. underground, but they're typically associated with one or more usually well-known, road-seasoned bands; bands who've been to Europe and are embarrassed to invite their new friends in Sweden or Holland here to suffer the alternative rock-club circuit and its indignities. These bands too, are few and far between.



“Our government promotes racism, fundamentalism, and ecological devastation globally... never mind horseshit like the arts.”

The real difference, of course, between us and them, is that most European countries and governments are still in the business, if you'd like to look at it that way, of supporting culture. By culture I mean a real, active, dynamic, and in many, many cases a thoroughly non-profit culture. A non-television, non-corporate culture visible in almost any European city with a population of, say, 30,000 or more, sometimes much less. A culture for culture's sake, for the (gasp!) people's sake. We here, of course, are a proprietary society based on private ownership and State's rules. Our government promotes racism, fundamentalism and ecological devastation globally with our tax dollars, never mind "Liberal" horseshit like the arts. Bands from Norway and Italy arrive to tour the U.S. with plane tickets and even equipment paid for by their governments, cash doled-out as artists' stipends or grants. Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and others have vast networks of *youth centers* that allow local promoters to book even the most obscure American emo band with very low overhead and thoroughly pro sound, lights, you name it. Shit, even the BBC paid every single member of

any band a handsome day's wage for recording a Peel Session! Where the fuck were their priorities?

The whole point of touring is supporting records, in our case a new album, Year Future's first. Sure, on this tour we played for some decent-sized audiences and managed to sell a few CD's and t-shirts, which just about covered breakfast and lunch every day for the four of us. However, the vast majority of the almost \$7000 we were paid by the venues went to pay for gasoline. The irony (OK, the humor) of our situation is that our record, *First World Fever*, couldn't be more critical of the kind of mentality and "values" powering the U.S. and controlling, amongst a vast sea of other systems, the prices we pay for gas. The reason for the tour, in essence, was to promote the ideas that inspired the content of the album, both musically and lyrically. The reality of the tour, however, was that in order to accomplish its purpose, we were forced to betray its ideals. Ah, freedom.

Anyway, With Love did their two weeks with us and from all indications had a total blast "just

being here." Considering just how few Italian punk or any other bands make it over here, it's certainly something of an accomplishment. But, if their tickets hadn't been supplemented by their government (not to mention certain prolific members' lucrative art-world grant-sniffing), the tour would have been a total wash for them financially. I imagine it probably was anyway, what with rental car, speeding tickets and all, but still. At worst, it was a cheap vacation around the U.S. and a disappointing crash-course in DIY economics, American style. There just isn't the support or interest in the underground here that there is, per capita, all over Europe. It goes in and out of fashion in this country, and it doesn't really require much of a commitment as it does in many other places around the world. Not that this was really news to me, but seeing it through the Italians' eyes really made the disparities obvious, not to mention newly disappointing.

Anyway, my point is, we, the traveling bands of America, aren't expecting much and we don't think we deserve special treatment. We'd just prefer not to be part of something that pretends to offer

an alternative to the mainstream, self-serving, war-mongering, all-consuming monoculture only to wind up being a microcosm of, or a breeding ground for it. We want to be part of something with a wholly different set of values and ideals, something permanent and alive. I'm not talking about support for punk *music*, per se, but for punk living. And, yeah, while we're at it, we want bed and breakfast, too. Imagine what's possible when your country's not invading others, wasting every conceivable penny and every available life on destruction. Imagine what people might discover for and about themselves if they weren't endlessly distracted...

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◀ listen to soundbites at
www.kotorimag.com
① www.yearfuture.net
② www.goldstandardlabs.com



ART: VIOLET FEWES

FLIPPIN' LIDS WITH BARON ZEN

BY: WILLIAM VERGIL BROFEE

People will tell you that there is no Baron Zen. They will tell you that he is the product of a warped mind, a bizarre alter ego created out of one DJ's desperate musical explorations. These people will direct you to a phantom website where you will read about a certain DJ Sweet Steve from San Jose and how he recorded an album called *At The Mall* under the Baron Zen moniker. Here, a few words with Señor Sweetness, a gifted DJ whose canny tunes blend funk, techno, alternative and hip-hop into a smorgasbord of reverberating jingles.

"Progress and what it means to you in twenty words. GO!"

"If today's music, especially rap, is progress, then progress is scary to me," Steve pauses to ponder. "Progress is the Internet where I can find hundreds of 80's electro-funk songs I never

even knew about back in the day."

"If your album was a casserole, what kind of casserole would it be?"

"More like a pizza," The Baron, nay, Steve explained. "It would be some sort of combo, a meat lovers deluxe. One song is pepperoni, another is sausage and another is salami. It's all over the pie charts."

"What was the name of the first song you ever recorded and what was it about?"

"The first song as Baron Zen is 'At The Mall' which is basically about teenagers hanging out at the mall. The setting is Eastridge Mall in San Jose. Sitting by the flowerpot near Sears, checking out girls and drinking Orange Julius. It doesn't get any better than that."

At the Mall is the conglomeration of a series of recording sessions that took place between 1988 and 1992. "The earlier songs were more drum-machine-influenced punk," Steve says. Take track 4 for example, "Fuckin' Bored", a fucking classic before its time. Back-to-back turntables were implemented for Baron Zen to loop beats on tweaked-out numbers like "Burn Rubber" and "Turn Around." Then he adds seriously, "I was really into Joy Division at the time."

"Right after we recorded *At The Mall* I brought it down to San Jose's radio station, KSJS, and it became part of their rotation. It helped that PB Wolf and I were DJ's on the station."

For the uninitiated, PB Wolf is President of Stones Throw Records, proud home to Baron Zen's LP, *MF Doom* and the late J Dilla among others. He is also Steve's high school chum; a guy who

fondly recalls playing pranks on people with Steve before he was the Baron.

"Where is Freedom located?" I queried.

"Freedom is all in your mind. Sure, we may hate the government and all the Big Brother things it is starting to do lately. But we do have the freedom to record an album like *At the Mall*, so no complaints from me."

To tour the dark and foreboding recesses of the Baron's Mansion, visit us online at www.kotorimag.com for the full skinny on Zen and how he created his own Creature Chorus in his cellar.

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THE WEATHER UNDERGROUND

BY: DAN KUTNER

Everything you ever really need to know about a band you can tell from the way their singer jumps into a crowd. Some plummet Eddie Vedder style, others ride inside giant inflatable balls - Wayne. Axl Rose once clobbered a fan, cancelled the show, and then fled from the ensuing riot. Anyone who's witnessed the standard fall-in / crowd-surf / get-molested-by-the-fans (sorry Gwen, call me?) can recognize the beauty in this approach.

Harley Cortez of The Weather Underground takes this his own direction - yours. Blink and he's off the stage, blink again and you're looking him in the eye. He engages the crowd, lip to microphone to lip: all spirit and pulse and passion. He provokes, pushes, begs, and convinces; the audience feels it and they're along for the ride. It's sport. The only

two people in the room unaffected have their shirts tucked into their jeans and are staring at their Budweiser. Smiles, the splits, break dancing, prodding, pleading - anxiety manifest; a few girls edge away at the impending attention but change their minds and approach him. In short order the stage is filled with clapping, embarrassed, smiling friends. You drive home trying to understand what you just saw.

Somewhere, a god is missing his fire.

The bands recorded tracks (available now as a 3 song sampler from an upcoming EP) hum with the same intensity and passion, the same level of engagement. The energy isn't contagious, it isn't electric: it's PERVERSIVE. To say The Weather Underground sonically careen through a set is

to say Herpes is 'spready' (sorry Gwen, call me?). Melodic but sweet with sharp vocals that range from a playful fervor to full-blown hurrah, the sound adroitly embodies the bands philosophy. Of note, the band's name.

The Weather Underground Organization were a radical, militant offshoot of communist revolutionary New Left - a late 60s / early 70s youth movement out of Chicago, born out of opposition to the war in Vietnam. Notable for their rejection of non-violence, the groups name is a reference to the Bob Dylan lyric "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows." Art and politics nipping at one another's heels. Here, art is snarling, teeth bared.

Harley explains, "Our choice in the name is reflective of

our attraction to a group of people that were enabled by an articulation of ideology and an agency of revolution to strike out against oppressive structures that essentially sought to squander a freedom of thought and movement it felt to be divisive. The name is an expression, not a designation."

The sound backs it up. How do just four young men go about creating such a forceful resonance?

"Through the laws of moments and time and space. We are all the greatest of friends. We sing and create songs about what is going on around us and we do it passionately."

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HOUSE HUMPING WITH DAN MIRVISH

BY: JAKE MCGEE

The film *Open House* is a hilarious one, starring Anthony Rapp, Kellie Martin, and James Duval among others. Martin and Duval are a couple who go "sexy swiping," a spin-off version of "house humping" (going to an open house, regardless of honest intent to buy, and getting jiggy), where after they make whoopee, they steal a trinket from the house, and then take it to the next house to drop off, and continue the cycle.

The movie is hysterically creative, an original musical where everything was sung live on set. And the DVD is packed tight with more additional material than the feature itself, with a bunch of How-To tracks, such as "How to Win an Award," "How to Make an Indie Film," and so on.

Dan Mirvish, co-founder of Slamdance, directed this flick, even though he's never truly been "house humping." "The

thought had certainly occurred to me," he says, "which is what led to the movie. I certainly tried. I did break a skylight in a house. I didn't go through it, but it was kind of a low skylight, and I was trying to look behind it, and it fell down and broke.

"But as far as 'house humping' itself, I tried to get my wife to go for it, but I don't know how close we ever actually came to it."

It's a shame, for this trend is an exciting one, and one that has been growing through the years, gaining considerable exposure with the release of *Open House*. "It been kind of funny," Mirvish laughs. "There was an article in the March issue of *GQ* about it, and there's a bunch of discussion groups online.

"Some of it has happened by itself, with the rise of the real estate market, it's inevitable that

people would think about it on their own. I think someone has written in to *GQ* already, saying how they had done it 20 years ago, and they bought the house, and their marriage is still fine. People having sex in strange places is hardly an original concept.

"Even stranger than that, in the *LA Times* there was a huge cover story in the Real Estate section, and it's all about people stealing things from open houses, and specifically stealing prescription drugs from medicine cabinets, which we sing about in the film.

"So, yeah, it is funny how life is apparently imitating art, in the case of 'house humping' and people stealing prescription drugs."

There's even a video game based on the film, where the point of it is "sexy swiping," adds Mirvish. "You play Kellie Martin's character, you go through a maze

of a house, and you are being chased by the realtors, cops, depending on which house it is. And the goal is to find the James Duval character, and then you have sex with him, and then you steal something from the house, and you go to the next house."

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① *Open House* is available on DVD, at stores all over the New World. For more information, check out www.openhousemovie.com.



essential

Friday, June 23

Sponsored by Kotori Magazine

chris micali

(vapour / reversible / fade, boston)



chris reavey

(reversible / porterhouse / fade, boston)

joplin + dory

(dialogue / essential / moonshadows, LA)



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GREG PALAST

BY: WASIM MUKLASHY

“Stuff marked
Top Secret...
Confidential...
I LOVE that
stuff!”

Guantanamo's Orange Suit City is America's 8th largest metropolis, we have 11,000 TV stations all programmed by Rupert Murdoch's wired brain preserves, and President Jeb Bush is buddy buddy with President bin Laden of Eurasia.

This is Greg Palast's report from the future.

Far fetched? Maybe. But after reading Greg Palast's latest better-be-bestseller *Armed Madhouse*, it's hard to think anything other than 'we could only be so lucky.' The facts and details and reports that he offers are so much more disturbing than the scenario described above, it's sure to make you wonder why we don't all just get our tubes tied and pipes smashed before clocking out of work today. Yet, as vile as the contents may be, this is undoubtedly one of the most important books of our time. If we were truly focused on liberty and justice for all, this would become required reading in our nation's classrooms. But it's not. And it never will be. It's too depressing. In other words...it's too honest. "Considering the stories I have in *Armed Madhouse*, if it was all done in a serious grim style, you

wouldn't make it without Valium," Palast confesses. Damn good thing he has a sense of humor.

Sure, you can write him off as a "conspiracy freak maniac weirdo pinko," but the fact of the matter stands, he's a 'maniac' that has won more distinguished journalism awards and accolades than he can find room for in his cramped NY office, and a 'freak' who has been one of the most coveted correspondents for some of the world's largest and most esteemed news outlets, including Harper's, the BBC, The Guardian, and The Observer. Yah, many of those are British outlets, but really... would any domestic mainstream news outlet be stupid enough to print any sort of stories that might provoke a bit of thought? Their families need to eat for cryin' out loud (not to mention those darned Lexus payments)! But that still didn't stop his last book, *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy* from popping up on the New York Times' bestseller list.

Not only that, but he's a 'weirdo' that has earned enough respect to warrant the attention of some of our country's highest level individuals from the world's highest level institutions. Among

those from where he magically manages to acquire a seemingly continuous stream of dizzying inside information are the World Bank, the FBI, the State Department, ExxonMobile, and the Pentagon. "A lot of reporters won't take it. It's a lot of hard work to go through this stuff, verify shit, figure out what a lot of it means," Palast tells us, "but I will. Stuff marked Top Secret... Confidential...I LOVE that stuff!"

This brings up a couple of important ethical points. One... there is actually someone out there willing to do the work that their job description calls for: investigate. Two, people truly exist...from within the system itself, who believe it imperative enough to make certain incriminating information public that they are willing to risk their careers, and in many cases, their lives. "For personal decisions or moral reasons, they put themselves in the line of fire. But I'm telling anyone that wants to hand me documents, I'll go to prison before I give you up. Like the shit I get from inside the World Bank, it's fantastic shit!! But if any of those people got caught, their careers are toast, so I would never give them up."

"What we have in America is 'silly news' which is done in this weird serious solemn style... we're telling you fluffy bullshit about the President...he's at his ranch, he's just a regular guy, he just fell off his bike...whereas I'll do some funny offbeat crap about some really heavy serious stuff about Iraq. It's also more fun for me, because I would otherwise go insane," Greg explains. "If you talk to people in weird language about anti-imperialism and stuff like that... if you use that kind of twisted language...well, two things are going to happen...you're not going to convince anyone, and you're not going to get laid." Sold me.

Palast may be the only person in the world to claim that "I had two writing teachers...Charles Bukowski and Allen Ginsburg" after studying finance under free-trade luminary Milton Friedman. "I didn't go to journalism school," he confesses. "That's probably why my brain isn't fuckin' twisted in a pretzeled bullshit careerist knot." His work only validates that point.

He was the first to break the Bush voting scandal of 2000 and describe in horrifying detail their

methods (and no, it wasn't faulty voting machines), and he was the guy that snuck his way into Tony Blair's inner circle, exposing him to his biggest scandal, "Lobbygate." Now, among other things, Palast is the first to report the story of the voting scandal of 2008...but wait...that hasn't happened yet...or has it?

With *Armed Madhouse*, Palast comes at us armed with information from within the very establishments he criticizes. In addition to the proof that the 2008 election is already fixed, and the names and circumstances of those responsible for drowning New Orleans, Palast has acquired both of Bush's plans to seize Iraq's oil (yes, both). Surprisingly enough, it wasn't so they can sell it...quite the contrary. The reports reveal that we went into Iraq "to make sure we *don't* get the oil. The oil companies love it. They're getting 70 bucks a barrel. 3 bucks a gallon. That's mission accomplished. I mean, if we're chanting down the street 'no blood for oil', most Americans think that's a bargain... blood for oil." Makes sense in a disturbing way doesn't it?!

In our A.D.D. society that has

turned to 15 second 'news' reports centering more on how large the reporter's rack is or splashy motion graphics that flash 'HOT' where one would normally expect a fahrenheit figure, Palast remains

"If we're chanting down the street 'no blood for oil,' most Americans think that's a bargain!"

one of the few still willing to put himself in harms way to gather and expose real and relevant truth. "Look, we're made stupid," he shouts. "All this shit about 'they're coming to get us'...if it's not the Muslim hordes, it's the Mexicans crawling over the border to get us. It's this whole thing to make us afraid, and when you're afraid, you get stupid."

But if you're like me, at this point, you don't want to hear anymore about what is happening.

You don't want to see anymore about the depressing huntas and corporate regimes that control our lives and our futures without a single breathe of our consideration. You're tired of hearing about the corruption and the scandal. And the exponentially growing front in the class war? Fuggedabit! What you (well, at least I) want to know is, is there anything we can do about it? So that is precisely how I approached him on a recent evening

in Manhattan. His immediate response?

"Well, there are simple solutions like 'kill the rich.'"

Uhh...

"But really, we haven't been doing too bad. Did you expect Cheney to come out of his bunker with his hands up saying 'you got me' so we can read him his rights? And I mean, yah, Bush stole the election, but that

means he didn't win. Score one for the American people," he explains matter of factly.

"The question is...are people going to un-stupid themselves? I think there are signs of it. We start out with the ability to do a few things," he continues. "We can organize, we can march..."

At that very point, his wife walks in, inquiring about putting their children to bed, prompting him to add "we can have lots of babies so they can't get rid of us!"

It's this very demeanor and presentation that has made him so effective. The sarcasm, the wit, the humor.

"Listen." He gets serious. "Every action that's worth a shit starts at the fringe. It starts off as marginal, then it becomes the center. Even when frickin' Nixon was President, you got this shit scheming little bastard and he still passes the Environmental Protection Agency law, the Occupational Safety and Health law... there was a lot of progressive action that happened."

"New Orleans should have been





our rallying cry. Why didn't people march and gather there by the thousands? For the most part people were like 'oh well, we lost a city,'" Palast laments. "We should *NEVER LET THAT GO*...that a government can let a city drown...bodies floating in the streets...that city was drowning long before the levees ever broke...economically. 1927 is when the entire American political system changed, when the levees broke in New Orleans. The nation was horrified. At the time, the local Public Service Commissioner, Huey Long, rose up and said 'screw this...these rich guys are drowning us!' He literally began a revolution, then he became governor of Louisiana, and then Roosevelt picked up the line as the New Deal."

"You have to bring the war home to people, the concepts home to people. All I know is that suddenly you hit people's points...their kid has cerebral palsy and they have no goddamn health insurance... and someone asks 'why is that?' No matter what we say, we still had 59 million people that voted for this guy. They didn't care that they didn't have health insurance, he just told them he'd make sure boys don't kiss boys and that we can have the 10 commandments at the courthouse door."

"You've got to vote, just like you have to wipe your ass. It's just a part of life. Don't let them take that away from you. They can steal some of the votes some of the time, and all of the votes some of the time, but they can't steal all of the votes all of the time. If you're a black person, you've got about a 1 in 7 chance that if your ballot will not count. Does that mean you don't vote? No, that means, you better get your brother to vote too! For God's sakes, fuckin' vote! If you can't do something that dipshit simple, then take the Che Guevara poster off the wall, get rid of the fashion statement, and just bag it. Do the basics man!"

"One way to bust through the electronic Berlin wall is through music. I mean, to me it's pretty significant that my stuff's been introduced in spoken word form by Jello Biafra, that Eminem did a video, 'Mosh,' that was inspired... whatever the hell that means... by my work. So they can tape my mouth and keep me off Fox, but they can't take me off the dance floor. That's no shit important!"

"Use the music and the full concept of the counter culture," he passionately continues. "Not everything has to be political."

You buck the system by creating music they don't understand, by having clothes and language they don't understand, by not taking shit-dumb-stupid-brain-dead-fuck-up jobs that destroy you and eat your life and then you're dead. You don't want their music that's picked out by Sony and EMI. You don't want the food that's been packaged for you by McDonald's. You don't want the movies that they have chosen for you. You don't want your job as a way of thinking, or the candidate they have chosen for you. I think it's a question of total resistance from morning til' night on all fronts cultural and political."

He stops and looks out the window upon 2nd Avenue for a brief moment. A touch of nostalgia glimmers in his eyes. He begins fondly reminiscing about his days as a working class child growing up in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. "We were the loser class," he softly utters. "We were ready to be shipped off to 'Nam. And here were these people playing this weird guy with a weird voice...Bob Dylan. I remember his first album."

He smiles.

"That's when it started busting apart."

He pauses.

"But remember, it was all fringe shit until it became mainstream."

Here is where our interview session began to draw to a comfortable close. Duty called. Our future was in his hands and he had to attend to it. In this case, it took the form of twin 9 year olds.

Before I turned to walk out, I couldn't help but chuckle to myself as his dog ran off with his wife's shoe, and he went chasing after it. The genius mind behind some of the world's most important information is human after all...

...and so are we.

Check www.kotorimag.com for a complete transcript of the enlightening interview session with Mr. Palast where he talks about how Hugo Chavez almost got him killed in Venezuela, about Bill O'Reilly and Hannity crank calling him, about the Kotori wing at Guantanamo, and what it is about Boots Riley and the Coop and Anti-Flag that he just can't get enough of.



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“There was a time when we were all together like a West Coast Native Tongues. There’ll never be another time like it.”

HOW MUCH CUT COULDA WOODCHUCK CUT IF A WOODCHUCK COULD CHUCK D?

BY: MIKE THE POET

Lucas McFadden is the L.A. Native best known as the world famous DJ CUT CHEMIST. Listening to Cut talk about music and his hometown gives a lot of insight into his sound. Dude’s hilarious. He’s got a razor sharp wit. It’s easy to see why he’s called *Cut Chemist*, because he not only cuts up records, he dices up conversation with a slew of poignant one-liners. When you see him, ask about his favorite line in *Blazing Saddles*. Long known as a member of Jurassic 5 and as one of the greatest DJ/Producers of his generation, he’s finally managed to find the time to release his first official solo album *The Audience’s Listening*, on Warner Brothers Records.

“It’s short and sweet,” says Cut. The album’s 12 tracks hit fast. 47 minutes of genre-bending joints. “Science fiction and fantasy are major influences,” he adds. Ethereal hip-hop, swinging beats, sound bytes, old funk, gritty samples, nobody can turn back the calendar and turn the page simultaneously as well as Señor Chemist. As hip-hop as he is, many of the tracks fall somewhere just outside the box. “The Garden” features a bossa nova style and Portuguese vocals from Astrud Gilberto’s Brazilian tune “Berimbau.” Hell, only two of the songs have emcees kicking rhymes. “The Storm” features Mr. Lif and Edan and “What’s the Altitude” features Hymnal, former member

of the legendary Darkleaf crew.

“The free spirit of Darkleaf is in *The Audience’s Listening*.” For those itching to catch up, Darkleaf were contemporaries of Pharcyde, Freestyle Fellowship, and J5 in the early 90s. “The most bugged out music from that time was Darkleaf. Darkleaf never got their proper respect,” adds Cut. “Darkleaf made me say it’s OK! They blew up the barometer. Their live shows were complete chaos. I remember one of the shows at Highland Grounds. It was wild, but somewhere in there it was brilliant.” Blackbird, former member of Darkleaf, remains one of his favorite MCs. Cut Chemist loves the new album, *Bird’s Eye View* avail on Alhapp Records. “‘Outro’ is just retarded!”

The early days of the LA underground are mythical folklore. Cut Chemist’s website is one of the best records of some of the early fliers and photos from that era. “Many people don’t know that David Arquette wrote graffiti as ‘SUM ONE’ and he was very good. So did Chali 2na, he wrote Chicagoism. His friend was a fresh kid named Jack Frost. They met at Bancroft Junior High School along with Mear (One) and DJ Rob One.”

Back in 1991 Cut and Mixmaster Wolf DJ’d the Peace Pipe event. In many ways this jam was a big seed for multiple musical manifests

that continue today, including, but not limited to, the Root Down, Breakestra, and Funky Sole. DJ Red Alert mixtapes were a major influence. “Skatmaster Tate schooled me on funk 45’s at the Gaslight.” Looking back he says, “I can’t seem to get away from night clubs, it’s been a long time.”

Cut was also childhood friends with renowned artist Keith Tamashiro who’s produced cover art for Cut, DJ Shadow, and Herbie Hancock to name a few. Cats like Wil-Dog from Ozomatli were also in the mix. They all grew up together.

“There was a time when we were all together like a West Coast Native Tongues. St. Mark, The Unity Committee (they became J5), Dark Leaf, Volume 10, Pharcyde, and the Heavyweights who became Freestyle Fellowship. It was an incredible time in the early 90s. There’ll never be another time like it.”

Those were also the glory days of the Good Life Café in South Central LA. The weekly open mic was homebase for a generation of emcees. “Seeing Mikah 9 for the first time at was incredible. He was a jazz musician with words like a verbal Charlie Parker. Scatting, rapping, with a trumpet, he led me into more jazz,” Cut remembers. Density entwines webs of parallel existence thick in the heart of

the inner city’s musical matrix.

“I sold DJ Dusk J5’s first record out of my trunk in 1994 in The Good Life parking lot.” The two became friends when Dusk called him shortly afterwards. “I met him as Tarek Captan. He had a camera with him. Somewhere early on I realized he was more than just a fan, he was a head. Before you knew it he was DJ Dusk. Dusk’s level of commitment was incredible. He led so many different lives. He put it down. I’m so proud of him.” R.I.P. DJ Dusk (tribute on p.80).

As the 90s went on Jurassic 5 built up a large fan base and began incessant touring. Simultaneously Cut’s DJ career was taking off. When it comes to superstar DJs that bring the noise, Cut Chemist is up there with the big dawgs. He’s rocked hundreds of epic parties the world over. Scratching, mixing, and matching beats effortlessly, he was a monster on the decks. Not only that, but his production and remix credits are included on over 50 projects to date, not only for J5 but DJ Shadow, Lyrics Born, Blackalicious, Steinski, Invisible Skratch Piklz, and many more.

Cut is also famous for having over 30,000 records. He says, “It’s not how many records you have, it’s how well you know ‘em. We used to have a homie that only had 2 crates of records, but he



still made the best beats. Otherwise it's a dick measuring contest." Cut knows his records like no other. The man's been buying vinyl since age 7. His first digging experience was in '86 when he went looking for "Funky Drummer." "I went to Tower on Sunset. When I saw the words 'Bonus Beats' on the 12", I knew I found what I was looking for."

Around the same time in middle school, he went on a trip to the East Coast with his family. He looked up all the record

stores in New York City and Philadelphia. Needless to say, he bought a ton. "In Philly, the bellboy told me to go to Funk-O-Mart on Market Street. I lost my mind. They stayed open late for me. Tapp Money laced me up with some Bob James drum breaks. Many years later I went back there with DJ Shadow."

DJ Shadow is usually mentioned in the same breath as Cut for many reasons. Their legendary "Brainfreeze" event at the El Rey a few years back was

an exercise in monumental inspiration. When it comes to sampling, mixing and arranging compositions they are both sound pioneers. "I was digging earlier, but he was digging deeper. Shadow was overseas and had Keb Darge schooling him in the UK."

With both seminal DJs releasing highly anticipated new albums this summer, it'll be quite entertaining to experience, debate, nitpick and revel in their flourishing individual music paths as they

size up and step through that inevitable fork in life's road.

The audience is listening to Cut Chemist. Whether he's rocking a rooftop party of soul children or you have his music on your iPod, he's gonna make your head nod.

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A HANDSOME PROFIT

BY: BOB FREVILLE

THE PROFESSIONAL SWITCH-UP OF PORN'S FINEST & THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEW INDEPENDENT WOMAN IN THE WAKE OF THERE-TRAMPED AMERIKA

There's an expression in the Real Estate game called "flipping houses." A house is flipped when an Agent personally buys up dilapidated property on the cheap, puts time and money into its improvements and sells it for twice what it was worth. The Agent bought it at an undervalued price, spent less than the house was worth on fixing it up and made back all his or her money on the re-sale...plus a handsome profit. Therefore, said Agent has *flipped the house*.

This isn't the only shrewd or shady scenario that turns big bucks and sucks your luck in the Real Estate world. But it is a luminescent example of how the customer gets fucked.

THE MADAME BECOMES THE MOGUL

"I have been working in Real Estate for three years," says Stacey Hirsch, of Pinnacle Estate Properties. Stacey is a realtor. That is who she is. But she was also someone else. Red-blooded American jerka-holics might recall a brunette

Pornstar of the 1990's whose almond eyes and pouty lips went oft-ignored due to her voluptuous mammaries, silver dollar nipples and healthy back door. This was *Raylene*.

From the looks of her at the time, one would probably guess that Raylene broke into porn for the same reasons a runny-nosed guttersnipe might break into a suburban home. Her eyelids were heavy and adumbrated and her early Gonzo videos painted her as a jaundiced drug whore of one type or another. Later in her career, she would change this up, either consciously or as the result of kicking a nasty dependency; she would become the happy pothead with the Cheshire grin who runs around praising quirky movies and Cali bud.

Somewhere between 2001 and now, Raylene disappeared. Branching out is not abnormal in adult entertainment. Asia Carrera was perhaps the first when she became the Queen of the Dow Jones. Gina Lynn has been all over the place, investing the money from her sex

performances in Gina Lynn Productions, Inc. and Top Notch Bitches Dot Com; she's now trying to open her own chain of Subway sandwich shops and an adult video store in her hometown.

Expanding your monetary potential is expected. The hard part to understand is the need for anonymity. My old friend Tabitha Stevens was in the business for years when she decided that she wanted to be a Chiropractor. And she did it, quite successfully in fact. But she didn't use a different name and made no attempts to conceal who she was. On the contrary, she continued to write a column for *Hustler's Busty Beauties* for years to come.

So the question arose. In a liberal and hedonistic climate like that of California, why would Raylene keep hush about her roots?

"Why the name Stacey?" I asked our curvaceous Hispanic-Israeli subject. "Is that your real name or a pseudonym?"

"My name is Stacey Hirsch," she re-

plied curtly. "No pseudonym."

The fact of the matter is, Stacey Hirsch and Raylene are but two of the many personalities of Stacey.

Stacey B. Bernstein was born in Glendora, California, in February of 1977. She started straddling for money and fame under the stage moniker Alexis Fontaine. Fontaine was dropped for Fontayne and then, albeit briefly, for simply "Stacey." All these switch-ups may explain why she felt the need to skirt my question. Sure, it's not a pseudonym. Perhaps Ms. Bernstein had it legally changed. Not my business.

THERE GOES THE 'HOOD

Getting back to business, Stacey tells me about 50% of her sales have been generated from the adult industry or from contacts she made while she was in it. "I do a lot of marketing that is geared toward helping people in the industry invest tier money in real estate." This could mean that a significant number of the big dogs in Porn are

now property entrepreneurs. In most states, getting your Real Estate license only takes a couple hundred bucks and forty-five hours of your time. A salesperson's course takes a few days and the only thing between you and that piece of card stock paper is a 190-page book and an instructor on autopilot.

That is not to say that Raylene didn't bleed, sweat and bare-knuckle her way into getting her license. I don't live in San Fernando Valley and don't plan to visit that gorge. But as Raylene states it herself, "There was no jump from Porn to Real Estate. I retired five years ago when I got engaged."

She continued dancing for another 3 years and her image continued to flap across TV spots for Spice Channel and surface at AVN Awards ceremonies.

MAMA'S GOT A SURPRISE COOKIN'

Modern entertainment, from the teen sex romp to the Reality TV show, has shocked Americans in every possible way so that now we need Porn more than ever. Adult film has grown into the last bastion for something forbidden. We are now a society taking our eight-year old daughters to buy slut costumes for Halloween. Tweens have traded in their Barbie dolls for scantily clad Bratz and we encourage them to idolize bubblegum pop whores selling them adolescent sex appeal every time they turn on the tube.

To see a pearl necklace or a close-up of goosebumps across a pubic bone. This is where it's at. We've got nothing else left.

This is a fact of life, but one that Raylene, who was seemingly randy all these years, can't seem to appreciate. "Retiring from adult film was a goal since I entered," she tells me in our second round.

It is probably worth mentioning that Stacey Bern...nay, Stacey Hirsch is the shark that has to press on or she will sink. "There's nowhere to move for me but forward," she explains. "The long-term goals will come in time."

Then she adds...wait for it! Wait for it!! "I have achieved what I set out

RAYLENEAKASTACEY
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FONTAINEAKA
MRS. RAYLENENBAUM



to do so far...I have my first baby on the way, so that's a start."

I advocate or espouse many things, even a good degree of filth among the pack, and a woman's body is most certainly hers. Except my girlfriend's body which, of course, belongs to me under dogmatic law. But it takes a batty chick to ignore the ramifications a decision like this makes in the kid's long-term life. He gets to junior high, maybe high school, and his friends or roommates rent a DVD and he sees the woman who gave him life sur-

rounded by pink peckers, getting a face full of splooge. All without a parental debriefing no less! Not fair.

FROM THE HORNDOG SHILLS TO BEVERLY HILLS

Mrs. Stacey Bernstein-Fontaine-Hirsch (now married?)-Alexis-Raylenenbaum is making a new life for herself. This much is clear. The part that boggles the mind is her active involvement with the industry that she apparently never wanted to be in from the word Blow.

"I currently market in the realm of Porn." By her own admission, from the jowls of slaves. "I do a lot of work with the AIM Foundation." And there's that 50% generated from the business. And, according to Stacey, she's only sold one house to a fan. So there's that "one" house. Add it all up and divide it by a knee-deep heap of hogwash and you've got your answer.

I got my answer. I no longer care about names or occupations. As I stumbled out of my house and searched for a dark culvert to hang my heavy head in, I decided that it didn't matter. Somewhere out there a tiny spermboy is emerging from fresh batter, ready to lunge out into this world and come to find that his mother's a treacherous whore. He won't be the first and he won't be the last. Freud's wet dream—a whole batch of children he can relate to long enough to blubber with a little bit—has always been here.

Only now the money for those Pampers that will carry the boy through grade school until he finally gets to college and shits himself at the sight of his moms on a TV screen, taking a wet and steamy across her nose and eyelashes, that money will come from a dirty place. Not that Porn is a dirty place and not because it will, in large part, come from the money that Mom has invested from her days when she got guys your age off in Handicam flicks. No, because it comes from that pit of lies, that guilty conscience cauldron that has clearly taken a toll on the sassy *mujerzuela* who proclaimed on her My Space page that she is, "Young, dumb and full of cum."

If anything's for sure, it is that Stacey Hirsch never has to worry about identity theft. Nobody is stealing her name. And if they did, she'd have no trouble tracking it down. She's been able to get it back several times.

It's time to build taller fences.



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MEET THE CREEPER

BY: JAKE MCGEE

"You can all watch a movie, and kinda get the same thing from it. But music really hits people in different ways."

Rob Zombie needs no introduction. He's not just the growling madman who started the groundbreaking White Zombie, changing the face of heavy metal and rock in general with that project, and then eventually his solo efforts. He's not just the writer and director of the wild, horrific romp *House of 1,000 Corpses*, which instantly became a cult classic, only to be followed up by one of the most creepy and unnerving yet compelling films in recent years, *Devil's Rejects*. He's not just the visionary comic book illustrator, whose work adorns not only his albums, but films and books as well.

Rob Zombie is an icon in many worlds, one that rocks out like nobody else, on many different levels. He's worked with sundry cats, from Mike Judge to Howard Stern to Paul Reuben to Mixmaster Mike to Lionel Richie to P.M. Dawn to DJ Lethal to The Dust Brothers to Ozzy Osbourne to Charlie Clouser to Todd McFarlane and beyond.

He recently released *Educated Horses*, after a break from new albums since 2001's *The Sinister Urge*. In addition to touring in support of the album, he's also working on several other projects, such as an animated film called *The Haunted World of El Superbeasto*.

For Zombie, it's all about having a good time. If it's not fun, he moves onto other things. "Towards the end of *The Sinister Urge* tour," he admits, "I definitely had stopped having fun. Bands are very unnatural creatures. You're basically

taking four or five guys, and saying, 'Hey, everyone live together as if you're a family.' And it's hard for people to get along.

"What happened with the band at that point was it was just starting to degenerate, people weren't getting along. And once people stop getting along, it's really no fun. Traveling around the country in closed quarters with people that can't stand each other, it really starts affecting your mindset and the music and everything."

And now, "I've met some new people, and we kinda got it all back together. I'm not saying that couldn't happen again; I don't live in a phantasy world. But right now, we get along great, everything's cool, and we're having a blast, so it's all good."

In the few years he took to regroup, he released *House of 1,000 Corpses* and *Devil's Rejects*, as well as put together a comic book series called *Spookshow International*. He's even entertained the notion of making *House of 1,000 Corpses* into a stage show. "I was thinking when I noticed John Waters' *Hairspray* went to Broadway, I thought I could see *House of 1,000 Corpses* being turned into a musical," he says. "I think 20 years from now would be about the right time. It sounds ridiculous as I say it now, but *Little Shop of Horrors*? Think of the original movie. If someone would have said, 'that's going to be a huge Broadway hit,' you'd be like, 'you're out of your fuckin' mind.'"

With Zombie, there is no reason to think he can't pull it off. Where *House of 1,000 Corpses* was at times just as funny as it was brutal, *Devil's Rejects* is a much more rounded and dramatic tale. Bringing Sheri Moon and Bill Mosley back together as Baby and Otis, the sister and brother are on the lamb from the law and vengeance, as Sheriff John Quincy Wyndell played by William Forsythe hunts them down for their crimes, particularly for killing his brother.

Devil's Rejects is an unpredictable tale, which alone makes it stand apart from other movies. "I wanted to fuck with the audience," Zombie notes, "and make them side with the wrong people. I knew how the movie was going to end, and if at the end of the movie, the whole audience is just feeling, 'Good, shoot 'em, die, fuck you,' then you'd feel like, 'whatever.' But I knew, little by little during the course of the movie, I would have to needle the audience, so toward the end, they would be conflicted on the ending. And also too, I always wanted to play those characters as a family, and if you're watching your brother and your father essentially being tortured to death and that character doesn't have some kind of breakdown, then that character wouldn't have that much of a character."

"If they're just like, 'Fuck you!' that to me seems like a fake movie moment, like tough guy stuff. When I see that in a movie, I'm like, 'Yeah, right.' 'Cause in every

horror movie, you always have the heroine mouthing off to the killers, and I always try to picture it more real. Like, what was Sharon Tate saying to Tex Watson? How was the reality of the situation?

"And I like the idea of making William Forsythe's character turn worse than the people he's hunting."

Throughout this all, Zombie has helped transform Sheri Moon into an icon of her own. Moon has been a longtime muse and inspiration for Zombie- having graced album covers and videos- but with her role as Baby, now people are growing just as fascinated with her as they are Zombie himself. "It's good," he says of her celebrity. "There's nothing I love better than if we go someplace, and someone talks to her and not me. It's great."

"The big moment for her was the scenes with William Forsythe, where she really made a big breakthrough, kicked it all up. Especially working with Forsythe, because his off-screen persona is not that different from his on-screen one. He's a very intimidating character, and for her to just step in there with him, and get face-to-face. He really liked working with her, he had a good time and they got along well, so it was good."

Next up for Zombie is likely to be *The Haunted World of El Superbeasto*, "an animated movie based on a character from Spookshow International Comics, El Superbeasto. That has been in the works



for over a year, and it's a theatrical, full-length, animated, monster superhero sex comedy. It should be out sometime near the end of 2006, maybe. I'm not exactly sure. But it's pretty nuts, people are gonna be really freaked out by this one."

At the same time, he responds to rumors that have been circulating about him starring as the next James Bond. Setting the record straight, "I've taken the role, because I felt that I was very much appropriate, and I've been working with a vocal coach on my British accent. I believe that hits summer of 2008. *You Only Live Twice, Three Times*. It's gonna be good."

Until then, Zombie seems to be enjoying the life of an icon, not taking himself too seriously. "I

think a lot of musicians get very self-important, and get very explanatory about their music," he laments. "'It means this to me and to you.' AH! You're ruining it! Shut up! I don't wanna hear about it. I had so much deeper meaning, and you just made it sound stupid."

"Music is one thing, more so than anything else...you can all watch a movie, and kinda get the same thing from it. But music really hits people in different, different ways. And that's what I like about it."

"I write in such a fragmented way, that things will start off about certain subjects, and end up on other subjects. It's really a weird way that I write. I don't really write songs like, 'I want this to really be about this, and

I need people to walk away with this message,' ever. Even if a song is specifically about something really, I don't care if they get the point."

When asked if he'd kick Dick Cheney in the balls if given the chance, he laughed, "Shoot 'em. You can shoot him in the balls, right? Just a little shrapnel. If you can shoot someone in the face, I guess it's not that bad."

Maybe not. But what kind of depraved music does Rob Zombie listen to in order to produce such insane sounds of his own? "I hardly ever listen to hard rock, truthfully," he confesses. "I tend to not listen to what I do a lot of times, because you get so bombarded with it. And you also get no influences; you always wanna be open to try to

hear new things and think of new ways to think about music."

"I listen to everything, just whatever is in the mood for me. I like finding things I never even knew existed. Like, I've been listening to these French pop records from the 60's. They're just different, it's cool."

There's even a remote chance that the new album (*Educated Horses*) will get a taste of Zombie's legendary remixing, as he did with his two albums before *The Sinister Urge*. "I really liked them," he says in reflection. "I might do one with this record, and include stuff from [*The Sinister Urge*]. I liked doing them; they're fun."

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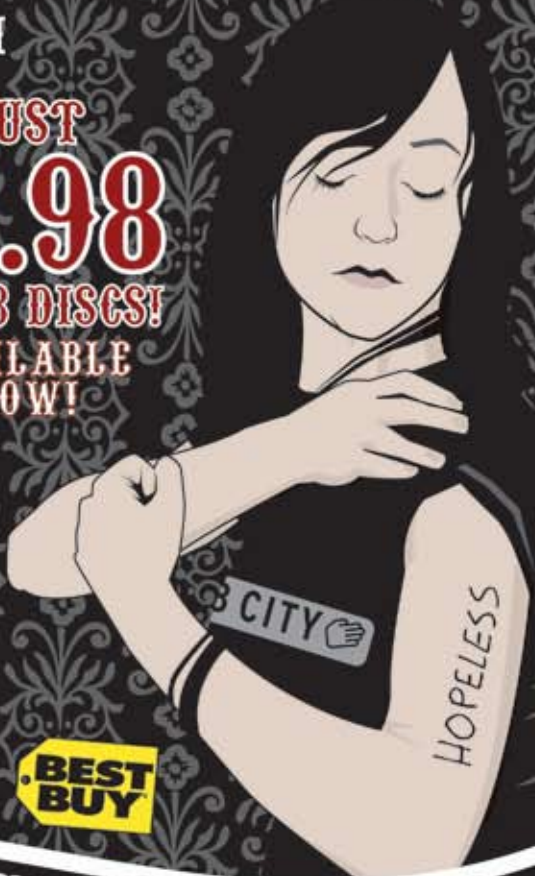
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RACHEL KANN

BY: MINDY NETTIFEE / PHOTO: TERENCE PATRICK

Rachel Kann always wanted to be a rock-star, but couldn't sing. She could perform, however, and she could sling comebacks like nobody's business (a talent most of us would have gladly traded our passable Deborah-Harry singing voice for). With an English Professor father and an inner drama queen producing emotional-pop-hits on the daily, it was only natural she would fall into poetry and theatre. She moved from San Luis Obispo to New York City, fell into the Poetry Slam scene via the Nuyorican, sharing a stage with the likes of Saul Williams. Standing out as a hip-hop/goth-poet hybrid, Rachel Kann became synonymous with proud, funny, riot-inciting feminist ranting, and the rest is poet-girl history.

Kann moved to Los Angeles and began surrounding herself with as many killer musicians and deejays as possible. She

started producing co-lab:ORATION, a ragingly successful show that brought together incredible music and spoken word talent to spontaneously collaborate in front of a live audience. Often times there is a Texas-sized gap between concept and execution with a show like this, but due to Kann's personal brand of magic, co-lab was consistently mind-blowing and garnered a huge following both at L.A.'s influential Knitting Factory and the Temple Bar. If you've never seen her in action, she has the heart of a California Central-Coast hippy, the mouth of a Brooklyn working girl, and the energy of a Buddhist monk hopped up on pixie sticks and rum. Needless to say, over the years Rachel has become a beacon of good-vibes and sanity in the LA artistic wasteland.

All this musician-love inevitably led to

the production of Rachel's first album, *word to the WHY's*, which featured her inspirational poetry laced with hip-hop beats. The work attracted the attention of the Non-Prophecs (Sage Francis and Joey Beats) who sampled the track "skin listens" on their album *Hope*. Her sophomore effort, *Ptolemaic Complex* followed soon after, and she has been wrapped in its momentum ever since. She has performed with a huge diversity of artists and emcees, including Rahzel (The Roots), Kid Beyond, Tre (Pharcyde), Nikka Costa, Kim Hill, Medusa, Antipop Consortium, and others. One of her standout collaborations has been with Enduser, whose dark, distorted atmospheres and heavy break-beats mesh seamlessly with Kann's darker, more fractured narrative works like "Familiar Taste of Blood."

Like all genre-tweaking geniuses, Rachel Kann's work adds a perspective to the aesthetic landscape we didn't even know was missing. And like all great new artists, now that she's here she seems obvious, even essential. Her current projects include a podcast "Eat Bird" that she co-hosts with Ragan Fox, touring with the higher-beings of GirlFest, and working with the daKAH Hip Hop Orchestra, a 70-piece music collective headed by conductor and composer GG (Geoff Gallegos). She has also been working with producer Tack-Fu and appears on the hip hop album *Tack-Fu presents the production team: The 85 Decibel Monks*. You can check out her books, albums and upcoming shows all at inspirachel.com



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CHEWIN' THE CUD WITH FAT MIKE

THE NOFX THAT YOUR PUNK ASS CAN'T HANDLE

BY: BOB FREVILLE
for Violet fewes



My lady-friend Violet was a die-hard fan of NOFX for the better part of her life. Her passion for their music had only grown stronger after being singled out in a crowd by frontman Fat Mike at a Warped Tour performance before getting a boot in the skull. The stomping wasn't the worst thing to happen to her in the name of punk rock. More recently, she discovered that her homemade collection of their songs, an aged audio cassette tape, had been cracked and smashed into pieces

in my Loft. This was the result of an evening I had spent intoxicating the youth of our fair hamlet. At some point, one or more of the little hellions must have tired of throwing knives at my wall and decided upon destroying harmless cassettes, no doubt for fear of the tape format that their generation had missed out on. What is this thing? We better kill it.

I had felt guilty about this horrible orgy of violence for awhile. *When I got an email from Vanessa at*

Fat Wreck Chords, I knew that I had to get us an interview with Fat Mike. Something this big would not come along again.

The date finally struck and Violet was stuck in a flooded backyard, unable to doggy paddle quick enough to reach my abode. But the show must go on! Time to rock the fucking Casbah!

There are many things that people do not know about Fat Mike, aka Michael John Burkett.

And there are many things that one could not deduce from looking at the Massachusetts-born punker with the spiked hair and wild vocal outbursts. Not only a happily married troubadour with an inimitable vox and his own record company, Mike is also a devoted father.

The interview had been set for 5:00 pm Pacific, but Fat asked his PR peeps to move it ahead to 5:30 in order to play with his daughter after being gone most of the day.





"Gotta give the two-year old what she wants," he explained.

This was not the only shocker that would manifest itself throughout our conversation. A fierce and ever-expanding flotilla of female fans are certain to get clammy at thoughts of bedding or wedding Mr. Fat, but very few of them know what his occupation could have been today...

"I probably would have gone into sex therapy."

"Was there a point like that," I

asked. "Where you were going to go a different route. Like maybe I'm gonna be in politics, pre-Law or something like that?"

"I went to college," he said. "I majored in Social Science and minored in Human Sexuality. And I also went to Real Estate School and got my license so I could have done that too."

He got his Real Estate certificate in '89 fresh out of college. "That same year," he said. "The market burst and my Mom was doing so good in Real Estate that she said, 'You gotta get into this.'

So after I got my license, she says, 'You know what, it just fell apart so why don't you go back and play in your band.'"

Mike's commitment to the band and the support of his loved ones has seen the band reach an enormous musical zenith that has spanned more than two decades. The band recently released their tenth full-length album *Wolves in Wolves' Clothing*. It's their first LP in nearly four years.

"Where were you at mentally when you made this," I asked. "What drove you to

do it after four years?"

"A lot of the anger I had with the Right wing, the Conservatives and the Republicans, kind of switched over to Christians and religious zealots," Mike replied. "There's people that bug the shit out of me. They care about their relationship with God more than they care about humanity. It's no way to be."

"Not to mention," I chimed in. "That everyone's so goddamn self-righteous with the whole 'My God's better than your God' thing."

"Yeah, people like me and you are self-righteous too, but I don't think my God's better. I think my world view is better. I think in our society we treat women pretty well. And Muslims are fucked when it comes to that. That's one reason why you can't have Democracy in these countries when half the population can't vote."

Jesus freaks aren't the only mutants chapping Fat Mike's ass. Bush's richest five percentile are also on trial here, not just with Mike but with me.

"Bush wants to give more tax cuts. I mean, how the fuck can

you give *more* tax cuts?! I'm a fairly wealthy guy and every time a tax cut comes I make money and it makes me sick. I don't understand how people with so much money feel better when they get a tax break."

"You think about it," I said. "The only kind of mentality that could be behind something like that is just generations upon generations of horders hording."

"Yeah," Fat said. "The trickle down. It doesn't work. We're all horders."

Much of my conversation with

Mike was moody and steeped in the folly of our times. This may have been a consequence of our drinking and the fact that while I nursed the first of many beers by candlelight and watched the rain crashing against blacktop, Mike nursed a hangover from his afternoon with Matt Skiba of Alkaline Trio. Despite the inebriation, our back and forth was rich with lucidity.

"Do you think that there's any hope to be held out for 2008," I asked.

"Well, I'm almost positive that whoever gets elected will be

better than this guy. I don't have a lot of hope for this planet or the world at all."

"Would you say that your message is to do whatever you can?"

"Yeah, do whatever you can. If you do nothing, that's not good enough. But you don't have to do all you can either. You should do something. Some people think recycling is kind of bad because people recycle their garbage and they think they're really doing something. And they're really not but they can feel less guilt. They're not doing something substantial. People re-using is a lot better for the planet than recycling."

For a cat who wrote songs like "Moron Bros." back in the day, Mike seemed very astute and well-aware of the plight that mankind faces. Which prompted me to ask how much different he is than the Fat Mike the world knew ten years ago.

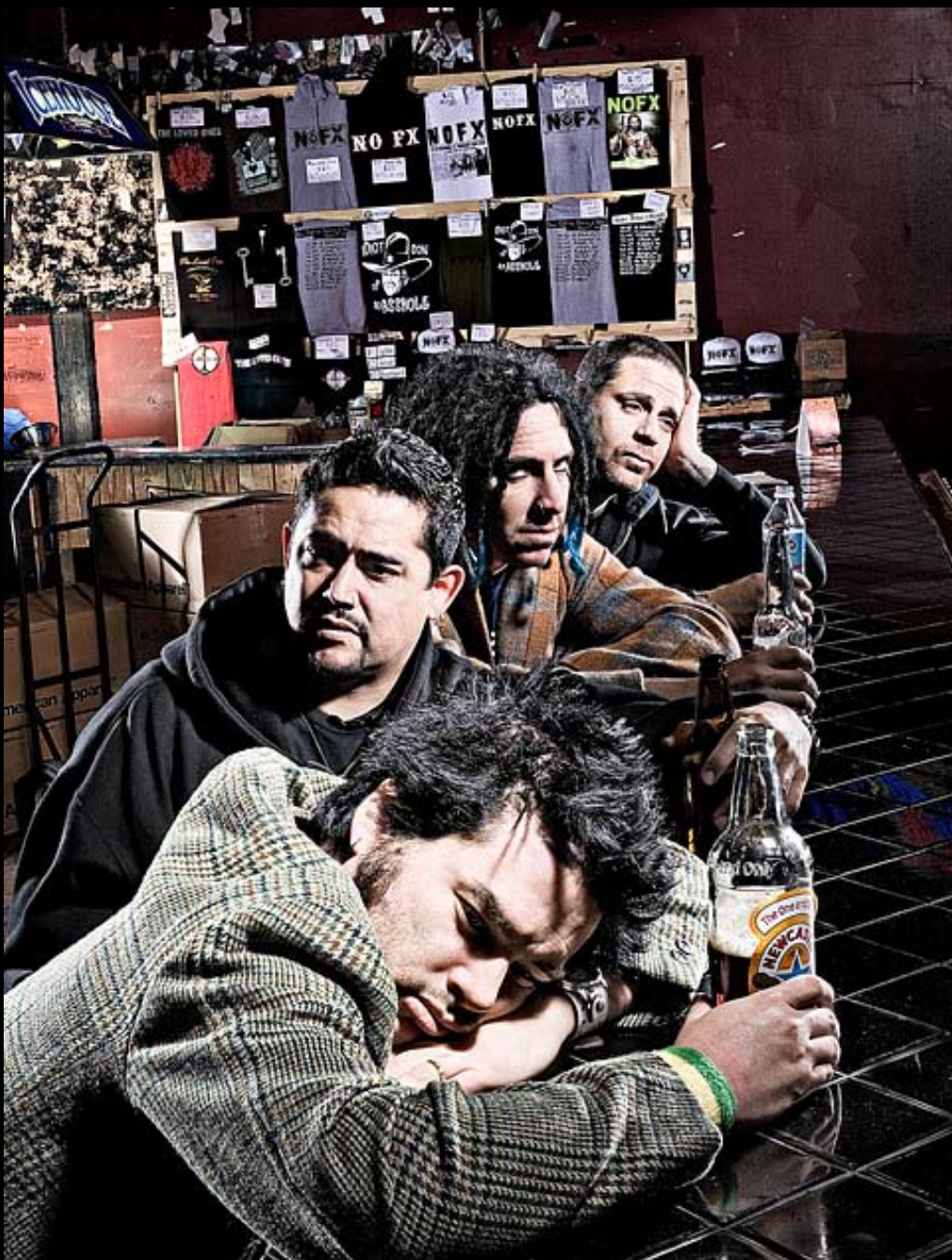
"I started doing drugs when I was thirty-two and I started getting tattoos when I was thirty-four. I was a lot straighter when I was twenty-nine...still kind of building Fat Wreck Chords and the band was still growing. I'm just having a lot more fun now.

"I talk to so many bands and it eventually turns into a job. I can't let this turn into that. I love it too much. I love getting obliterated on stage and not knowing whether I'm going to be able to play the next song right. That's punk rock to me. It's not about how big you are, it's about how much fun you have."

"What do you do for Punk Voter in the off-season," I asked. "Are you gearing up for 2008?"

"We have a new Voter's Guide for the Warped Tour for the 2006 mid-terms. First we need to get the House and Senate back. That's a start and then Bush can't do anything more."

"What we need in this country is run-off elections...you vote not for just the person you want 'cause you vote for who you want first and who you want second. Like, for instance, you vote for a Green Party member first and if he doesn't make it to the primaries, the vote goes to the second guy. You vote for





Ralph Nader, he doesn't get a certain amount of votes, then your vote goes to Kerry."

"Shit," I said. "It's funny you said that, man. 'Cause I get harped on constantly by my girlfriend because she was a strong Kerry supporter, for the same reason that so many people were. She'll rail on me for voting for Nader 'cause of the whole 'A Vote for Nader is a Vote for Bush' argument. But if you had run-off elections, you wouldn't have to worry about that."

I inquired about his relationship with PETA. "PETA sets up tables at our shows," he explained. "We did a compilation to raise money for them. I don't work with them that much ever since Bush won. I just realized, ya know, there's bigger problems. I spent a shit load of money on the Rock Against Bush comps."

"Hey, you have to shift your focus in terms of what needs to be focused on the most," I replied. "People are gonna continue to wear fur, but there's something we could actually do about Iraq."

"I'm not a conspiracy theorist, but I think we won both elections."

"Yeah, it's American Idol on a governmental level, in the sense that it's not the common man that's really deciding all this...so how well do you know Drew Barrymore?"

"She interviewed me for some show she did on MTV! We had a couple drinks together."

"Did she show you her Poison Ivy?"

"Nah," he laughed. "No, but she's super-cool. Cool chick."

"How do you sleep? How many hours do you usually get?"

"I take sleeping pills," Mike said without a note of hesitation or shame. "There's too many fucking problems in the world not to drink and do drugs. I take sleeping pills 'cause, uh, like my friend in Propagandhi is half-suicidal. He just can't fucking handle the state of the world. All he does is read books. And the more you read, the more information you

get, the more depressed you are.

"The world's a shit place. You kind of have to accept it. You have to try and help out your neighbor, your fellow man. But you can't live life in a depression. I mean, shit! In the Sixties we were a half-hour away from all-out nuclear war."

"But people were still living and enjoying every breath," I added.

"Yeah, and those were a lot worse times than what we're facing now. Global warming...it's fucked and if we don't do something about it, hundreds of millions of people are going to die. And the world's gonna be a lot different, but it's still better than all-out nuclear war."

Mike and I share a muted laugh. This is true.

In the end, I copped out of our heavy and importunate conversation in favor of something I could go to sleep with...after taking a healthy dose of NyQuil.

"Are you happy with how far

you've come with your music?"

"I couldn't be happier to have a twenty-three year career and I've been in my band longer than half my life. Our crew has been with us for an average of about fifteen years. Every couple months a year, we go on tour with our best friends. We do it right, we only do short tours and we make sure to golf and have good parties. We have a lot of fun."

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The Lost Angeles Times

VOL 1, ISSUE 7

Lost Angeles, Friday, February 31, 2006

BY SCOTT SHAPIRO



White House Goes Hollywood

President Bush unveils Operation: Last Stand

BY SCOTT SHAPIRO

As the latest installment of the wildly successful *X-MEN* series shattered box office records over the Memorial Day weekend, one thing one was abundantly clear about the much-ballyhoed slump Hollywood has been in the last two years. Americans are going back to the movies and now, it appears as if the White House is going with them.

In a press conference yesterday, President Bush explained to the world what he believes will be the key to bringing terrorism to it's knees, revealing the final step in the War against Terror: Operation Last Stand.

Standing in front of a large curtain, the President started, "Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the leaders of the most ambitious military mission any country has ever seen. A coalition of the willing comprised of

a multinational force that will strike fear in the hearts of villainy, armed with with years of combat training, from the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan to the jungles of Australia and even to the cyber-world before America On-Line. Today I give to the world a gift, and promise: Operation Last Stand". Then, in a moment straight out of Hollywood, the curtain fell, revealing: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone, Bruce Willis, Jean-Claude Van Damme, Chuck Norris, Carl Weathers, Paul Hogan and Max Hedroom.

Much of the press conference revolved around the fear that none of these leaders, aside from their Hollywood exploits, had any real military experience. Bush snickered at this notion, responding, "I think experience is highly overrated. People said I wasn't really all that experienced in the ways of the world before I came to the office of the Presidency and we've seen how that's turned out."

The President then turned the presser over to the task force, where Gov. Schwarzenegger was asked how he'd be able to balance serving the state of California while maintaining a leadership role within this unit. Schwarzenegger replied, "I will be going back to California, but

don't worry. I'll be back" And judging from polling numbers in California, politicians surmise that to be sometime in mid-November. As questioning turned to Sylvester Stallone, his knowledge of the enemy was tested, to which he responded, "All I know is that they're the disease. And I'm the cure", to which Bruce Willis added, with a smirk, "Yip-pee-kay-yay-mother-fucker!"

Immediately, conservative talk show hosts flamed the air, questioning why the White House would leave the nation's defense in the hands of the predominantly left-leaning Hollywood task force, Rush Limbaugh quipping, "Honestly, why stop there? Why not get George Clooney to lead this group of misfits?" Press Secretary Tony Snow scoffed at this notion, "George Clooney? That's just being silly. We've got Commandos, Green Berets, and Delta Force leaders. We're certainly not looking for any *Peacemakers*. And when you look at the President's current situation in regards to the public, the administration needed to not only demonstrate that it is still serious about the War on Terror, but it also needed to show that they are not going it alone, which is why we're reaching out to the left to try and accomplish that mission. Bottom line, with most of these great American heroes' recent box office returns as low as the President's current approval rating, this is a match made in heaven."

As the press conference came to a close, President Bush knew that such an unorthodox plan would be met with skepticism, but he believes that very reaction is the key to entire operation. "I hope that's what the terrorists are thinking. I hope they think this is all a joke, because if they are, I've just got three words for them. Bring it on!"

Celebrity Baby Pictures: Part Deux-dy

TomKat to sell pictures of newborn's dirty diaper

BY SCHIMP BAYLESS

"Everyone's been asking for the inside scoop and now we're prepared to give it to you," Tom Cruise beamed today while announcing to the world that he and Katie Holmes have decided on selling pictures of their newborn baby's feces to the highest bidder.

Not to be outdone by Brangelina (Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie), on the heels of the disappointing box-office returns of *Mission Impossible III*, sources say the the 4.1 million dollar price tag on the rival celebrity couple's baby pictures spurred a jealous Cruise to join the tabloid fray. However, people from the TomKat camp say that's hardly the case.

"This is an opportunity for Tom and Katie to pull back on the supposed shroud of secrecy that surrounded their baby's birth into this world and to be able to give back to those who have supported them through the years," said Cruise's sister and publicist Lee Anne DeVette.

Chief amongst those supporters has been L. Ron Hubbard's Church of Scientology, who Cruise has said will be the beneficiary of any and all proceeds from the sale of the pictures. "The great Xenu (*continued on page 112*)

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THE ATTACK OF MR. SQUIGGLEMAN

BY: MOLLY HAHN

You may find him tagging the walls at CalArts in Valencia, CA or in his studio sandblasting 40oz glass bottles.

Meet Mr. Squiggleman, otherwise known as 22-year-old experimental artist Aaron Axelrod.

Axelrod is swarming in ideas and delivering work at an extraordinary pace - bountiful in carnal, disturbing, raw, and seductive images. His increasing notoriety for innovative portraits and sculptures created especially for the headlining acts at the Coachella Music Festival has landed him a recent spotlight in the *L.A. Times*, and even personal recognition from some of his biggest musical inspirations.

Hired to do portraits by Coachella's concert promoters, Axelrod chooses his medium in relation to how each artist inspires him. One of the more

noteworthy pieces he produced was for Radiohead three years ago. Axelrod impressed Thom Yorke with the sculpture of a head, made out of mosaic tiles and finagled to look like it was shattering though a glass window.

This year Axelrod created even more spectacular pieces. For Kanye West, "I painted him on platinum records, but with silver paint so it looks like it's engraved in the platinum records." For Madonna, "I painted her in a bubble bath, with the bubbles coming out of the canvas, and I painted it on tape so it was blingy. She was stoked and was like, 'I'm taking this on tour with me everyday.'"

"That's the best feeling - I do art for bands that I've listened to all my life and look up to, and they really like it. On the back of each piece I write, 'thanks for the music.'"

Not too long ago, Axelrod was stirring up at a lot of trouble at Beverly Hills High. "I got kicked out of Beverly. I was all about getting in trouble for a quick laugh." He ended up going to Grant in North Hollywood, where he met more "real kids that didn't have the money that fucked with their heads."

In terms of childhood inspiration, Axelrod thanks Dr. Seuss and another unlikely source - the worst teacher he ever had at Beverly High, Miss McConnel. "She hated me and was so horrible to me. I thought I would never paint again because of her. But looking back, it made me strong." Axelrod told himself that "I'm going to make it big just so I can call her out."

Axelrod received attention for his incessant doodling not only from his disciplinarians, but also from the city of Los Angeles. At

18, he was commissioned to do an Angel for the Community of Angels Sculptural Project - a joint venture of the Los Angeles Convention & Visitors Bureau and the mayor's Volunteer Bureau. Selected artists create Angels that are installed at various public spaces around the city.

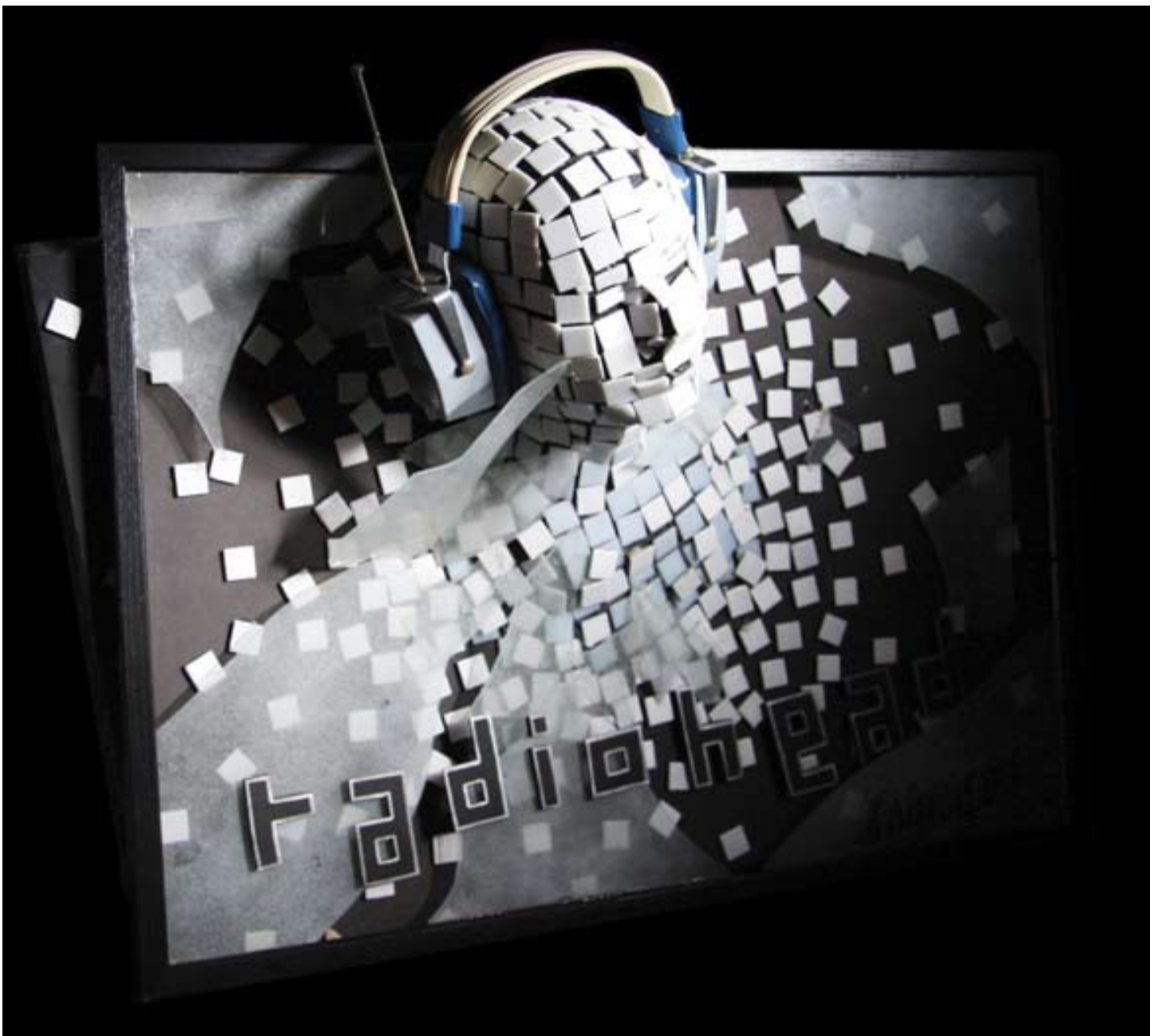
Axelrod's Angel was particularly unique. He used chameleon car paint that changed colors when looked at from different angles, and finished it with a glossy mirror coat so that when each person looks into the Angel, they see their reflection. For nighttime ambiance he used fiber optic lights.

Growing up in the San Fernando Valley exposed Axelrod to a more erotic side of life that heavily influences his work (80% of the world's porn is produced there). Currently, he's working on a large oil painting that mimics

AXELROD, CA



Paul Cohenfold (Coachella '06)



"scrambled porn"- unique to our generation as xxx entertainment you could only find late at night on analog television. Using one frame from actual porn as his reference, Axelrod imagined what the distorted version of that image would be. The colors are incredibly vibrant, the contorted mouths and phallus quite humorous. This commentary on the shift from analog to digital technology evoked a sense of nostalgia even from yours truly.

Not all of Axelrod's pieces convey such sensuous feels, and in fact some are utterly shocking. I came across a painting he did of a baby getting eaten by two dogs. "I wanted to paint the most disturbing image I could think of. If you are able to extract raw emotion - good or bad - it's great if you can do that in a single image. Even if they're really disturbed by it, you did your job well. It's part of life - not everything is happy."

As a student at CalArts, he has had the opportunity to hone his artistic technique and philosophy. Initially he used airbrushes, and his style conveyed a more absolute sense of reality. "I thought that making things look realistic is what determined if you're a good artist or not. The more I do art the more I realize that can't be any further from the truth. I think when people see an ultra realistic image, you're just pointing out the obvious. It's more powerful when someone can point something out that not everyone can see in terms of stylizing the way you view the world."

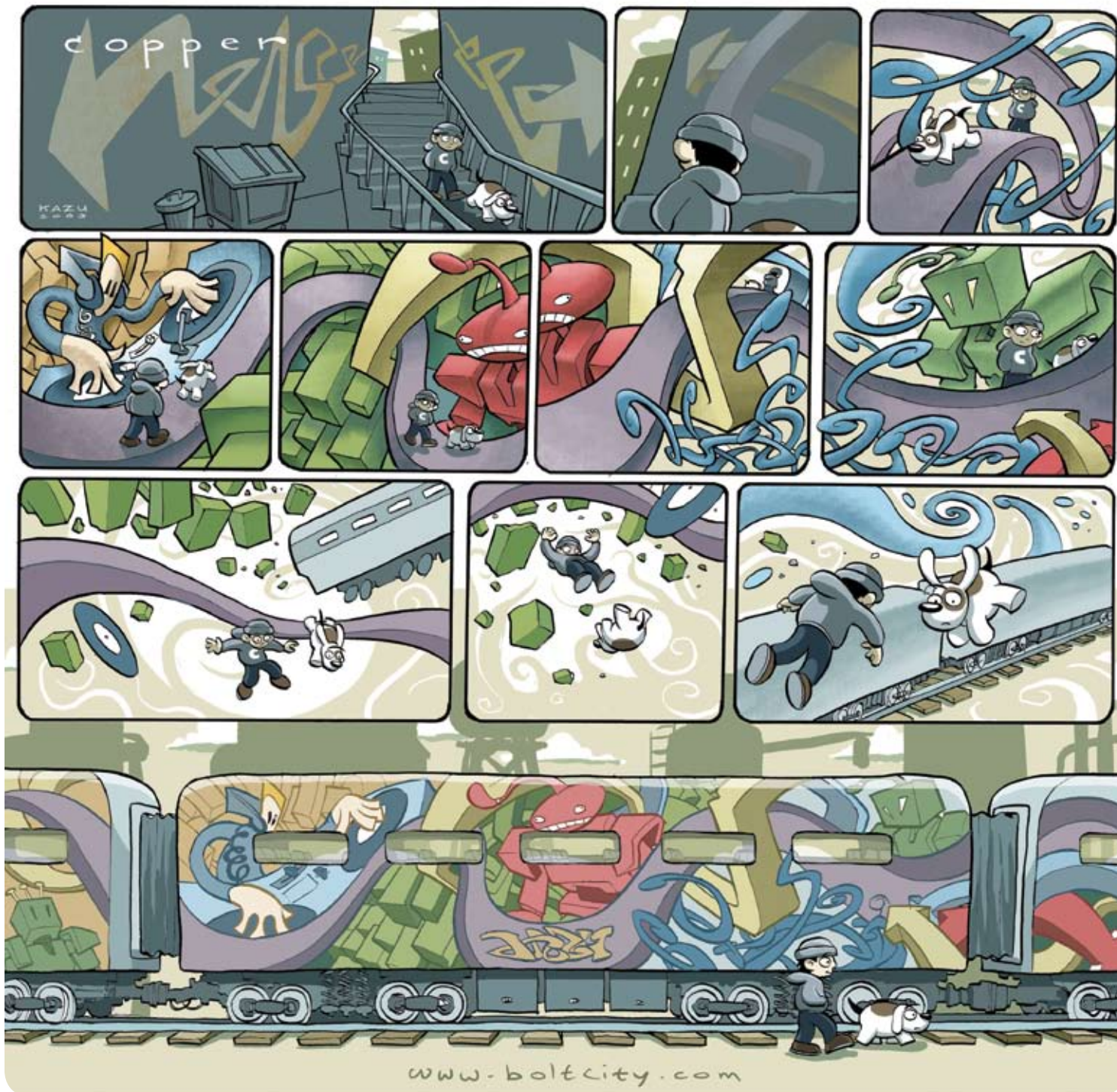
This revelation evolved from Axelrod's fearless approach to experimenting with various mediums, including but not limited to: duct tape, band aids, packaging tape, blunt wrapper boxes. "If you keep using the same material all the time, it gets repetitive and you don't like doing it anymore. I think it's a good thing to always be changing." One of his favorite juxtapositions is packaging tape and gauche paint, "gauche is opaque, unlike acrylic; you don't see brushstrokes and it doesn't reflect any light whatsoever so it looks like velvet when it dries. That's why I like to put tape on the background, because it's shiny."

"Mr. Squiggleman" is the nickname he acquired from his peers and the administration from CalArts, because he tagged a number of cartoonish-like drawings of a squiggly looking character all around campus. Typically known for its liberal atmosphere, CalArts appears to be tightening down its policies - so much so that Axelrod had to do 80 hours of community service, including painting over every character he had tagged.

Axelrod plans to finish school, come back to Coachella for round four, and of course continue working on his endless supply of inspirations. "A painting to me is an idea; I have so many more paintings in my head that I can't get out. Looking at all of them together again gives me a brand new thought just because of the old stuff I've done, that informs me about the new shit."

Keep pumping it out, Mr. Squiggleman.





Frank and Frank Birthday



Frank and Frank Bigger



ON THE GREY ALBUM:

"I WAS SENT THE ACAPELLAS FOR THE BLACK ALBUM AS A PROMO BECAUSE FROM MY WEBSITE, THEY KNEW I DID REMIX WORK AND STUFF LIKE THAT. ONE DAY I WAS CLEANING OUT MY ROOM AND RAN ACROSS THE WHITE ALBUM, AND IT JUST HIT ME LIKE...WAIT A MINUTE...I HAVE AN IDEA I WANT TO TRY TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS. IT WAS KIND OF AN ART PROJECT REALLY...NEVER ONCE FOR A SECOND DID I THINK IT WOULD GET BIG."

ON GORILLAZ:

"I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY, BASED ON THE GREY ALBUM, THAT DAMON ALBARN WOULD WANT ME TO DO THIS RECORD."

PARENTS JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND:

"MY PARENTS WERE LIKE 'SO LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. YOU TOOK THIS PERSON'S MUSIC AND YOU TOOK THAT PERSON'S MUSIC AND YOUR NAME IS THIS OTHER CARTOON. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?'"

ON GNARLS BARKLEY:

"ALL THE MUSIC WAS MADE FIRST, THEN CEE-LO WOULD GO IN AND FINISH IT OFF VOCALLY. WITH 'CRAZY,' HE DID THAT IN ONE TAKE."

ON MF DOOM:

"HIS WORDS, HIS REFERENCES, HIS PHRASING, HE JUST SPENDS SO MUCH ATTENTION TO DETAIL. YOU FINISH LISTENING TO A SONG AND YOU GOTTA GOOGLE HALF OF IT TO SEE WHAT HE'S SAYING. YOU KNOW THAT'S HE'S GOT YOU, BUT YOU DON'T GET HALF OF HIS LYRICS AND REFERENCES. SO WE STARTED WORKING ON THAT RECORD."

DANGER MOUSE GETS HAMMERED

BY: WASIM MUKLASHY

The first real internet generation is all growz up. They find themselves at a point where society has no choice but to accept what they have to offer.

UCLA's Hammer Museum finds itself in a position to merge popular culture with aspects of the global subculture in such a way that presents both of them as indispensable parts of each other. They've tapped into this age of edge by truly 'seeking' out quality rather than simply 'settling' for what we're commonly given. To find such notable aspects of our future culture, one has no choice but to cut up the cookie cutter and relish in the surprising satisfaction that comes with the process of discovery.

Dig into the underground.

With their Conversations at the Hammer Museum series, which take place in the museum's airy and sunny courtyard, the museum's goal is to 'pair creative thinkers from a range of disciplines for engaging provocative discussions of culture, science, and the arts.' Furthermore, 'the conversations are meant to be organic and spontaneous.'

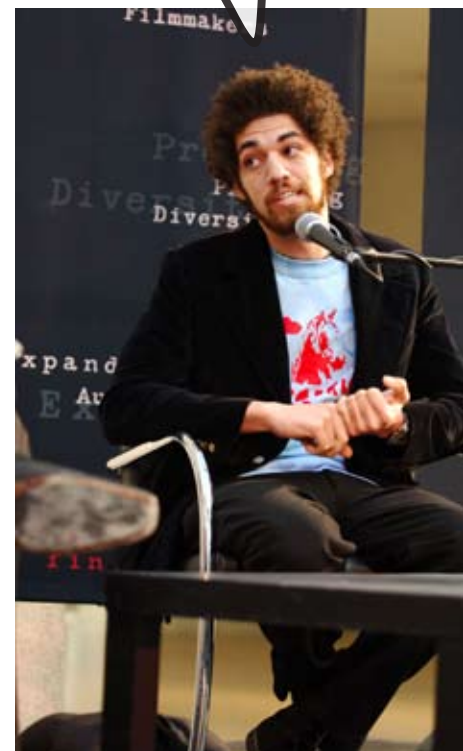
Judging from their first session...they're onto something here. Who better to usher in the series than Brian Burton and Jason Bentley, two men who have benefited quite tremendously from the globalization of information?

Brian Burton is best known as DJ Danger Mouse. He's the guy who, just two years ago, mixed together Jay-Z's Black Album and The Beatles' White Album into The Grey Album. This not only garnered unprecedented attention from fans, but more importantly from those who despised what he did...copyright attorneys. To their dismay and surprise, it all helped cement his position as a personified 'hero' and today one of the most sought after producers in the hip-hop world.

Since then, he has been nominated for a Grammy for his production work on The Gorillaz's Demon Days, has further proved his eccentric tastes by joining legendary emcee MF Doom in last year's Danger Doom, and most recently, has lit up the global charts with his work with former Goodie Mobster Cee-Lo in this year's insanely acclaimed Gnarls Barkley. Mention the track "Crazy" to 10 people and you'll get 12 favorable responses.

He joins founder of Quango Records and KCRW and KROQ DJ Jason Bentley (who has also served as music supervisor for countless films including The Matrix) in this fine summer afternoon conversation covering everything from music to film to cartoons and beyond.

> www.hammer.ucla.edu
> www.dangermousesite.com





METALES Y DERIVADOS

BY: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION



PHOTOS: KRISTI CURTIS

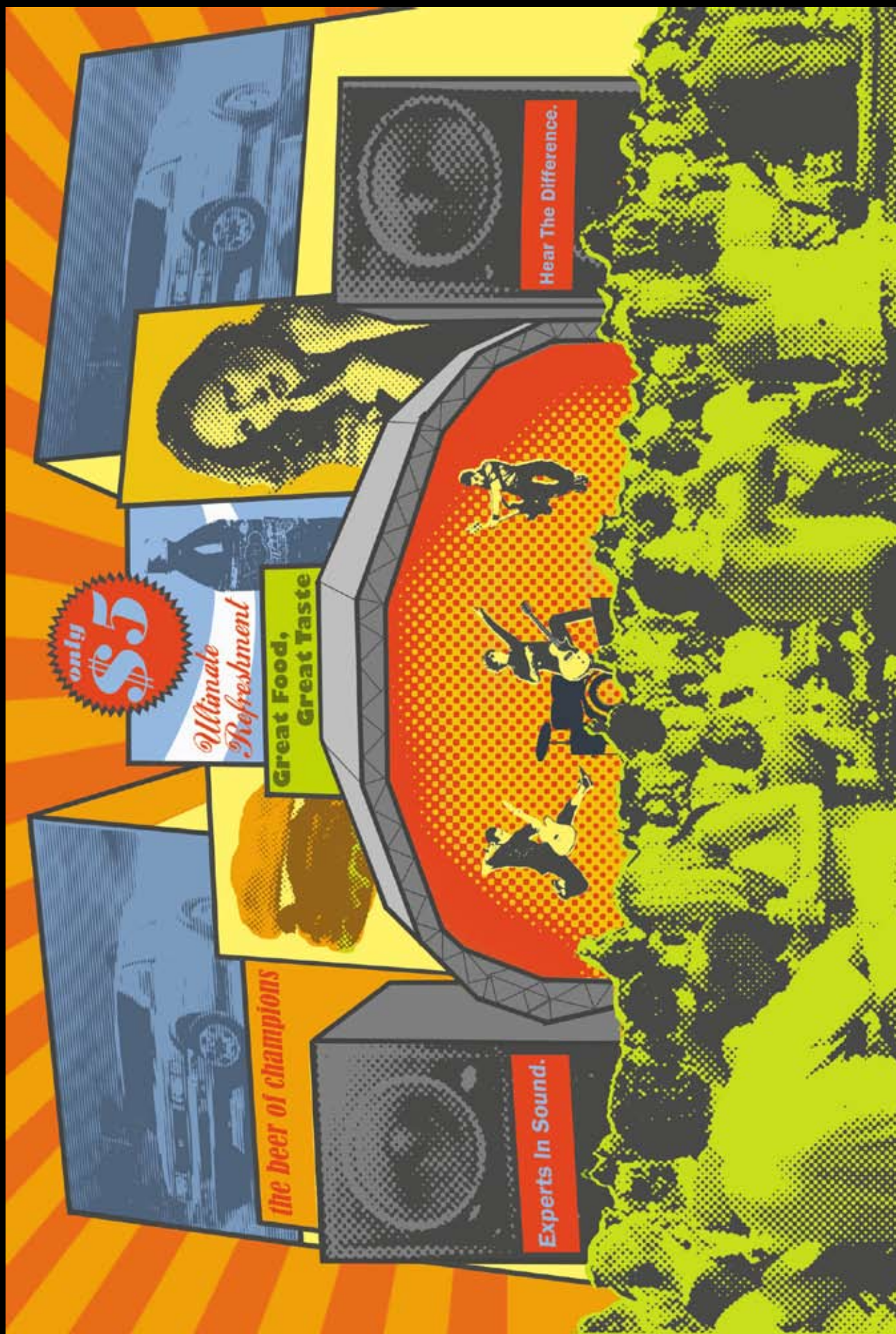


Metales y Derivados is one of the 66 documented toxic waste sites along the U.S.-Mexican border. The maquiladora, which recycled batteries imported from the U.S., was shut down in 1994. That year, an arrest warrant was issued for the owner, José Kahn, after the community reported health problems and the Mexican government documented repeated violations of environmental law. The owner fled Mexico, and left behind 23,000 tons of toxic waste.

In a sample of children living near the site, all had elevated blood lead levels.

The Metales y Derivados case shows how a community can successfully call attention to an injustice. Metales y Derivados became Mexico's number one priority for toxic cleanup by January 2004, due to effective organizing. The Metales y Derivados case is also exhibit A for the failure of the NAFTA model of free trade to protect public health and the environment. The NAFTA petition process documented the Metales y Derivados case, but without an enforcement mechanism, could not compel cleanup. NAFTA fails to hold corporations accountable for their toxic waste. The owner of Metales y Derivados has never disputed responsibility for dumping toxic waste at the site, but has not contributed a penny to cleanup. NAFTA also failed to provide environmental defense resources for Mexico's disproportionate burden of the impacts of trade. At the start of the Metales y Derivados cleanup in summer 2004, only about 10% of the funds required to satisfy the terms of the cleanup agreement between the community and the government had been set aside for the project.

> For more information on Metales Y Derivados and maquiladoras like it, contact the Environmental Health Coalition at 619-474-0220, or visit www.environmentalhealth.org and www.maquilapolis.com



ART: NICK TAYLOR

LIVE NATION IS A MINION OF EVIL

BY JAKE MCGEE

Around the turn of the century, large monitors began popping up at concerts. Sometimes they would supplement the performance, but more often they would flash advertisements in the down time between acts. Eventually, they became a disgusting part of the concert landscape.

For example, at Guitar Center's DJ Spinoff in Cleveland, Ohio, on August 4, 2002, between every set, the MC of the event said, "and now turn your attention to the screens," so that the crowd could watch ads for Dodge trucks.

Obviously, this intense commercialization is to make more money, but for who? Concert promoters claim it's just the cost of business, to help pay for the events. But as ticket prices continue to climb, it seems that it's simply about milking the events for as much scilla as possible.

At the top of this food chain lies Live Nation, the concert leg of Clear Channel Communications, Inc. Formerly known as Clear Channel Entertainment, Live Nation dominates the concert industry with control of over 70% of the nation's live shows.

In February 2000, Clear Channel bought SFX Entertainment- a collection of regional concert firms and venues- for about \$4.4 billion. "This transaction," said Clear Channel CEO Lowery Mays, "allows Clear Channel, through SFX, to gain immediate leadership in the highly attractive live entertainment segment, while taking advantage of the natural relationship between radio and live music events."

With Clear Channel's supremacy over the radio and advertising industries, their competition was no match; in 2004, they generated more revenue than their 24 leading rivals combined. Furthermore, they exploit every chance they can to make an extra buck, raising vendor prices, placing numerous advertising monitors at venues, tacking on all sorts of weird service charges to ticket prices, and jacking up the prices of tickets themselves. Between 2000 and 2005, average ticket prices rose from \$44.80 to \$55.18, while bands such as U2 command an average of \$138.02 per ticket.

This conglomerate has been under persistent criticism for its business practices. One of many instances was in 2001, when Denver promoter Nobody In Particular Presents filed suit against Clear Channel, claiming they illegally reduced radio airplay for artists who booked concerts with competing promoters. While they eventually settled out of court, records showed that emails sent from the Director of Programming for Clear Channel's Denver radio stations attacked management at Reprise Records for going with someone else. "We are out of business with you," they said, "and you can go fuck yourself as far as I'm concerned."

There have been similar cases through the years since Clear Channel was founded in 1972. The biggest catch is, you have to have a lot of money to go up against Clear Channel, and so musicians and promoters often find little choice but to roll with the program, or be run out of business.

Because of all the controversy, Clear Channel felt it best to try to make

their companies seem like they weren't as connected as they are. Thus was born Live Nation, in December 2005. Clear Channel Executive Vice President and CFO Randall Mays is the Chairman of Live Nation, while the title of CEO and Director was given to Michael Rapino (who was already in charge of Clear Channel's amphitheaters and global concert business).

In essence, all that changed was the name. Live Nation now owns or operates at least 135 venues, and through equity, booking or similar arrangements, they have the right to book events at more than 30 additional venues.

"The business has become a lot more about customization," Rapino was quoted in *USA Today* in September '05. So, what Rapino has done is brought in pricier vendors to concerts, like Legal Sea Foods, Au Bon Pain, Starbucks, and Ben & Jerry's, as well as instigated various VIP programs, where if you pay the right price, you can get a seat on stage, access to backstage parties, photo opportunities, etc.

Now, at first it appears that bands like the Rolling Stones- who charge more than \$450 for a VIP ticket- are the greedy ones. Then you take into account that these tickets are taken from the stash that performers used to be given per show. So, where 10 years ago it was up to the musicians who got the VIP tickets, it's now up to the corporate promoters.

"Corporations have been sold all the good seats," Steve Miller told *Rolling Stone* in 2004, recalling a concert with an attendance of 18,166, but

only 2,311 in ticket sales. "[They] are removed from the ticket manifests, and not shared with me."

Even worse, in 2003 Clear Channel bought the patent for technology that enables concerts to be recorded instantly and then sold directly following the show. For decades, many bands have condoned recording their shows, allowing for trading among die-hard fans. But the quality wasn't always guaranteed, and when slimy cats started charging rates like \$40 and more for these albums, musicians figured they should hop in on the game, not just to make money, but moreover to ensure the best sound possible.

Pearl Jam was the infamous catalyst for this trend, when they offered recordings of every show from their European tour in 2000. Within months there were more than 70 different titles, and the band sold more than 3 million copies.

But when Clear Channel seized control of this too, suddenly fans and artists found the tradition almost prohibited, regardless of the musicians' wishes. Now, the only way to get a live recording at any Live Nation show is to buy it through Instant Live, Clear Channel's live concert burn-and-sell company.

Neil Young put it best about Live Nation and Clear Channel, when he told the *Chicago Tribune* in 2003, "They are anti-music, and they don't get the spirit of it."

Thankfully, Young, Miller, and many other artists have started denouncing Clear Channel for what they are, while some musicians, such as under-

ground sensations The Locust, refuse to play any Live Nation show, no matter how hard it makes things. This righteous attitude cost The Locust several prime dates in their 2005 tour with Fantamos. "Turning down shows with our friends the Yeah Yeah Yeahs or Fantomas at the Fillmore isn't the easiest thing to do," the band stated, "but instead of it being a thorn in our side, it's more of like an early coffin nail for Clear Channel."

Clear Channel has made the concert experience into expensive yuppie galas, where lattes are sold at punk rock shows. And there is little the audience can do to stop them, unless everyone who truly loves music completely boycotts their concerts all together. Even then, they would thrive somehow. Indeed, recent *Polstar* figures show that while the number of tickets sold in 2005 dropped to 36.1 million from 37.6 million in 2004, concert revenue continues to climb, from \$2.8 billion in 2004 to \$3.1 billion in 2005.

It seems to be up to the artists at this point, to avoid playing Live Nation events at all costs, and opting for the smaller venues. Which would prove a nice thing, going back to the days when musicians played at one venue for several nights, rather than hopping from state to state every day. This would give fans a chance to see their favorite musicians in a more intimate setting, and give the musicians a chance to relax a little more while on tour.

Sure, we'd be losing the opportunity to pay \$5 for a bottle of water, but such is life.

ILL-LITERACY

iLL-Literacy is smirking. Only five years ago, most would have scoffed at the idea of spoken word rocking a crowd. Nowadays, especially in the Bay Area, things are a lot different. iLL-Literacy's the new crew around these parts...and it's nothing to go dumb about.

Individually, Dahlak Brathwaite, Nico Cary, Adriel Luis, and Ruby Veridiano-Ching hold achievements under their belts that include performances throughout the country, dozens of publications and recordings, features on HBO's *Def Poetry Jam* and MTV, and poetry slam championships in the youth, college, and adult circuits. Collectively, the four poets compose a family that blesses audiences everywhere with its highly acclaimed stage shows.

This is not your everyday snap-your-fingers-in-berets poetry. In fact, iLL-Literacy's unique fusion of spoken word with elements of hip-hop, experimental theater, and visual arts has landed the crew among crowds over the United States and Europe, sharing the stage with such heavy-hitters as Common, Black Star, Goapele, the Beastie Boys, Dead Prez, Saul Williams, and Yeah Yeah Yeahs. And this is just the beginning. With a new album and full-length stage production in the works, it can only get iller. iLL-Literacy's coming...stack up on the Airborne.

① Find out more at www.ill-literacy.com

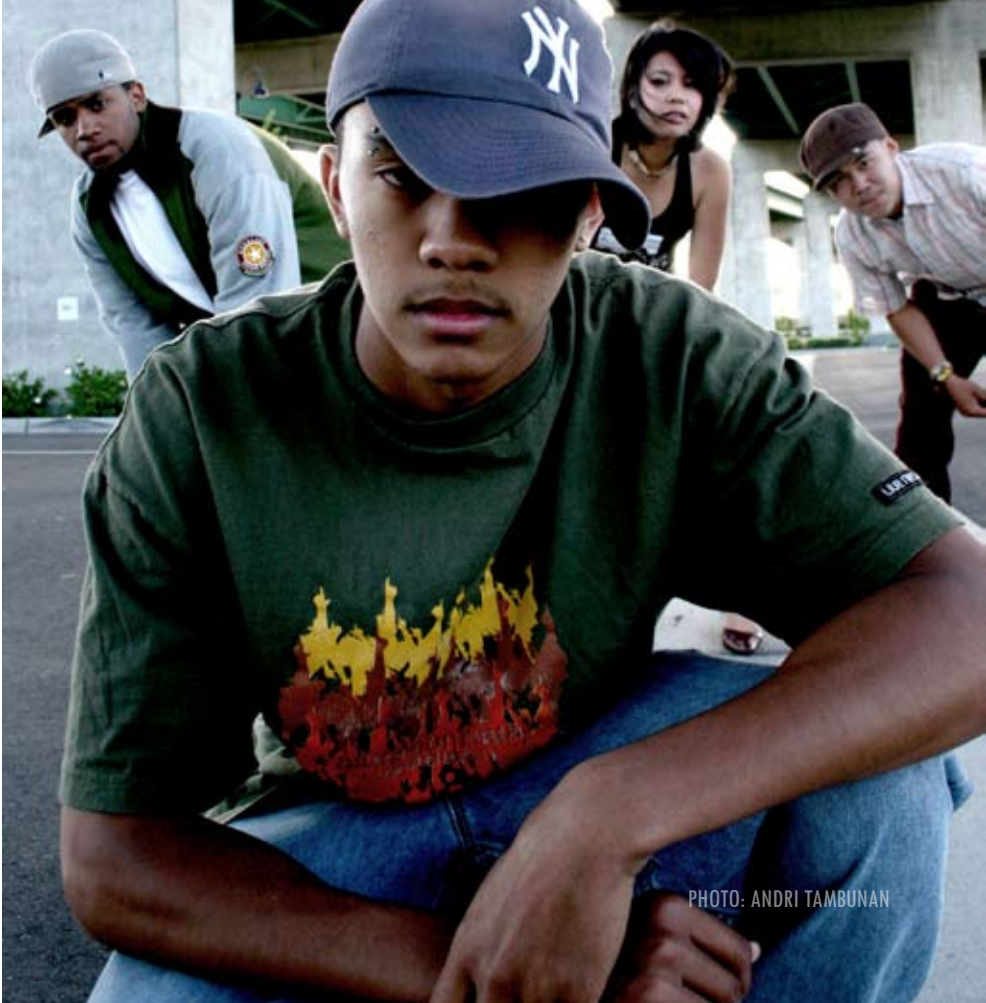


PHOTO: ANDRI TAMBUNAN

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DIESELBOY GETS HIS!

BY: ASHA AZHAR

All of Dieselboy's works, everything from the actual imprint on the CD to the album cover design, are linked to one another. Dieselboy now offers *The Human Resource*, a two CD compilation released on the Human Imprint label. CD 1 is an unmixed label compilation and CD 2 is mixed by Evol Intent. When asked how the name for the album originated, Dieselboy answered with youthful gusto. "As with most of my CD projects, the name just popped into my head! I felt that it was cool in the sense that it means the CD is an actual resource for label material as well as a tongue-in-cheek use of a well-known phrase. It just fit!

"For the most part I was just waiting until I had enough material to truly flesh out the CD properly," he explained. "When I had finished signing some new material, I sat down and thought about how I wanted to make it the best it could be."

Never content to wear only one hat, Diesel went the extra mile in preparing the project, coming up with the concept, designing the title font and art-directing the whole album. "My good friend Joel Savitzky at System handled the work side of it and provided essential input."

"I lined up some special remixes to commemorate this project and to add some value to the album. I chose Counterstrike to remix the KC 12-inch because he is great at working with metal riffs in drum and bass. The Upbeats were a fan of the Subculture remix I did with Kaos so they were a perfect fit for that. The rest of the CD was chosen by me. Kinda like the best of the best of Human." The second CD features Evol Intent, a Georgia-based industrial jungle group. "I really like the Evol Intent boys on a personal level and had already lined them up for a 12-inch on the label. I knew that they would take the mix to the next level." Diesel was right. E.I. went beyond just putting tunes together and actually re-edited tracks.

"I gave them every tune, released and unreleased, on the label. I gave them a short list of tunes that I definitely wanted them to include in the mix. The rest of it was up to them. I like detailed drum and bass



A close-up, high-contrast portrait of Dieselboy, a young man with short dark hair and intense blue eyes. He is looking slightly off-camera with a serious expression. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on his face and deep shadows, creating a moody atmosphere. The background is dark and out of focus.

"After years of battling with labels like Moonshine and Palm Pictures, I wanted to be in complete control over my projects.."

and those guys are the kings of putting in crazy minute details in their music."

Human Imprint was founded in early 2002. "After years of battling on certain levels with labels like Moonshine and Palm Pictures I wanted to be in a position of complete control over my own projects. Starting Human Imprint allowed me to do that. My goal has always been to try and make every release special in some way. I want people to see a Human release and automatically know that it is going to be quality."

Like Durst at Flipside (have you forgotten who was responsible for Puddle of Mudd already?) Dieselboy is his own A&R guy. "So everything that is released on the label is stuff that I personally love and play in my sets. I think that Human has its own sound compared to other labels," he said. "The name Human Imprint is my own...it had a nice ring to it...I like what I can do it with it on a conceptual level for projects, logos, names, etc." Currently without an exclusive roster of artists, Human Imprint is still growing. Dieselboy reminds us to look for one-offs from artists down the road like Ewun, Tetradin and Infiltrata. Some of the releases under the label include Dieselboy's last two mix CDs, *Project HUMAN* and *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the label compilation *Human Resource* and many 12"s. Dieselboy has the next 8 releases for the label lined up until the end of 2006. These include 12"s from Sasha, Evol Intent, The Upbeats, Demo and Define. Additionally, he is currently wrapping up a Planet Of The Drums tour with AK1200, Dara, and Messinian. He now plans to write some original music and begin work on his next mix CD in between intermittent international DJ dates.

Final summation? Dieselboy spreads himself around more than an acrobatic nympho-maniacal Indigo child on Spanish fly.

Huh?

Exactly.

▶ listen to soundbites at www.kotorimag.com
① www.djdieselboy.com

A close-up portrait of Bernard-Henri Lévy, a middle-aged man with dark, wavy hair and a serious expression. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt. His hands are clasped in front of him. The background is a warm, textured brown.

BHL:

BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY,

or BHL as he is known, is a rare man in contemporary culture - a famous philosopher. His career spans more than 30 years as a journalist, essayist and diplomat, not to mention one of the most photographed figures in Parisian high society. BHL was previously best known in America as the author of the controversial 2003 best-seller *Who Killed Daniel Pearl*, where he put forth the argument that it was not the murdered Wall Street Journal reporter's Judaism that got him killed, but the simple economics of a league of international government, business and criminal elements eliminating the threat posed by a gifted journalist who was getting too close to the truth. His latest book *American Vertigo: Traveling in America in the Footsteps of Tocqueville* addresses the socio-economic situation in contemporary America, as BHL retraced the route that 19th century French philosopher took through this land in search of its true character.

But an often-overlooked work, 1977's *Barbarism with a Human Face* offers what are perhaps the most salient of BHL's insights into global geopolitics. It was written as an argument against the polemic violence of the European left; but its vision of progressive ideals devolving into Communist dogma and the subsequent rise of the right, or worse, the amoral specter of rampant capitalism in Europe and its urging of the left to pull itself together and take up the task of revitalizing its ideas and practices seem prophetic in their current relevance. His dire predictions about rising forces of totalitarianism within democracies, the proliferation of new gulags and attempts at silencing dissent and instigating religious strife have sadly more than been borne out by history. But as Kotori's Shana Nys Dambrot soon discovered, his hope for the ultimate triumph of progressivism is alive and kicking.

THE KOTORI INTERVIEW

BY: SHANA NYS DAMBROT



SND: So it's 30 years since the publication of *Barbarism*. For better or worse, it seems that everything about the way international power is organized, distributed and manipulated has come to pass as you had predicted. How do you feel about that?

BHL: When I see this book, I remember the harsh polemics with which I was involved 30 years ago; and I recall there was something absurd in it. But at the end of the day most of what I have said in here has been revealed to be just in advance of what was going to happen; it's even to my own eyes difficult to believe, but all that I predicted, all that I learned, all that I wished for in the book has been what has happened. It makes you full with melancholy and of course also joy. What I said in this book is that of course I spoke from the point of view of the Left, and I have kept on thinking the same way. I criticized radicalism in order to reinvent the Left as another sort of Left, whose masters would be the dissidents more than Stalin or Lenin, and I remain faithful to what I plead for in the book.

SND: But when you look at the situation with the Bush administration, terrorism, fanaticism, right wing religious zealots in every religion, politics of fear, corruption, the assault on human rights, individual freedom and the environment - it's

hard to stay optimistic on the left.

BHL: One of the conclusions of my book *American Vertigo*, one of the results of my foreign eye on your country is that there might be less reason to be demoralized than you think. I am a pessimist, but one of the things about America, when you try to see it from a broad point of view, not so much with an eye toward the reality of the day, but from the point of view of a few years you can have quite another reading of the Bush story, of the conservative wave, of the moral values campaign and so on. You can view this less as a wave, impossible to stop; less than as the last pearl of the old rightist oyster. You can see things as a long term battle and a victory of the democratic ideals of the Sixties getting deep into American society - and this as a sort of rear-guard battle, a last spasm of the old beast refusing to surrender without a last fight. Take for example this story of the anti-abortion movement in South Dakota, of course you have a governor who signs these things but he knows that it means nothing as long as the Supreme Court and federal law are as they are. And if you look at the polls all over America, 70 percent of women are really not ready to abandon this right. All of the South of this country which provided until the middle of the 20th century all the battalions of racism in America - it's like night

and day now. They know that racism is not an opinion they can express. So you can consider the Bush movement, the conservative moment, as the last spasm of the old. It is my bet that in the next ten or 20 years history will see the time of this administration in this way.

SND: Can you talk a bit about the role that art and culture have to play in the so-called culture wars unfolding now?

BHL: I haven't changed my mind in 30 years. The last page of the book I remember well, about the Dante of our time. [Reaches for book, finds passage on *The Gulag Archipelago* and reads from it...] I have learned more from reading this book than from the political commentaries... The importance of art, I deeply believe that artists give the most important and influential messages. I realize that more than ever. And I think here in Los Angeles, where we are celebrating the anniversary of the Beat Generation, about the huge importance of in this case poetry. George Herms is more important than any politician. There was Kerouac, Burroughs, Ferlinghetti - they changed our perception of the world, they were at the origin of the cultural revolution which is still taking place 40 years later.

SND: What about the power that young people have to shape America's future? As you said in *Barba-*

ism, they'll have our lives in their hands one of these days. Are they ready?

BHL: My feeling is that they express exactly what is happening in the country. I remember one thing that happened in Austin, Texas, the day after the re-election of Bush, in a high school class. The whole story is in *Vertigo* - but basically I discovered that the majority of them would have voted for John Kerry; the majority of them believe in the right to abortion; the majority of them believe that creationists are kooks. I learned that the youth of this country is that blue tide, the progressive tide that will in the long run be the dominant current in the country; the civil rights movement, the democratic revolution. The George W. Bush administration is not the end of the world.

BOOM BOOM SATELLITES

BY: PIERCE JACKSON

In March, Japanese rock band The Boom Boom Satellites touched down in Miami to perform at the M3 summit and celebrate the US release of their latest album, *Full of Elevating Pleasures*. This album expands their sound by pairing guitars and heavy drums with analog synths to create electronic-infused rock unparalleled in the annals of Americana. This was both their first U.S. performance and release in 7 years. Since then, they've toured the world with artists like Moby and Prodigy and have rocked out at music festivals in Europe.

"The overall experiences of these events lead to the creation of this album." In a recent phone interview conducted through a translator, Nakano Masayuki (half of the two man crew) tells us the album title was dubbed by Kawashima Michiyuki (the other half). "We want to take listeners on a journey like when you're at a live show...we want to explain the different moods and ups and downs that you go through." And *Full of Elevating Pleasures* does just that. The first track explodes with crash symbols and drum rolls but levels off on the second song to let its listeners catch their breath to a more disco-influenced sound. From there each track builds in intensity before quieting down for a few laid back cuts, closing out the record on a pleasantly docile note.

The last time the Satellites were here was in 1999, when they were on tour with Moby. With a band like Puffi Ami Umi having their own show on Cartoon Network, "I suppose it's not so uncommon for Japanese groups to perform in the States anymore," says Masayuki. But nevertheless, "to be back in America after seven years is one our career highlights. It's interesting for us to see how things have changed," Michiyuki adds. "We love touring. It gives us the chance to perform in front of different audiences."

But sometimes, it's not always about the music. "Our favorite part is to try the food at each place that we play...our favorite food in the States is Burger King."

Uh...someone get these guys to a Johnny Rockets!

>> listen at www.kotorimag.com
>> www.bbs-net.com



CONVERT YOUR BAND VAN TO BIODIESEL

BY: VIRGINIA MELIN & MOLLYCULES

Are you a touring band looking for cost effective and environmentally friendly transportation? Or just plain sick of being reliant on foreign sources of oil? A diesel vehicle powered by biodiesel and/or Straight Vegetable Oil (SVO) may be for you.

Innovative? Not quite. In 1895, Dr. Rudolf Diesel invented the diesel engine and ran it initially on vegetable oil and infamously stated, "the use of vegetable oils for engine fuels may seem insignificant today. But such oils may become in course of time as important as petroleum and the coal tar products of the present time."

As diesel engines came into

wider use they were adapted to burn a less expensive and polluting petroleum based fuel - petrodiesel - a lower grade by-product of the gasoline refining process. Petrodiesel produces the nasty carcinogenic sulfur emissions that cause smog and are linked to global warming.

The overreliance on foreign oil (especially the Middle East) is becoming increasingly expensive in terms of money, the environment, and human lives (NO BLOOD FOR OIL!). As oil consumption increases and fossil fuels dwindle, alternative energy sources are garnering more and more support.

Biodiesel, aka "LIQUID SUN", is a clean burning renewable fuel

substitute derived from virtually any vegetable oil, including soy, corn, rapeseed (canola), peanut or sunflower — as well as from recycled cooking oil, animal fats and even algae! Biodiesel works in ANY diesel vehicle with little or no engine modifications, has excellent lubricating properties, is free of lead, and contains virtually no sulfur or toxic compounds - resulting in significant reductions in the release of unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter (soot). It is the only alternative fuel to have fully completed the health effects testing requirements of the Clean Air Act.

And you can make it in your own kitchen!

Biodiesel is made through a process called transesterification: a reaction of the vegetable oil with an alcohol (ethanol or methanol) initiated by a catalyst (sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide); the byproducts are biodiesel and glycerin. If you are a do it yourselfer, please visit www.journeytoforever.com, because the ingredients must be handled with extreme caution and instructions followed carefully.

You can simply buy biodiesel, which is blended with petrodiesel - the most common blend is 20% biodiesel and 80% diesel (B20). Willie Nelson, a founding member of Farm Aid and celebrity troubadour of the

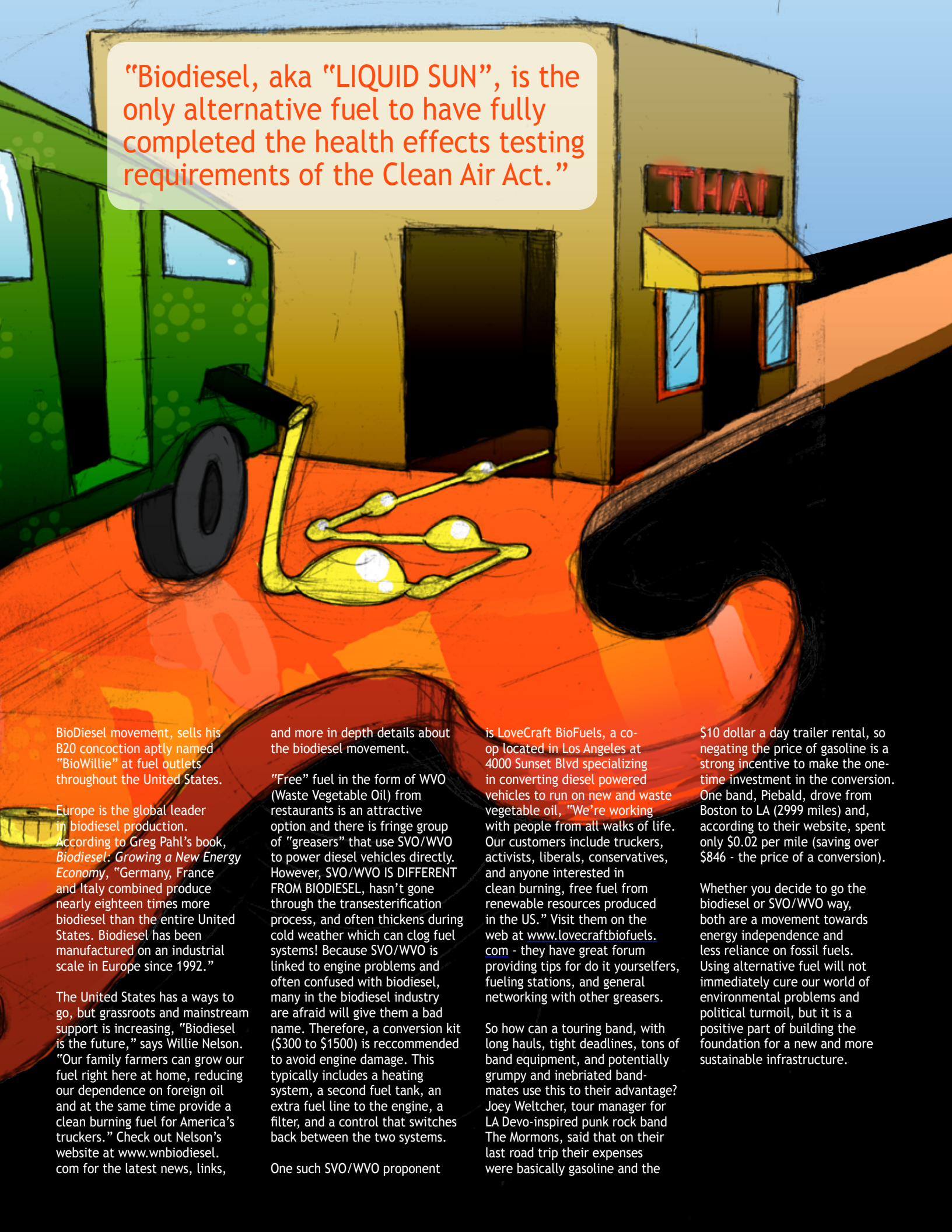
LINKS

① <http://www.lovecraftbiofuels.com> - Professional Conversion business based in LA

① <http://www.wnbiodiesel.com> - Willie Nelson Biodiesel

① <http://www.greaseotgas.com> - Piebald Tour Website





"Biodiesel, aka "LIQUID SUN", is the only alternative fuel to have fully completed the health effects testing requirements of the Clean Air Act."

BioDiesel movement, sells his B20 concoction aptly named "BioWillie" at fuel outlets throughout the United States.

Europe is the global leader in biodiesel production. According to Greg Pahl's book, *Biodiesel: Growing a New Energy Economy*, "Germany, France and Italy combined produce nearly eighteen times more biodiesel than the entire United States. Biodiesel has been manufactured on an industrial scale in Europe since 1992."

The United States has a ways to go, but grassroots and mainstream support is increasing, "Biodiesel is the future," says Willie Nelson. "Our family farmers can grow our fuel right here at home, reducing our dependence on foreign oil and at the same time provide a clean burning fuel for America's trucks." Check out Nelson's website at www.wnbiodiesel.com for the latest news, links,

and more in depth details about the biodiesel movement.

"Free" fuel in the form of WVO (Waste Vegetable Oil) from restaurants is an attractive option and there is fringe group of "greasers" that use SVO/WVO to power diesel vehicles directly. However, SVO/WVO IS DIFFERENT FROM BIODIESEL, hasn't gone through the transesterification process, and often thickens during cold weather which can clog fuel systems! Because SVO/WVO is linked to engine problems and often confused with biodiesel, many in the biodiesel industry are afraid will give them a bad name. Therefore, a conversion kit (\$300 to \$1500) is recommended to avoid engine damage. This typically includes a heating system, a second fuel tank, an extra fuel line to the engine, a filter, and a control that switches back between the two systems.

One such SVO/WVO proponent

is LoveCraft BioFuels, a co-op located in Los Angeles at 4000 Sunset Blvd specializing in converting diesel powered vehicles to run on new and waste vegetable oil, "We're working with people from all walks of life. Our customers include truckers, activists, liberals, conservatives, and anyone interested in clean burning, free fuel from renewable resources produced in the US." Visit them on the web at www.lovecraftbiofuels.com - they have great forum providing tips for do it yourselfers, fueling stations, and general networking with other greasers.

So how can a touring band, with long hauls, tight deadlines, tons of band equipment, and potentially grumpy and inebriated band-mates use this to their advantage? Joey Weltcher, tour manager for LA Devo-inspired punk rock band The Mormons, said that on their last road trip their expenses were basically gasoline and the

\$10 dollar a day trailer rental, so negating the price of gasoline is a strong incentive to make the one-time investment in the conversion. One band, Piebald, drove from Boston to LA (2999 miles) and, according to their website, spent only \$0.02 per mile (saving over \$846 - the price of a conversion).

Whether you decide to go the biodiesel or SVO/WVO way, both are a movement towards energy independence and less reliance on fossil fuels. Using alternative fuel will not immediately cure our world of environmental problems and political turmoil, but it is a positive part of building the foundation for a new and more sustainable infrastructure.

belief

BY: BOB FREVILLE

"Who do you trust?" I asked.

"George Bush," came his reply. That is the enigma that is Belief, Brooklyn's prolific hip-hop music maestro. Is he serious? Is he joking? Has he gone bat shit and joined Halliburton so as to ensure that his music will be piped in to Air Force One?

Belief chose his words carefully, taking time to sculpt his answers. I hung back and chewed on my knuckles until blood gave way to bone. It was all worth it.

"Your first full-length [*Dedication*] is in the works," I said. "Now you've worked on a lot of projects, but never before have you made your own LP. Why has it taken you this long to get down to it?"

"I had been thinking about and collecting song ideas from work on other people's projects for awhile," Belief explained. "One day I realized that I had been through the experience of doing songs on other people's albums enough times and I needed to push it to the next

level in order to keep learning.

"And maybe make some real money."

For some reason, whenever I think of money, I think of a gargantuan clock necklace which, naturally, leads me to think of big hats and fake noses, the kind that are usually sold in corner stores with plastic eyeglasses attached.

"What was it like working with Humpty Hump on *Risky Business*/*Brotherly Love*? Does he still wear the nose?"

"I actually didn't produce *Risky Business* and, unfortunately, haven't gotten a chance to work with Humpty...but I sure as hell can do the dance."

For the express purpose of pro-creating a healthy future generation of Hip-Hop, we certainly must hope that Belief is telling the truth.

"You've mentioned your conscious decision to try and inject your music with the New York experience," I said.

That's the other thing about this mysterious cat. Even if you were to lift a direct quote from him out of some magazine that he was interviewed in less than a year ago, Belief seems like the type of dude to sit quiet and fastidiously craft a way to re-work what has been said into a new package. "The idea was to move to New York to get it into my subconscious," he said. "The music I make isn't necessarily the product of the place I'm at during its conception, but more the things and places I've experienced throughout my life. Like I could be up in the country visiting my family and come up with some real Harlem shit..."

"When you walk out into the New York City night, what are you expecting?"

"To come home inspired."

"Alright," I said. "Dopest machines with which to make people's ears bleed..."

"I feel like it might be the SP1200, but I don't have one. In the

mean time, better believe my 2000XL will do the damn thing."

"One of your long-term goals is to write film scores. Where does that aspiration come from?"

"I may be wrong about this, but it seems like doing scores might be a more mellow lifestyle, only cuz there isn't any back and forth with artists. I feel like that would be a nice thing to move on to later in life when I don't have the energy to deal with artists or record labels any more."

"Where does the sun hide at night?"

"The West coast."

"And where do you get your head cut?"

"Actually," Belief replied with a sheepish grin. "My girl cut it, but don't tell anyone."

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D.J. AND THE CASE OF THE BLU LEAF

BY: ERNESTO ROSINSKI

Growing up in the Watts section of Los Angeles, DJ "got into the lifestyle that was all around me," and molded his attire accordingly. But the older he got, the more he yearned for something more than just an urban appearance. "The problem with the majority of so-called 'urban clothing' companies," he says, "is that they're owned, ran and designed by people who have no clue about what urban really is. At the same time, these companies collect our money and put nothing back into our communities."

So he started his own clothing company, donning the moniker Blu Leaf Clothing. "It started because of my love of clothing and trouble in finding true urban style on a top quality product."

"Blu Leaf started at the end of 2003, but didn't start growing strong 'til 2005," he

reflects. "When I first came up with the name I made a couple tees with a heat transfer, which had a blue leaf on the front and a small blue weed leaf on the back. Every time I was out people were asking me where I got it at and how they could get one, so from there I really got it crackin'."

"Blu Leaf is about TRUE urban style, and reinvesting in the communities that it represents. At the company level we reinvest a minimum of 8% of all proceeds into inner city programs and donate our time at teaching kids basic business skills. We try to run Blu Leaf as an example to kids and adults alike on how to run a business, and yourself as a person."

Naturally, Blu Leaf is connected to music as well as clothes. "We're real heavy in the music industry," DJ notes,

"with the artists and producers all over. We work at helping a lot of the 'New West Movement' rappers at getting themselves as a 'business' right and getting all the small details worked out. We've worked with rappers like Glasses Malone- Sony Music, Cashis- Shady Recs, Frontliners, etc. *West Coast Reputables Mixtape Vol. 1* is dropping this summer, and the Reputables from all the other regions best get at us to get on the next Volumes."

Starting a business like this from scratch is simple, right? "Hell muthafuckin' no," he declares. "Things ain't easy these days, unless you're the majority instead of the minority. We have run into many walls trying to set ourselves up as a company that is self-reliant. Certain groups that run these different divisions of the clothing industry do not like to see a new player, especially a

black-owned company at that, coming in trying to do things from the ground up. Big established companies fear any new company coming into the game, definitely when that company has such strong ties to the streets and music artists, well-known and up & coming."

Between the guidance of DJ and Chief Operations Officer Cliff "Big Heat" Jordan, Blu Leaf is becoming a lasting force. "Most urban retailers, such as Sheikh Shoes and Bad Boy Clothing, carry Blu Leaf tees. You can always find the full collection at www.bluleaf.com. The mixtape is available on there, as well as www.wcreps.com and www.hiphopwest.com."



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NOT GETTING RID OF THE VOICES IN YOUR HEAD

BY: SCOTT MACKIE

The radio station I DJ on has strict policies concerning the number of times you can play a band - only one song and never in consecutive shows. But a little three-piece from Wales has totally transformed me into a big bad radio outlaw. On almost every show I fly my freak-flag right in the face of the man and play 2-3 of their songs in a row. It's really scary sometimes, but living life on the edge can be exhilarating. And the listeners don't seem to mind either - in fact I've been using their songs as a diagnostic tool: to see if anyone is listening to my damn show. Halfway into the first song the phones will invariably light up with people asking: "Who's playing right now and where can I get it?"

The answer to those burning questions - and to be honest, almost all of life's deepest questions - is the Voices, and www.my-kung-fu.com.

Things that happen during the course of the self-titled first full length: slippery-sexy vocals

slide like radiant mind-screws in and out of swank and creamy clouds of electric guitars *played* the way electric guitars were meant to be played: shimmering showers of fried-as-f*ck feedback bringing on the wah-wah moans coaxing angel sighs and demon groans. Yes Emily you *can* attain higher consciousness and satisfy carnal desires at the same time. Legally. For only \$10. www.karmadownload.com

And the situation is about to improve: another full-length is on the way. Based on the un-mastered version I've heard, it seems the dosage has been slightly adjusted: 10 mg less MBV, substituted by 5 mg JAMC + a Spiritualized protective coating to prevent tummy aches (and provide me pharmaceutical analogies). Is it better than the first? Buy both and decide for yourself. www.tonevendor.com

The Voices have not yet played outside the UK, where it regularly wrecks PA's at such venues as Club AC30, a bi-weekly social in London

also known as heaven on earth for people with a fondness for such ultrasonic majestaphonics like Epic45, Telescopes, Oppressed by the Line, Sambassadeur, Amusement Parks on Fire, and Ulrich Schnauss (who regularly DJ's at the club). Which brings us to my particular motive in writing this essay: if enough of you buy their CDs, maybe they'll come to the States and save me the expense of flying halfway across the globe to see them. www.lostinconfusion.com

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SOUNDS



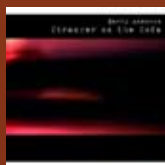
COLETTE & DJ HEATHER
HOUSE OF OM
OM RECORDS

This double disc set is straight-up sickness! I've heard both of these divas play live many times, so I know what to expect. This is why I was somewhat disappointed in Colette's set, well actually in her track selection. Now, don't get me wrong, Colette's voice reigns supreme as always and her blending skills are top notch as you will hear in this all around solid recording, however, I think the more serious househeads are bound to keep Heather's disc in rotation. This set of Heather's brings me immediately to the dancefloor, like a train laid chugging smoothly on it's tracks, which in this case, are some mighty tunes from top producers such as Inland Knights, Trademarq, Dopeheadz and even some of her own collaborations with E.C.B. and Brett Johnson. Her take on the Boompty sound is nothing short of body-jacking bliss. Nuff said, two needles up and look out for these Lady Jane Allstars while they're on their international promotional tour. (jt)



OCOTE SOUL SOUNDS AND
ADRIAN QUESADA
EL NIÑO Y EL SOL
EIGHTEENTH STREET LOUNGE

El Niño y el Sol is a collaboration between Martin Perna (Ocote Soul Sounds) and Adrian Quesada. They are founding members of two of the world's most successful and progressive afro/latin/funk big bands, Antibalas and Grupo Fantasma, respectively. After kicking off the album with a lush instrumental sound-scape in "Tamarindo", these guys smash you in the face with some top-shelf funk in "Dedication TV". Pretty soon you find yourself drunk from their intoxicating "Afro-Latin" jazz rhythms mottled throughout the rest of the album. This joint definitely passed the boot-knockin test with flying colors and is sure to be the first of many collaborations between these two. (JTizzle)



BARRY ADAMSON
STRANGER ON THE SOFA
CENTRAL CONTROL

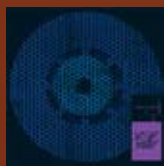
To know him is to love him. Original member of fan favorites Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, hailing from our generation's soon-to-be Atlantis (Long Island, NY), Adamson has time, talent and taste backing him on this LP. Some songs are complicated, confusing the (un)enlightened long enough to suck you in and deposit you back where you stood...strangely gratified yet suddenly bored with your Time. "Sofa" jumps from one feeling to another, although by its end, you've stopped complaining about the change of tone...you're trying to sing the new song...which doesn't have words. I was particularly drawn to a track entitled "Officer Bentley's Fairly Serious Dilemma." The song, concerning a character who hears a Nurse reading his stats over a police radio in his head, is layered with conflict & emotion, echoing the intense situation of its theme. Barry appears on every two songs or so and while his clever and soothing voice is missed on the instrumentals, the jazzy sections are smartly arranged rather than lacking. Take a seat. Get comfortable. (Violet Fewes)



THE KAJMERE SOUND, VOL. 1
(KAJMERE SOUND RECORDINGS)

A lot of these soul grooves are fresh out of the 70's ala Earth, Wind, and Fire, Stevie Wonder, at times mixed with today's beats and "Native Tongue" lyrical underground flows. The Kajmere Sound is a collection of up and coming artists on the Kajmere label as well as artists already familiar to most, such as Chali2na and The Rebirth. The Kajmere label was created by the underground soul group and KOTORI favs' The Rebirth to serve as an outlet for up and coming talent. Some of that talent featured here is Choklate, an artist from Seattle. She is featured on "Waitin'," a hot track to start off the CD. Choklate is also featured on track #6, "Bigger Than You," another highlight. Other highlights include "Sum Same" by The Rebirth, "Tread Lightly" by NBE featuring Jon B, and "Our Time to Shine" by Modern Groove Assembly featuring Sy Smith. I'll bet you'll be seduced to invent a new dance for "Hidden Gem."

This compilation is how one should be. To paraphrase Big Boi & Raekwon - "All types of flows and flavas innovative - new and creative spine tinglin' with mad styles and crazy dangerous I mean, bust ya shit open beats!" (Drumacide)



THE KNIFE
SILENT SHOUT
MUTE

Electronically integrated, infused with a irksome vocal back drop...categorization is nearly impossible...Who are these people?? Skerige is where they call home. (That's Swedish for Sweden if you were wondering) Each track brings you on a journey into the deepest and darkest realms of computer made music. This bro and sis duo make music that transcends what our culture is used to be. Leave it up to those crazy Europeans...Listening to this album is in close contention with an outer body experience. "Neverland" is electronically imposing one it's own...throw in the vocals and the prophetic story the tell...likes like they a painting with sounds..."Silent Shout" is more up tempo...almost trance with electronic steal drums...the sounds are just all over the place...the are cluttered and jagged, but that's the way it has to be!! to try and alter the spasmodic sounds would take away from the allure of the music. It will be like nothing you have ever heard before...a farfetched fantasm!! (the dirty j)



PEEPING TOM
PEEPING TOM
IPECAC RECORDS

After years of wild rumors and longing, Mike Patton has released what he claims to be the first Peeping Tom album. Although it's a departure from most of his many projects to date, Peeping Tom does conjure up memories and melodies of Faith No More, but moreover it's the closest thing to "Pop" that Patton has unleashed to date. Of course, it's "Pop" like only Patton could give.

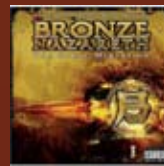
Several tracks rock well, while others flow with mellow grooves. Every song features a guest artist- from Massive Attack to Kool Keith- but the most surprising collaboration is "Sucker," with Norah Jones. She is

ferociously sexy here, a confidently beautiful voice on par with Patton's unlimited vocals. (JLM)



J DIMENNA
AWKWARD BUILDINGS
(EXOTIC RECORDINGS)

Very thoughtful and rhythmically complete, at first listen the almost Beatle-esque Awkward Buildings comes off as a perfect companion to a lazy day at the beach. But the more you listen, the more you realize that the record as a whole cradles an undertone of anxiety...like something ugly hiding under the surface of something uneasily pretty. Don't get me wrong, it's a very rich and lush record that seems to fill all the proper frequencies with just the right amount of aurally pleasing sound, yet, it's fundamentally simple enough to be...eerily timeless. Still, something about it exudes a sense of beautifully melancholic disturbance. The haunting oil field fairground cover art seems to only amplify the feeling. Yah, I know, I'm talking about what is essentially a 'singer/songwriter' record, but if you listen closely you'll realize it's very intricately designed and structured across the board...lyrically, musically, and mentally...effectively tapping into more than just your 5 senses. (wam)



BRONZE NAZARETH
THE GREAT MIGRATION
BABYGRANDE RECORDS

The story of this Detroit native taking the Greyhound 15 hours to reach New York in the hopes of meeting The RZA of the one and only Wu-Tang Clan isn't that dazzling...The fact he had to try 3 times to succeed, it's the conviction and the desire to succeed that makes this story...Make your breaks happen, that seems the motto of this up and coming hip-hop heavyweight. The lyrics are deep, the beats are tight... "Hear what I Say!" got the beats and powerful lyrics... genuine and intense. "Detroit" is a collaborative work. Don't let the engaging beat throw you off; Detroit ain't going down like that. The lyrics speak volumes about the inventive originality that this young cat has in his arsenal. And being tied into WU, you know it's got the killer bee references... (the dirty j)



BRADLEY
THE HUSTLE

Grooves that lay back in the cut and silky smooth production imbue this SoCal hip-hop album with a classic feel. Songs like "In the Summertime" and "Pass to Paradise" are the perfect melding of song and lyric, painting vivid pictures of a life lived strictly for fun, and the tracks throughout conjure up some great vibes reminiscent of everything from Desmond Dekker (RIP brother!) to Van Morrison to some more gangsta-fied shit. The problem is that although this whiteboy rapper has a great delivery, his lyrics can be a little...off. On many tracks the guy drops more pop culture references than a tweaked out Beastie Boy trapped in a Quentin Tarantino movie. "Too Hot" is his excuse to name every celeb who's ever given him a boner. Jessica Simpson? Paris Hilton?? Dude, who cares?! I listen to hip-hop to escape that fucking nightmare world. But where Bradley falls short lyrically, Ryan Williams, who wrote and impeccably produced most of the songs on

the album, steps it up a notch and carries him through. All in all, an impressive hip-hop debut. But don't take my word for it, check out some tracks for yourself at www.myspace.com/bradleyhiphop. (The Mambo King)



**ELEVATOR ACTION
SOCIETY, SECRET
(MORISEN RECORDS)**

Punk Rockers from North Carolina, now I've heard it all. Give credit where credit is due, these guys and one girl are the real deal. This is the Charlotte trio's second release. Front man Eric Gilstrap has an exclusive style, while robust drummer James Donley has no problem holding his own amongst drummers upper crust. And don't forget about the bewitching bass siren Laurie Ruroden. A talented bunch who puts it all out there and lets the listener make their own judgment. "Call Me Transistor" really displays their proficient ability to mix things up. "Breaking Glass Plans" is a more mellow approach to southern punk. It has more of a soulful feel, that feeling you can only get from the south. (The Dirty J)



**NORTH COAST UNDERGROUND
CADILLAC DREAMS**

A lethal combination of hip-hop, reggae and rock. Truly and strain straight outta Nor Cal! It's like a hybrid. With 2 gifted emcees blowing it up and 1 badass dropping the beats, these cats add a funky commentary to the problems that plague our society. An intellectual anger portrayed through melodic beats. "Air Raid" brings it back to the day when Cypress Hill was doing the rock/hip-hop crossbreed. For more of a reggae feel, "One Thing" will scratch that itch. With a Marley-esque feel, it will keep the head moving to a positive melody that will just echo through the dome piece. I've always been a fan of Nor Cal...and this just reinforces my previous beliefs!!! www.northcoastunderground.com (The Dirty J)



**QUANTIC
AN ANNOUNCEMENT
TO ANSWER
(UBIQUITY RECORDS)**

After a year and a half traveling the world digging for records and making music from a laptop, Will Holland is back at it again. Experimenting with new sounds and techniques while still keeping it real with his trademark funkified feel, this album is sure to be a crowd pleaser. With guest artists Noelle Scaggs and Ohmega Watts it's like the sugar on the plantains. "Blow Your Horn" is a legendary mix of hip-hop with a Far East pulse. In contrast, "Politic Society" is a blend of the soulful Latina influences with a jazzy touch. The colorfully vivacious lyrics really accent the Latina style of music. With only 9 tracks, it leaves the listener wanting more! Extremely smooth in every movement and sounds.... An amazing work for the Latin lover in all of us!! (The Dirty J)



**KRAAK & SMAAK
BOOGIE ANGST
QUANGO MUSIC GROUP**

Dutch trio Kraak & Smaak hits it off with sexy energy and lots of funk. The first song, "Money in the Bag" will make you want to thrust that pelvis back and just get down and dirty. The journey continues with more bluesy jazzy trancey grooves and breakbeats

with transcendental lyrics. Off to some tribal and conga grooves that'll make you do the funky mambo. Halfway through, the album seems to lose some of the original energy it started off with, ending with a scaled back version of the opening track. Of course that may just be their way of easing your way back down from the peak, which, in that case, works out! Ahh...the suns up..... (mollycules)



**STRANGE FRUIT PROJECT
THE HEALING
(OM HIP HOP)**

Sure, introducing a hip hop imprint may have been a bit of a gamble for a traditionally dance music oriented imprint. Would OM's audience embrace their take on the genre? Well, if the Roots' QuestLove is into it, which he is, then they've got to be onto something! Following in the lines of the success that Mark Farina's "Mushroom Jazz" series, J-Boogie's sexy Dubtronic Science, and Colossus' smooth live jazzy future hip-hop brought them, OM recently signed acclaimed Waco bred hip-hoppers Strange Fruit Project.

One listen to their debut The Healing makes it quite apparent that the label has a penchant for singling out true forward thinking quality. With smooth downtempo soul-hop as the backdrop for a very deep and mentally expanding lyrical journey, this album exudes an aura of playful intelligence and provocative aural engineering. Soul, jazz, Latin rhythms and rhymes. Ahhh...the cross-breeding made possible by the internet age's wide array of ridiculously accessible influences... if only everyone from Texas would let themselves think a bit (you know who I'm talkin about). (WAM)



**EVIL NINE, WIGGLE, & DJ
FORMAT
FABRICLIVE VERSIONS
(FABRIC)**



Something about playing at Fabric that brings out the fuckin' best in a DJ. Goddamn, here's 3 more powerhouse mixes in 3 completely different rights in the Fabric Live series. This energy is ridiculous. Every thing from boom bap sex bounce to deep dusty desert grooves to hip hop turntable wizardry. This package brings us Evil Nine, Wiggle, and DJ Format in all their well deserved glory. While Evil Nine brings us big room broken beat and vocal cut magic interspersed with booty shakin' bass breaks, Wiggle comes in and holds it down in his minimally hazy-bass groovetacular house beats, and then DJ Format cleans up with his hip-hoppin' funk and silky sample laden jazz infused sexiness (I mean, who has Mr. Lif in the same mix as Ella Fitzgerald??). Three completely different styles of mixes that fall into the same genre...fuckin' dope! (WAM)



**MONSTERS ARE WAITING
FASCINATION**

Disclaimer: This review may very well be tainted by the memory of their live show a couple nights ago where they wowed the crowd with their 40 minute set -- and it

had absolutely nothing to do with the fact that lead singer Annalee Fery is sexy as sin. (And we all know how sexy sin is). Monsters Are Waiting play the kind of pop music that infiltrates your life- as you go to school, do the dishes, whatever- and it can be hard to escape their catchy melodies and guitar-drenched choruses. Annalee's vocals are too playful to be overtly sexual, yet too sensual to be completely innocuous. Think early Bjork and Blonde Redhead. She has the kind of effortless sexuality that Hollywood spends hundreds of millions trying to re-create, which is important because onstage and on-record her presence dominates the band. This is not to say that the rest of the band is merely a supporting act. At their best, they alternate deftly between shades of Sonic Youth and the Pixies, knowing precisely when to step it up and steal the limelight. It's the best of 80's pop/alternative with a 2006 edge thrown in and man, is it fun to listen to. (The Mambo King)



**DABRYE
TWO/THREE
GHOSTLY INTERNATIONAL**

Michigan-based beat pioneer Dabrye offers up his promising first truly hip-hop record.

Following the success of his Ghostly International released debut One/Three and the subsequent release of Instrumentl on Prefuse 73's own Eastern Development, Dabrye began catching the eyes of prominent MC's and after some serendipitous word of mouth networking, recorded a collaboration with the late J Dilla on Game Over. Building on the buzz from that cut, Dabrye reached out to some of the best underground talent for the sessions of Two/Three, including Doom on the boisterous epic "Air," Beans for the brash beat driven lament of "Nite Eats Day" and Waajeed and Ta'Raach on the politically charged, sample heavy "Viewer Discretion." Dabrye also included some of the instrumental tracks that got him where he is with "Machines Pt. I & II," "Tell Dem," and "Piano." Lyrically smart and musically sound, Two/Three is an eclectic triumph. (David C. Obenour)



**THE HYLOZOISTS
LA FIN DU MONDE
BOOMPA**

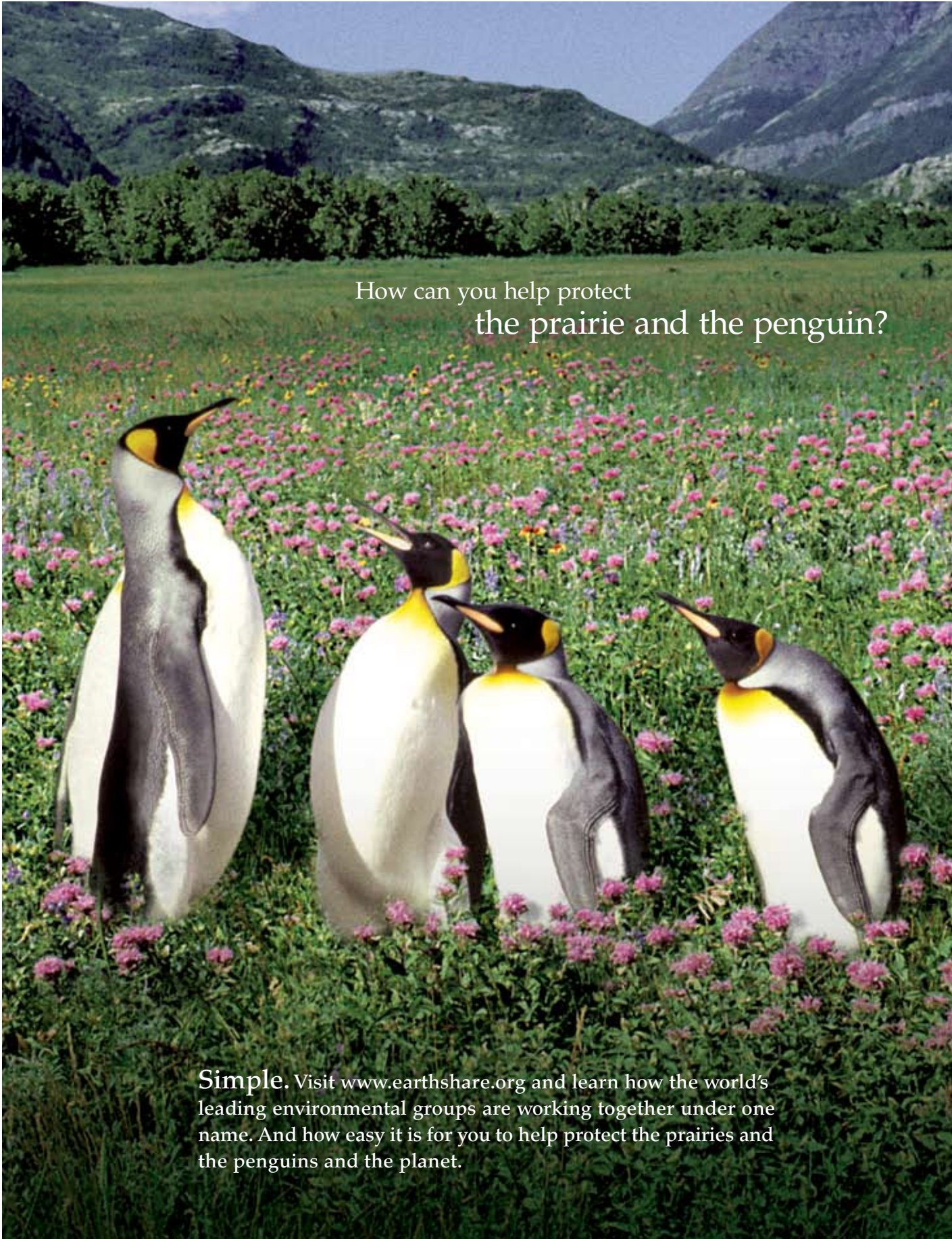
The Sadies' Paul Aucion's intricate attention to structure, composition and instrumentation for the songs on La Fin Du Monde might best be surmised as neo-classical pop opuses. Along with members from The Weakerthans, Broken Social Scene, and FemBots, the tracks come to their full realization with each contributing part. Echoing of Portastatic, Jon Brion and Badly Drawn Boy's cinematic work, the album reaches further than the music, drawing on outside imagery. Starting off is the whimsical string, organ and bell play of "The Fifty Minute Hour," developing through the comical burlesque slide guitar on "Smiley Smiley" and concluding with the fanciful bombast of the album's title track. Based around the belief that all matter holds life, known by those in the philosophical community as hylozoism, The Hylozoists have packed as much of it as possible within this 3 1/2" plastic disc. (David C. Obenour)



**THE HANDSOME FAMILY
LAST DAYS OF WONDER
CARROT TOP RECORDS**

Just in time for lazy Summer afternoons the husband-wife duo of The

Handsome Family are ready to release their seventh



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album *The Last Days of Wonder*. As unrushed as the growing grass, *Last Days...* is meant as a statement of how we are teetering on the brink of self-destructing, yet how paradoxically we always have been, turning the bleak statement into a docile lament. With guest appearances from Stephen Dorocke of Freakwater and David Couiter of Tom Waits band, *Last Days...* brings to mind echoes of Johnny Cash as well as contemporaries such as The Lemonheads and Jayhawks. There are dashes of Alt-country on "Flapping Your Broken Wings," gothic Americana on "These Golden Jewels" and bluegrass on "Bowling Alley Bar," without ever being kitschy. It may not be a huge departure from their previous work, but just because you can still remember last summer doesn't make you long for the next any less.

(David C. Obenour)



**CORDOVAN
HIGHWAY 10 BLUES
LUNATICWORKS JAZZ**

This is the nu-future jazz movement, and Greg Reeves stands at the helm. In the vain of Miles Davis, Charles Mingus and other influential jazz greats, Cordovan is back with their signature smooth jazzy downbeats and rhythms. And while the harmonies and melodies evoke the emotions and sensibilities of the old skool, the structure and, especially, percussive elements hold their roots in the technologically fueled world of electronic music. Even the process by which the record came together plays testament to the ridiculously convenient methods available to artists nowadays. Most all the parts for *Highway 10 Blues* were files that found their way through cyberspace from one source to another. The best part...after all that, the record was still mastered to analog tape. The result is an extremely pleasant jazz infused broken and break beat soundscape. All the structure of seasoned new skool musicians, all the freeform of the unconditioned old skool jazz spirit.

(WAM)



**BLACKLINE
BLACKLINE
YELLOW MATTER RECORDS**

Get used to hearing this name because the name will be spoken with adoration and exaltation for a long time a coming. These bad ass Indie rockers from Bean Town (Boston, MA for the non east coast natives) will not disappoint!! As a whole, they play with deftness, with a masterful command of the sound that radiates from their instruments. The influence of Metallica can be felt throughout the album. "Armageddon Soul" is a manifestation of the collective genius that embodies BLACKLINE. "Superone" slows it down a notch, but not to worry, they keep it hard and powerful throughout. "Run" is just another avenue in which these guys illustrate the countless reasons why Blackline will soon be as much of a household name as Metallica or Tool. Don't take my word for it, listen for yourself...And I dare you to make an attempt to prove me wrong.

(The Dirty J)



**CLOUDLAND CANYON
REQUIEMS DER NATUR
2002-2004
TEE PEE RECORDS**

Consisting of German multi-instrumentalist Simon Wojam and Panthers' psychcore guitarist Kip Uhlhorn, *Requiem Der Natur 2002-2004* is not the album you might initially expect. Over two years in the making Kip met Simon on a European tour when the two began exchanging

tapes. After a handful of transatlantic performance, Simon traveled to Brooklyn for a weeklong recording session for what would result in *Requiem...*, an ambient experimental post-punk record shadowing the seminal work of New York's Swans and Germany's Ash Ra Temple. "Opening/Ice Rift" starts with a cymbal roll that later augments a Gregorian chant while "Costal Breathe"'s brooding synthesizer lays a bed for frantically plucked strings and "Joyful Noise" is a dark and hectic experimentation with indistinguishable vocal samples that swirl around its heavy bass line. Dense, dark and difficult Cloudland Canyon's intricacies come off as highly ambitious yet are incredibly rewarding.

(David C. Obenour)



**ALOE BLACC
SHINE THROUGH
(STONES THROW)**

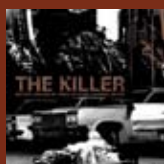
Aloe Blacc's *Shine Through* is one of those bleak yet ambient techno-sexual offerings that makes you wonder whether it's appropriate for you to be bobbing your head. The first track, aptly titled "Whole World," wraps its talons around your soul, or at least that part of your soul that appreciates Soul and night-friendly beats, and it doesn't let up until its plangent outro. The song encompasses much of Aloe's gratefulness for his heroes and contemporaries while reinforcing his own legend. "The world reminds me of music and the music reminds me I'm free," Aloe sings. Tragically hip? Perhaps. But what's good is good.

"Long Time Coming," Aloe's ode to Sam Cooke's "Change Is Gonna Come," is another hot track that would be that much more incredible if it weren't for the first thirty seconds or so of high-pitched obnoxiousness. Still, there's no denying that Soul has been injected back into ethnic music and *Shine Through* is where you will find it.

The titular track features some of the purest harmonizing to come out in ages and it will no doubt send some of us back to that untouchable hey-day of street corner music when the garbage can was burning but not quite as bright as our souls.

A spot-on LP for everyone from the Otis Redding camp to the Kanye West clan. *Shine Through* is funtackular, baby.

(Bob Freville)

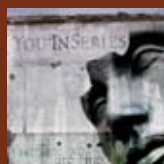


**THE KILLER
BETTER JUDGED BY TWELVE
THEN CARRIED BY SIX
ORGANIZED CRIME RECORDS**

I'm going to go out on a limb and say, quite frankly this is the best hardcore album I have heard since *Life of Agony's* masterpiece *River Runs Red*. Along with the grinding guitar work and deep howls of anger, this album boasts a depth not seen in this genre of music in a while. Standout songs on the album include "The True Failure," "The Confession of an Escape Artist," and "The King is Dead." Raw and unrelenting, this band combines the elements of old school Vision of Disorder with the anger and social conviction of bands like Minor Threat and Black Flag. A real treat on the album is the outstanding cover of Twisted Sister's "Burn in Hell," changed to fit this band's taste and it does not disappoint.

Included with the CD is a DVD of a live show. The gritty DVD quality combined with the sound of this powerful band make this a must have for any fan of great headbanging music with meaning. It is one of the most compulsively watchable live DVDs that I have seen in a while. Keep your eyes on this band, my friends. This is

one of the best albums of the year.
(Joe Russo)



**YOUINSERIES
OUTSIDE WE ARE FINE
EQUAL VISION RECORDS**

I'll be honest and say that I have never been a big fan of emo bands such as Taking Back Sunday and Story of the Year. However, this ever-widening genre of music has expanded to include a darker, more reflective side. In the vein of bands like Funeral For a Friend, YouInSeries seems to have carved a niche for themselves. The guitar work of Chris Davilla and Logan Lanning combined with Cheyne Smith's drumwork comes off like that of seasoned professionals. Kyle Lobeck's vocals, restrained at times and very forceful elsewhere, comes like a scream in silence. Songs such as "The Watcher" and "Lose Faith in the Truth" are haunting while other songs such as "Often Too Much Thomas Kincaid" and "When and Where A Real World Occurs" deal with changing the conformity to which most people find themselves succumbing to. This is a mature album, something rarely found in this particular genre, as you really feel that this band is taking a look not only at themselves, but the world around them, and letting us know what they see.

(Joe Russo)



**MESSER, FUR FRAU MULLER
TRIANGLE, DOT & DEVIL
AEROCCCP RECORDS**

From Russia with love...??? What the f@*k ?? Like an animated cartoon...high on acid!! Don't get me wrong, the level of creativity and originality are genius!! There is no genre to compare this album to. Best thing to come out of Russia since vodka!! A lounge music type of feel infused with California surfer rock n roll and an overall sinister vibe. Perfect for the night of entertaining guests dressed in smoking jackets and silk pajama pants sippin' on psychedelics. The album compels the mind to visualize the sounds emerging from the various samples and instruments used in producing this one of a kind work of artsanity. "Cherche le zavr" combines samples from different eras in time as well as vocal clips in different languages. The end product is a unique track that stimulates the senses. The rest of the cuts are equally and pleasantly unnerving...in a good way.
(The Dirty J)



**FRENCH KICKS
TWO THOUSAND
VAGRANT RECORDS**

Two Thousand, French Kicks' fourth album in 6 years, is a hip, pulsating, indie-pop work-of-art. The controlled and restrained rock, fused with the subtler grooves, creates a beautiful array of songs. Unusually positioned, "So Far We Are," which introduces the album, is definitely the highlight of these 10 winning compositions. While the melody and guitar riffs are instantaneous, repeated listens expose layers of supporting instrumentation, rhythm tracks, and counter-melodies. Lead singer Nick Stumpf's engaging voice carries the soulful but poppy album with help from Josh Wise (guitar), Lawrence Stumpf (bass) and Aaron Thurston's solid and fluid drumming. French Kicks make a successful return with this, their latest and greatest.
(JCH)





HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU (VOL. 6)
HOPELESS / SUB CITY RECORDS

Records. From punk, to metal, to ska, to indie, this label covers it all. Good music can come from many different places, but it can all be found here. Disc One is all the new artists (Amber Pacific, All time Low, Royden), while Disc Two offers a glimpse into the label's diverse history. The Guttermouth track "Hopeless" is responsible for the name of the label...Bet most of you didn't know that!! It's really a no brainer!! This collection of talented artists will keep the listeners bouncing off the walls for hours!!

(The Dirty J)



GENERAL MALICE
THE FINAL TAKEOVER
N20 RECORDS

At the age of 24, with 35 vinyl releases already out on the market, General Malice finally released his long awaited first full length album

The Final Takeover on N20 Records. The album features twelve original tracks and encompasses the various genres of ragga jungle, reggae, dancehall, and IDM mash ups. A three-piece vinyl set was also released to accompany the album. "I want to push the more underground forms of music up to the mainstream and cross a lot of different boundaries," he professes. Using Cubase SX3, Korg Triton and a MPC, The Final Takeover plays impressive testament to that statement.

(Asha Azhar)



FERRY CORSTEN
L.E.F. (LOUD ELECTRONIC FEROCIOUS)
ULTRA RECORDS

The Dutch Godfather of "Electro Dance" is back at it againWith yet another piece of DUTCH GOODNESS !! (no I am not talking about the

coffee shops!!) Electronic excellence fused with an almost 80's like rock/pop twist...Energy fueled beats with a feel of dirty distortion...It's almost like your doing something you shouldn't be doing. L.E.F is sure to please the most cynical of critics. Although this engagement was initiated 2 years ago, the Final Product was well worth the wait. The single titled "Fire" has already seen a TOP 10 LISTING on Billboard's "Hot Dance Airplay" chart. "Beautiful," almost psychedelic by nature, has mischievous beats that just inundate the mind body and soul..."Prison Break Remix" resurrects the sinister madman we all know and love...

(The Dirty J)

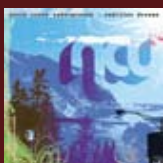


KENN STARR
STARR STATUS
HALFTOOTH RECORDS

A rapper from Virginia? Did I hear that correctly? Sticking true to the state motto "Thus always to tyrants" Kenn Starr is slicing and dicing the

would-be competitors with his verbal daggers. Lyrics are intelligent, everything just flows smooth. Witty and real, the tracks keep the head moving. Bringing his perspective on the experiences and fears and thoughts we all go through in everyday lives, "Middle Fingaz" is a soon to be classic street anthem. A powerful display of Starr's mic skills. "Back At It Again" is a collaborative work. The beats stay tight, the lyrics tell the story. A display of the talent Starr and his Halftooth homies bring to the table!

(The Dirty J)



SILVERSUN PICKUPS
CARNAVAS
DANGEROUS RECORDS

SilverSun Pickups' beautifully melancholic, debut album with Dangerbird Records, is subconsciously addictive. While it's difficult to choose which

track is better than the next, after repeat listens, Carnavas proves that this 11-cut collection is really just one, as each composition flows seamlessly into the next. The alliterative lyrics complimented by the



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enchanting melodic and atonal stream, aptly showcase the fruition of Silversun Pickups' obvious talent. Brian Aubert's captivating voice unites his distorted guitar along with bassist-singer Nikki Monninger, keyboardist Joe Lester, and drummer Christopher Guanlao. This album is unquestionably, cruising down PCH with your windows down, worthy. (JCH)



**MY BRIGHTEST DIAMOND
BRING ME THE WORKHORSE
ASTHMATIC KITTY RECORDS**

Shara Worden has a voice like no other. Unique and passionate, emotional and gripping; she has an amazing talent. Blended opera and guitar with an elegant voice that sends chills down your spine. The versatility in her vocal range enables her to transcend to a level of prophetic rapture. Soft and sweet, yet troubled and sad. "Golden Star" deftly combines dynamic guitar sweeps with powerful opera cultured vocals, whereas "Magic Rabbit" has a slower pace, a deeper darker pace. The voice of an angel echoing amongst the chords of our emotions. A commanding presence that inundates your senses and grasps at your soul. A sexy seductiveness felt through the minds of the listeners. (The Dirty J)



**FUSING NAKED BEATS PRESENTS
OUTER PERSPECTIVE
JUST PLAY RECORDS**

Following up their incendiary debut Digital Asia, the dynamic West London duo of Asif Ali Gillani and Martti Sewell aka Fusing Naked Beats, drop another electronic jewel titled Outer Perspective via their own label. Transcendental Asian vibes fantasy-ride you in and out of 16 dance monster tracks by showcasing gritty production skillz and homogenizing Indian Beats, D&B rhythms and funky house lines into one magically cohesive listen. (Shuda)



**MR. LIF
MO MEGA
DEFINITIVE JUX**

"Fuck Clinton too, you ain't really down because you live uptown bitch!" Mr. Lif has a bone to pick with our administrations' past and present on Mo Mega's "Brothaz" jam. "My target, the red carpet, the dead market, I'm a have to end this shit the way that it started." Hmm, seems Lif's 9 year MC career hasn't tickled his high-fashion bone either on "Murs iz my Manager". Aided by the magnanimous El-Producto puttin' the rootdown, this cd confides and compels the listener. Favorite lyric? "And I know there listening so P.S. Fuck The Feds!" (Cluz)



**JEFF MILLS / THE MONTPELLIER
PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
BLUE POTENTIAL
UNCIVILIZED WORLD**

Prolific beat electrict Jeff Mills gets heaps of help from The Montpellier Orchestra in bringing his hallmark ambient anthems to life beneath the grandeur of the Pont Du Gard bridge in France last summer. The Blue Potential CD/DVD disassembles the cliché rock-meets-orchestra fluff with an epic performance where Mills mainly drops the beats and some intermittent anecdotal intro's throughout the set, while conductor Thomas Roussel

translates energetic compositions with dream-like feel and precision. (MDL)

FILMS



**NEIL YOUNG
HEART OF GOLD
PARAMOUNT PICTURES
DVD**

Directed by Jonathan Demme, this film captures Neil Young performing songs from Prairie Wind live for the first time, at the Ryman Auditorium (formerly home to the Grand Ole Opry), in August 2005. It has an organic feel, more like a presentation than a normal concert movie. And as a finale, Young gives a chillingly beautiful performance of "The Old Laughing Lady," before walking off the stage.

The DVD is packed with extras, from "making of" footage to Young performing "Needle and the Damage Done" on The Johnny Cash Show in 1971. There are interviews with all involved, from Emmylou Harris, to Young himself.

This is a great testament to one of the many chapters in the life of Neil Young. (JLM)



**SHAKESPEARE BEHIND BARS
SHOUT! FACTORY**

What do you get when you put 14 hardcore felons into a Shakespeare workshop for The Tempest? Why, Shakespeare Behind Bars you ninny! This documentary plays out like a low-tech, subdued episode of HBO's OZ sprinkled with a Lifetime network tear jerker. There's something for the whole fam here: kids will watch and wanna stop running from the cops and chasing the dragon to avoid these thespian lifers' destiny, while Mom and Dad will relinquish their tears to the chronic soul-searching of each inmates struggle. (Mozey)



**BILLY CONNOLLY: LIVE IN NEW
YORK
RYKODISC**

The British heavyweight of comedy takes aim at the one and only NEW YORK CITY!! And who said the Brits had a dry sense of humor!! Delivery is everything.... With Billy and his animated actions combined with that infamous thick accent, it's sure to leave your stomach mussels sore from laughter. A stage presence that demands attention, that longhaired hippie look...A perfect blend of witty, intelligent and often off color humor.... He opens up cracking jokes at his own expense, the old age jokes. But when the right person tells them, the age jokes don't get old. His theory on war and sex in the Middle East is borderline offensive for the thin skinned. And if those people out there can't take a joke, well f#*k 'em !! (The Dirty J)



**GORILLAZ DEMON DAYS LIVE AT THE
MANCHESTER OPERA HOUSE
VIRGIN RECORDS**

Nothing could have been more touching than the live rendition of Dirty Harry. The DVD is worth it just for that cut alone. With the band being joined by well over 20

members from the Children's Choir from Parkland's School in Manchester, England (pay close attention to the girl that couldn't be more than 10 years old bustin' moves you wish you could jock at 25), it was like a fantasy come to life for both the children and for the adults reliving their childhood. It was beautiful. It basically looked and felt the way we strive to feel 24 hours a day/7 days a week. And the Gorillaz managed to create that feeling for the kids, for the musicians, and for the audience. The rest of this Live DVD, recorded live at the Manchester Opera House, is just as inspiring. This wasn't just a live show; it was an epic production complete with guitars, bass, percussions, turntables, full cast of backing vocals, full string section, adult and children's choirs, and a lineup of guests that would attract the same attention on their own. Together, it's almost unfair! With MF Doom and Ibrahim Ferrer (via larger than life video screen), Ike Turner, Neneh Cherry, Roots Manuva, De La Soul, and humanity in tow, the Gorillaz present a DVD that made you feel that you were experiencing something quite special and historic. It was interesting to see a live band, most of the time behind the guise of lighting-rig induced silhouettes, while the cartoons we've grown to love show up intermittently through the massive video screens in the form of various cleverly impacting montages, cartoons, animations, and comics. The Gorillaz, once again, take things one...okay, ten...steps further. (WAM)

WORDS



**WENDY FONAROW
EMPIRE OF DIRT
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS**

"The Professor of Indie Rock"...tell me that's not a class you'd crash!?. A riveting backstage pass spanning 13 years from the trenches of the U.K's Indie Rock scene. A diagnosis of the guest list...the underlying symbolic meaning of the guitar...and, of course, who can forget the "groupies"! For any of us that wanted to be a rock star at some point in our childhoods (basically...all of us), Empire of Dirt explores all the various aspects of the indie scene in terms that are directly relevant to the everyone from the casual listener to the active participant to the musicians themselves...she breaks it all down in...gasp...scholarly research driven terms. Everything from the 3 zones of a gig in relation to the stage...who sits where and why...who stands where and when...the audience's involvement in the gig and the symbolic meaning behind it. Yes...there is. As a matter of fact, it's a psychological study into the psyche of each individual based on what they do and how they handle themselves at any particular show. Kinda crazy. Even crazier is that it all makes perfect sense. Who'd a thought? Such an insightful approach to sex drugs and rock and roll...now where's the bar? (The Dirty J)

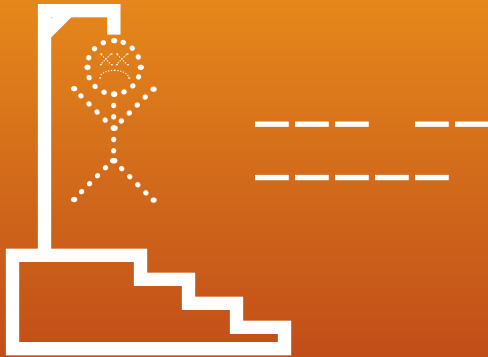


**LYN MILLER-LACHMANN
DIRT CHEAP
CURBSTONE Press**

Something's amiss in a small suburban town in Connecticut. Mysterious illness and even death has stricken several children. No, this isn't the next Steven King novel. This is an "eco-thriller," ripped from today's headlines, delving into one man's crusade to bring the corporations responsible to their knees. Taut, tense and timely, Lyn-Miller Lachman not only succeeds in entertaining the reader, but she also makes them think as well. (Scott Shapiro)



HANGMAN 1



FUN TIME

OWL FUN FACT

The most prevalent and commonplace owl on the North American continent is the Great Horned Owl, a wise and fascinating beast that can endure temperatures dropping as harshly as forty below zero. The Owl issues a warning call when a predator is in its midst.

ART: RIC STULTZ

FUN QUIZ

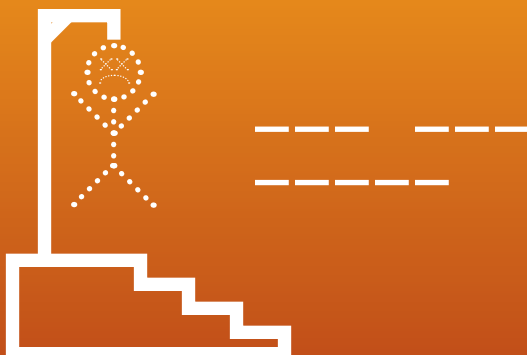
If George W. Bush were a character from *The Wizard of Oz* what character would he be?

- A) Dorothy because he likes wearing a dress.
- B) One of the winged monkeys because he's Symian.
- C) The Scarecrow because he needs to find a brain.

If you said A, you probably spent time with Dubya in his frat days. If you said B, you have good eyes and should study Anthropology. If you said C, you are most definitely right. However the answer we were looking for was D) He would not be in the Wizard of Oz because he cannot spell "Oz."



HANGMAN 2



Hint: Many vowels



HOMAGE TO DJ DUSK

BY: MIKE THE POET

PHOTOS: AZUL * AMARAL

"And I say One Time for your mind, Los Angeles! If you're feeling alright now make some mutherfuckin' noooooiissee!!"

Anybody that's been to the world-famous Root Down knows those are the words of DJ Dusk. Resident selector Tarek Captain, aka DJ Dusk, died on April 29, 2006 in a car accident. Only 31 years old, he accomplished a lot in a short amount of time.

Over the last decade, Dusk had grown into a giant in the hip-hop, funk, and soul underground. Very well respected by both casual fans & veterans of the DJ community, Dusk knew how to set off a party...

"Make no mistake there is no sound in town like the Mighty Root Down."

Dusk was the heart & soul of Root Down, a springboard for so many West Coast hip-hop acts like J-5, Dilated Peoples, Black Eyed Peas, Visionaries, Crown City Rockers & many more. At the center of it all was DJ Dusk mixing records & reminding you

to get on the dance floor & make some more of that 'motherfuckin' noooooiissee!! His sets were effortless mixes of hip-hop, funk, house, reggae, cumbia & the unexpected. He spun everywhere from Hollywood to New York to the Bay Area, all the way to the Sundance Film Festival. Back in 2000, Dusk even had his own radio show on KPFK called "The Bridge." Not just a micstro, Dusk was an ethnomusicologist with an amazing record collection. Records, records, records. His two mix CDs show his genius selection & butter blends. Dusk was a meticulous dj with sharp skills.

A protégé of legendary DJ Rob One, Dusk was not just a DJ; he saw himself as a teacher, ambassador, freedomfighter. He also worked with hundreds of youth @ the Mar Vista Youth Center over the last 13 years.

There are so many stories to share of his legacy. On the lines below are a few short paragraphs I wrote about a year & half ago, hanging out with Dusk @ an after-hours party beneath the 1st Street Bridge:

After-hours parties have been happening weekly. An artistic renaissance is flourishing in the City of Angels. After jams like Firecracker or Soundlessens; everyone heads to some undercover loft location and dances until the sun comes up. Last month I was at one when my old friend DJ Dusk comes up to me in the middle of a hallway and tells me to kick a poem. Suddenly it got real quiet. I dropped verse in front of about 30 people. Then Dusk kicked a flow. Right after that the visual artist Frowhawk Two-Feathers started yellin' words.

Dusk, Frowhawk & I went back and forth for over a half hour entertaining mad folks. J Sole came outta the DJ booth and told us, even the skeptics have grown to accept it as known. The spontaneity of it all was what made it so magical. Plus, no one knew that Dusk or Frowhawk kicked lyrics. It was damn near 5am. People were bouncing and beatboxing. The energy was so awesome nobody wanted to go home. Nothing but music and poems.

JEREMY SOLE adds: "That was DEFINITELY a magical night. When I was walking into that party, getting ready to mix right away, I saw Dusk in the hallway and asked him if he wanted to mix with me on my set. He said, 'I'm just here listening to YOU, brother,' and then he walked away and I got ready to play. I started mixing, then I saw him come behind me and look through my records. Dusk and I went back to back, record for record, for the whole set. It was a highlight of my life, for sure.

"At the end of the night, it was just family hanging around, and it was so fresh to sit in the hallway w/ y'all, and speak on some truths and lyrics until the sun came up. Memories like these are crystallized in my soul, and will reflect Light forever."

DJ Dusk was just beginning to hit his stride. In his short life, he touched countless lives & shined a bright light. He will never be forgotten.

"We're not done. We're not done."



PSALM ONE

THE
DEATH
OF
FREQUENT
FLYER

The new album from Southside Chicago native Psalm One.
Featuring appearances by Brother Ali, Thaione Davis, KaDi and Ang13.
Produced by Overflo, Ant, Maker, Thaione Davis, Madd Crates,
and V-Traxx.

IN STORES 7.18.06

see Psalm One on tour

with People Under the Stairs 4/25 thru 6/03

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SOUL POSITION
THINGS GO BETTER WITH RJD & AL

"The mainstream may sleep on Rj and Al but you don't have to make the same mistake." -URB (★★★★)

"Rjd2 and Blueprint are two of the most talented artists making rap music today. Best album I've heard in 2006." -HipHopdx.com (XXXX/)

"Things do indeed go better with Blueprint and Rjd2 in your ears, because they recognize hip hop's limitless potential..." -RapReviews.com (9 of 10)

"What's with Minnesotans and their scary good indie hip hop records?" -Spin (A-)

"Equal parts melancholy, hopeful and hilarious, Audition is a hip hop album that flashes influences of metal, emo-rock and pop punk-inspiration that's mostly endearing and unusually authentic." -URB (★★★★)

"Audition is further proof that most of the interesting music being created today is coming out of hip hop...mature beyond his years." -Clamor

POS
AUDITION



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YOU CAN'T IMAGINE
HOW MUCH FUN WE'RE HAVING

"Atmosphere has never sounded as pointed and focused as it does here on it's fifth album." -Billboard

"Both a return to form and a major step forward" -URB (★★★★)

"An album that's for neither hardcore hip hop fans nor punkrockers, but for everyone." -Alternative Press

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