

ART + MUSIC + PHOTOGRAPHY + WHATEVER

FANE

FEATURING: INTERVIEWS WITH SNOWBEASTS, KLOVIS GAYNOR & THE URINAL CAKES, IMAN ESSJET / ARTWORK BY THE ANONYMOUS ARTISTS BEHIND HOT RAT SUMMER / PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID MÜLLER / PROSE BY RAE C., DEVIN HOWE / ARTICLE ON DETROIT BURLESQUE BY NICOLE ALEF / JONBENÉT BATAILLE TOUR DIARY BY THOMAS BOETTNER.

PLUS MUSIC AND BOOK REVIEWS, COMIC STRIPS, AND MORE!

ISSUE NO. 4

VALENTINE'S DAY 2025

THE "FAB & KINKY" WORLD OF
**FOXTROT
ECHO**
AND COUM TRANSMISSIONS
BY MATTHEW LEVI STEVENS



PHOTO BY: BERTIE TAYLOR

Stop!

Before you devour every tasty morsel packed into this Issue, a few pleas from:



- 1.** *We are desperately trying to increase/improve our standings across all social media platforms. If you aren't already, please consider following us on Bluesky, Instagram, and all other platforms.*
- 2.** *We are just starting to create video content on YouTube (and possibly other places in the future). Please subscribe to the FANE channel on YouTube for some excellent content to come! Suggestions for what you would like to see are always welcome and highly encouraged.*
- 3.** *If you would like to help FANE grow, please consider making a financial contribution. The best way to do that is through our Ko-Fi where you can make a one time or recurring donation in your amount of choice. Next would be buying some of our shirts, hoodies, and other ephemera. The digital edition of FANE will always be free, but it does take a lot to make happen (and even more to do it like the "big boys" do). Right now FANE is created entirely on a hand-me-down iPad nearing forced obsolescence, using the Procreate app. We need new hardware, and proper video equipment to expand our coverage capabilities. Look, I know everyone's hurting. If you can't support FANE financially, please consider doing any or all of the actions mentioned in 1 and 2 above.*

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome back to another installment of FANE, your source for the latest in cool queer shit.

Before I get into it, I've got to address the giant, orange faced, spray tanned elephant in the room. A bigoted failed steak salesman was elected President of the United States. I know it's shocking to many of our readers who have a sense of decency, but sadly it's not a shock to me. Millions of Americans will gladly throw you to the lions if they think they can save a buck, showcasing the immense lack of empathy in this country. They said taxes were too oppressive; we're still under the shitgibbon's tax codes. They said the cost of living is too expensive; we have a greed based, barely regulated free market, and no Republican alive today is going to change that.

We are living in a Post-Truth era, one that's being endlessly distorted by the wealthy to confuse and control those beneath them (financially speaking). Alan Moore warned us about this. To paraphrase, he predicted and feared for a world where the speed of disinformation moved far too fast for anyone to have time to disprove it. We're there now. I can't lie and say I'm not frightened by this, as I absolutely am. I've spoken to many people now whom, when presented with factual information that disproves propagandized manipulations, will double down on the lie or just refuse to listen to reason.

As I recall, hate crimes increased during his first term as President, and I expect the same shall happen during his last. His own campaign ads were loaded with transphobic rhetoric, and networks like ESPN took his money and aired them during some of the most watched programming in America. It's disturbing to say the least.

So what now? Do we fold under pressure? Do we abandon our brethren from marginalized communities? Do we give up freedoms for the promise of safety?

Fuck no!

We survived the first four, we'll survive the last four. It may not be easy. The conservatives are gleefully flaunting Project 2025, and the unaffected are more concerned about the price of eggs than the bodily autonomy of half the population. However, all is not lost. We have each other, and together we can fight back against fascism in all of its forms.

Take time to process your grief, your fears, your anxiety. Then, we ride together as one against the storm. We will not go quietly into the darkness, and we will never concede to bigotry and fear. All of us, together as one, are unstoppable.

Now, let's talk about some of the features we have in this issue...

We've got some coverage of the trans art action "Hot Rat Summer". Many anonymous trans or trans allied artists spread rat based artworks all over the city of Seattle this summer to spread a message of trans acceptance and community, and I gotta say I love it. From trash bags shaped like rats, to t4t coloring book pages, to an absolutely stunning mosaic. Just really great stuff you gotta check out for yourself. Huge thanks to the anonymous individual who provided us with the context and images. You're doing the lord's work!

There's a heartfelt goodbye from one of our own; a supermasochist living with VEDS (Vascular Ehler-Danlos Syndrome) who is sadly nearing their final days. It's a crushing read, but it's one I strongly recommend. They want to get the word out about VEDS, and the terrible things it does to the human body, if it's the last thing they do. Find it in your heart to help honor their wishes.

We've got some fascinating skeletal/bone based sculpture and photography from German based artist David Müller. He's got a great eye for the kind of angles that make for thought-provoking images. He's got a great fashion sense, too! David has also shared some lyrics from a forthcoming musical project.

Detroit based photographer Nicole Alef introduces us to her local Burlesque scene. In her piece, she photographs 4 of Detroit's best performers, and provides insight and interview segments to help illuminate what it is to perform Burlesque. As someone who has never been comfortable with my body, it's wonderful to see and learn about these performers who publicly celebrate theirs.

Artist and musician Devin Howe presents us with some unapologetic prose pieces from the corners of his mind. He asks the tough questions, like "Why don't the youth eat ass?", and then proceeds to describe some of his rectal related experiences. There's also plenty of anger and frustration, sometimes flirting with the transgressive. For the 'mos among us with tough skin from the bashing they've endured.

Matthew Levi Stevens brings us a wonderful piece about Foxtrot Echo of the infamous British art collective COUM. Within, he interviews Foxtrot about the early days of the group and its often overlooked inherent queerness. We hear about creators like Genesis Breyer P-Orridge, Cosey Fanni Tutti, Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson (all of whom were founders of the massively influential Throbbing Gristle), and more. While very little photography of those days exists, Foxtrot did open up his small archive to us and we shared the best available. Truly an honor. Huge thanks to Matthew for making this piece happen.

We've got an interview with RI based electronic duo Snowbeasts. They've got a great new album out, "Devour", and I just had to talk to them about it. Its got this awesome darkwave meets electro clash vibe that I just can't get enough of. If the album's title track doesn't get your ass shaking, somebody needs to check you for a pulse.

Klovis Gaynor of Klovis Gaynor & The Urinal Cakes took time to interview with us, as well as share images from a forthcoming new video and some excerpts from Sketchbooks he's been keeping for decades. In his interview, he talks about the pitfalls of sexwork, queer divinity, surviving catholic school, his approach to songwriting, and smoking spliffs with a variety of DILFs.

We've also got a feature with experimental hip hop artist and clothing designer Iman Essiet. She's been making a documentary about the realities of life on the street called "American Dreaming". It's incredibly disheartening to hear about all the ways our government and public servants DON'T help us when we're at our most vulnerable. Iman stays strong, though, which is miraculous to me.

JonBenét Bataille provides us with a tour journal written during their most recent romp around new england and its neighboring states. You don't often get this kind of insight into the day by day struggles of a touring noise musician, probably because it isn't very glamorous. That said, however, it exemplifies the fact that these artists do what they do out of dedication to their art form, and help each other out wherever they can, and that's a beautiful thing.

We've also got lots of reviews this time for a whole slew of artists. If I were able to include everyone who submitted for this issue I'd need 200 pages! Lots of really cool and unique stuff I can't recommend enough! We've even got some book reviews, and a live report from a pumpin' Prince related dance party.

There's more, of course, but I can't give it all away. I hope you enjoy this issue of FANE, and I hope to hear your thoughts and suggestions.

Stay safe out there!





HOT RAT SUMMER

ALL TEXT, ARTWORK, AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANONYMOUS.

THIS SUMMER A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK IN SEATTLE WAS TRANSFORMED OVERNIGHT BEFORE THE LOCAL ART WALK WITH A MULTI-MEDIA GUERRILLA ART INSTALLATION OF RAT THEMED ARTWORK FROM 25 TRANS ARTISTS. THE PARK IS A LARGE SCALE OUTDOOR GALLERY THAT NOW HOSTS AN ONGOING CONVERSATION ON ART AND T4T COMMUNITY.

SINCE THE INITIAL INSTALLATION MORE ANONYMOUS TRANS ARTISTS HAVE CONTINUED TO ADD ART PIECES TO THE PARK, AND TO PLAYFULLY RESPOND TO ONE ANOTHER'S WORK IN AN ONGOING ARTISTIC DIALOGUE.

HOT RAT SUMMER WAS DREAMT UP BY A SMALL GROUP OF TRANS ARTISTS BUT HOT RAT SUMMER IS ALL OF US. OFTEN THE ARTISTS DON'T EVEN KNOW EACH OTHER OTHER OUTSIDE OF KNOWING WE ARE ALL IN T4T COMMUNITY WITH EACH OTHER.

THE PROJECT SPEAKS TO DIFFERENT ARTISTS IN DIFFERENT WAYS, BUT THE POWER OF COMMUNITY UPLIFTING US, OUR VISIBILITY, THE ACT OF ASSERTING OURSELVES IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SPACES, AND FEELING OUR OWN PRESENCE HAS BEEN POWERFUL FOR ALL OF US. TRANS PEOPLE ARE ALL AROUND US. AND WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HERE.

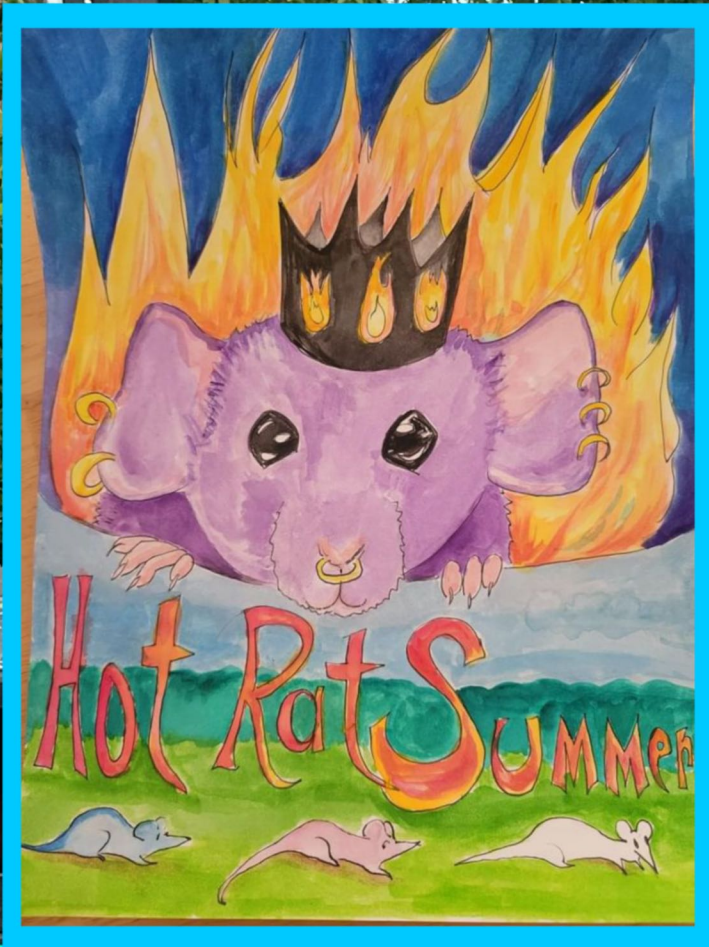


She is a 21 square foot glass mosaic overlooking the reflection pond titled, "Community is Our Savior" also dubbed "Saint Rat" and "Our Lady of Hot Rat Summer".

She has become a shrine and a spiritual place for people in the neighborhood. A memorial plaque was added. People light prayer candles and leave offerings of flowers and art.





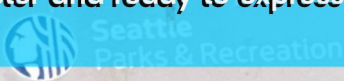


Nagle Pl

Garbage
UNION BUSTER

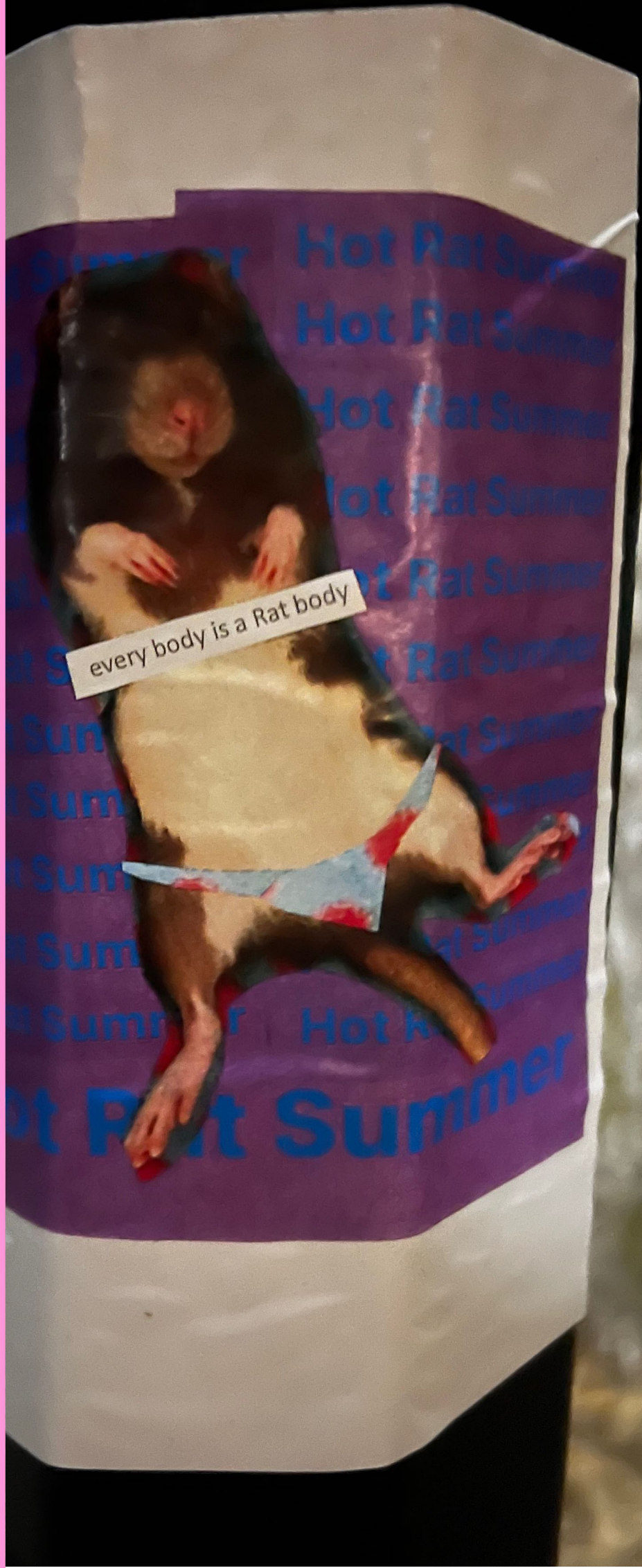


Mighty and Majestic Hot Rat Summer. Revel in gender fluidity. Embrace the non binary possibilities. This rat is bursting out of their dumpster and ready to express their full majestic self





Hot Trash Rat
From a series of soft sculptures of giant rats that resemble garbage bags

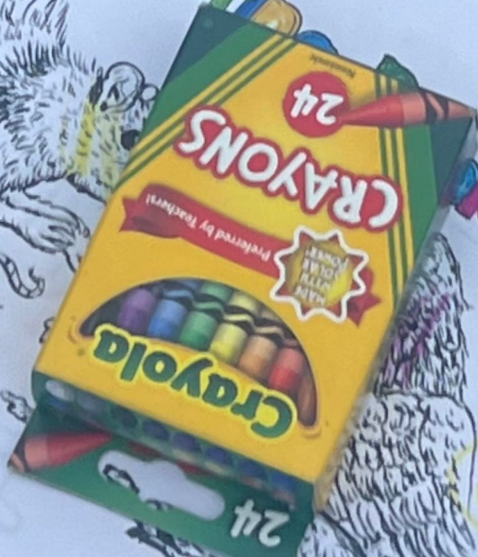


Coloring Book FOR KIDS



Colori

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FOR KIDS

Protect Trans Kids installation from the children's play area of the park

Seattle Rat Hole (formerly of Chicago)





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THIS IS
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A GLIMPSE INTO THE BURGEONING
DETROIT BURLESQUE SCENE,
FEATURING PHOTOGRAPHY AND
ARTICLES BY NICOLE ALEF

ACQUA



TOFANA

Burlesque is a Protest

by Aqua Tofana

My main message is that burlesque as a whole is a protest against beauty standards and the censorship of our society. It's performers taking back a sensuality and redefining it to what it means to them. When it comes to BIPOC performers we are often overlooked or used to fill unspoken quotas. As a fat, black, queer, and neurodivergent performer my message is that above all of those terms I am a performer and not a token for productions to make their show "diverse". Fat performers are amazing. Black performers are amazing. Disabled performers are amazing. And so is every performer that is not conventionally pretty, skinny, white, and fem presenting. Allies and advocates are needed and treasured in this community and I have been lucky enough to work with some amazing people who have supported me in my journey. Being a performer comes with a permanent spotlight on what we do on and off the stage and I want my voice to be as big as my personalities.

Aqua Tofana is a triple threat; performing in standup, drag, and burlesque. New to burlesque and drag in 2024 and making a splash. They've made a name by blending campy with sexy, while also using their platform to advocate. A testament to the strong impression Aqua has made on community, they were invited to perform at the preview for The Dirty Show 2025.



MARGAUX ROYALE



The first time I met Margaux Royale in person was when I attended one of the regular shows she co-produces, called Deep Dive Burlesk. I was hired to photograph that show the following month, and wanted to see the venue, lighting, and general flow of the show (I'm a professional performance photographer). Before the show began, she was doing exactly what you would expect, ensuring the performers were ready, checking the lighting, checking the sound, greeting guests, and making sure her show would run smoothly. I noticed right away that she gave boss lady vibes and was meticulous about every detail.

Margaux herself is flawless, even when she's not performing. Channeling early Joan Crawford, she could easily have arrived in a time machine from Hollywood in the 1940's. But that's not where she came from. Instead, she came from Florida, in the 1990's. During college, she says she was stereotypically Florida, with blonde hair and a tan. During college, she worked as a stripper. She admits she was a lazy stripper. The job was fun and the money was good, without really trying that hard.

That statement, right there, is so incredibly deep and descriptive about the general experience of being a woman and being a commodity in a male-centric culture. Margaux says she began to feel the male gaze at thirteen or fourteen. When she quit stripping and began working as a webcam girl, she made even more money. She was comfortable with herself and her sexuality, but she still views this as work. She quickly realized that she missed the stage. Many women can corroborate that early female experience, myself included. This is where the line gets tricky, however. Sex workers of all disciplines and gender presentations will tell you that monetizing that experience can feel powerful, but also demoralizing at times.

The double standard on that concept can be found in many other experiences. Margaux's current day job is in a corporate setting. She tells me that before the pandemic, she lived every day as if it were a performance. She dressed up in vintage skirts and full makeup for her corporate life, and would never have considered wearing yoga pants out of the house. A common experience for many women in corporate America, we feel as if we won't be taken seriously if we don't present a polished feminine persona. But that standard often stops just underneath the glass ceiling. If you're too feminine, you likely won't be able to crack it. Too masculine, and you won't even be on the ladder. But, that final push through to executive management requires an appearance that is more akin to a feminized version of a male executive. This strategic persona management is where many women get stuck, regardless of how good they are at their job. And, it all ties back to women being a commodity for the male gaze.

Margaux is clearly intelligent and extremely creative. She reflected on a time when she wanted to use her creativity in her performance as a stripper, by dressing up as Marie Antoinette. She made no money from that act. She had put care into developing that performance, but that's not what the audience was there for. She did begin to realize that she wanted to be more artsy and creative. She tells me that she was vaguely aware of burlesque through celebrity performers like Bettie Paige and Dita Von Teese. She attended her first burlesque show during a vacation in New Orleans. She tells me that it was one of those lightning moments, where it just clicked. When you have that thought of, "I want to do this."

At that first show, one of the performers approached her and asked about the dress she was wearing. She was starstruck and fangirling and it was then that her life began a different trajectory. Years later, she considers that experience in every show she produces. She hopes that someone in the audience of her show is having that moment. If someone can have that moment where they discover there is an outlet for their creativity.

At one point during our interview, I asked the question, although I already knew the answer. How does she feel about me revealing her real name in this article? I knew, from knowing her, and from getting to photograph and know so many burlesque performers, that the answer is, "Please do not reveal my real name." Asking her this question launched us into a conversation about a stage performer's public persona.


From Marilyn Monroe to Miley Cyrus, performers have been working under pseudonyms for as long as there have been stages. For some, it's a business decision. Maybe their real name is unremarkable, hard to pronounce, or tied to someone they don't want to be associated with. For others, it's to be cheeky or clever or pay homage to a person they admire. For some, it's out of their control. For Margaux, it's a matter of symbolism, anonymity, and safety. Her name, Margaux Royale, is a nod to New Orleans, where her burlesque career was inspired. Her stage name is her burlesque persona. That aspect of the burlesque scene is fairly universal. Most of the performers, even if they are personal friends, refer to each other with their stage names.

My conversation with Margaux naturally flowed through various topics and lasted far longer than we had planned. We talked about her journey, but also discussed the cultural implications that burlesque has on the community, how feminism both influences and is impacted by this art, and how it can teach us so much more about ourselves, whether we are in the audience or on the stage.









EARTHA KITTEN

I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Eartha Kitten, the owner of the Metro Detroit Burlesque Academy, to discuss her experience in the Detroit burlesque scene. Eartha is a well-known Detroit burlesque producer and performer and was recently named the Metro Times Best of Detroit 2024 - Best Burlesque Performer. Her show, Rouge Reveal, was named Best Burlesque Show/Troupe.

Eartha got her start in the Detroit burlesque scene as a fangirl, attending as many shows as she could and talking to performers. As a self-described theater nerd, she was involved in theater productions through high school and well into her twenties. She focused on stage management, studied theater in college, and worked as an instructor for children's theater after leaving college.

When she finally decided to step onto the burlesque stage, it was as a stage kitten (resetting the stage between performers, and assisting with performances). This role was a natural fit for her with her stage management background. She kittened as much as she could, until she received a scholarship to the Detroit School of Burlesque as a gift. After completing the program, Eartha Kitten debuted in November 2018.

During her first year, she emceed, performed, or kittened nearly every weekend. Eartha quickly made a name for herself in the community. In 2019, she began teaching at the Detroit School of Burlesque under headmistress Miss Holly Hock. Then COVID happened.

COVID changed everything. The school closed and she wasn't sure what all of this meant for the scene. She wanted to keep burlesque alive in Detroit, and knew that teaching was the key to that, but wasn't sure how to move forward. Eventually Eartha and another instructor approached Ant Hall in Hamtramck, Michigan, and asked them to host in-person burlesque classes.

As we all climbed out of that surreal moment in history, Eartha's classes became increasingly popular, eventually spawning the Metro Detroit Burlesque Academy. She believes that her alumni numbers are around 100 performers, which is remarkable. The students are a diverse mix of people - ex-dancers, theater performers, and every day people wanting to try something new.

Eartha wants to continue to grow burlesque and help people to understand that this is a legitimate art form, benefiting the performers and the community in important ways. She has made it her personal mission to spread awareness, especially in the black community. When I asked her what she thinks about the statement, 'Burlesque is a Protest', she told me she agrees.

"When people use their burlesque for activism, they're using their entire body, which is a vulnerable act and another form of protest. We're often told to keep our feelings private, but that's not the case for everyone. These issues affect different areas of life and our artistry. If art is to imitate life, people need to realize this is the life we're living.

Burlesque can be an intersection of marginalized groups saying, 'I don't need to perform in the box you've put me in.' It's about rejecting preconceived notions and not living up to others' expectations."



LILITH VON TAL



Lilith Von Tal is a burlesque performer, producer, and instructor at The Metro Detroit Burlesque Academy.

Nicole: Can you tell me why your tag line is Detroit's Golden Girl?

Lilith: So, it's because I do love the color gold. I used to have this act using my signature gold costume. I sewed Werther's everywhere and had a fringe skirt made out of Werther's. I came out with a walker as an old lady, wearing an adult diaper, and threw Werther's at everyone.

People then assumed that I just loved the Golden Girls, the TV show. For years, people would send me Golden Girls merch. But, really, a 'golden girl' in 40s, 50s, 60s slang is a woman on the rise. She's doing it, being everybody's friend, smiling. It's supposed to describe a social person who is kind and giving but also taking charge and leading the way. That's me.

N: My take on burlesque is that it really is kind of like that. It's like taking power, like females, but not just females. Anyone of any gender taking their power back. What is your take on that?

L: I think it is a form of empowerment through self-expression, but also chasing joy. Joy for so many people in those categories: women, femmes, non-binary people, trans people, and queer people in general. You don't have to be queer to do burlesque, but there are a lot of us. Burlesque is still, in many places, very taboo. We are very adjacent to sex work. It's about owning one's body, one's voice, and one's creative potential.

It also means being vulnerable, because you are getting nude on stage. But having that vulnerability be a raw, powerful statement of "I am here. You just watched me. And I did it because I chose to." People have different reasons for doing all sorts of things. When you look at the people who are at the top of the game in burlesque, there is a level of authenticity that cannot be duplicated. It's just them, right?

They have become iconic because they don't pull their punches. Sure, they edit because so much of burlesque is about editing, tweaking, and finessing, but they're not editing who they are, at least not in that form. That's why I love it.

N: So, I shot Aqua Tofana the other night, and they unfurled a sign that said "burlesque is a protest." It was such a powerful moment to us as the audience. But also, I could see it in the performer's eyes, it's not just like they unfurled a sign, it's like it came out of them like that. So, what do you think about the statement burlesque is a protest?

L: I agree with it. So, we're on record here. To speak specifically to Aqua's moment, I know that there was a lot that went into that moment for them. I can be a bit of a contrarian. I'd like to think that I do it with a really good heart, but I agree with that statement, especially in the way that Aqua was doing it.

When it's our time on stage, it is radical. That joy, that moment of taking up space, using your voice, saying what needs to be said. For many of us, it's about de-centering the male gaze and re-centering ourselves and our sexuality. Burlesque is a form of creative expression, a form of communicating with other human beings who

have bodies. From birth, especially in this society, we are told to clothe ourselves and shield our physical form, to separate ourselves from trusting our inner voice and intuition. Reclaiming that is a form of protest.

For many of us, just existing is a protest. Existing loudly is a protest, whether you are a woman, black, brown, queer, fat, able-bodied, or not able-bodied. It's inherent in burlesque to say, "I'm not playing by your rules." Showing agency and autonomy is an act of rebellion, a revolutionary protest.

I also really love explicitly political burlesque. That's what I mean when I say I'm a contrarian. I've had students nervous to do that because what they're really doing is social commentary, which is what art is for. Say something. Do something. It doesn't have to be loud because for many, that initial moment of vulnerability is huge.

Both forms of expression, whether loud or subtle, have the same impact and level of protest. What is protesting? It is the raising of one's voice and taking a stand. It's individual for everyone, which is exactly what burlesque is.

N: I was doing just a lot of studio photography and I shot my first burlesque show and I was immediately addicted to it. But then going on my social media, I have these beautiful images and I'm like, if I put these up, that changes everyone's perception of who I am as a professional. And it did. It changed the trajectory of my photography career, but not in a bad way. It's given me some of the most joyful and satisfying work of my life.

L: I sometimes forget about that juxtaposition because my life is so much burlesque. I forget how people who, like you entering this community, are very aware of that dichotomy. I actually got a photograph flagged and removed by Instagram two days ago, not ten seconds after I posted it. That's the constant. It was one of your photographs. So, I try to choose less explicit ones just to make the algorithm happy. It's a weird thing to think about because when you're in the scene, those are the moments that people yell the loudest. Not because they're the raunchiest, but because we all know what goes into creating a moment like that.

I'm often not aware of outside perspectives. I have noticed that, with Instagram flagging images, these are not a whole lot different from some other images that are not flagged. The only difference is body size. I've been an audience member at a lot of burlesque shows for years, and when we see people like us on stage, it connects so much deeper. It's not a tits and ass moment for us. It's an "I can be okay with things" moment. That my body is valid. That my existence is valid.

I am a proud, fat dancer, and I know a lot of people in the world find those two words being together, proud and fat, to be such a thing that they cannot comprehend. Dancer is just tagged there because that's what I do, but it could be proud, fat, anything. Skin makes people very uncomfortable sometimes. I have body dysmorphic disorder, an eating disorder, and some metabolic disorders. Doctors put me on an experimental program, which was really a diet, for

seven years of my life. I didn't want to lose weight. I was fat. I was fabulous. I never bought a drink at a bar.

I had no desire to lose weight. It wasn't until I lost all that weight, started getting compliments, and was treated differently that my body dysmorphic disorder started to rear its head. Being in burlesque, having body dysmorphia, and having an eating disorder, I have empathy for the people who think they can't do it. At the same time, something in me just wants to be such a loving bully and say, do it anyway, do the scary thing. That's how anyone who gets started in burlesque feels. It's terrifying. Do the scary thing. Do the big scary thing. It is so healing.

We talk about joy and how joy is radical and revolutionary. That's because it's healing. There's a healing component there. Seeing bodies like ours, when you see something that you can relate to, visibility changes the game. I am often the first fat performer people see. During one of my performances, a man grabbed his partner's leg and whispered, "She looks like you." She perked up almost like she finally had permission to be like, hell yes. They didn't watch me ogling; they watched me with the intent to empower.

You could see it on her face, the awe and the light bulbs clicking on. She sat up a little straighter, her body language shifted, and then they came up to me and thanked me. There are lots of men out there with female partners who say, 'I find you sexy the way you are.' I feel like all of us should be able to find that independently. Our worth shouldn't have to rest on if someone else finds value in us. Don't get me wrong, I love that supportive partner energy. But it's so ingrained in us. That's where visibility comes in. That's powerful stuff. I love it. I don't ever want to stop doing it. I feel powerful and that's where the sexy comes from. You know what I mean? Like it's not sexy first. It's powerful first.

To say that this doesn't stroke the ego... No, it totally does. And it should. There's nothing wrong with that. I've been on stage since 1998, professionally. The ego is way less of an issue in burlesque than in stage theater or even screen acting. But it has to be balanced because comparison kills. There's such a covetousness for stage time that I even still get a little moody. I don't want to excuse myself, but there are times where I look at a cast list and get moody, ethically, because there's nobody that looks like me on that list.

As a teacher, I constantly want to shake so many of them and say, don't do it for the applause. You're creating an act, spending money on it, so finesse that act. If I look at the people I admire the most, they're not performing every single day. They have signature acts, and they've aced them. Their muscle memory is there. They have become experts in those movements. Having a gestalt handle on your ego is very, very important.

N: I want to hear about your history. How did you get into it? And you know like how did you get to the place where you are now with you knowing this kind of thing? What was your trajectory?

L: I have a BFA in acting. I spent most of my early adult years professionally acting, which brought me to Detroit. I'm from Mississippi, about an hour outside of New Orleans on the coast. I

grew up very close to New Orleans, where there is a lot of burlesque. When I was in college, I met a woman named Estelle, a phenomenal queen. She would take me to shows, and I would say, "Estelle, I want to do what you do." She'd reply, "Honey, it's called burlesque. You can do burlesque." She taught me how to put on lashes, and I fell in love with it.

But it wasn't until I moved up here that I pursued it. I'd been in Detroit for a while, professionally acting, but I got really tired of it—burnt out and jaded. I was tired of dealing with the same body politics I grew up with. In college, my university's costume shop built me a fake set of breasts because they were casting me in mother roles, even though we had professors who should have been playing those roles. They made me a large set of fabric boobs to make me more matronly. I got tired of it, quit, and sat in a quiet space for a couple of years.

Then the Detroit School of Burlesque opened. I was hemming and hawing, and a friend of mine said, "I'll pay for it. Just do it." So, I signed up. The first time I ever experienced stage fright was the first day of class, telling people my name. I was so nervous. I did an eight-week class and was hooked. The beauty of being new in a thing is that you don't know the rules or the politics, so the world is wide open with infinite possibilities. That's the perfect place for creativity to thrive. Every class we teach, students come up with the zaniest things, and I'm all about it. I often think, "I wish I had thought of that. That's so creative."

Personally, in my burlesque journey, I now know all the politics, rules, regulations, and the industry. But what about me? What I've learned from listening to people who came before me is that you constantly have to re-tap into your potential. The minute you stop pressing and feeling that friction, that part of you has died. You should always feel that, and it's gratifying.

Sometimes people lose sight of who's not there. Before the pandemic, there was a huge issue in this community, not just in Detroit but nationwide, of having one fat person and one black person per show just to avoid getting canceled. It was purely for optics and a problem. You don't have to book me, but book someone like me. I want people to see that I've had to live in this body. Yes, I am successful and carving a way for my own success, but please see how much larger my burden is than yours.

On the last application for the show I produced in October, I wrote special application guidelines. Anyone who identifies in any of these categories will be given special attention: the LGBTQ community, the BIPOC community, fat or performers of size, and disabled performers. Only one person applied who didn't click a single one of those categories. I loved that. The number of people who had never applied for my shows before suddenly did. They said, "I didn't know this is how you did it." I replied, "Well, that's how I do it." Just to feel safe, to know that because of the precedence I'm setting, people feel safer interacting with me now. I also carry this burden.

N: You're not doing that for optics or tokenism. You're doing that because that's real life.

L: It's real life. Because again, I am still seeing lineups that don't have

bodies that look like mine, right? I would love to live in a world where you see me as a person and performer first. It's like, okay, but I also have these things that need to be accounted for. If they're not, I will not feel safe. We've had some issues in the city, specific growing pains, right?

N: Well, that kind of gives me a segue here. Can you talk about the Detroit burlesque community and really what it means to the community.

L: The Detroit scene specifically has a lot of growing up to do. There's always been a burlesque presence here, but has it been super active? No. Has it been flourishing? No. I started burlesque here seven years ago, and it is still a baby scene compared to places like Indianapolis. Detroit is a pretty small-scale city, not like Chicago.

I think Indianapolis is seen as enviable. Their shows are sold out, and that's less about the burlesque performer community and much more about the burlesque fan community. This is something I've learned being a transplant here: if you are new in town, you have to go through trials and tribulations before anyone takes you seriously. That is such a Detroit thing.

N: Like breaking through that famous Detroit pride?

L: Yes. Who are you to come here and do this? I don't mean that in a disparaging way, but we are in a city that historically lacks a lot of resources, even with being an epicenter for music. Detroit bustled with jazz and burlesque. The legendary Detroit burlesque performer, Toni Elling, is the muse behind the Duke Ellington song, "Satin Doll." That's how rich the history here is. She lasted through decades and only passed away a few years ago.

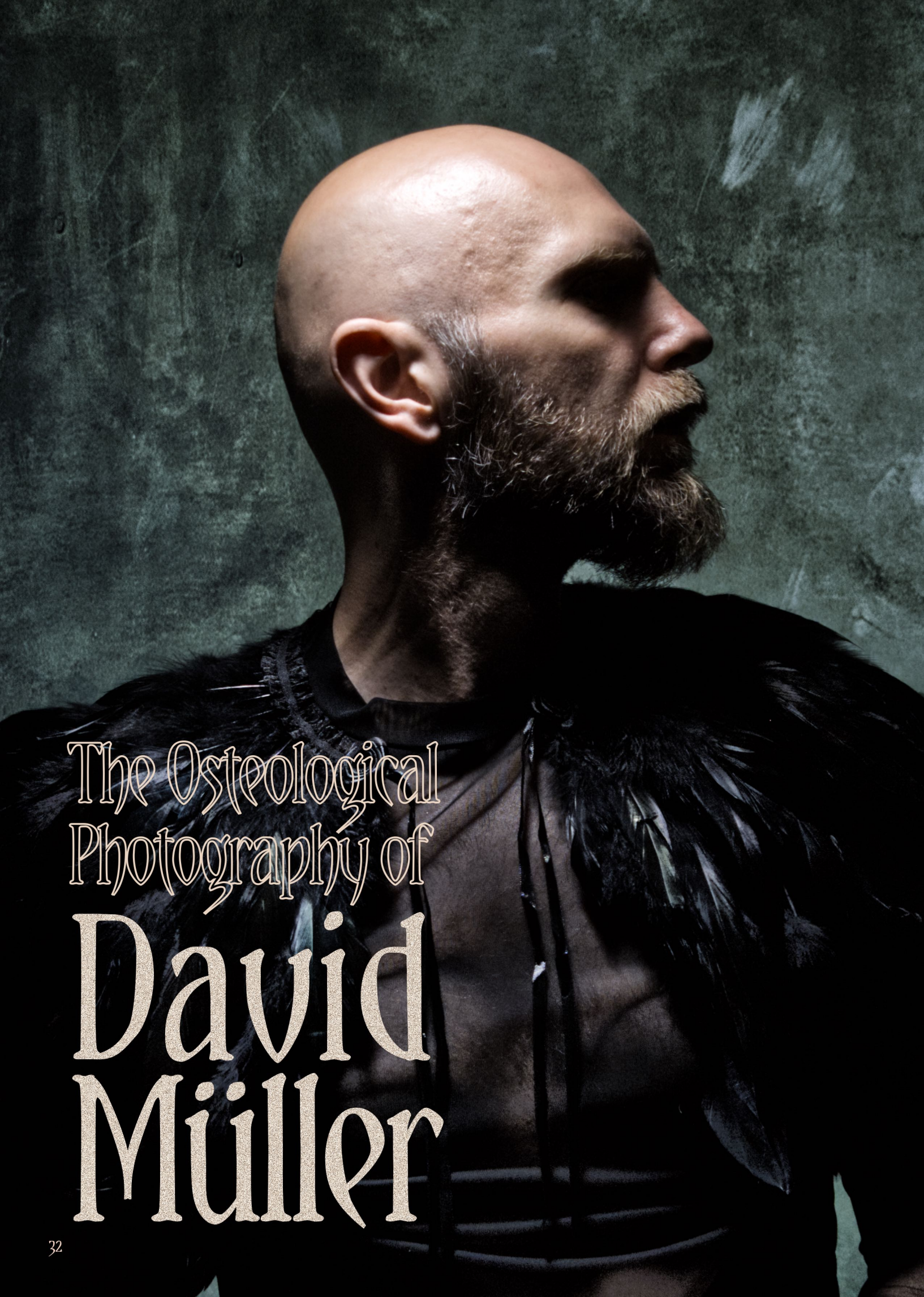
This city is kind of hostile to new things. You do have to prove yourself. I wish it was a little more camaraderie-focused. The economic disparity between the surrounding counties and Detroit is reflected in Detroit burlesque. It's a microcosm. We have to be very careful about oversaturation. These are producer-level concerns, but performers are experiencing it too because there just aren't enough venues. Sure, there are venues, but they don't know us well enough to feel confident bringing us in unless we're paying them \$7,000 to rent a hall for an evening. No burlesque show in the city brings in \$7,000 in one night.

That being said, I've found that what makes Detroit burlesque special is the tenacity of our performers. I've done international festivals and regional competitions, and our performers have a tenacity that's very indicative of that Detroit flavor. We are unique in our approach to burlesque—feral and goofy. What I love is that it hasn't changed. If there's any blessing that comes from having limited resources, it is that necessity is the mother of invention. It is so creative here. Even as we get more resources, I hope that creativity never dies. It is one of the most creative scenes in any kind of art. I want that to thrive, and in order to thrive, it needs to be sustainable.



NICOLE ALEF is a Detroit-based professional performance photographer, specializing in burlesque, theater, and concerts. She is passionate about capturing unique moments of movement, and finds beauty in the shapes, colors, and textures created by performers on stage. To see more of her work, follow her on Instagram at [@moonrisephotographystudios](#).





The Osteological
Photography of
David
Müller

About the Artist

Age: 39

Pronouns: he/him

Gender: Unknown

Location: Germany

Creative Mediums: Photography, Music, Video, Animation

Bio: David is a multi-media artist mostly known as the experimental music creator 'VERFÜHRERVERGELTER'. Explorer of the furthest regions of sound, and Germanys best kept secret, Davids work often delves into the romanticization and fetishization of self-destruction, mental health, and the void within.

Links:

deathindustrial.neocities.org

bsky.app/profile/traumavore.bsky.social

verfuehrervergelter.bandcamp.com

Photographs

1. HAMMERRULT (pg. 34)
2. GLVTEVS (pg. 35)
3. EXHALE (pg. 36)
4. PRIAPUS (pg. 37)
5. BREAKING 1 (pg. 38)
6. UU NIGHTSHADES (pg. 39)
7. UNITY'S UNDERTOW (pg. 40)

+ Lyrical preview of brand new
VERFÜHRERVERGELTER material. (pg. 41)















Before The Black

... dragged through darkness... Whispers. Screams, voices. Everywhere!

Steps quick, ever faster. Heat, biting smoke. Hands grab, do not let go.

Stumbling over stone, through mud, through pitch... through living flesh. Flames lick, air burned.

Onward, always onward.

No stop, no rest. Noises break, sounds merge. Lights flicker ... disappear.

Pushing, shoving, NO ESCAPE! Cries behind, screams before me.

Metal cuts. Blood flows. Cold envelops, ice binds.

No up, no down.

Lost, forgotten.

Silence,

...

then NOISE again.

Endless

the city awaits...

Abandon All Hope

Shadows stretch, the gate towers—ominous, foreboding. Air thickens, a chill despite the growing warmth. Whispers curl around, voices not quite human, murmurs of dread.

Eyes wide, each blink a desperate attempt to clear the vision that cannot be unseen. The ground trembles underfoot, a slow, relentless rumble. A scent, acrid and suffocating, fills the air, pressing in. The threshold looms, a line I'm compelled to cross yet wish to flee. Every fiber screams to turn, to run, yet the path behind has faded into nothing. Ahead, only darkness, deeper, swallowing all light, all hope. The weight of unseen eyes, watching, waiting.

A step forward—another.

The gate grinds open, the sound a monstrous groan.

Abandon warmth, abandon light.

Abandon all hope.



Photo by: @serverue (IG)



THROUGH FADING YES

Last notes on living and
dying with VEDS, from
a Supermasochist.

by RAE C.

Socials: [thatonepainpup](#) (IG) / [thatpainpup](#) (Twitter / Fetlife)

Pain is an interesting thing.

In my opinion, pain is one of two emotions that truly control us as animals, the second being fear. We experience pain in a multi-faceted fashion: at times it is a catalyst for change, yet in others it buckles us to our knees. We go through great lengths to create a life with as little pain as possible, and that varies between tiers in our socio-economic pyramid. I am no exception to this concept, yet I am certainly an outlier from it. I go through great lengths to seek out high degrees of pain as a means to combat the high degrees of pain I experience through my varying disabilities. In a world where we shape our lives to prioritize comfort and depose pain, why would I choose to break this formula?

My name is Rae, and I am going to die soon. I was born with a wide range of disabilities, too many to discuss in this piece, but the condition I have that raises the most eyebrows is VEDS (Vascular Ehler-Danlos Syndrome). VEDS is a connective tissue disorder that also affects my internal organs and my entire cardiovascular system. It has put me in a wheelchair, blurred my vision, shut down my stomach and colon, atrophied my muscles - the list goes on and on. I am writing this in a hospital bed, the same one I've been stuck in for 5 days, my 5th hospitalization in one calendar month thanks to VEDS. I am preparing to have a peg tube placement (a feeding tube that enters the stomach from the abdomen) to allow me to get proper nutrients because I am unable to eat hard food. The unfortunate reality I am facing is that I have crossed the threshold of the end of my life. Once VEDS starts causing organs to shut down it only continues, impacting all the other systems of the body, priming the body for a traumatic death. It is almost guaranteed that my death will be due to VEDS.

I feel this condition in every aspect of my life. I have to wear braces on every major joint in my body because of how hyper-mobile I am and how much pain I am in. My shoulders will come out of the socket doing simple tasks like putting on a seatbelt or raising my hand to wave at someone. My femur rolls out when shifting positions in bed, my fingers dislocate during my sleep, my jaw dislocates when I yawn. There isn't a single part of my body that VEDS hasn't purloined. Despite all of this, VEDS has turned me into a superhero of sorts. I call myself a "supermasochist" because I possess a unique skill set that sets me apart from the world at large, while also playing my own homage to Bob Flanagan. I have the strength to hang my entire body weight on hooks, the aptitude to disfigure my face with an unfathomable amount of metal, and I have the gal to nail my dick down in public. But how did I get here?

I have been in pain as far back as my memory can go. My childhood was spent in and out of doctors, specialists, inpatient / outpatient hospital stays, surgeries and procedures. All I heard from people around me, something I continue to hear every time I'm seeing a doctor or a specialist, is that I'm "too young" to be experiencing this. As if there's some magical number that makes it all okay. But I digress.

As a means to escape the traumatic nature of living through pain I turned to sexual gratification, which in turn dissolved any shame I could have held regarding my proclivities. I fucked every shampoo bottle I could find, and in turn every bottle would then fuck me. Anything with a handle found itself a tight new home: a hair brush, a toothbrush, a grabber tool, a broom. Any food I could imagine felt good I investigated; I fucked more bags of buttered pasta noodles than I can remember. I tied myself to my own bed by the wrists and neck, suspended myself with rope off the trees in my backyard, sucked the skin off my own dick in the bathroom at 3am. I explored asphyxiation with our plastic grocery bags or my own hands. I experienced penetration through a slit I carved in my own mattress.

As I got older my tastes changed, and instead of purely focusing on gratification through sexual pleasure I started experimenting with pain. My figure is littered with scars from where I peeled or grated or burned pieces of my own skin off, marks that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. My pain practice, however, didn't steal the foreground until I entered my 20's when I was deep in my kink practice. At this stage in life I was able to ambulate autonomously, but my body was in agony with every step. My knees felt like they were ready to explode out of my body, my ankles would scream at me as I shifted my weight, I don't even have the words to describe the pain in my back. In an attempt to silence these voices I focused on exploring the realm of sadomasochism.

I broke my back in December of 2022, which required surgery to correct and was the first surgery caused by VEDS. My health would exponentially decline from this moment on. Where I sit today is without a doubt the worst my health has ever been. I take an appetite stimulant prescribed to cancer patients because I can't eat, let alone digest and process that food out. My vision has been blurred for 2 months now, indicating that I am nearing my first emergent ocular complication like a carotid cavernous fistula, or carotid arterial dissection. My partner has taken on the role of becoming my caretaker because I can no longer cook for myself, get out my own clothes, transfer into my wheelchair independently, do housework of any kind without injury, and so much more. He does so much to take care of me each and every day, but we'll get into that shortly.

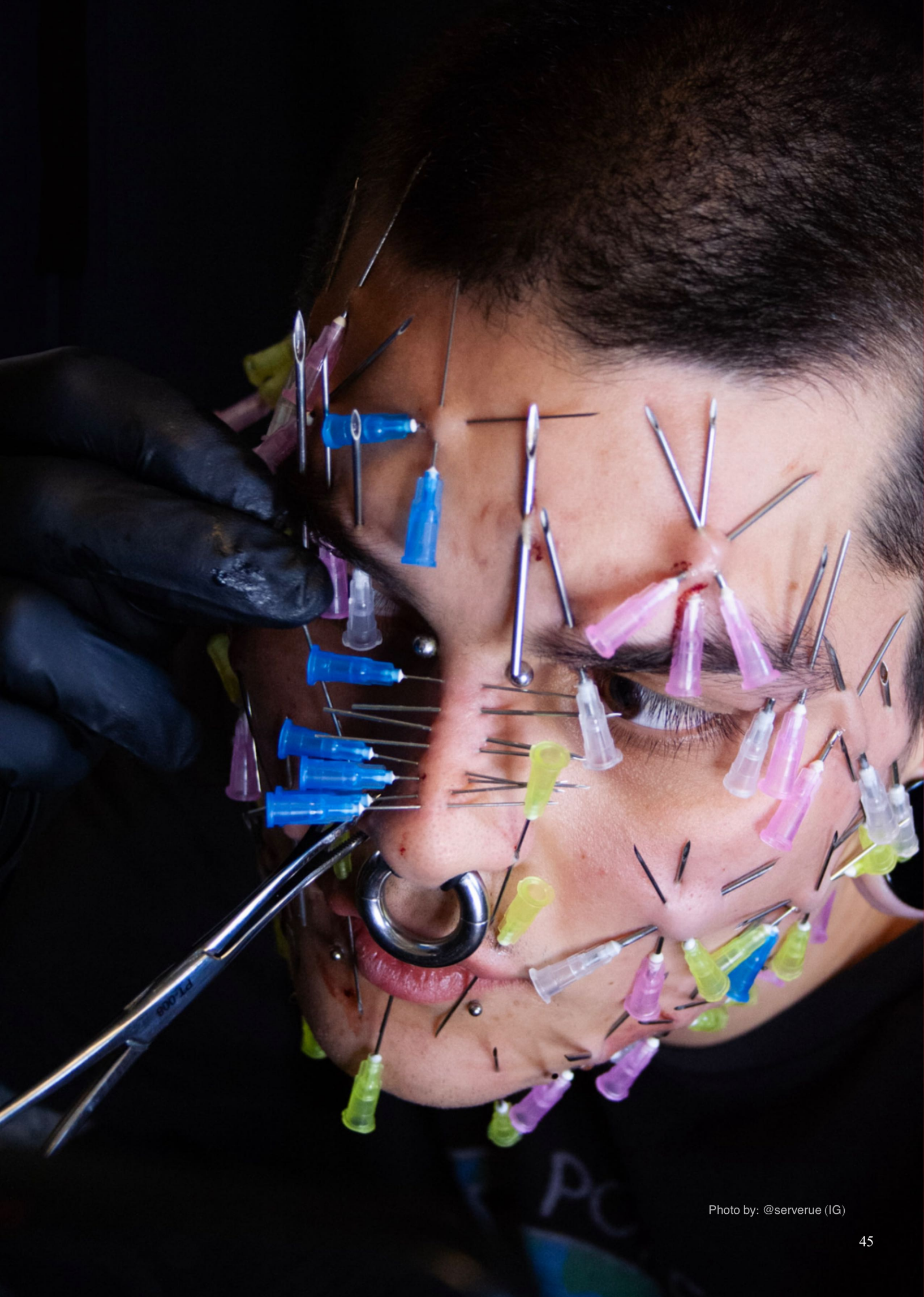


Photo by: @serverue (IG)



Photo by: @serverue (IG)

Chronic pain, injury, illness and disability have a prominent link to consensual pain, because we are forced to find anything we can muster to defeat the overwhelmingly oppressive nature of our symptoms. For me it is the only time that I truly feel myself, or that I have power within myself and of my body. I still experience my chronic pain when indulging in masochism, and I am certainly limited by my chronic pain whenever I am choosing to take in consensual pain. I am in a constantly flowing cycle of grief regarding my disability and capacity for autonomy as a severely disabled adult. I have turned to art as a means to not only express myself, but present myself and all my pain, sickness and limitation to the rest of the world. It is one of the only ways I can engage with kink at this time because I have atrophied so much that I can't withstand much kink, and from an ambulatory nature I can't hold the same positions I used to. I am very open about all of this online because it is paramount that I impart these vulnerabilities on whoever may read it, in the hopes that it may make an impact on those around the world. I have people in every continent who I have the privilege of sharing stories with, working through pain next to, and rediscovering power collaboratively.

I think that the most important thing I do with this piece you're sitting in front of is share the realities of my disability, the aspects that stay behind closed doors, or that others may not want to confront. The goal of my art and my pain and my life is to force people to feel something, whether it's positive, negative or even neutral. And the truth is that I am sick.

I have to use a power chair to navigate across my house. I have a cane which I use to help me transfer in and out of the car, or between my power and manual wheelchair, but it is not possible to walk independently. Like many disabled individuals I struggle with overdoing it to prove to the world and myself that I am able to do things independently, but the fact behind that facade is consistent injury every time I try. My spouse, Rue, has to cook meals for the two of us, have outside helpers do tasks around the house, drive me to my various doctors, push me in my manual chair any time I have to leave the house, let alone every other task big or small in my life. He is there for me when I wake up, all the way until it's time for me to go to sleep. I couldn't possibly be this disabled without him, and I don't want to torture myself with what that could look like.

My life is sort of a blur. Like a dream that you're watching, or you're watching someone else go about life from inside their head. I am bedridden, which means I am forced to stay in bed for almost the entirety of the day. Now yes I do have to leave bed for various tasks, and I certainly push myself to do things

out in the world, but my truth is that 90% of living needs to be rest and recovery. I have such a hard time measuring the time that passes me by when all my days are filled with similar, if not the same activities. It is impossible to maintain friendships because I am unable to go out into the world to do things, and even if I could get my wheelchair out by myself, I am unable to propel myself. This is owed both to muscle atrophy and the severe hyper-mobility of my shoulders.

It is also almost impossible not to compare this present version of myself with past versions of myself, and that's not just because I am part of a DID (Dissociative Identity Disorder) system. Even though I was always in pain, I was still able to maintain independence. I have summited mountains, opened restaurants, managed tattoo studios, hell I've even lived through houselessness. My brain can't seem to disengage from this thread-like comparison no matter how hard I try, how much I write, and how much work I pour back into myself during weekly therapy sessions. This is really important to acknowledge because it is a very common experience for disabled people, yet it's one I see shared less online. And I want you to know me. I want you to know that I struggle. That I'm imperfect. That I am a real person and not just a curated form of online presentation.

VEDS is an incredibly rare condition, which is why I do my best to advocate for it loudly. It is estimated that 5,000 people in the United States have VEDS, and out of those 5,000 people only 2,000 have documented cases. Because of this we don't have easy access to specialists, clinics or hospitals, let alone in person resources of any nature. Our stories are not known to many. Our lives pass by silently, as do our deaths. All of us have to live a life with a heavy anvil dangling over our heads at all times, wondering whether that anvil would kill us instantly or whether we would slowly die in agony. And that's not okay.

My mission in life is to bring awareness to VEDS specifically, while also softly bringing awareness to EDS as an overarching connective tissue disorder with 14 subtypes. I hope that through personal anecdotes of my life and struggles I can provide someone out there with some sense of solidarity and camaraderie. Through my art, I hope that I can evoke emotion in the viewer that makes them think about what it's like for disabled people around them, and how they can understand those stories from a new perspective. Through my death, I hope that I can show people that death isn't a concept that we should fear, or sweep under the rug: death is beautiful, and even though we frame it out as some fear tactic or grab for power, we should change the way we view it. And through this writing, I hope that you may have a better glimpse at who I was before I die.



WORLD IN MY EYES

PROSE BY **DEVIN HOWE**

»1

I'm through explaining myself; fuck them. They're free to read my t-shirts and make assumptions. I know where my values lie. Don't fucking ask me to take my headphones off to entertain your asinine questions about why I dress like that, why I read those books, why I watch those films... I keep them on to block it all out—maintain a comfortable distance. It's better that way. I don't want to know them, and they don't want to know me. This is my hell, and I get to pick the soundtrack.

»2

"You're a little light in the loafers, aren't you?"

"I haven't heard that one in a while."

"It means you're a faggot."

"Ya, I suppose that I am. I go both ways, though."

"I bet you do. You're the worst kind; you'll fuck my wife, and then you'll fuck me."

"Sounds about right, ya."

"You know what I do to faggots? I insult them."

"I take it you don't like us very much, then."

"No, I do not. It's disgusting, what you do. It's written right there in the Bible: 'A man who lies with another man as he would a woman is committing an abomination'."

"Mm, yes, I know that verse."

"So what don't you get?"

He insisted that I take another one of his cigarettes and called me a bum. I put it into my pocket for later.

»3

They obfuscate and misconstrue my outward appearance in order to blindly uphold their moral high ground. I'm not the enemy here. I see you glancing at me and whispering to your friends. I see your fucking sideways looks. Of course I see you going up to the promoter to deal with me because you're too fucking spineless to confront me directly. What is it that you're scared of? That I will hurt you? Do my ideas frighten you? My behavior? Then let me fade into the background like I've promised I would numerous times before. Fucking cowards.

»4

You make trauma look so pretty. When is it my turn? Tell me again how you could hit my veins from a mile away. Straight shooter. Christ, you're beautiful. "Heroin chic," they call it, right? Cutie. May I come over tonight? I want to get lost in your eyes again—the ones like glistening crystal glaciers. I've never seen anything like them before. Eyes like that start wars, you know. He told you that you were "cute in an Aryan skinhead kind of way." I see it. Lie back and let me treat you right. We're not in any rush, now, so let's make this comfortable. I'll lube it up nice and good with that silicone stuff and take it nice and slow—real gentle-like. Good boy. You have such a pretty, inviting ass hole. "Starburst Pink," you called it. My favorite.

»5

Kids these days don't eat ass. Old fags get it, but it seems so lost on my generation. The first time I had my ass eaten was by a twink who approached me at the goth club. The faggot was shitfaced and offered to suck my dick, so, naturally, I obliged. He sucked my dick in the men's bathroom stall. He wanted to fuck me, too, but neither of us had a condom. He ate my ass instead. As I was leaving the club, I realized that my wallet had been stolen.

»6

I'm not a monster. Right? One mistake. One stupid fucking mistake from a position of stupid fucking ignorance that I immediately sought to ameliorate—and I did. Right? Don't I deserve another chance? Have I not done enough to earn my humanity back? I haven't been able to find it in a year. Can one blame me for desperately seeking it in a bottle when the crushing weight of my reputation systematically stifles any remaining belief that I deserve a place in society, let alone love? I put myself through this hell; it is my penance. I can't love myself more than I'm allowed. How can you expect me to forgive myself before I'm forgiven by everyone else? I'm so fucking tired of clinging to the few people who find it in themselves look into my eyes and attempt to reaffirm my humanity. It's so fucking exhausting to have that mean something when I don't even need to turn around to hear ten other people whom I've never met announcing to the other hundred people I've never met that my presence has now made the space unsafe. Keeping to myself outside of my barren dorm room has become impossible. I only want to lose myself in my little fantasy, faded and drowning the noise out with music that I wish I had the capacity to write myself. Leave me the fuck alone, watch me fade away. I'm here. I'm there. I'm gone. If you really believe that I should be ridiculed until I excise myself from this world, then you may rest assured that I'm already three steps ahead.

***"I'll be victim
Stand down
Be good
I'll be victim
Praise you
Shut down"***



A hand is reaching up from the water, set against a background of a sunset sky with vibrant colors of orange, red, and purple. The water is dark and reflects the light from the sky.

*Life can be overwhelming.
Feeling alone makes it worse.*

**YOU ARE NOT
ALONE**

Suicidal Ideation doesn't have to destroy your life. There's no shame in asking for help. Therapy can give you the tools to reclaim your life. findahelpline.com, which is sponsored in part by the International Association of Suicide Prevention, is a free resource to find support in your country.

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THE “FAB
& KINKY”
WORLD OF
FOXTROT
ECHO AND
C O U M
TRANSMIS
SIONS BY MATTHEW
LEVI STEVENS

'COUM are fab and kinky,' 'COUM are obscene and not heard,' 'COUM your local dirty banned,' 'COUM are cool, hip sissies,' 'COUM urinate down the handrails of your subconscious,' 'Everything about COUM is true. Everything about COUM is false. Everything about COUM is nothing. It is by omission that we might be exact.'

October 1971, and hippy space-rockers Hawkwind are playing a benefit gig at St. George's Hall, Bradford. Among the various other bands on the bill were one COUM Transmissions, presenting a show they called 'Edna and the Great Surfers,' in which the fact that the lead singer stood on a wooden plank, balanced on a couple of buckets of sea-water, was one of the least strange aspects. Art student Greg Taylor attended the show, and described it thus:

"Most of the bands playing were boring twelve bar blues cliché type bands, I was yawning and suddenly this band came on stage that was absolutely bizarre. They were all wearing orange PVC capes and the drummer had this enormous double drum kit and it had a sun shade over it, and there was this very long-legged schoolgirl, and a dog, and it just seemed extraordinary, they went into these strange songs that I don't know how to describe really, but they were sort of slightly reminiscent of Captain Beefheart. There was a long drum solo and it was all just fascinating."

Sufficiently impressed to go up and talk to the band afterwards, Greg - who would also work with the demanding composer Cornelius Cardew, and was no stranger to the avant garde - expressed his enthusiasm and suggested he might be able to help them get a gig at his college.

But who exactly were the curiously named COUM Transmissions?

To answer this, we have to go back a few short years to 1969, when a student from Manchester called Neil Andrew Megson - who was thinking about becoming a living artwork that he would call 'Genesis P-Orridge' - had dropped out of college, and hitchhiked around the country. Part of his journey had involved a few weeks staying at the London squat-commune of performance art troupe Transmedia Explorations, which had evolved from the

former Exploding Galaxy group of Filipino dancer, queer activist, and sculptor, David Medalla. This experience would leave a profound impression of a way of life in which everything - from how you acted, ate, and spoke, to what you wore, and where and who you slept with - was examined and tested, sometimes to the very limit. Upon returning to his parents' house in Shrewsbury, Genesis - or 'Gen' as he was also known - experienced an intense out-of-body experience, in which he received a veritable download of images and information, including the name 'COUM Transmissions.'



An Early Photo Of COUM | From The Archives Of Foxtrot Echo.

Banding together with former schoolfriends Ian Evetts ("Spydeee Draconis Basilisk Gasmantell VII") Peter Wistanley ("Pinglewad") and Gen's new girlfriend, Christine Carol Newby (first "Cosmosis" - yes, it was the 60s! - before settling on "Cosey Fanni Tutti"), COUM moved into a derelict former jam-factory near the docks of Hull, at that time a decidedly grim and rundown Northern town, "living in Dickensian squalor" and dedicating themselves to a life exploring possible new personalities, making art, and taking Hippy Happenings out on to the streets. In fairly short order, they attracted a revolving cast of additional members - some college friends, some who had come up to them on the street and said they would like to join in - including Cosey's childhood friend Les "Lelli" Maull ("The Reverend Cheese Wire Maull"), local hard-man & petty criminal Ray Harvey, Cambridge maths don Dr. Timothy Poston, "juvenile delinquent" Tony "Babbling Brook" Menzies, "Biggles," and the enigmatic teen runaway, "Fizzy Paet."

'Thru a glass darkly'
Foxtrot at the Phoenix Art Space, Brighton, 2024.
Photo by Bertie Taylor.



First with the news

BORMANN
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Evening
News

Foxtrot with inspiration for COUM's 'Bormann of the Jungle,' 1973
Photo from the Archives of Foxtrot Echo.



After his initial contact at the Bradford gig, Greg - now adopting the persona "Foxtrot Echo" after the call-sign overheard on Police radio - found himself gradually immersing in the world of COUM, which began with extensive letters back and forth between himself, Genesis & Cosey. They were by now both keen practitioners of the newly emerging Mail Art, in which artists would write elaborately collaged, decorated, hand-drawn and hand-written letters to send to each other ("It was a way of bypassing the dealers and the gallery system, you were sending a gift to a fellow artist" as P-Orridge would later comment.)

Foxtrot Echo:

"It was almost like a love-affair, you would get all these incredible letters! And Gen in particular was a great one for showering you with gifts, he was always sending things.

"So we started corresponding, and I tried to arrange a gig for [COUM] to come and play at my college where I was doing film, TV, and theatre, but there was nowhere for them to play. We had this joint arrangement with the Bradford Afro Club, which was all West Indians; there was a great black girl on the same course as me. She was like the mediator, so they ended up playing at the Afro Club ... It was quite a bizarre evening as you can imagine! Gen did a long drum solo and Cosey was just there as 'The Presence' - but he was dribbling and spitting, in a sort of proto punk way - but he was also very engaging, as he always was, talking to everybody!" After a quickfire exchange of ideas, Foxtrot was invited to visit COUM in Hull, and very quickly became a core member:

"So I went to stay with them in Hull and I was contributing ideas and they just said 'Well, why don't you join us?' So from then on it was basically us three, but also Cosey's friend Les, Lelli, the Reverend Cheese Wire Maull, who she'd pretty much grown up with. So for about nine months or a year I think it was the four of us, mainly, but with other people coming and going, and then Fizzy Paet arrived."



Fizzy Paet In The 70s | From The Archives Of Foxtrot Echo.

With the advent of Fizzy Paet [real name withheld out of respect for his privacy], it is perhaps time to discuss an aspect of COUM that has, at least up until now, been overlooked: its essential Queerness. COUM examined and tested the limits of identity, gender, sex & sexuality as rigorously as any other received structures or social constraints. Genesis - who had always been very comfortable with his feminine side, and later in life would come to identify as non-binary - is on record as describing his schoolfriend and COUM co-founder, Spydee, as "effete, he was like the Oscar Wilde of the school"; Cosey's friend, Lelli, had known from early childhood on a rough Council estate that "I was not like the other boys... [if] you were homosexual, pre-Queer, you were going to get beaten up." This, indeed, is one of the things that he and the young Cosey (on record as saying she identified more as male, because of the way she had been brought up by her father as a kind of "surrogate son") had bonded over. Then, the beautiful and androgynous 15-year-old Fizzy, kicked out of home over his sexuality and lifestyle choices, found his way to COUM after witnessing one of their street-performances and talking to them afterwards, asking if he could join in. Nicknamed "Fizzy" as much for his bubbly personality as for a perm that had gone awry, he is remembered by Foxtrot Echo:

"Fizzy Paet, he was like a 'found' performance artist [reference to the idea of 'readymade' objects that 'become' art by being chosen by the artist]. His life was like an artwork ... The way he looked and behaved, you didn't have to teach him, he just was himself! He could be very fanciful -

quite extraordinary! - and he had his own obsessions and interests, quite eccentric. But he wasn't at all pretending, he really was that person."

One of the highpoints of Fizzy's time with COUM - of which, regrettably, only a few photos survive, even though it was said to have been filmed for Granada TV - was 'The Marriage of Fizzy Paet and Tremble the Wonder-Dog,' in which Fizzy, dressed as a clown on roller-skates, was married to Cosey's dog, Tremble, in a derelict church, allegedly to the accompaniment of Morris Dancers and a brass band!



"The Marriage of Fizzy Paet and Tremble the Wonder-Dog"

As the early-to-mid-70s progressed, COUM were wearing out the resources available to them in Hull, but were also beginning to be affected by the 'extra-curricular' activities of some of their members: Ray Harvey, a volatile character with links to local crime, was arrested for allegedly assaulting a police officer. A harder blow was when Lelli Maull - who had for some time been supplementing his income by way of cat-burglary - was arrested and sentenced to two years jail. For some time Foxtrot - who had studied at St. Martin's Art School in London - had been saying to Gen & Cosey that they would probably find more options for their art actions and a larger audience down in London. Serendipitously, around this time they came across the international Mail Art magazine, 'FILE' (a spoof on 'LIFE' magazine), which in its Winter 1972 issue contained a section 'The Image Bank Requests' with numerous writers and artists from all around the world giving their contact details and suggestions for

imagery they were interested in. As well as introducing the members of COUM to a wide range of likeminded correspondents, two key outcomes of this would be contacts with the American author William Burroughs, and artist Robin Klassnik.

P-Orridge, long since a fan of the radical Burroughs - and much inspired by his ideas about collage, consciousness, Control, and the counterculture - immediately initiated a correspondence with the author that led to Genesis being invited down to London to visit, where they met for the first time in May 1973 [NOT 1971, as has been mistakenly repeated a number of times in recent years.] This encounter would lead to a collaborative association that would run for several decades, and see Gen later refer to Burroughs as his "magickal mentor."

As for Robin Klassnik, he also provided a vital link in the chain by making Gen & Cosey aware of an arts studio space in London they could make use of, and which would become their base of operations.

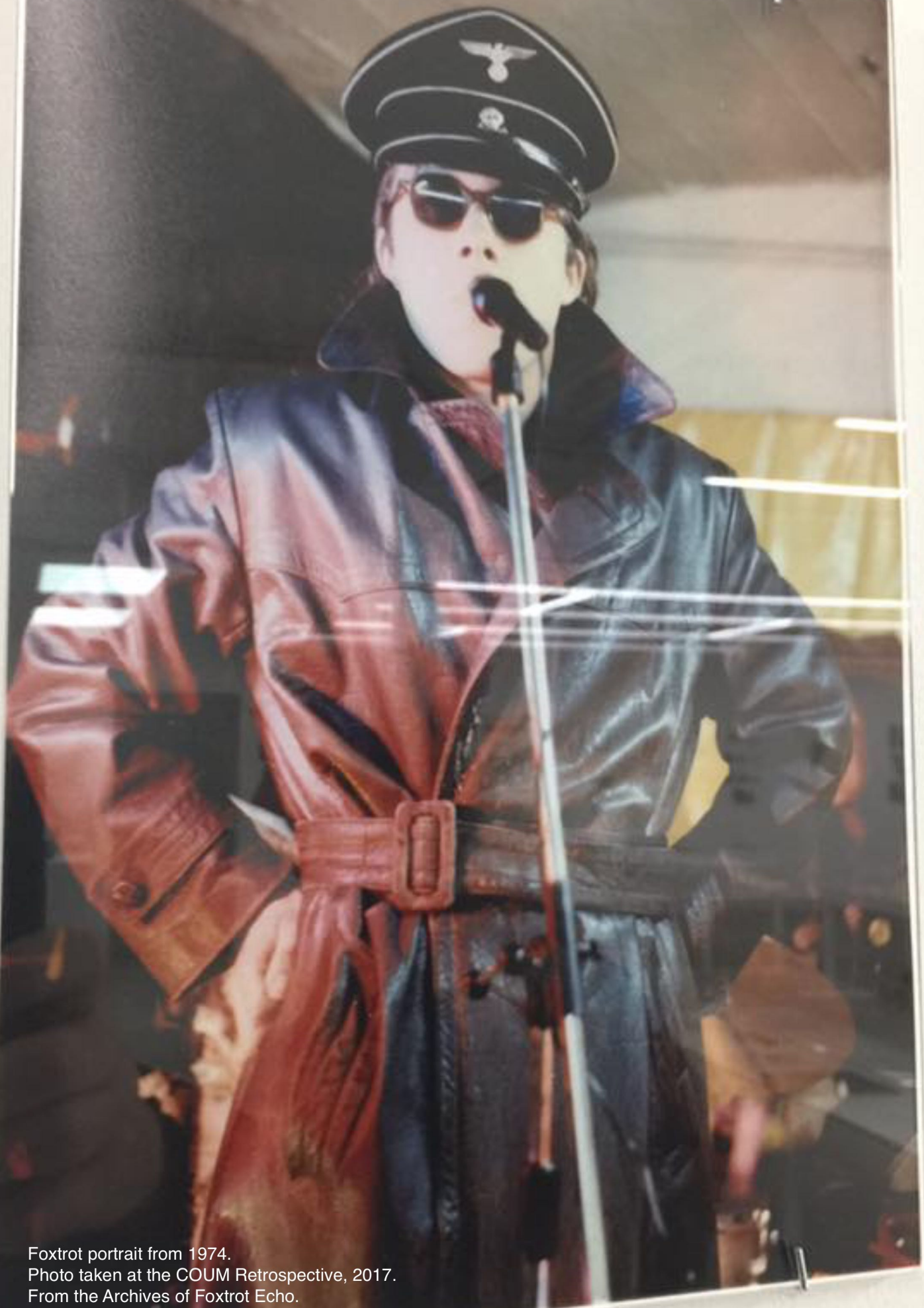
London provided meetings with other artists exploring the challenging new forms of Body Art and Performance Art - such as "The Living Sculptures" Gilbert & George, and the radical Viennese Aktionists, whose confrontational work frequently involved nudity, self-harm, and sex-acts. The other big impact London had on the members of COUM - both in terms of their art and also personally - was exposure to Gay Lib Street Theatre.



COUM Street Action | From The Archive Of Foxtrot Echo.



Photo by: Bertie Taylor



Foxtrot portrait from 1974.
Photo taken at the COUM Retrospective, 2017.
From the Archives of Foxtrot Echo.

Cosey would later remark of the politically charged climate of the time:

"I didn't find Feminism really spoke to me, or for me. I loved men! I loved sex with men! I didn't want to cut men out of my life. But when I encountered Gay Lib, it made more sense. It was inclusive."

Also, for Genesis, meeting with one particular Gay Lib Street Theatre activist, Nicholas Bramble, would have a very personal impact. Gen would remark over 40 years later that although he had always been "not heterosexual, not bisexual - just sexual" and had had numerous male lovers, Nicholas was the only one he had ever described as his "boyfriend." A tall, beautiful, former dancer with the Ballet Rambert, by the time he met COUM Nicholas Bramble worked for Madame Tussaud's Waxwork Museum, and had also developed fine skills as a restorer of antique dolls. Once arrested at a Gay Rights protest for allegedly "assaulting a Police Officer with his diamante bracelet," Nicholas would occasionally participate in COUM actions, and as well as his relationship with Genesis, would become good friends with Foxtrot Echo, introducing him to the world of antiques. One amusing anecdote concerning both Foxtrot and Bramble is the show that the latter didn't actually make:

"We were going to do this show at Kent Uni, and Gen - who always had a nose for mischief, and what you'd call 'good copy' - had told them that Nicholas Bramble from Gay Lib Street Theatre was going to be appearing with COUM. Well, when it came to it he couldn't make it for some reason, so Gen decided I was going to be 'Nicholas' for the night, and told everybody I was! I was wearing red lipstick and false eyelashes, and had this lime-green Lurex top that my mum had loaned me - also this long blonde hair down to my shoulders, like Veronica Lake, so I suppose I looked the part!"



Foxtrot Echo As Veronica Lake | Archives Of Foxtrot Echo.

Gradually over time - perhaps as a result of COUM condensing in numbers, perhaps because of the move to London, and the new influences and inspirations they were exposed to - the essential nature of the performances took on darker or more extreme themes. Foxtrot described the piece 'The Birth of Liquid Desires' thus:

"Me, Cosey and Gen, they were naked, and I was dressed in a long black leather coat, like an S.S. officer - and I didn't wear anything underneath, just to spice things up! - with a whip, moving very, very slowly, on a gravel path. They were naked, making love at the end. That was over half an hour, 40 minutes. I'm very good at moving slowly. Apparently I was very menacing."

Around this time, too, Foxtrot had come across a competition for Reader's Photos in popular girly magazine, 'Men Only.' After putting it to Cosey, he took the very first nude photos of her, which although

rejected at the time, nevertheless opened the door to what would become her engagement with and exploration of Pornography. [Cosey has acknowledged in the BBC documentary 'Other, Like Me: The Oral History of COUM Transmissions and Throbbing Gristle' that "Foxtrot took the first photos of me, he deserves acknowledgement for that."]

Another change that occurred was the arrival of someone who, in many ways, would not only become a kind of 'replacement' for Foxtrot, but would also help lead Gen & Cosey to even more extreme and transgressive territories (as well as being a step on the way to what would later become pioneering Industrial band Throbbing Gristle - but that's another story!) During a series of performances late 1974 at the Oval Theatre, which also involved Foxtrot [somewhat ironically billed as 'The Photographer,' as well as Hermine Demoriane: tightrope walker and later actress in Derek Jarman's Punk classic, Jubilee], Cosey & Gen were approached by a tall, slim, shy-but-intense 19-year-old, all in white with a camera around his neck, who said that his name was Peter and would they mind if he took photos of their show? As Cosey later remembered:

"I said to him, 'Oh, you're sleazy' because of the way he had sidled up, asking to take photos of us naked! And then the name just stuck."

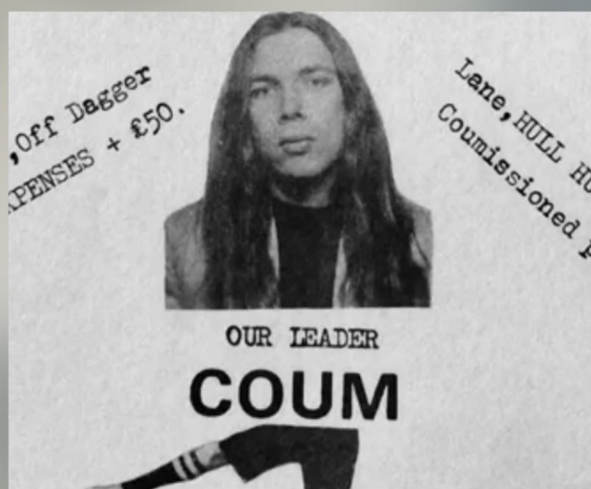


Later COUM. Top: Foxtrot, Gen (behind Vagina Dentata bag), Sleazy; Front: Fizzy, Biggles | From The Foxtrot Echo Archives.

This was Peter 'Sleazy' Christopherson, who would eventually join COUM a year later - after what Foxtrot Echo has described as "very much a courtship!"

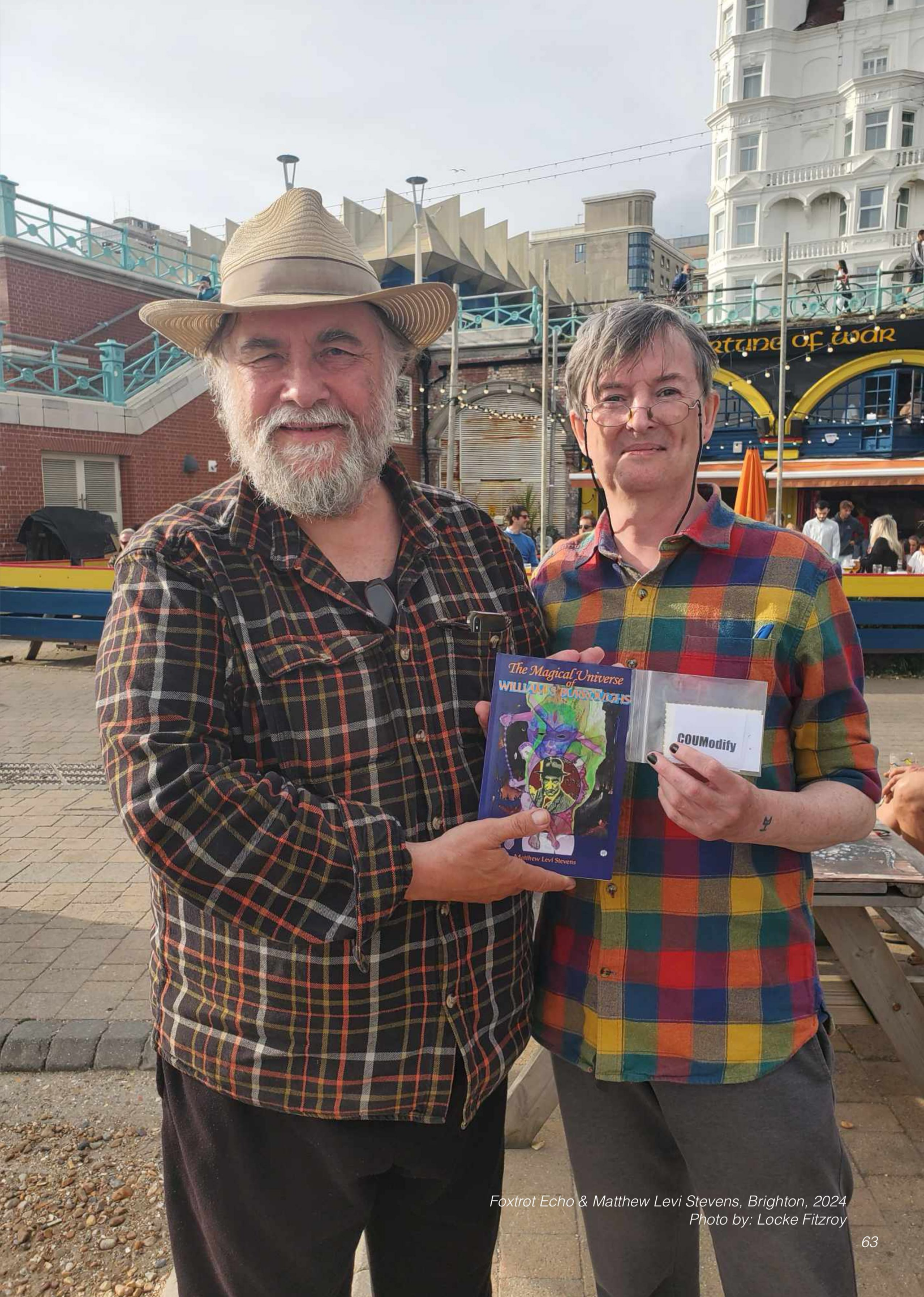
by Gen, in which he pursued Sleazy for his photographic expertise, and interest in and access to film and video (all things which Foxtrot had been interested in furthering with COUM) - as well as his obvious credentials as defiantly queer and a connoisseur of deviance. Says Foxtrot:

"I can remember seeing [Gen] and Sleazy in the kitchen at Beck Road [the house Gen & Cosey shared in East London], and they were like a couple of naughty schoolboys, egging each other on - except instead of conkers or marbles, they were talking about wound simulation and sex with under-age boys. Sado-masochistic sex with under-age boys, to be fair, with Gen all, like, 'Did you use handcuffs? Were there spikes?' And clearly getting quite into it, at least hypothetically."



Foxtrot Echo From COUM Advert | Archives Of Foxtrot Echo.

From July to October of 1974, Foxtrot travelled to Los Angeles - and although he would still continue to have involvement in later COUM projects, it was clear that the man of whom Genesis P-Orridge had once written "Foxtrot Echo is the leader of COUM Transmissions" was moving on to pastures new - or perhaps that should be 'pastures old' as it would mainly concern the buying and selling of antiques, a career from which he would subsequently make his living.



Foxtrot Echo & Matthew Levi Stevens, Brighton, 2024
Photo by: Locke Fitzroy

*'He casts a long shadow'
Foxtrot haunting Prince Street, Hull.
From the Archives of Foxtrot Echo.*



As for the continuing saga of COUM, and how it would eventually give rise to the Ground Zero of Industrial Music that was Throbbing Gristle - which in turn would split to birth Psychic TV and Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth, from which also ultimately emerged Coil - these are all stories which are, at long last, being told - and which the Present Author also intends to tell of what he witnessed and experienced, in due course.

For now, we will leave the last word on the Queer, Fab & Kinky world of COUM Transmissions to Greg Taylor, the man still known to this day as Foxtrot Echo: "I always thought of COUM not so much as an 'art movement' as more like a gang - a bit like a criminal gang, but certainly a kid's gang! It was all part of that 60s mobility of just trying things - you know, your dad might have been a docker, but you could have a go. Anyone could have a go at making music, or art. And I thought that was healthy. Still do!"

Matthew Levi Stevens
October 2024.

[With sincere gratitude to Greg Taylor/ Foxtrot Echo, for sharing his archive & memories; to Bertie Taylor for use of his photos; to Jason Williams/Iadwal Fisher for some of Foxtrot's answers; and also to Locke Fitzroy, for All the Rest.]

COUM Poster | From The Archives Of Foxtrot Echo.



Photo by: Locke Fitzroy

About The Author

Name: Matthew Levi Stevens

Age: 58

Pronouns: Whatever you like, sweetie!

Gender: Depends who's asking

Location: South England

Creative Mediums: Writer, poet, lecturer. also former fine artist, musician, and performance artist.

Bio: Matthew is a published author ('The Magical Universe of William S. Burroughs'), public speaker, practising magician, and hopeless romantic. He long ago realised he is the kind of person his parents tried to warn him about.

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Photography & Sketchbook Excerpts By: Klovis Gaynor

SPLIFFS AND DILFS

An Interview With



Klovis Gaynor
& The Urinal Cakes

ive been a LIAR

ive been a PHONY

ive been a BULLY

ive faked it so HARD

ive lost it

lost it, lost it, so far gone

FORGOTTEN UNDERNATH

Forgotten AT THE SURFACE

Shiny Shiny frogs on the lilies

Shiny Shiny Boiling in the sun

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FANE: Where did you grow up?

Klovis Gaynor: I grew up in a suburb in upstate New York.

F: What was your favorite toy as a child?

KG: A cold hand.

F: Ha! Never a fan of figures or dolls or those kinds of things?

KG: Haha I was really obsessed with rubbing a cold hand and squeezing the coldness out of it. It was strange I will admit. I remember playing with dolls too I guess. I have a few distinct memories of stripping my G.I. Joe's and making them fuck or wrestle naked or lay on top of each other.

F: Tell us about your family life growing up.

KG: I was the youngest of five in a big family and spent most of my time creating and dreaming with my sister and best friend, Canon. I played piano loudly to drown out any chaos and sang songs with my siblings for smiles.

F: What was that dynamic like for you, being the youngest in a big family?

KG: I feel privileged to be the youngest. I was exposed to more diversity of thought and developed a strong sense of individualism and identity at a young age. I received care from a wide cast of characters which I understand as contributing to a greater sense of openness and curiosity about the world and love for learning and connecting with ideas and people outside of what was parentally prescribed.

F: Tell us about a happy memory from childhood.

KG: I met Britney Spears at my sister's friend's birthday party when I was 4 and got to dance with her and sing her songs with her and go on her shoulders and kiss her. Later in life I learned she was simply an impersonator hired by the kid's parents for the themed event.

F: What was school like for you?

KG: I went to an all-boys Catholic school until I was 14. There were only 10 of us in my grade. I then went to public high school that provided more diversity in people and in thought, which in turn led to more friendships and more acceptance and more learning.

F: Did you have to deal with anti-TLGBQIA2S+ rhetoric while in Catholic School? If so, what impact do you feel that had on your development as an adolescent?

KG: Yeah Catholic School was definitely filled with queerhating rhetoric. Catholicism has an extremely narrow and naive understanding of gender and sexuality. The mere idea of an all boys school underscores how deep that shit goes. I often look back and am most disturbed that my classmates' parents, as well as my own teachers and spiritual leaders, were the most queerhating. By third grade or so my peers caught up and joined in on the bullying but for the first few years it was really only adults that looked down on my flamboyancy, openness and joy. My life and my work continue to be informed by all this of course. The pipeline from traumatized Catholic school boy to kinky BDSM faggot adult runs deep. Obviously growing up forced into submission, exclusion, coercion and abuse will impact the development of your brain. On my knees worshiping a naked bleeding man with long hair and drinking his blood remains an extremely erotic idea to me. My sexuality informed my Catholicism; my Catholicism informed my sexuality.

F: When did you first realize you were different from the other boys?

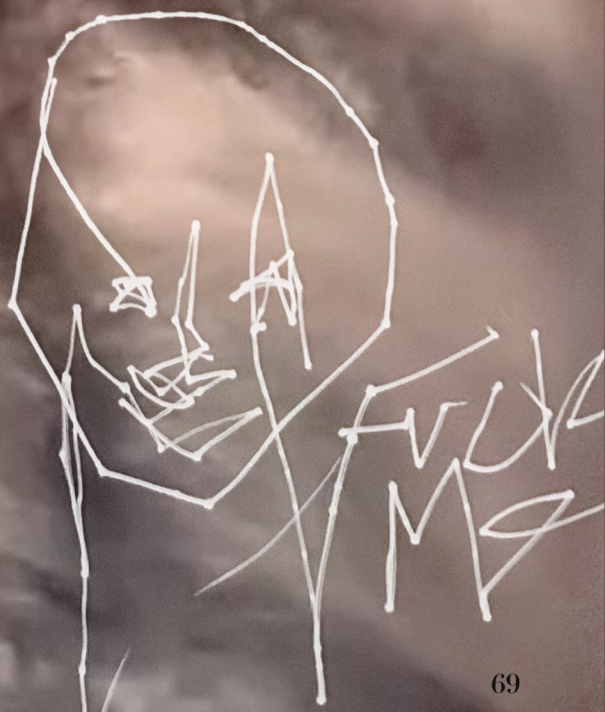
KG: The all-boys school I went to growing up still had co-ed pre-k. At the start of Kindergarten I remember missing some of my afab friends from the year prior. I think that was the first time I realized that society thought of me as one of the boys instead of one of the girls. I can picture Kindergarten so vividly - where all my favorite toys were, where I napped each day, where I hid on the playground, etc. I played alone and eventually developed a pride that I was different from the other boys. I did not find their games fun or their interests interesting. I spent recess singing Britney Spears fully thinking I was a beautiful blonde woman. I did not care what

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~~FRANK~~
CARAN!



ORGANIZATION

I AM THE AGONY
OF JESUS CHRIST



my peers thought or said because I was in my own world singing loudly and walking glamorously. It's interesting to me now how unapologetically authentic and Klovis Gaynor I was at that age. I am exactly the faggot I am today that I was at age 4. We eventually give up on our authentic selves for love and approval and safety, of course. I like to think that's why the two decades in between were plagued with heartache and dishonesty. Through the writing of SAVE ME 4 THE SPANK BANK, I have healed tremendously and feel closer to my 4 year old faggot self and my dreams of looking in the mirror and seeing a beautiful and blonde and infinite being.

F: What was first coming out like for you? Did you find acceptance?

KG: I never had a big coming out story. It did not feel comfortable to even let my mind wander in queer thoughts until I was living far from home. I had built a layer of deceit around my mind and manipulated myself to think, act, and desire differently. So much so that even though I was accused of being queer my entire life, I truly did not realize I was until a few years after I was sexually active. The brain and trauma are funny things.

I follow light and surround myself with warmth and love as I think I have always aimed to. I slowly shared more of myself with those I felt most warm with. I admitted to myself for the first time that I wasn't straight 2 months before I turned 20. Through trembling lips I said it privately to a friend, then another, then another. Lots of love poured and I realized life felt lighter everyday I lived more honestly.

F: Who was your biggest supporter at that time? Are they still in your life?

KG: Yes, absolutely. I told my sister/bestie Canon via text that I was bisexual when she was studying abroad back in 2016 and she responded with something like "lmao me too". She remains my biggest supporter and closest friend.

F: When did music become a main focus for you?

KG: I remember writing songs before doing pretty much anything else. I began piano lessons at around 6 years old but remember instances even before then where I would sing and scream while banging at the piano. I still do this, obviously. I try to do it every day. Sitting at the piano is sacred to me. I continued classical piano lessons through my adolescence before attending The University of Vermont for music technology and studio art.

The music and the queerness are unmistakably present throughout my life. My identity has always been deeply rooted in both but I did not share either until very recently. Even when studying music in university, I was very shy about it and almost never shared what I created. The world was still so seemingly small and I, still so seemingly scared.

The need to share my authentic self propels me forward. My music feels more honest than me. I realized in order to feel loved, like genuinely loved, I need to share my genuine self with others. I cannot wear a mask. I cannot manipulate myself to be something I am not. I cannot live with a fire in my pants. So I wrote this record, started pitching it to some friends which led to working with producer, Brayden Baird, and putting together Klovis Gaynor & The Urinal Cakes.

I share the music and myself with others in hopes to be seen, understood and loved. Music has always been and will forever be the main focus. Without it I fear I do not understand much at all.

F: Who would you cite as among your greatest musical influences? Why?

KG: Lizzy Grant. She was a prolific pioneer creating worlds and projects far beyond the creative output of most musicians. Her early works are experimental, emotional and contain a vulnerability that is rare to find. ANOHNI has also been a huge musical influence. Her album, I Am A Bird Now, is perhaps one of the greatest influences for our forthcoming record, SAVE ME 4 THE SPANK BANK.

F: What's an album you couldn't live without? What makes it so essential to you?

he puts it in my mouth
INHALE
KLOVIS IN HELL



KG: The Velvet Underground and Nico. I am continually inspired by the lyrics, concepts, sounds, and experimental approach of the record.

F: When did you start working with your current group, The Urinal Cakes?

KG: I took a short hiatus from NYC in 2023 to catch my breath. I lived a lonesome life teaching kids to ski and making sandwiches in rural Rutland, Vermont. I returned to NYC May 1st 2023 with plans to pursue music full time. My friend, Brayden Baird, needed a pianist for a once in a lifetime gig my first day back in the city and I jumped in despite not knowing him all that well at the time. He agreed to join me at the studio the following week to hear what I was working on. We quickly became close friends and collaborators and within just a few weeks put together The Urinal Cakes with our mutual friends and collaborators Dane Bundschuh and Josh Hausman. By summer 2023 the group was playing regularly and recording. We soon met Larah Helayne who joined on the fiddle that fall.

F: Do you prefer collaboration over solo work?

KG: That's tough. I worked solo for so long and deeply treasure my alone time songwriting at the piano. I trace everything back to that and imagine I always will. That said, the spiritual connection and cosmic synergy I feel when locking in with other musicians is like nothing else in this world. I feel privileged every single day that I have such talented and creative instrumentalists to play with. I have learned so much from making music with others and am so rejoiced to have had some of my most treasured friends help build this project. I smile knowing their own uniqueness is carried into the record as well as the unique relationship we share together.

F: Let's talk about your most recent EP, "Baby Pink Spliffs". Pardon the ignorance, but what exactly are those?

KG: Haha baby pink spliffs are essentially just spliffs (a joint with both weed and tobacco) rolled with a paper that is the color

of baby pink. The term can be understood far beyond the literal object of a baby pink spliff and it is my hope that after you experience the music and themes on the record the richness of the baby pink spliff is infinitely illuminated.

F: The EP is very sexual in nature; not so much to shock or titillate, but to present pictures of real life scenarios queer individuals find themselves in. Are you pulling from personal experience?

KG: Oh, unfortunately yes. The songs are auto-ethnographic in nature; using stories of intimate experiences from my own life to propel forward a larger discussion and understanding of queer sexual trauma.

F: The music feels excruciatingly emotional; your vocals sounding like they're pushed to their very limits. What toll does this take on you? Is it draining? Empowering? Both?

KG: Definitely both. There is no way to sing a song about being raped unemotionally. There is no way it won't drain you and take something from you every single time. But something is given to you too through this. Something so beautiful comes out of the fire and ashes. I lose my voice after most shows and feel the pain in my throat for days afterwards. I think of my body and my limits and the pain and the pleasure and the power within me. Singing is much like sex honestly. I find it rewarding to extend my body beyond my perceived limits. I find it rewarding to share vulnerability and truth with strangers. I like to think it's all exponential and our collective healing could start with screaming, singing, sharing, listening, learning, fucking, questioning, losing our voices to find them again. There is something so grand to be discovered in going beyond.

F: It seems like there are a lot of problematic "sex work enthusiasts" touched upon in the EP, particularly the self loathing kind. Have you found yourself in a particularly dangerous situation in the past? How'd you find your way through?

KG: I have found my way through with the love and support from friends and through holding forgiveness for myself and others.

F: Take us through your songwriting process. Do you have a set methodology?

KG: I would not say I have a set methodology. Each idea or concept born must take the path that makes most sense for that idea or concept. I try to write every single day. My happiest place is sitting at the piano. I sit down and work through my emotions through improvisation. I'll just sing and sing whatever comes to mind over whatever chords come to mind. The strongest ideas usually start to illuminate themselves and a song forms. I write poetry and diaristic entries daily and often reference those too when sitting down at the piano. **BABY PINK SPLIFFS** comes from a few excerpts I wrote. Mainly from some writings directly following some intense experiences in the Spring 2022. That said, I have an entry in a sketchbook from Fall 2019 with the words "Why open me up? Call me a perv and then leave, you hurt you, you hurt me." Those words flowed out of my voice intuitively again at the piano in 2022 while singing through the **BABY PINK** traumas. Sometimes I even surprise myself at how deep rooted and beautiful the creation process can truly be.

F: Which of these EP tracks did you find the most difficult to write, either emotionally or technically?

KG: "SPLIFFS & DILFS" was the first track written and the beginning of the **SAVE ME** journey. The project is grounded in personal growth, more specifically, the healing of a child and the making of a queer star. Honesty is required for both. I had to confront my shadows and accept my failures and a lot of that started with writing "SPLIFFS & DILFS" and sitting with some serious shit I hadn't before. That same month I wrote "BABY PINK SPLIFFS" which is another very emotional one for me. I cannot sing the song without feeling some sort of pain. Perhaps one of the most emotionally overwhelming moments for me on the EP is right before the breakdown in "BABY PINK SPLIFFS" when I scream, "and you hate what's inside you / and so you hate me / and so you hit me / and so you beat the fucking shit out of me." The events described will always be painful but through sharing with others the pain can begin to transcend into healing and into hope.

F: What, if anything, are you hoping people take away from the EP?

KG: Hope, empathy, an understanding that everything in this world is delicately interconnected. Sexual shame is poisoning our species and corrupting our souls and we are all to blame. Every comment, judgement, or fear that we hold infects our culture and creates insecurity, hatred and violence. Shame is exponential and it is imperative, especially as we step back into Trump's administration, that we actively work on dismantling our prejudices towards one another and to move forward with kindness for all in our hearts. I want listeners to realize that the antagonist of the record isn't the DL men or rapists at all, it's the system that creates the monsters. I often think about queerphobic people I have met in my life and how many of them would never guess how their intolerance contributes to shame cycles so powerful they feed assault.

F: There's a full length coming not too far in the future. Tell us about that.

KG: Yes, our long-awaited 14-track debut LP **SAVE ME 4 THE SPANK BANK** comes out early 2025. The baroque queercore record weaves together stories of sex, sadness, failure and fame, attacking the listeners with a diaristic rawness unheard of in music today.

I am also directing and starring in several video artworks in tandem with the record including the short film, "BABY PINK", out January 3rd, as well as forthcoming films, "MYSOPHILIAC", "HORNED UP HAZY BABY", "PETER THE RABBIT" and **MAY THE ROAD RISE TO MEET YOU**. We also continue to release hand-made clothes, show zines, and booklets underscoring the ever-expanding universe of Klovis Gaynor & The Urinal Cakes.

F: Where can people see these, and any other videos related to your project?

KG: If you are in NYC, there is an opening for my immersive **BABY PINK** installation which features the film, on January 3rd. For folks elsewhere, the video will be available to watch on my website as with all forthcoming music videos. klovisgaynor.com

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F: You mentioned you create zines expanding your musical lore. Tell us about those.

KG: Absolutely. So for every live show, my best friend and collaborator, Canon Mg Lake, creates a limited edition urinal cake zine. Each show a completely new urinal cakes zine. Each zine numbered and only ever for sale at the one show for which it was created. In addition to the show zines we have created special zines in connection with releases. Most recently, we made the BABY PINK ZINE, expanding the world of the recent EP, BABY PINK SPLIFFS. Through lyrics, poems, video stills, photographs, and glued in objects, the zine offers viewers an opportunity to dive deeper into the BABY PINK universe. There is an intimacy to the zine paralleled in the video and the EP. The upcoming immersive installation forces viewers to watch the film in my own bed - the same bed the old man and I fuck in. I am interested in what happens when you share vulnerability with strangers. The songs, the zines, the videos, the ways in which I perform and showcase them - its all a brutal submission to strangers to see me, objectify me, adore me, fuck me, judge me, hate me, love me, save me, save me, save me.

F: If you could have any job other than musician, what would you be doing?

KG: A piano teacher or if that's too close of an answer to a musician then simply a teacher.

F: What are you currently listening to?

KG: PJ Harvey's *Rid Of Me* and Nina Simone's *Wild Is The Wind*. Floored by both albums and artists.

F: Do you have any hobbies? Anything you like to collect?

KG: I like to draw and write. I keep a sketchbook on me at all times, usually filling up an entire one every month or two. I cherish them.

F: What kind of drawings do you find yourself making? Do you like to sketch from life, create abstracts, etc.?

KG: My approach to drawing is very similar to writing and playing in that it's rooted in letting go of control and investigating my emotions. I almost never draw from life or reference images. I draw what is inside of me, not around me. I have developed a lexicon of symbols and styles in my 2D practice that includes imagery of Christ, Mary, Pigs, pigs being crucified, pigs having sex, penis, ass, my face, my body, my perception of self, masculinity, violence, aggression, rabbits, fire, gardens, frowns, urinals, etc. My approach is messy and rough. I like to penetrate the pictorial plane with stitching or stabbing through strings. Lots of yellows, reds, and pinks. The walls of my bedroom are covered with ever-changing works in progress. I see my visual art practice and music as one. The title of my forthcoming single, *HORNED UP HAZY BABY*, was written on my wall months before I wrote the full song. For weeks it was just a big piece of paper hung horizontally that read in light blue oil pastel "and MAYBE I WOULDN'T BE SO ANGRY IF I WASN'T THE ONLY HORNED UP HAZY BABY."

F: When was the last time you cried? What was the cause?

KG: I cried at the end of my most recent show just last week. After my performance, humans I had not known held me in their arms crying. A fan came out to me through tears. She wailed in my ear; said I gave her strength. Shared sad stories of projected shame and the current situation with her queer hating family. She gave me so much strength. I wish I could hug her again right now. Through tears her last words were, peace be with you. Through tears, I responded, and may peace forever be with you.

Sharing is so special. Queerness is so special. Sharing with queers is very very special.

F: From that I have to assume advocacy and protest on behalf of the TLGBQIA2S+ community is important to you. Are you active in this way outside of your music (not to insinuate that what you're doing artistically isn't enough)?

KG: I aspire to be more involved in queer advocacy and aim to volunteer within our community more and more. Every chance I

have to connect with queers is fruitful, inspiring and life-affirming. I am surrounded by so many lovely lovely queers and believe our love and care for each other everyday is an act of advocacy and protest too.

F: What do you think others should do to further the cause?

KG: My advice would be to carry yourself with kindness always and to search for new discoveries within yourself and within others with excitement. We are conditioned to hate and judge and fear and stay stagnant. The more learning we can do about ourselves and about others the less we hate, judge, fear, stay. Stand up for people not money. Stop thinking about money and start thinking about care. Question what you were taught. Question power, authority and yourself. Try new things. Suck a dick if you haven't. Eat an ass if you haven't. Push yourself beyond the person you have believed you are. You are so much more. You are infinite. Show up for marginalized communities. Unpack your biases and predispositions. Research the histories of institutions, countries, religions. Research the violence of it all. Talk to people with differing views than you. Love them. Pray for them. Pray for the poor and the suffering and for the sick and the dying and for the hated and for the unloved. Black trans women continue to be murdered every day just for being. Simply for being. Sit with that. Sit with your understanding of what merits murder. Sit with the delicate interconnectedness of everything. Sit with how you contribute to evil and then stand the fuck up and try to turn it into something good.

F: Tell us what a Klovis Gaynor & The Urinal Cakes show is like.

KG: Provocative, arresting, loud, love-filled.

F: Are you planning to go on the road anytime soon?

KG: Yes, we are in the process of putting together a tour to promote SAVE ME 4 THE SPANK BANK this spring. The impact of the project can be heard loudest live. We are eager to create queer spaces across the country that celebrate rawness and realness.

It is our mission to bring fagpunk to new audiences while fostering queer connection, community and creativity.

F: Should the fans be expecting any physical media of this and other releases?

KG: eek I am trying to print vinyls for the LP, SAVE ME 4 THE SPANK BANK, coming out early 2025. I am still figuring out how to best do that as it's a bit tricky and expensive but I remain hopeful. I also plan to make some BABY PINK SPLIFFS ep tapes. I got some translucent baby pink tapes and I plan to burn the songs onto them this week and add them to our website :) super stocked to have these for sale soon!

F: Anything else you'd like to share before we let you go?

KG: I appreciate you <3





poor
peter

BLACKBERRIES

AMERICAN DREAM

AN INTERVIEW WITH IMAN ESSIET

ALL ORIGINAL GRAPHICS BY IMAN ESSIET



IMAN ESSIET IS A SUSTAINABLE DESIGNER FROM BROOKLYN, NEW YORK. AS AN EMERGING ARTIST, IMAN'S WORK IS BASED PRIMARILY ON HIGHLIGHTING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF PEOPLES IN THE AFRICAN DIASPORA. FROM THE PAIN AND TRAUMA OF INSTITUTIONALIZED RACISM AND COLONIALISM, HER VIEWPOINT FOCUSES ON RESILIENCE, BRILLIANCE, AND CREATIVITY BOTH LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY.

HERE, IMAN OPENS UP ABOUT HER EARLY LIFE, HOMELESSNESS, HER ONGOING DOCUMENTARY "AMERICAN DREAMING", MUSIC PROJECTS, AND TRYING TO SIMPLY EXIST IN A SOCIETY THAT'S HOSTILE TOWARDS OUTSPOKEN MINDS AND BLACK SKIN.

FANE: Tell us a little bit about where you grew up? What was that like as a child?

Iman Essiet: I grew up in Brooklyn, New York. Bed Stuy, to be exact, in a house on Monroe Street between Ralph and Howard. I lived with my sister, and my aunt, cousins, and grandparents lived next door. Unfortunately, now it's a place that no longer feels familiar to me due to all of the Ethnic Cleansing of the community (with the exception of my aunt's house). Pretty much all of my childhood memories have been removed and replaced with cookie cutter modular style architecture that totally removed the true essence of the community.

The corner store where I use to get my heroes and Sunnydales (50cent quarts of juice that would be salvation during those blistering Brooklyn summers) and my long freezee Icees (champagne colored ones my favorite). The Roosevelt bank, which had the best AC to walk through during those hot summers just to cross over to Gates Avenue. We would slide through the bars of the bank's gates after it closed and use the parking lot as a playground; watching the boys play football, while the girls would play explorer looking through the plants and using our imagination. The empty lots where we used to pick snails and plants... literally just playing in the dirt.

The uniquely designed homes of the OGs of the block like Ms. Hazel, Ms. Barbara and Ms. Rite, all replaced by "new construction". The only house that still remains familiar is my aunts house; the house right next door to the house I grew up on.

I moved off the block in 2001 to Nostrand Avenue between Halsey and Hancock; another part of Bed Stuy. Another place that now feels foreign to me. That block has been ethnically cleansed as well. Literally there is no place in my "childhood community" that I can say remains the same or feels like home.

F: Did you have a favorite toy growing up? I'm a big kid at heart, so I like asking people about their childhood toys.

IE: What girl doesn't love her dolls. And of course I had a kitchen set (that my sister gave away and lied about), then there was my indoor slide, and last but definitely not least is my riding horse. You couldn't have a pony as a NYC girl but my granddaddy made sure to get me one of those play riding horses that I still have to this day.

F: Could you tell us a happy memory from this time in your life?

IE: Life was just simpler and easier, meaning I was truly naive to the inner workings of the world, and the adults I was surrounded by (as most kids probably are). I mean, I would absolutely witness the yelling matches between my siblings who were my caretakers, but I did not know the extent of their "rivalry". They say ignorance is bliss.

F: What were your teen years like?

IE: I was extremely social, a social butterfly, with lots of people around me. I was always having sleep overs or gatherings after-school. I was always orchestrating some type of shenanigans and in the year book I was nominated class clown for them. Honestly, I used High School as a playground because my household was so toxic. I was dealing with a lot of trauma and drama at home, and school was the only place I could let my hair down.

F: Is there a strong ally you've had throughout your life?

IE: Myself. My self awareness. I have betrayed her more times than anyone, but she has always stuck by my side.

F: Do you remember the first time someone "othered" you? How did it make you feel?

IE: I never really dealt with face to face racism until my mid twenties, being that I lived in predominantly black neighborhoods. I mean, of course living in a racist country our conditions were of course racist. But the first time I really had the "oh that's racism", like I said, was in my mid twenties. I had just got hired at a styling company, which was predominantly white and female owned. I remember one week my style mentor, a black and notable stylist, was being praised for her work and then the next week she was "let go" and replaced with some random white woman who had no styling background at all. From that point on it was like an energetic shift in the company. All of the black girls (there were just a few of us) felt like ducks in the water after she was let go. The fake smiles of our white coworkers kind of faded and it was just different. I remember being on the elevator with two coworkers (white women) and greeting them and they acted as if I was invisible and said nothing.

When I went home, I spoke with my sister about everything happening and she looked at me baffled that I was even shocked at their behavior. She responded something like "yea Iman, that's how they are.. that's what they do. That's racism." I just was used to working with black people for real and never had that type of experience. That was also around the same time heavy ethnic cleansing of Bed Stuy was happening. And the same summer of Philando Castles murder which was then met with another case of the police murdering Delrawn Small a few blocks away from me on Atlantic Ave. It was like a summer of awakening. Although I was already pretty conscious, it was a summer where I became even more devoted to my life's work and purpose.

F: If you're willing, could we talk a little bit about your mental health?

IE: I am diagnosed with Dysthymia, which is chronic Depression, and General Anxiety Disorder. I also battle with PTSD.



F: How would you say that's has impacted your life? Positively, negatively, or both?

IE: Well, ironically, the people who have assisted in the progression of these diagnosed conditions have been some of the very agents that try to weaponize these diagnosis against me in order to paint some picture of me that is untrue. Meanin' I have relatives, or former associates, who would try to use these diagnosis to tear down my character while they are the very ones triggering anxiety and depression in me through their narcissistic personality disorders.

F: What do you wish more people understood about living with Dysthymia and Anxiety?

IE: I wish people would understand the part that they play in the role of exacerbating the diagnosis; whether that be the environment they place people in, or how they deal with them, etc. Many people want to talk down on you and try to belittle you, not understanding that many of these conditions stem from us being highly sensitive, highly aware, and highly intuitive. And because we live in a world filled with people that lack self awareness, or the ability to empathize, we are more times than none misunderstood and mislabeled.

F: In the first episode of of your ongoing documentary, *American Dreaming*, you show some harsh realities of living in late stage capitalism. We see the homeless being harassed by Police, public facilities that are overwhelmingly in disrepair, and perfectly good buildings full of... just... clutter, unavailable for anyone to find shelter within. Putting it all together paints an awful picture of an American reality. What do you think we can do to help change all of this?

IE: lol. Well, America can begin by givin' back the years of wealth they have stolen from the exploitation of the black body in this nation. We literally built this country, and just like the mathematician women in Virginia who worked for NASA, no one knew lol. We remain hidden figures in regards to our true contributions to this nation. Earlier I gave you my first experience with racism, and in that experience I explained how those white women in the elevator ignored me as if I did not just greet them as if I did not exist. Many times I say that I am the microcosm to the macrocosm of the black experience, because in reality this is how black people are treated; as if we are invisible, as if our lives are irrelevant, as if our contributions to this country are little to nothing, when in all actuality that is the exact opposite of the truth. If not for the free labor of blacks in America there would not even be a Whitehouse to place a president in, who would then ignore our needs to be housed. Do you get how that can be triggering mentally? Living life like this on a daily basis, especially being a woman as conscious as my self? James Baldwin said, "to be black and conscious in America is to be in a constant state of rage". And sometimes that rage looks like depression, or high

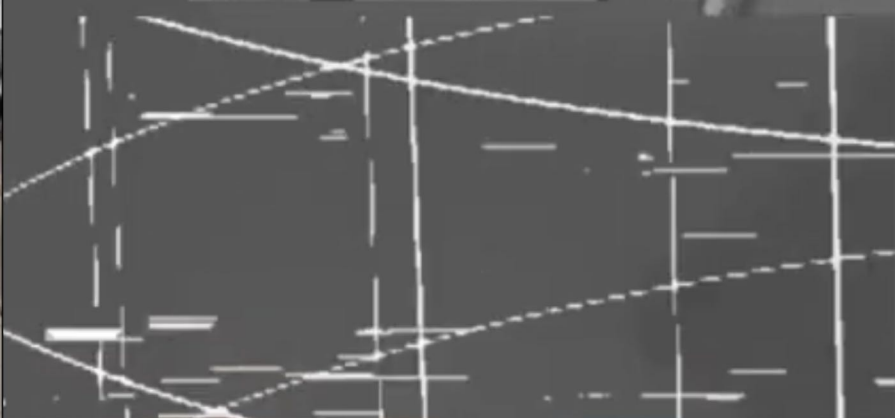
levels of anxiety. Or any other diagnosis America would like to label me or any other oppressed black person, according to their Diagnostic Manual, which I always found hilarious because Americans/Europeans diagnose everybody except for themselves. What is the diagnosis for enslaving people for centuries under some of the most wicked and inhumane conditions like lynching, burning of corpses, feeding babies to alligators, tearing off limbs, castration of men, raping and sodomizing women, all the while forcing them to build you an empire of wealth for free... lmfao. What do you diagnose that as? Psychopathic? Sociopathic? Schizophrenic? lol, do you know that there was even a diagnosis created that labeled an enslaved African as having a psychological disorder for takin' back their freedom and escaping slavery? Drapetomania. That's the diagnosis. Now ask me if I struggle with "mental health" being as conscious as I am living in a sick place like this?

F: I know you've been through and seen a lot. What's the worst thing you've seen so far while making *American Dreaming*? What, if anything, has been the most compassionate/faith restoring thing you've seen?

IE: I mean, just the overall reality of us living in a nation that would rather outsource the funds of its citizens to murder black and indigenous children around the world than take care of the homelessness and desolation of the "citizens" whose ancestors built this place is disgusting enough. And, of course, the documentation of my lived experience. It's disheartening to realize how the hearts of the people are so hardened towards injustice. I am disturbed by what is normalized. I had to start donating my plasma to afford my room rentals, and the room I rented was filled with mold, cracked filthy walls, disgusting base boards, and dirty sheets. Then there is that mindset of "beggars can't be choosers" and that's bizarre because why does a person have to beg for a decent environment? Why do we normalize dehumanizing conditions so easily and demonize revolutionary thinkers who are merely just agents of change? Me speaking up about injustice will get me targeted for assassination or police harassment and labeled as crazy, but the true enforcers of wickedness get overlooked. Look at Assata, look at the Panthers, look at all people who have ever fought against injustice in this so called land of the free. Look how we are treated just for speaking up on our conditions and our reality. They would rather spin a story to demonize us then fix the fucking issues.

F: You yourself are currently unhoused, which you discuss in *American Dreaming*. However, you're maintaining yourself wonderfully, working on a video documentary, writing & recording bars... How are you managing? It has to be a struggle.

IE: I am thankful to have a beautiful support system. My boyfriend is really a knight in shining armor. He, being a black man in America, understands what I am going through, and he has been supporting me



New York's Finest harassing a man who is clearly with out shelter. for sleeping on the train. they literally gave him a ticket. if he dont got money for rent where he getting the money to pay the ticket? 😂😂😂



financially as best as he can. Other than that, I'm not no weak bitch, respectfully. I take my shit on the chin and I know how to just figure shit out, for real. I really try not to lean on my boyfriend so much, but he'd rather I ask for his help than try and do things on my own.

F: You've had run-ins with the Police. I know it might be painful, but could you talk to us about one of those situations? What were they harassing you over? How were you treated?

IE: The police operate like a gang; they violate your humanity and truly believe they are just in their behavior.

F: Recently, you were in an Airbnb rented room for shelter. You showed your IG followers the conditions of the room you paid very hard earned money for; missing plates on electrical sockets, very tight space. black mold in the bathroom. Do you feel that individuals, and corporations like Airbnb, are taking advantage of the unhoused? Did they do right by you in the end (black mold is deadly)?

IE: I believe that the unhoused are absolutely being taken advantage of, as opposed to people utilizing their position of "power" to assist those less fortunate than them. More times than none people are only looking out for their financial interests. I find that people are always trying to do the the least amount of work, like the barest of the minimums, but expect the highest return. I mean, we are literally run and governed by corporate greed. There is no true reason for an Airbnb rental unit to be unlivable when they are making profit on a daily basis due to the pandemic known as homelessness that is sweeping this nation. People are only caring about making a quick buck. They are not taking into consideration how hard it is to even solidify housing now a days. For example, I literally had to sell my blood to get that room, and for me to be met with such a disgusting space... I was outraged. And of course it was not rectified to my liking. I think I received like 20 of the 70 dollars back that I paid for the room. It's absolutely disgusting what is going on in this world today when it comes to just the blatant removal of thinking humanely. I can get locked up for "stealing" food when I'm starving, but these corporations are never punished for turning our basic human needs into some type of hunger game. The odds are always in their favor.

F: In the first episode of *American Dreaming*, you talk about your family who think your troubles, including your housing situation, are self inflicted. How do you see the situation?

IE: I laugh at that idea only because no one ever wants to take accountability for the fucked up shit that they did, and how it currently affects today's reality. Like I said before, I am the microcosm to the macrocosm. America never did right, or what it should have done,

for enslaved Africans and their descendants, and we see an exact correlation in the reality of the vast majority of black people today through, and by, our poverty stricken conditions. AKA, America never dealt with the damage it did to Africans and it continues to sweep it under the rug, ignore it, or act as if it never happened out of the idea of trying to save face and not take responsibility, which of course would cost them financially. I am learning nowadays how expensive the truth is.

As a child growing up there were certain needs that went unmet, whether acknowledged or not. I am now learning how to handle life for real in my mid thirties, and it is what it is. But I'm not going to internalize other peoples guilt, or lack of accountability anymore. Nor will I be silent about my story. I know my experience; I lived it, and it's been with me each day of my life, everyday, all day. There are "relatives" who have gone years, even decades, without knowing or checking on me, so I'm good with whatever story they tell themselves. I know my reality, and it's not to tear anyone down, it's really me breaking free from all the chains that oppress me. I'd rather be a black sheep. That's better for my mental health, and most necessary for me at this time where I am self actualizing as everyone else has.

F: Do you think the family rift can be repaired?

IE: I think that at this time, I wish everyone well. I just need my time to heal and regroup. It's just funny cause, like I said, I have lived sometimes with decades of no contact, so to be wanting me around now is kind of annoying, especially if I'm being treated like the same 10 year old they think I am. I really prefer my boyfriend's company, honestly. He gets me, and we get each other, and I feel mentally safe.

F: You've recently put out a book as part of the *American Dreaming* project, "*Building Better: American Dreaming The Eradication of The Normalization Of Our Dehumanization Volume 1*". Tell us about it.

IE: I wrote this book while being incarcerated in Essex County, where I noticed the stark similarities of all the environments that the black body is prone to be in this society; the projects, the shelter, the hospital, and the penitentiary.

Building Better : American Dreaming The Eradication of The Normalization Of Our Dehumanization Volume 1 is an essay where I unpack my experience of being an inmate at Essex County Jail. In this essay, I highlight the correlation of the built environment and the internalization of the dehumanization of the black body in America. I unapologetically state that poverty is not only a man made system, but indeed a system that has specifically been designed to normalize this internalization of dehumanization of poor black people.

This essay calls out the power structure in a shameful manner by stating blatant realities that they would hope to go overlooked, while simultaneously educating the masses of people who are subject to the oppression of this system.

F: Tell us about *Black Lilith*, your musical persona. Who is she, and what is her mission?

IE: *Black Lilith* is the name I derived from Lilith, the first wife of Adam who he rejected because she was too outspoken. I've felt rejected and abandoned my whole life for not being that cookie cutter sweet person everyone would like me to be; for actually feeling and being myself. Speaking my mind has gotten me in more trouble than not (I told you how I'm learning the price of truth) or gained me haters, lol. Let's call them fans with misplaced emotions because I don't do the "life" game. I don't go on to get along, and I literally never will. I don't play the game because, contrary to the beliefs of most people, life for me is not a game. People love giving me attitude, but hate when I have one. It's like I'm supposed to be everyone's punching bag and scapegoat, but once I'm fed up I don't have a right to speak up or be angry. *Black Lilith*, and not just Lilith because this is the experience of the black woman in America: "and when he get on he leave your ass for a white girl" like Ye said, lol. Again, remember the story is Lilith was Adams first wife, and he left her for a more submissive and controllable woman. I embody the elements of blackness that this world would like to reject, and say "fuck you, imma be her anyway, bitch".

F: The first taste of *Black Lilith* comes in the form of "The Jux Prelude". Tell us about the track.

IE: Well, it starts off like "hood bitches need liberation too". It's a proclamation that liberation is not only for the scholarly that can effectively articulate the nature of the black condition. It's definitely me throwing shade to the system and its inner workings. We love a good scholarly dissertation (and I have written many) on the plight of blacks. We love a good town hall meeting with no results. In essence, we love symbolism but not that real raw shit. Like, y'all talk about the urban youths and their impoverished communities and how underserved we/they are, but be afraid of that shit. They be afraid of jail, afraid of the projects, afraid of the shelters, and/or their inhabitants as if the people in these places are animals. That petty bourgeoisie mindset. And it's like, no, the most materially impoverished people need liberation. Don't just write your grants about us. Don't just write a pretty thesis on us. Bring forth true liberation by seeing us as who we truly are. And of course, the true change of our conditions. Tired of all these theories, it's time for results and action.

F: Your Bandcamp has been updated quite a bit since I first took a look. The "Black Lilith Begins" preview/sampler is loaded with beats and concepts. The bit that caught me off guard was the track "Selection",

bringing in some classic house/techno. Are you taking *Black Lilith* to the dance floor?

IE: I define myself as a sonic collagist and experimental hip hop artist who is not confined to the basic traditions of what we classically define hip hop as. For hip hop is Jazz, it's Rock and Roll, its electronic, etc. Think of all the sonic sampling of the genre. So yeah, we will be on the dance floor for sure.

F: There's also the "THERAPY" EP. We've got a snippet of, literally, one of your therapy sessions along with some beat/track ideas. "This is Gaza" hits hard, and "BITCHES BE WEAK" is a great flow. Will we be seeing versions of these tracks on the *Black Lilith* debut?

IE: Yes. I am exploring all realms of creativity, and honestly this is the roll out of my debut before my "technical" studio recorded debut album, if you will. I am giving the world who I am as an artist. I am debuting my DIY experimental sounds.

F: Talk to us about the single "America Stay Fucking We".

IE: In this piece I use actual sound clips of recordings of me and my boyfriend having sex. Literally expressing my true feelings of how I feel about America and its Global system. America fucks us truly. I say "America stay fucking we rent 1700 just breathe they charge a fee", meaning all of our basic needs as humans are met with fees or taxes, which brings to question how humane are our leaders truly? We pay for air, water, food, clothing, shelter; all things which the earth gives to us freely, but because of colonial greed these naturally free things now become luxuries that one must afford. I am specifically talking about the black experience, of how America Royally fucked Africans via the transatlantic slave trade, stole our bodies, our labor, our innocence, to build up their wealth then turned around and had the nerve to want to kill us and charge us for existing. As if we asked to live under their colonial rule. In the background you also hear me singing in opera, which is an illustration of how Americas elite will purposely ignore the blatant bombs of exploitation going off just to enjoy their ill gotten wealth.

F: How do you approach writing your material? Do you find that the words just pour out of you? Is it a long editing process?

IE: Being that Music is such a spiritual thing for me, the words just usually flow out. I'm almost always relating my music to some aspect of my lived experience on earth, so not much editing goes into my process. I like the rawness of my work. I enjoy it because it is my truth being actualized sonically.

F: What would you say most influences your work?

IE: My lived experience.

Overqualified for the jobs

Yea thats what they say.

But really they just want another black sex slave.



BITCH

She wasn't handed a damn thing. She's been fighting all her life. Life threw punches. She took 'em, spit out the blood, and kept going. Broken heart? Shaken soul? Exhausted spirit? Join the club. But badass women don't break—they fucking rise like phoenixes, every day.

F: Tell us about one of your favorite albums and what it means to you.

IE: Ugh I just love music, for real for real. I could name so many but it all boils down to the sound being put out, the message being spoken, the delivery, and the content. If your sound is pure, and you are saying something I can feel, I'm into it.

F: In addition to creating music, a documentary, and books, you're also getting into clothing design with an emphasis on sustainability. Tell us about it.

IE: My brand is just an extension of my project, *American Dreaming*, where I want people to wear the message. Fashion is used to disturb the peace silently, and I appreciate that. I can create art that is wearable and relays important political messages to maybe those who have not yet been able to hear my music. The emphasis on sustainability is creating wearable pieces that are recyclable, and have been recycled. Minimum outsourced labor and high levels of creativity involved.

F: Where do you draw inspiration for your designs?

IE: My everyday journey. What I see, what I have seen, and what I want to see.

F: Do you have any favorite independent clothing designers?

IE: My sister is my first favorite independent designer, even though our relationship is estranged. I still always give credit where credit is due. She has been ahead of her time for years when it comes to her designs. She knows how to make shoes and everything. She's one of the few designers who actually knows how to sew. Besides her, when it comes to streetwear, Genggrizzly of *PTP*. I was gifted a few of his pieces. I fuck wit the *YEEZY* collection hard, and soon as I get some coin I will be copping pieces. I love that everything is 20 dollars, but it's still fly as fuck (but of course it's a Ye brand). Now that's sustainable. I am also inspired by Jim Jones and the *Fabulous* streetwear aesthetic, and of course Erykah Badu's *Badu's World Market* brand and how she is not afraid to experiment.

F: What, if anything, are you currently reading?

IE: I am currently reading journals and essays on the history of slavery in Bergen County, NJ which happened to be the largest slave holding county of Jersey. Excerpts of different books on slavery in NJ. And *The Chemistry of Joy*.

F: Name an artist working in any medium that you think needs a shout out. What's great about them?

IE: Auniqueting. He's a really dope photographer, visionary, and creative director.

F: Any final thoughts before we let you go?

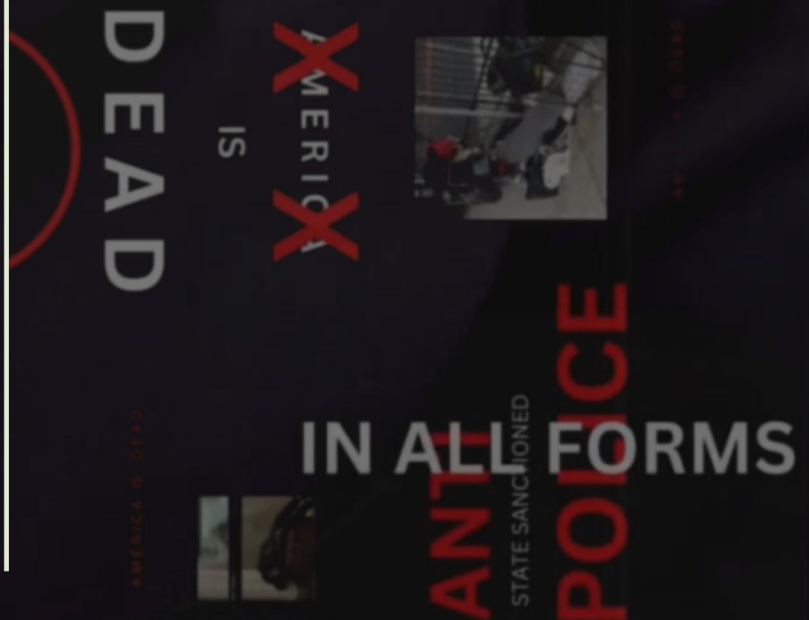
IE: Support my music, and buy my merch. I'm an artist with something to say, and I'm doing things my way; breaking the mold while still in pursuit of my educational goals. I feel like because my art is so dangerous, it's extremely targeted and black balled, so I just want to feel the support. I know I'm doing the right thing, and I know my art is necessary... especially in this hour!

New episodes of the ongoing documentary *American Dreaming* can be viewed on Iman's YouTube channel [youtube.com/@ImanEssiet](https://www.youtube.com/@ImanEssiet)

You can cop yourself some of Iman's original hand made clothing, as well as music downloads from her experimental hip hop *Black Lilith* project, and more at [imantheoriginal.bandcamp.com](https://www.imantheoriginal.bandcamp.com)

We here at FANE believe this is an artist to keep your eyes on, so be sure to follow her on Bandcamp as well as her Instagram/Threads [@shes.black.lilith](https://www.instagram.com/shes.black.lilith)

Given Iman's current instability due to her lack of consistent housing, we'd also like to share her GoFundMe for those willing to contribute to her overall development and wellbeing. You can donate to her cause at [GoFund.Me/3521792a](https://www.gofundme.com/3521792a)



STATE SANCTIONED

POLICE

PERFORMS

How does one define a gang?

What is the largest gang in NYC? The real group that causes terror and fear in the black, brown, and economically disadvantaged communities of NYC? The answer would be the New York Police Department.

The NYPD's alleged motto is to protect and serve. I always find it funny that this phrase plastered on the side of their squad cars has quotation marks. As to suggest it is just a joke, because that is exactly what I take them and their motto as.

The communities this gang "police" are not protected or served by them. As stated above we are terrorized, harassed, and violated by this gang. When we see their squad cars uniforms or hear their sirens, the response of the community is not one of feeling safe but instead one of fear and trauma.



DEAD
IS
AMERICA

IN ALL FORMS
ANTIPOLICE
STATE SANCTIONED

CAMERA
PLAY
00:02:00

USE YOUR
IPHONE

DANGER

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE
LIVE ON THE STREETS OF
AMERICA



FREE
ALL
NIGGAZ

Photo by: Mandi Martini

simon whearst

BLIZZARD OF NOISE



For more from Snowbeasts:

snowbeasts.audio

snowbeasts.bandcamp.com



Snowbeasts is the post-industrial brainchild of Providence-based duo Robert Galbraith and Elizabeth Viroso. Together, they create eerie atmospheres consisting of heavy 'dance' beats and wild synthetic textures. Since their formation in 2014, Snowbeasts have released more than twenty works, including collaborations with highly respected experimental artists like Mark Spybey of Dead Voices On Air. On their most recent foray into darkness, "Devour", the duo explore their vision of Haunted Body Music.

FANE: I'm a big kid at heart, so before I get into the nitty gritty of the group, an ice breaker... what was your favorite toy from childhood? What made it special for you?

Robert Galbraith: I am still a massive kid at heart and toy collector. As for a single toy, that's a really tough one but I am going to go with my two foot tall Mazinga Shogun warrior. I was around 5 when I got it and it just totally captured my imagination. The original was sadly lost but I ended up finding a replacement on eBay.

Elizabeth Virosa: One of my favorite toys was a movie player. Hasbro might have made it. You would stick a tape cartridge inside it, and it had a crank on the side to control the frame speed. Some shorts were from Disney, or some stop-motion animated 70's movies with dinosaurs. The way it illuminated the room made it like my own little drive-in theater. It was like an early DAW since I would enjoy reversing the movies and pretending I was creating a new movie.

F: Where did you both grow up? What was that like?

RG: I grew up in a few places but mostly rural Connecticut. It was quite boring to be honest, but I think it pushed me into exploring music deeper.

EV: I grew up outside of Boston in Braintree, MA. I was always a bit of a weirdo outsider kid and spent a lot of time alone in the woods nearby. I went through periods where I was bullied, but at least had a few close outsider friends; in High School, I had an easier time socially, maybe partly because I made varsity and alternative music started becoming more mainstream. I liked hanging out in the art room. Being close to Boston was cool, though. In my teens, I could jump on the T and go to shows; Usually, raves or punk/hardcore shows that one of my punk friends would invite me to.

F: How did the two of you first meet?

RG: We met through a mutual friend at her birthday party in Brooklyn. We hit it off over our mutual interests of synths and electronic music.

EV: Yes, that. I knew of him back in college from mutual friends. I listened to some of his earlier Codec stuff at the time, and I would see him at certain events, but we never chatted until years later.

F: How'd Snowbeasts initially come together? It started as a solo project of yours, Robert, correct?

RG: It was very shortly a solo project. Elizabeth and I were working on another project at the time, Pattern Behavior, and Snowbeasts was the music that I was doing when she wasn't around. I had taken the plunge into modular synthesis around that time and wanted to push my music into a darker and more atmospheric direction.

EV: I might have contributed slightly on a track on the first release... I just had to look this up yes, I did. "Vocals on 5 & 9 + Synths on 8 by Elizabeth Virosa". As time went on, it became more collaborative, and at 50:50, we found it was a bit too hard to have the two projects going at once. So I feel like Pattern Behavior just blended with Snowbeasts, and since we were playing out and promoting as Snowbeasts more (partly because it fit a little better on line-ups with noise, experimental modular, and metal bands around Providence), we just stuck with Snowbeasts.

F: How'd Snowbeasts end up in Providence? Were you seduced by the brutal New England winters?

RG: I got a call that a company had received my resume and wanted to bring me in for an interview. The strange thing is that I have no recollection of applying for the job. I was just starting to get back into music at the time, and I felt I was stagnating in Connecticut, so I jumped at the opportunity when it arose. Sometimes, the universe puts opportunities where you need be.

EV: I guess I might have missed the colder weather. After living in the DC area for a few years, I moved back to the Boston area and started working with Rob when he announced that he had a studio in Providence. So I would visit on weekends or whenever we set our schedule to work on Pattern Behavior. Eventually, we ended up dating. Now we are married and live in Providence.

F: Let's talk about the name for a minute. Did it just come to you? Are there meanings a layperson wouldn't pick up on?

RG: It comes from going through a really bad winter with numerous blizzards and the effects of being shut in. I have always been fascinated by cryptids so it was sort of born from that.

I was also going through some health issues involving not being able to process food and a lot of the first record was an emotional response to not knowing what was wrong with me. Luckily, there was nothing serious wrong with my health and it was easily remedied.

F: Did Snowbeasts ever perform as a solo act? If so, what were those shows like.

RG: As Snowbeasts, no. However, I had been playing as Raab Codec for a while and as Codec in the early 2000s. I much prefer to play as a duo and I feel like we have built up a solid synergy over the years.

F: After becoming a duo, what was it like taking Snowbeasts to the stage?

RG: It has absolutely been a progression. As the earlier music was more droney and ambient, our



*Taken from the "Devour" video.
Directed by: Luke Haughwout*

stage performances were a lot more sedate. We have always tried to bring a visual aspect to our sets and even in the early days had backing projections.

EV: Right. Partly because of the sound earlier, our stage presence was less performative. Now, though, I have been very interested in getting back to incorporating more movement and my body in the live performances, especially since our tracks are now faster and in a danceable bpm range. I have been taking Butoh classes, which I think have some similarities to some concepts and feelings in our music. I have been calling the latest release, *Devour*, *Haunted Body Music*, since it was influenced by both EBM, other post-punk sounds, and some concepts found in both spiritualists and modern psychiatry when it came to trauma therapy when I was writing some of it. I am really interested in finding and releasing negative energy through music, which I think works not just for me sometimes but for the audience, too. One of the best shows we performed at was in Detroit, and I felt like I almost had another spirit with me dancing; the vibe was pretty wild. Almost everyone there was dancing, which we are not always used to since we are not always playing at dance nights.

F: “*Haunted Body Music*”... I like that, and I think it fits well with your sound. Elizabeth, you’ve mentioned psych concepts... is your personal experience with these topics academic, therapeutic, or both? Therapy saved my life, so I like to hear about others experiences.

EV: I’m glad you found good help. It is harder to come by these days, or sometimes those who need it don’t realize they do. Personally, yes, I have had therapy in the past. I have a learning disability/ADD, and it was not called that or understood quite yet when I used to be taken out of the classroom to study when I was a kid. Also, I suffered some depression in High School and was overly medicated. I still occasionally get depressed, but lately, I seem to be able to get through it and handle it a bit better by going to a few therapy sessions or just doing some self-care (meditation/ more exercise, etc.) if it’s mild.

Academically, when I was in college, I started off studying art therapy. Later, I ended up going to art school, but I have always had an interest in learning about psychology and how it intersects with art and music. I am not a licensed therapist, but I pick up books or take an online course here and there (sound therapy/sound baths, for example). One book I am reading is ‘*The Body Keeps the Score*’, which discusses alternative treatments for post-traumatic stress. Rob also studied psychology, and I still have some of his Jungian books hanging around.

F: Since 2014, Snowbeasts has been quite active, offering releases on an almost bi-annual schedule, and collaborating with some titans of experimental music. Tell us about a particularly fond moment in your back catalogue.

RG: For me, I would say “*Knives*” from our ‘*Instincts*’ album. It was one of those pieces that just happened almost instantly. Sometimes, a spark just hits you and you need to chase where it takes you. I find that sometimes my favorite tracks are the ones that just come together in a couple hours.

EV: I remember early on listening to Rob working in the studio from another room in our old loft when he was working on the first release and it felt like it really took on the tone and tune of the *Elder Gods of Providence*, but really it felt like it came from somewhere else yet still captured the winter and environment we were in at the time.

In terms of collaborations, I was very excited to work with *Bestial Mouths* on a remix of the track *Hex*. I have been a fan for a while, and *R.O.T.T. (innyskin)* happens to be one of their strongest releases so far. It was a pleasure to work on, and that remix even made it to vinyl via *Soil Records*.

F: Who would you both most like to collaborate with, either within or outside the context of *Snowbeasts*?

RG: I have to say that we have been very lucky with the artists we have collaborated with in the past. So first and foremost, I would say that I would love to have more time to work with them again. I also have some friends who have been reaching out about collaboration so I want to make sure I can make that a priority. I never feel like there are enough hours in the day.

EV: We really like collaborating with others, like *Dead Voices on Air*. That still is crazy to me because I used to listen to *Download* a ton in college. If I could, some artists that come to mind would be *JK Flesh*, *Gazelle Twin*, and *The Bug*; I’d love to remix *Diamanda Galas’s* vocals. *Zola Jesus*. *Orphx*, *The Body*.

F: What was the last album, or EP, or single that floored you?

RG: ‘*Damaged*’ by *Ghost Dubs*. It dropped recently on *The Bug’s* *Pressure* label. Some seriously amazing dub and atmosphere on that one.

EV: It’s been a while since I have been floored, but I think the last time was when I listened to the *Gazelle Twin’s* *Unflesh* album. I think I tend to get more floored easily at live performances.

F: Well, tell us about that :) Who’s taking the stage these days that’s blowing your minds?

EV: There are some great performers in the noise, dungeon synth/ NE electronic scene we have played with relatively recently or seen locally. *Compactor*, *Harpy*, *Jenn Taiga*, *Hexx Head*, *Street Fever*, *Trace Amount*, *Pain Chain*... We had a great time seeing a show in London last year. I had never heard of *Years of Denial* and they were amazing. We could not stay

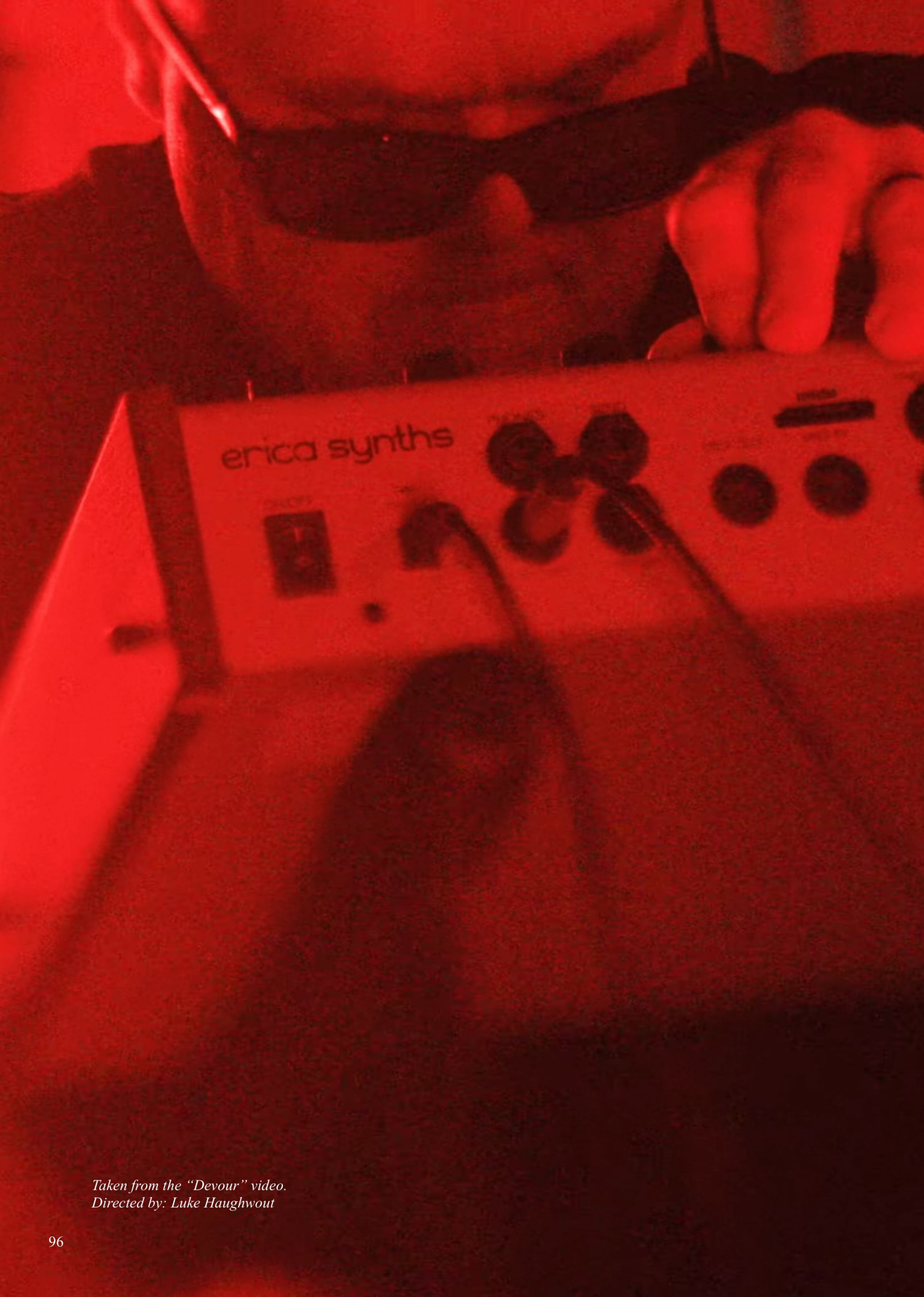


*Taken from the "Devour" video.
Directed by: Luke Haughwout*





*Taken from the "Devour" video.
Directed by: Luke Haughwout*



*Taken from the "Devour" video.
Directed by: Luke Haughwout*

up for the act we initially were there to see, which was Broken English Club. We also got to see Sidewalks and Skeletons who are on the same label as us another night.

RG: Our friend, Compactor, is one. He's always mixing his sets up and doing something different and unique. A lot of it is social commentary, focused on labor and workers.

F: Tell us about an artist working in any medium that you feel deserves more attention than they're getting?

RG: Harpy from Providence. Their live show is an intense mix of noise, performance art, and pounding beats. Very intense and visceral!

EV: Ditto. I have seen some acts that are not quite at their level, in my opinion, on European tours. Anyway, they are on my should have more attention outside Providence list. Same with SRWM and CRAOW.

F: You've recently released "Devour"; 11 slices of experimental darkwave deluxe. What was your vision for the release?

RG: My vision for 'Devour' was to take the concepts we set out in our previous album 'The Endless' further and push ourselves further. There have been a couple of seismic shifts in Snowbeats in terms of style but this time I would say it was more of a focusing and refinement.

EV: I wanted to go a bit darker with more beats. I had more to get off my chest in this one so I knew I wanted to write some lyrics for at least a few tracks.

F: Tell us about something you had to exorcise in this album? Did you find the catharsis you were looking for?

EV: I have been working on letting go of how I perceive my body (negatively), getting closer to death, and the concern over how others may perceive me or seemly have control of those things. I think I am in a better place mentally about those things than I was a year ago.

RG: I had a few big ones to exorcise; over the last few years, I lost both my father and grandmother. A combination of dealing with their deaths and then dealing with the aftermath and family afterward built up a lot of tension that needed to be let out. I don't think I ever gave myself the opportunity to properly grieve either of them, so I think music gave me the vehicle to do that.

F: Which is your favorite track on the album? If it's too difficult to pick a "favorite child", how about telling us about a track you had a lot of fun making?

RG: I am going to go with the title track "Devour". I wrote the bulk of that track while traveling for my previous day job. The real pleasure came from

seeing Elizabeth flesh it out with vocals and bring it in a direction that I hadn't even thought about.

EV: I enjoyed getting into character for the track Distrust and getting some angular and aggressive sounds from my Soma Pipe, a vocal synth that looks like a sax I play live.

F: Which track gave you the most trouble, either technically or creatively?

RG: The majority of the album came together very smoothly. Part of how I create is that I find that an idea isn't working or is floundering, I tend to cut it off early and go on to something else. "Imprints" was probably an example of a track that we forced our way through instead of moving on. I think because it was one of the first tracks we worked on for the new album and wanted to see it through to completion.

EV: I agree, but it's interesting how others think otherwise; I saw someone say in the chat that it was one of their favorite tracks at our listening party.

F: I loved the album's title track. It's got all that electroclash-leaning goodness that I for one am glad to see making its way back into contemporary music. Tell us about the track, and why it became the album's namesake.

RG: The initial intent wasn't to take the track in that direction, It happened more organically. The track was originally more of a techno track and once we started layering some beats with the Erica Perkons drum machine it started taking shape into what it is now. We also added some sounds from our Daxophone to it for the creepy hits and tones-it's typically seen as a more experimental instrument but we wanted to see how we could use it in a dance context.

EV: I was thinking about painters at the time like Goya and how they portray darker imagery. So yeah, Devour was a bit inspired by paintings, common themes in mythologies of power consuming itself and control of the body.

F: Since painting came up, and I think of music as audible paintings, tell us about one of your favorite visual artists. Why do you love them?

EV: I came across a friend's grandmother's painting while leaving a hospital. It was "Lady Slipper" by Penelope Manzella. I read she was more known for her urban landscapes than flora.

I used to paint lady slippers back when I had a studio, so it was cool to see someone else who had done that successfully. I loved the art deco style and the dramatic contrast. Anyway, it was nice seeing it when I left the hospital that day, since I used to get excited finding those flowers in the woods growing up.

RG: I am going to go with Robert Longo. He's



*Taken from the "Devour" video.
Directed by: Luke Haughwout*

known best for his series of drawings of men and women falling, but the piece that really had the biggest impact on me was his large sculpture “All You Zombies Stand Before God”. I remember seeing that piece at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford in the early 90s and was just completely taken with it.

F: The album is loaded with plenty of heavy/fat bass lines and kicks. I know I was shaking my ass all over the place. However, it’s not all dance floor here. “Ancient Memories” stands out as a dark ambient/noise blend that closes out the record with a spoonful of pain. How important to you is mixing in some sonic pain with pleasure?

RG: That track was a nod to our dark ambient beginnings- an acknowledgement of our DNA. For me mixing in some of the sonic pain and dissonance is a catharsis. It’s a way to get frustrations and anxieties out and not have to carry them with me.

EV: We often end our live sets that now feature more dance tracks with an improvised ambient/noise piece, so this track is a bit more in line with that cathartic sonic path, and we still think it’s necessary to include that approach in the current work and live performances for this project.

F: What’s the reception like when you blast off into the noise arena? Are you finding the audience is as enthused as with the beat oriented material?

RG: Typically it goes over really well. Sometimes it comes as a surprise to our newer listeners expecting an entire industrial/techno set.

EV: We often will play a bit noisier if the bill leans that way since we have moments of improvisation, but we still will play our beat heavier tracks. So far, we seem to engage with most of that audience, but there may be less dancing than a dance night or a more dance-focused line-up. We had some fans come from sludge metal lineups, too (hence our current logo by an artist who typically does logos for metal bands).

F: What, if anything, do you specifically hope people take away from the record?

RG: I think our music affects people in different ways. At one of our earliest gigs, we had a woman come up to us and tell us that our set helped her with their anxiety. As someone who has suffered from panic attacks in the past, that’s the most amazing thing that someone could say to me. It wasn’t an intention by any means but a wonderful side effect. But on a more general level I hope that people will find something about the album that will bring them back to listen multiple times.

EV: I hope it finds its way to those who love it, like to dance to it or even help them deal with something heavy and challenging to take on.

F: Rob, you’ve referenced Anxiety a couple of times. Is this something you’ve dealt with your whole life? Have you been able to get a handle on it?

RG: Anxiety is something that came on really heavy in my mid twenties. My first anxiety attack took place while driving on the Mass Pike on my way to visit a friend in Boston. Over the years, I have been able to tame it quite a bit. For me, anxiety usually hits in the down time. I do well in stressful situations because mentally I don’t allow myself to fall into the doom spiral. It’s the quiet times where I find it coming up and causing issues. This may be the reason that I am always working or starting up a new project—as defense mechanism. Flying used to be a major panic trigger but I was traveling about 50% of the time in my last job so I had to work on that. All that being said, it’s been over a year since I had a full blown panic attack.

F: For those curious about what a Snowbeasts show in late 2024 would be like, tell us about your current live set up. What should people expect to see?

RG: I approach live gigs much in the way, a DJ does - everything is continuously mixed to keep the energy going. We do leave space for improvisation though, to keep things interesting. We also don’t operate off a predetermined set list so every one of our sets are a bit different.

EV: Our current set-up is a bit more minimal with lighting since I am focusing more on performing. At some point in the near future, I want to bring back more video and possibly more interactive elements.

F: What’s coming up next for Snowbeasts?

RG: I am working on a solo album right now of drum & bass tracks. It’s a genre that I absolutely love and made an album full of tracks of in the late 90s but really have only dabbled in since. I started dabbling with cutting up some breaks a few months ago and then I went down the drum & bass rabbit hole. We have started on an another collab album with Solypsis and some remixes that will be announced shortly. Other than that we are plotting and planning our live gigs for 2025.

EV: I’m working on some new ideas for interactive performances for next year with some guidance from other artists. We typically write in the winter of course. It’s a bit early to know exactly, but this will be a shorter release. At least, that’s what I’m thinking now.

F: Any last words/thoughts before I let you go?

RG: Thanks for chatting with us and look forward to more Snowbeasts music and shows in the near future!

EV: Thank you!

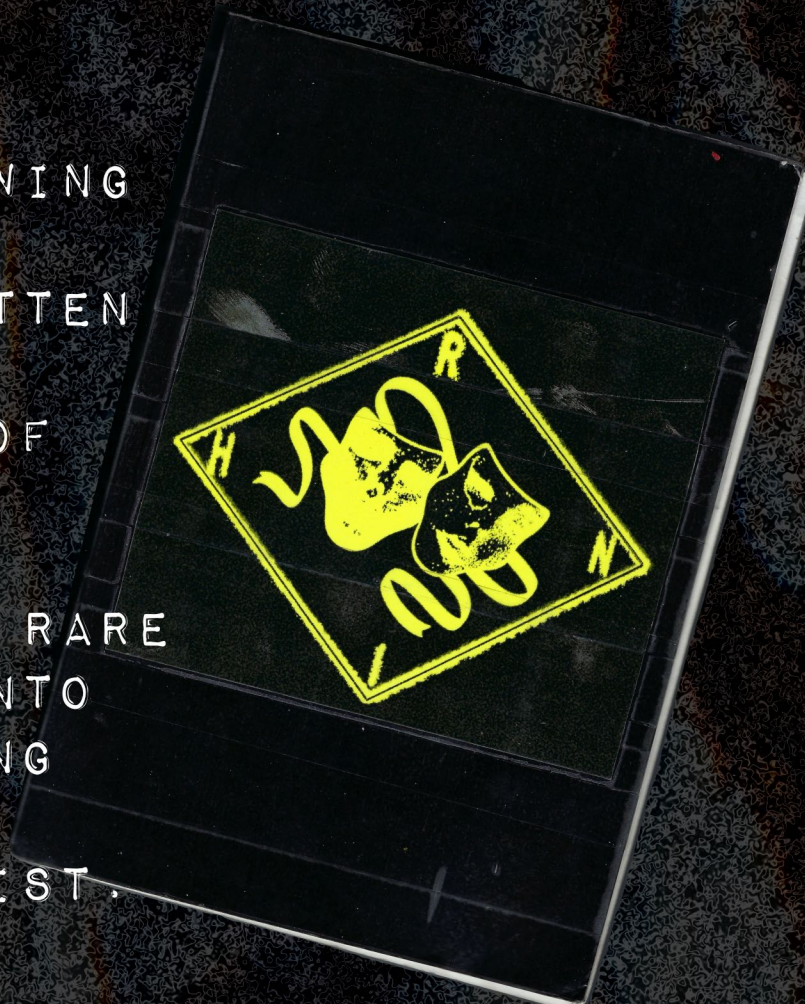


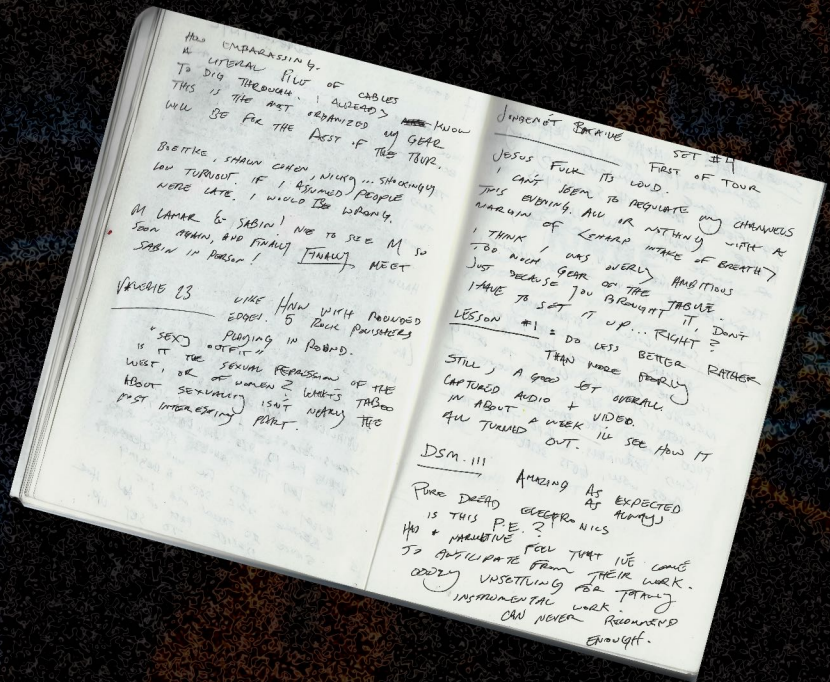
ON TOUR WITH



Jon Benét Bataille

THE FOLLOWING
IS A TOUR
DIARY WRITTEN
BY THOMAS
BOETTNER OF
JONBENET
BATAILLE,
PROVIDING RARE
INSIGHT INTO
THE TOURING
LIFE OF A
NOISE ARTIST.





17 OCTOBER

RIDGEWOOD/QUEENS, NYC

NAPPED BETWEEN STAMFORD AND NYC. AWAKE TO ENDLESS TRAFFIC AND THE CONSENSUAL CHAOS OF NYC DRIVERS. A WONDER THAT THE STREETS AREN'T FLOODED WITH THE OFFAL OF VEHICULAR MANSLAUGHTERS.

TRANS-PECOS—SURPRISINGLY SPACIOUS (AND LOUD!) FOR ITS SIZE. EVERYONE OPTS FOR LINE CHECKS RATHER THAN FULL SOUND CHECK, WHICH IS A BLESSING BECAUSE I NEED THE BETTER PART OF AN HOUR TO SET-UP. HOW EMBARRASSING. A LITERAL PILE OF CABLES. I ALREADY KNOW THIS IS THE MOST ORGANIZED ANY OF THIS GEAR WILL BE FOR THE REST OF THIS TOUR.*

BOETTKE, SHAUN COHEN, NICKY ... SHOCKINGLY LOW TURNOUT. NYC. COME THRU? M LAMAR AND SABIN! VERY FLATTERED THAT THEY BOTH MADE A POINT TO COME SEE JBB DESPITE HAVING BOTH HAD EXCEPTIONALLY LONG/BUSY DAYS. BLESS THIS MESS.

VALERIE 23 LIKE HNW WITH ROUNDED EDGES. 5 ROCK POLISHERS PLAYING IN ROUND. WHAT'S TABOO ABOUT SEXUALITY ISN'T NEARLY THE MOST INTERESTING PART.

JONBENET BATAILLE LESSON #0.5: JUST BECAUSE YOU BROUGHT IT, DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO SET IT UP. LESSON #1: DO LESS BETTER, RATHER THAN MORE POORLY.

DSM-III PURE DREAD CREEPTRONICS, OOZY UNSETTLING. CANNOT RECOMMEND ENOUGH.

SWOLLEN ORGANS HIGHER FIDELITY THAN USUAL? OR AM I MISREMEMBERING? MEAN, BRUTISH, PERVY—EXCELLENT.

SLOW SLOW LORIS STYLISTICALLY, OUTLIERS ON THE BILL. NOT A BAD THING THOUGH. REMINISCENT OF PUCE MARY'S THE DROUGHT LP. KIND BERLINERS, HOPE THEIR TOUR GOES WELL/GETS BETTER.

NOT ONLY DID ANDREW GET US A SHOW, BUT HE REMEMBERS (LAST MINUTE) THAT HE OWNS A RECORD STORE—OUR PRAYERS FOR HOUSING ARE ANSWERED!

*I TURN OUT TO BE WRONG WITH THIS ASSUMPTION!

PHOTO BY: SPORESICK





V
VENGANCE
REDUCED CARBON
40% less carbon footprint than the same size in glass

Rolland
KEYBOARDS

WORLD PEACE
BY ERIC HOFFER

UPRO

DIRTY NOISE

KE
I'M THE
HUFFIN
RAG AN
IN THE

**Jon Benet
Ravalle**

18 OCTOBER

RICHMOND, VA

AFTER 2PM, CLOSER TO 3 AS WE LEAVE NYC.
WHICH TAKES MORE THAN AN HOUR.
LIKE ALWAYS.
LIKE EXPECTED.

GET AROUND PHILADELPHIA EASY ENOUGH. BUT ONCE WE HIT DC/
ALEXANDRIA/THE BELTWAY PROPER, TRAFFIC ALTERNATES BETWEEN A
DRAG AND A CRAWL.

MAKE IT TO THE WAREHOUSE BY 9:43. WE MISSED **OOZING MEAT**.
MAD DASH TO SET-UP IN THE HALF-LIGHT OF THE VENUE DURING
JEFF PLUMMER AND **CEVRA** SETS.
ON THAT NOTE, EXCELLENT TO SEE JEFF AGAIN. GLAD HE ESCAPED
NOLA TOO.

LIFE APPRECIATION RENEWAL CLOSES THE NIGHT. SO STOKED.
LOVED 10-56.
WON'T SPOIL THE SURPRISE BUT I'LL SAY THIS. WHETHER EARNEST
OR CALCULATED OR EDGY OR TRANSGRESSIVE... CAPTIVATING SET
THAT I WON'T FORGET HAVING SEEN.

EXCELLENT MEDITERRANEAN AT A SUPER PALESTINIAN SPOT AFTER
THE GIG.
FAT TIPS ALL AROUND. F.T.R.T.T.S.

CRASH AT JASON HODGES'. SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED BUT, DESPITE
US HAVING NEVER MET, WE KNOW ALL THE SAME PEOPLE AND SPOTS
AND PROJECTS AND RUMORS. IT'S SUCH A SMALL SCENE.

ANOTHER LONG DRIVE TO PGH TOMORROW.
THANKFULLY JASON WORKS AT 10:45.

FROM PROVIDENCE, RI



Jon Benét Bataille

LIFE APPRECIATION RENEWAL **CEVRA**

JEFF PLUMMER

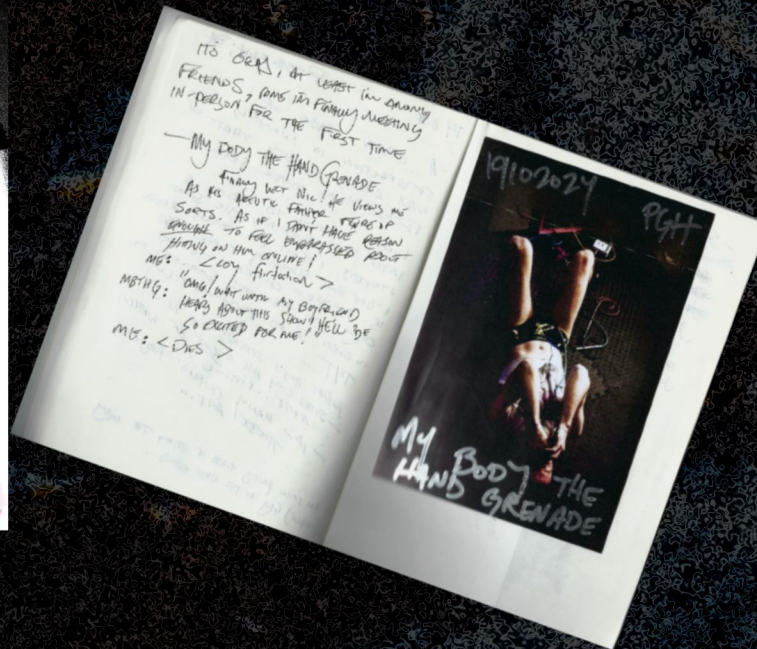
FRIDAY

OCTOBER 18th

8PM

THE WAREHOUSE

FLYER BY: JASON HODGES



19 OCTOBER
PITTSBURGH, PA

A STRANGE SENSE OF SATISFACTION IN KNOWING MY WAY AROUND A CITY MY FRIENDS HAVEN'T BEEN TO. I LIKE HOW QUEER PGH IS... STARK CONTRAST TO THE CITY MY PARENTS SHOWED ME WHEN I WAS A CHILD. I WONDER IF IT ALWAYS WAS, AND THEY WERE JUST IGNORANT... TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, GUARANTEED, YES.

- STEEL CITY SURE HAS A LOT OF WALL NOISE. APPROPRIATE.
- ALSO A SURPRISINGLY LARGE NUMBER OF COUPLES' PROJECTS...

OBSERVATION: (SOMEHOW WENT FROM BEING THE ONLY GAY GUY AT NOISE SHOWS, TO BEING THE ONLY SINGLE GAY GUY AT NOISE SHOWS?)

MY BODY THE HAND GRENADE MY SON, MY SON, WHAT HAVE YE DONE!
SO GLAD TO FINALLY MEET NIC FACE-TO-FACE.
HE VIEWS ME AS SOME SORT OF ARTISTIC FATHER FIGURE.
"NAW, CREEPY OLDER BROTHER AT BEST."
BLISTERING OLD SCHOOL P.E.
FUCKS, GOATED, ALL RIZZ, NO CAP.

PURITY-KINK
SCARLET DIVA KINDBERG HAD A FAMILY EMERGENCY, SO IT'S UP TO HAITIAN TOM AND MOTHER SUPERIOR JILLA.
WAIT, IS THIS MY FIRST SCARLET DIVA SET? WELL LOOK AT THAT...

GOURMET SHIT SCENE RICHARD RAMIREZ + SEAN MATSUZ-RAMIREZ PROJECT.
THERE'S A STORY TO THE NAME THAT I'M NOT YET PRIVY TO, BUT KNOWING THEM IT'S DELICIOUSLY VILE.

CHAINLINK MISTRESS ANONYMOUS TRANS BDSM HARSH NOISE COLLECTIVE PROJECT?
LADIES, IT'S STARTING TO FEEL A LITTLE CULT-Y IN HERE...

ORAN DELPHI FROM ROCHESTER. WIZARD HATS. WINDCHIMES. MEOWING.
"THIS IS SATANIC." - MOONBEAM TERROR

FAREWELL DEMON DUNGEON, YOU WERE A GREAT BASEMENT HOUSE VENUE SPACE. YOU NOW GO TO HOUSE VENUE VALHALLA WITH THE REST OF THE GREAT ONES... CLUB RECTUM, HOUSE OF OUR LARD, SHEGYPT, FORT THUNDER, FUCK MOUNTAIN, MEDUSA, GHOST SHIP, RHINOCEROPOLIS, LE CRUNK, IMMAGINARIUM, BIG PINK, ETC.





20 OCTOBER

PHILADELPHIA

SUCKS THAT THE CITY WITH THE MOST FRIENDS IS ONE OF THE ONES WE'LL SPEND THE LEAST TIME IN.

SHOCKINGLY LITTLE SOCIALIZING ON THIS TOUR. I GUESS IT'S 'CAUSE WE KEEP ARRIVING LATE. ALSO TURNOUT HAS BEEN LOW ALL OVER. WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

SOMEHOW PHILLY ENDS UP BEING CLOSER THAN I THOUGHT. OR RECALLED? MAYBE IT'S A NEW CONNECTOR, YOU KNOW HOW PA LOVES THEIR HIGHWAYS. ARRIVE WITH PLENTY OF TIME AND, SHOCKER, THE EARLY HOUSE SHOW DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT EARLY ACTUALLY. AMAZING, MASSIVE BASEMENT. TWO BASEMENTS IN TWO DAYS? WUNDERBAR!

AETHER (+ DUSTIN FOSNACHT)

WILD AND VISCERAL AND BASICALLY SCREAM AND THROW A LOT OF SCRAP METAL AROUND AGGRESSIVELY. RELIEVED THEY MISS OUR TABLE. I DON'T WANNA HAVE TO SET UP THREE TIMES.

SPECTACLE OUT OF THE EARLY DAYS OF AMERICANOISE. FUNNY 'CAUSE I THINK THE OLDEST ONE OF THE CORE GROUP IS MAYBE 21.

ONLY ONE PERSON COMES TO THE SHOW. NEW IN TOWN, FROM VA. GOSH, PHILLY. NEITHER GYNA NOR I HAVE EVER HAD A GOOD GIG IN YOU. WHAT'S THE FUCKIN' JAWN? YOUSE REALLY GONNA LET A BUNCH OF YINZERS SHOW YA UP?



FLYER BY: THOMAS BOETTNER

MEATLOCKER presents

OCTOBER 21
DOORS 9:00
NOISE 9:30
MEATLOCKER
8 PARK ST
MONTCLAIR, NJ
BRING \$\$\$ FOR TOURING ACT



OCTOBER 21
DOORS 9:00
NOISE 9:30
MEATLOCKER
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MONTCLAIR, NJ
BRING \$\$\$ FOR TOURING ACT

JONBENET BATAILLE PROVIDENCE, RI
THOMAS BOETTNER X GYNA BOOTLEG

HYPERTROPHY ^{NY}
HARSH MUSCLE NJ LEGEND

NA-CLO ^{NJ}
LOCAL HARSH NOISE WALL



21 OCT

MONTCLAIR, NJ

SHORTEST DRIVE OF THE TOUR.
FRIGHTENINGLY CLEAN FOR A TOWN IN JERSEY.
OF COURSE, ALL THE RECORD AND BOOK STORES ARE CLOSED MON-WED.
SURE, WHY NOT.

THE ONE AND ONLY TIME WE GET TO TOWN WITH LITERAL HOURS TO KILL
AND DAYLIGHT TO BURN.
WHY IS IT 80°F?

THANKFULLY THE MEATLOCKER IS OUR HAT TRICK. BASEMENT #3 IN AS
MANY DAYS.

WALL-TO-WALL STICKERS AND GRAFFITI. A 45 YEAR OLD SPACE? THIS
COULD BE THE OLDEST DIY SPOT IN AMERICA?!
GOTTA LOVE A SPACE WITH ONE RULE: "YOU CAN'T SMOKE CRACK IN
HERE. RORY DOESN'T LIKE THE FUMES."

AND NOT TOO BAD TURNOUT FOR A MONDAY!!

HYPERTROPHY

WHAT A GREAT PROJECT,
AND SAUNDERS IS A GOOD GUY, TOO! TOTAL GOOF
THOUGH. HOLDS US HOSTAGE AFTER THE GIG WITH
PIRATE JOKES AND KNOCK-KNOCK GROANERS.

NA-CLO

INCREDIBLE, DENSE, CRUNCHY WALL NOISE. LOVE IT.
10/10 WOULD WATCH LIVE AGAIN.

HEAD FOR RI AFTER THE GIG 'CAUSE, WELL, WHY NOT?

FIN

BOOKS

THE EARTH SINGS IN FLOWERS WHILE I SING IN TEARS

**COLLECTED
WRITING**

BRIAR MOTH

Briar Moth

"The Earth Sings In Flowers While I Sing In Tears"

2024 Self Released | briarmoth.bigcartel.com

Briar Moth is a late diagnosed ASD and Non-binary artist from the Southern US. They've had a whole lotta life experience, much of which has been expressed throughout the years through their numerous musical projects; the most recent of which is Vexagon. This book, "The Earth Sings In Flowers While I Sing In Tears", is a collection of lyrics written over the past decade, sorted by year with additional poetry and prose, that reads like a tortured artist's autobiography.

2014 is where we begin. Here, we have early lyrics written for the music project Loser. In these lyrics, there are words of frustration and anger. "pendulum" has a closing line that resonated; "in between, spring & solace / at each end, hell". That feeling of being fucked no matter what you do or where you are. "Even Me" is another that gave me a gut punch of relatability; "but I never wore the right clothes / and my words weren't on point with all you pose as / the anger there was my only friend / the hatred I always felt then". If you know a neurodivergent individual, this is probably how they felt throughout their adolescent/teen years right into their 20's, and possibly beyond.

2018's "All Hallows" shares a sentiment I think all "weird" kids have; wishing every day was Halloween. Is it because of the horror aspect? Is it the monsters? The spirit world? I think not. It's about one night a year where you can essentially be whoever you want to be, as bizarre or extreme as it may seem to others on a regular day, and just been seen as one of the crowd. There's no othering; it's hard to single out somebody for being a freak when everyone's a freak.

2020 brings the largest prose piece of the book, "Search Lights". It's a 'you can't go back' sort of piece, where Briar finds themselves skating in the skate parks of their youth, only to find the rails of old have been completely replaced; the battle scars of hundreds, maybe thousands of skaters erased from history to appease a gentrified neighborhood. They also talk about the simplistic wonderment of going to a Blockbuster Video as a child, and playing video games in general.

On a more serious note, Briar also talks about their dying Grandfather, their beloved "Papa", and the experience of coping with the loss. Lyrics/Poems like "No More Footprints" carry the sentiment and expand on a loving connection that won't dim or sever, no matter the time or distance apart.

2021 is a chapter that focuses on the heart; what it wants, what it can't have, what it tells us to do, and what it refuses to listen to. We've got lyrics detailing the misadventures of a misfit couple, just far out enough to be in with each other. However, it's not all wine and roses. "Scream Queen" has the lines "Run while you can / You shouldn't have to cry for love". "Just Not Today" outlines the cracks in the foundation, and the confused frustration that follows the death of a relationship: "We were in love & then you didn't exist / You thought I was cool & then I didn't exist."

Then, we have "Spectrum", which talks about Briar's experience learning they have ASD, and the mixed emotions that come with such a medical revelation. Additionally, Briar examines the critiques lobbed at their ASD diagnosis: "You don't look autistic / What the hell is that supposed to mean?". Life with divergent traits that aren't physically apparent is difficult. Unless you physically appear to be debilitated, Neurotypicals will simply assert that you aren't, and that's an endlessly exhausting loop one finds themselves trapped inside of. What happened to empathy?

2022 works feel more pointed, more angry. Briar's clearly cleaning the closet of their past, and moving the pile of skeletons and guilt fueled repression is hard work. "Here Comes Nothing" pines for some recognizable acknowledgement of their value. "Voyeur" is atypically distant, but I think that's the point; being present but too far away to touch or be heard. "Have A Great Summer" is sarcastically titled, and recalls some morbid experiences during High School. It also scratches the surface of a reality Briar may not have recognized within themselves prior: "but really no one here but me / and a potentially better me / that doesn't exist yet / because I won't get out of the way".

There's more, but we must save something for you to discover on your own. Overall, this is an intimate look into the mind of the artist. The gamut of emotions are unabashedly splayed and explored throughout, as is their journey of self discovery and the many pitfalls one in their position faces. The book has yet to receive a wide release (just Advance copies at the time this was written), but you can keep your eyes on Briar Moth's Linktree for a link to purchase. While you wait, check out their catalogue of music as Vexagon: we recommend their darkwave infused Twin Peaks tribute "Love Is Surrender", which is available digitally or as a limited edition cassette.

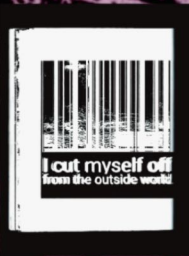


COLLECTED ZINES

2009 - 2020



Thomas Boettner



Thomas Boettner

"Collected Zines 2009-2020"

2024 Self Released | Lulu.com

I've included something from Thomas Boettner in every issue of FANE so far; either an article he's written, or a review of one of his works, or even a full on interview with the man himself. All of that is for good reason. While he may not be the first openly gay artist operating in the current Noise/Death Industrial scene, he's certainly one of the best. His prolific audio output is spread across seemingly countless niche labels of high regard, and the quantity hasn't negatively impacted the quality of his work one iota (a rarity amongst creatives). Additionally, he's just a genuinely good guy who wants to see his scene, and everyone operating within it, grow and thrive (hell, he was one of the first people to offer assistance to FANE). Needless to say, when he asked for some minor assistance laying out his latest book, I couldn't say yes quickly enough.

"Collected Zines 2009-2020" is exactly that, an anthology collecting Boettner's very scarce and sought out zine publications. Some of these works were limited to as little as four copies, making the anthology the first time many will be able to absorb the material. The collection is divided into seven chapters with each zine getting it's own space to breathe. The pages of the original zines were all hand scanned by Boettner in a very DIY sense which hold true to the spirit of the original publications themselves and adds a certain "je ne sais quoi" to the overall aesthetic.

We start with "FIG. XXXV, Issue 1". Here, we're treated to a collection of both full color and black & white collage cut-ups. Some pieces feature assorted escort advertisements with taglines like "Me love you long time" juxtaposed with strips of cut up Latin (Roman) phrases and images of human decay. There are references to people like Dennis Cooper, Benito Mussolini, Ted Kaczynski, and Issei Sagawa. A particular stand out here for me is a page dated 2 Nov 2009 at the top that features a polaroid shot, I think of the author, that has the portraiture sensibility of late 60s/early 70s Joel Peter Witkin.

Next we have "Possession Limits". This black & white zine leans heavily into excerpts from some kind of stranger danger pamphlet for kids, designed to teach them about their PRIVATE ZONE and who or what is allowed to touch there (spoiler: no one and nothing). These run along cut ups of some highly transgressive literature, presented without glorification and with the intent (I think) to polarize. Reading bits about creeps and the things they do instantly makes the preceding PRIVATE ZONE sections infinitely more

unsettling. Continuing, we've got an earnest essay via paper strips about human sexuality, the roles people assume, and what that may or may not say about those in assumed positions. There are other pieces that ask if homosexuals are by nature biological terrorists, and if their orgasms equate to abortions.

Following that is "<<Skull With Silver Tooth>>". Here in black & white, we have many pages torn/xeroxed from a book on Demonology and various associated rituals. There are also pages that will feature either a single word or single sketched image, which in a way challenge the reader to see beyond the page and decipher their intent or larger meaning as it relates to the whole. Some examples are pages dedicated to words and phrases like "gag", "April 1999", and "piss drinkers" as well as simple line art drawings of an owl, a pentagram, and a headstone. There's also a list of names that include well known victims of suicide and murder, as well as child killers and figure skaters.

"Installation + Performance Outline" comes up next. This zine, in its simplicity, probably hit me the hardest. On its face, we have happy portraits/candid of fourteen males, each with a different phrase typed over the whole of their image. At first, I wasn't entirely sure what was being presented, but then I saw Konerak Sinthasomphone's smiling face and it all hit me; I'm looking at a collection of homicide victims. Sinthasomphone is, I believe, the youngest of Jeffrey Dahmer's victims, and one that might still be alive today if the Milwaukee Police hadn't delivered his bleeding, naked, and disoriented self post escape back into the arms of his rapist and killer. Every victim has a story, and every victim is a tragedy, but little Konerak rips my guts apart every time I see his innocent, smiling face. The depths of human apathy and depravity know no limits.

The other chapters I leave for you to discover and decipher on your own. There are 186 pages to this anthology, and the vast majority feature dense collage work dedicated to the sacred, the profane, the overtly sexual, and the criminally insane. You can pick up your own copy through lulu.com for \$50 Softcover and \$65 Hardcover. How long this stays available is anyone's guess, so don't wait too long to snag one for yourself or that fucked up qwierdo in your life!



MUSIC



Unsub "Ambitious Victim"

2024, Love Earth Music | unsublem.bandcamp.com

This release really surprised me!

Unsub is a collaboration between Steven Davis (+DOG+) and Kevin Bernier (FetusK). Both have an overwhelming resume in both music and art, and they put it all on display here.

Now, looking at that gorefest of an album cover, I fully expected some full on impenetrable Noise/Grind/Metal assault with guttural vocals and zero mercy. What I got, however, was the complete opposite. Unsub are serving us dark ambient atmospheres, reverb laden guitar drones with doom-like riffing, and plenty of pulsating and fractured electronics and percussion.

"The Cleansing" features brightly strummed guitars layered atop heavily distorted noise (kept at a low enough level to not overstep its boundary). Long, drawn out riffs ripple like waves. Dark electronics peek through at times, giving an eerie, unsettling feeling. However, those riffing guitars feel like a protector clearing the way.

"Ritual Tribulation" has the synths pushing their way forward. Riffing and soaring guitars match well with dub-like percussion. This made me think of Controlled Bleeding's more dub-infused moments like "Red Hands Waiting". The sampled choirs and washed out ghostly screaming really seal the deal.

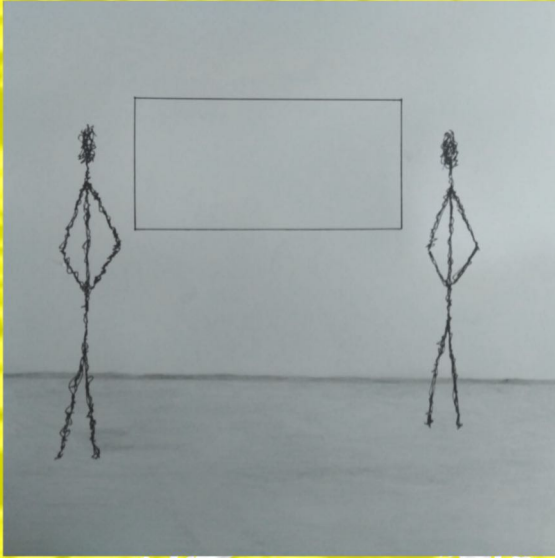
"Hijacked Vacuity" is a very laid back, dark ambient dreamscape. Yes, there's guitars, and distortions, and odd percussion, and all the things we love about abrasive music, but they're all bent to Unsub's will, and their will dictates a warm, embracing experience. The ringing bell that makes sporadic appearances drives home the meditative aura surrounding this one.

The worming synth that starts "Torture Trap" immediately made me think of Throbbing Gristle's "Slug Bait". However, the hip-hop like beats, middle eastern instrumentation, and swirling dirge of vocal extremities that come in very shortly thereafter change that position very quickly. I found myself bouncing along to the best, waiting for an MC to start spitting fire (spoiler: there's no MC). Really great feel to this track. A remix of this by The Bug would really be something!

"Giras Dominance" is a dusty, desert dirge. Hissing air, delay and reverb... we're struggling through the heat. Kevin's guitar work here is beautifully layered and ever evolving upon a theme. The track loops, but each time a loop passes, something more gets added or boosted or distorted. Soaring synths, heavy hitting drums, rolling basslines. Over the 10+ minutes of this beast, we're taken on quite a journey through the tracks evolution.

"Returned To The Coffin", the closer, is an airy, ambient piece. Dark electronic flutters pan and shift in volume. Cavernous, heavily delayed drones dip and soar along the crashing waves of SUNN O))) styled doom guitars. The riffing increases in intensity until the track finally collapses in upon itself around the 14 minute mark.

This is a "must have" for me. Digital you can pick up for whatever price you choose (free if you must). CDs are only \$7 Shipped (presumably continental US only, additional shipping charged elsewhere). Definitely a very strong high point in the Love Earth Music discography. It's time to eat, kids... nom nom nom.



Alpha-27

“Naked Suicide: A Nihilistic Electronics Presentation”

2024, Self Released | alpha-27.bandcamp.com

I first got introduced to the Athens, Greece based Alpha-27 through their YouTube channel where they talk about all kinds of music, especially industrial, noise, and power electronics. Admittedly, because they're soooooo good at reviewing and analyzing music, I was a bit nervous about attempting to write a review of theirs, but here goes!

“The Numerous Moments I Wasted My Life” lives somewhere between Power Electronics and Post-Hardcore. At times I felt like I was listening to At The Drive-In. Lyrically heartbreaking, the track deals with those terrible feelings of worthlessness and the dark areas our minds can go to: “Waste Of Time / One More Time / Sacrifice / Let It Fly”.

“Your Smile Exposes Your Broken Teeth” has got a groove I am absolutely in love with; Heavy, distorted and industrial AF. It's a red hot slice of digital hardcore.

“We Fetishize Death” thumps along with a minimal techno beat. Speak/say vocals discuss the human obsession with, and romanticism of, death and destruction. Ventilated noise and static creep in and take over before pounding drums and searing guitars steal the forefront; vocals become heavily distorted screams.

“Unfiltered Apocalypse” starts as a full on industrial noise assault, halted in moments to give way to rhyming sing/say vocals. Halfway in, the track touches on early 2000's metal/rock before pushing itself back into the void of extreme noise.

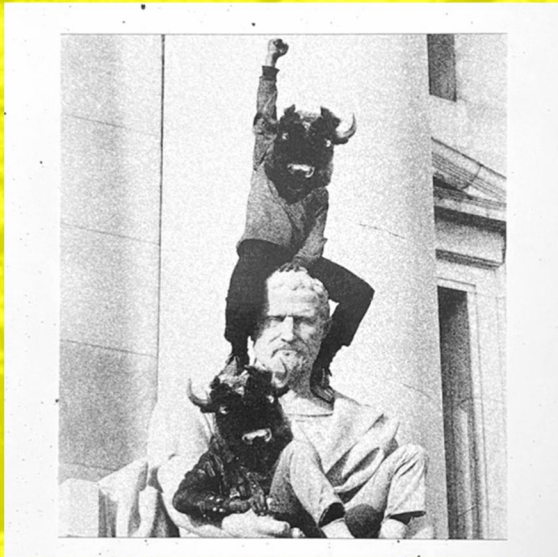
“Free Cage Bird” is industrial hip-hop, adjacent to something we'd hear from Death Grips. Lyrically, we're dealing with those people who live under oppression and actively support the oppressor, thinking they'll be welcomed by their captors. “I Am Free Inside My Cage / For Anyone Else That's Not The Case”.

“Resentment Of Over-Exaggerated Emotional Devotion” brings in a fleet of pounding toms. The synth moves like a worm, not dissimilar to the opening of KMFDM's “Juke Joint Jezebel”. Lyrics like “Disengage / Disassociate / Distance / Deflect” read like survival instructions.

There's plenty more to experience here, but I don't want to give it all away. You can grab this beast digitally at whatever price makes you happy, and I highly suggest you do just that.



Photo by: Alpha-27



Bison Squad “Prodigal Nothingness”

2024, Love Earth Music
woodroomcollective.bandcamp.com

Bison Squad is the Noise/PE project of crash-masters Professor A and Stab Master Slash. “Prodigal Nothingness” is their most recent effort on the LEM label, and it’s a great one!

“Where Will I Find Salvation” is harsh noise goodness. We’ve got impenetrable layers of noise with laser-like synths firing off around us and slowly pounding bass inducing trance-like states. Heavily distorted vocals swirl above the mix.

“A Firm Accounting Of Everything Lost” continues the heated noise assault. You can hear the static fabric being pulled apart at the seams. Short vocal bursts tease from deep within.

“Day After Day After” brings the grinding, and crushing. Fuzzed out frequency loops accompany waves of noise. High pitched tones pierce and stab just long enough to make sure you’re paying attention. Sampled vocals rise to the surface, while mumbling and murmuring vox stay deep within the bed.

“Obsidian”, the 14:14 epic of the album, starts with ear shattering metallics and pounding bass. Harsh noise slowly builds and fades like ripples in a child’s plastic pool. Heavy drones wail like held guitar chords before the track shifts to an all noise assault.

I’m just scratching the surface here. Saying “don’t take my word for it” is sorta crazy for a reviewer to say, but you really gotta just hunker down and get wrecked by this one. There’s tons to pick apart and digest here, and at, what, \$7 a CD from LEM you really can’t go wrong!

Couldn’t find a digital offering at the time this was written, but check with the band and label if that’s your drug of choice. I’m sure someone can hook you up.



MSTRBLSTR “El Jefe Ácido”

2024, Self Released | mstrblstr.bandcamp.com

MSTRBLSTR has been kicking out the ACID jams since at least the early 90’s. For this little two track slice of clubland past, he digs into the vaults to unearth two delightful slabs of vintage ACID, recorded to DAT on the same day in 1996.

“El Jefe Ácido” is classic ACID. We’ve got 808s keeping the rhythm section bumping, and we’ve got the quintessential 303 helping us to “turn on, tune in, and drop out.” With the 808s just bumping, I half expected Afrika Bambaataa to start dropping some bars! My ass was shaking.

“Downtown Wasteland” slowly builds with industrial leaning sound design gently popping off while a bass groove builds in the background. The 303 is working overtime here to bring all the ACID weirdness. This is the kinda stuff I’d like to hear at some warehouse rave... odd synths/rhythms, sounds in constant flux, and some incredibly hard metallic percussion that comes in like a fucking Semi without breaks.

It’s been a while since I took a long strange trip to the ACID house. This delightful offering is proof that my visit was long overdue. There’s plenty of other great ACID based material available for consumption at the artists Bandcamp page.



E.O.C. (Engineering Of Consent) “Dreams”

2024, Love Earth Music | eofc.bandcamp.com

Mexico's Engineering Of Consent, otherwise known as E.O.C., unload their latest (debut?) work upon us via the mighty Love Earth Music label. Over the course of 5 tracks and about 40 minutes, E.O.C. unveil their concept of “Dreams”.

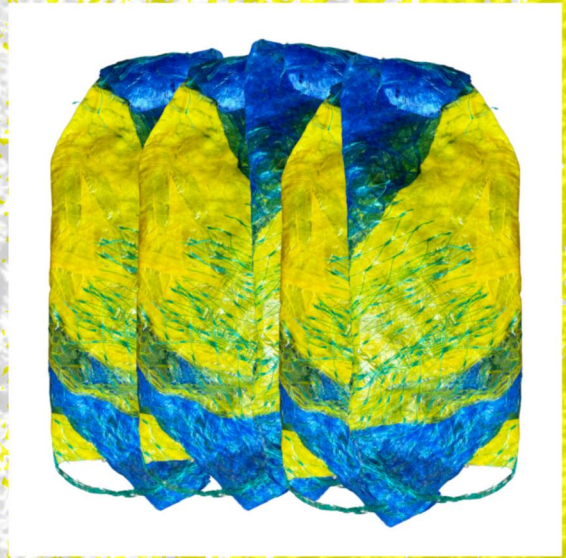
We kick off with the title track, “Dreams”, which begins with spoken word samples. Slowly, a bed of wet electronic sloshing builds. Spouts of static expand and retract while the violent sounds of metalworking crash in looping intervals. Buzzing blips and fried electronics complete the piece.

“Happiness” has greater drone properties than its predecessor. There's a reverb laden, clock-like ticking (or perhaps bowing) under short, distant bursts of metallic pummeling. Samples of individuals discussing the sources of evil/happiness pop up briefly: “they never questioned the reality.” The following track, “Human Nature”, very much continues this theme, with similar ticking, droning, sampling, and noise.

“Prosperity” shows off some shifted, gated, and time stretched electronic rhythms. Layered vocal samples muddle each other, but the subject of prosperity can be picked out at times. A wall of noise occasionally comes at you, as if being shot through a fire hose.

“To Be Normal” feels anything but. There's this rhythm that sounds like a distorted baby whimpering that slightly unsettles me; its pitch shifting amid waves of crispy static. A minor cacophony of assembled noises flare and fade while our whimpering rhythm distorts into high pitched, knife-like slashes. Bit-crushed noise is thrown like flames until we reach an abrupt end.

If you're looking for some mantra-like, semi-rhythmic, dark ambient washed noise, E.O.C. have got you covered. Available now on CD & Digital.



Chad M. Clark + Damon Smith “Hallucinated Citations”

2024, distant taxa music | chadclark.bandcamp.com

Free Jazz/Improvisational giants Chad M. Clark and Damon Smith, who have both worked with some of the best known names in the genre today, meet here for the first time on “Hallucinated Citations”. Clark brings his guitars, Smith his basses, and in the end we have four almost seasonal variations on a theme.

“the Asterisk” is jangly, which I know isn't the strongest description, but that's the feel I get here. Lots of tiny vibrations throughout. Guitars sound like waterphones at times with plenty of warble.

“the Dagger mark” is drawn. Even with hasty fretwork and fingering, the piece manages to sway side to side like a slowly rocking boat. It's nearly intoxicating. String scraping, and other abuses, are more prevalent here than before.

“the Crossed dagger mark” is glassy. Slides are the standouts, played with a variety of glassy objects. Bowed strings boom along to crying guitar notes.

“the Section sign” is a bit kinetic. It's ecstatic at times, it's strummed, it's bowed, it's picked and pulled apart. Every action sounds like it's being carried out by a heavier, more forceful hand than before, while somehow also maintaining a calm demeanor over all.

This one was interesting. A bit difficult for those new to the genre, but with so many rich and vibrant textures, it rewards the listeners who put in the effort

Some VERY cool, one-of-a-kind cassettes are still available for those who act fast!.



Mictain "Murmur"

2024, Upside Records | mictain.bandcamp.com

"Murmur" is the latest EP from the depressive black metal project Mictain, lead by multi-instrumentalist Marci de la Mort. This serves as a preview for the larger "Thee Book Ov Mictain", which will collect previous EPs as well as the new material here. Let's get into the EP, shall we?

Movement I starts with buzzing noises and swelling distortion. Drums and guitars inflate the chaos, while a high pitched shriek, formed out of layered horns courtesy of Charlie of Bloom County, carries onward. Grumbling, hoarse vocals lash out and strike from behind walls of blackened sonics. Brvtal.

Movement II continues the theme. Guitars are a bit broader here; easier to pick out of the mix. Bass lines thump, drums slam and crash with clock-like precision. Vocals are further back here, creating an atmosphere as opposed to carrying a narrative. Noise washes over everything.

Movement III is a dissolving deconstruction of all that came before. It begins with the heaviness and the noise found in the previous parts, but it slowly peels back layer after layer . . . vocal, guitar, bass, drums . . . until you're left with nothing but a throttling, rhythmic static carrying you to a complete fade out.

A great offering from Mictain! Make sure you pre-order a copy of the lovingly made "Thee Book Ov Mictain". Marci does all of the beautiful sigil work by hand, and it's really nice to see in-person/in-hand.



+DOG+ "Our Beloved"

2024, Love Earth Music | dognoise.bandcamp.com

+DOG+, forever experimenting with different sides of noise, have served up a 3 part suite with "Our Beloved" (yes, five periods). This album in three parts showcases the groups ability to funnel a sonic cohesion through a prism to explore different spectrums of noise.

Part 1 is loaded with crispy, crackling static, not unlike something the Atari 2600 might produce under stress. I mean, I wouldn't call this Chip Tune, but it's definitely a distant cousin. There are loads of layered sounds that bring me back to playing video games in the very early 80's; they are, of course, distorted to hell and back, but they're there!

Part 2 cranks the gain up all the way and blasts waves of harsh noise at you. There are momentary reprieves, however, as to not completely destroy your ears. There's also lots of interesting sonic manipulation throughout. Static pattering underneath mimics a dirt bike's engine, while alarm like pulses drone onward. You gotta put the work in to pick out the unique bits, but that's half the fun of HNW material.

Part 3 is more of a muffled affair compared to its counterparts. Think the sound of a towel being shaken out or snapped, then flip it backwards and play it from the next room. Arid swells come and go in disjointed, breathing-like patterns until the track comes to an abrupt stop.

+DOG+ has been bringing the noise for, what, 20+ years now? They know what they're doing, and they know how to serve up some hot, tasty noise. Grab yourself a plate and eat it up!



SKRATZ

"In The Swollen Gut Of Eden"

2024, Self Released | crookedcranes.bandcamp.com

SKRATZ is a 4 piece hailing from Austin, TX. On their debut release, the group more than brings the noise.

"Crooked Cranes" sets the mood with gutter trash distortion, guitars turned up to 11, bass absolutely saturated in fuzz, and some wild drumming. Vocals are screamed forcefully, but are delivered with a cadence that reminds me of Eugene S. Robinson. The squelching, searing guitars REALLY do it for me!

"Drag You In" slams through with a funky little bass groove, accompanied by rolling static and mathematic drums. Erratic drum breaks come in bursts while the tracks begins to slow to a doom/grind vibe. Vocals scream to the heavens "I've Done / What I Can / I Will / Drag You In".

"Stone Womans Dance" is an all out epic. We go from straight up face melting, to delicate, almost waltz like drumming with gentle synths and guitars whining through chains of distortion. Lyrically, this feels like a tribute to the bullshit women have had to deal with throughout human history. References to bending like oak branches to man's will, the empty feeling of having a child taken from you, the experience of losing your partner (to violence, presumed). All of the bullshit of man, women get left with the aftermath.

"Renunciant" is a straight forward rocker, with plenty of noise of course. Subject wise, the track seems to deal with revenge for religious injustice. Being a big ol' Mo' who has had to deal with religious oppression, I appreciate the sentiments.

"Weak Man", another epic doom-infused noise rock burner, loaded with simmers and swells. Electronics twist and clink like handfuls of coins. Swinging drums, low chugging guitars, and gentle sing/say vocals tell the story; there's an internal conflict playing out before us here. Can we push past the weakness instilled in us by the lies of others? "Fear Built My Mind / Fear Ends My Life". More than relatable content.

"It Breathes It Fucks", the closing track, slowly flutters in with whispery vocals and minimal electronics before blasting into a cacophony of noise laden grind-funk (is this one of the Jazz Funk Greats TG alluded to?). All agony and rage served at roughly 60BPM. Departing words: "A beat down faggot with something to prove / It breathes, it fucks".

Well, this thing pummeled the living shit out of me, and it's sure to do the same to you. Pick this up and get fucked.

PS All you heavy labels out there (Earache, Crucial Blast, etc.) take note... SKRATZ appear to be unsigned, and would make a great addition to your extreme rosters.



Photo by: Allie (@reddprint on IG)



MARMER x No More Cheering "You Simply Cannot Go Home Again"

2024, Self Released | nomorecheering.bandcamp.com

MARMER and No More Cheering are two sides of the experimental artist known to us only as M. Each comes from their soul, but from two distinctly different places. On "You Simply Cannot Go Home Again", M pits their projects against themselves, and the results are quite rewarding.

Part I: MARMER

"It Comes From Pain" is a grinding disposal of electronics and frustration. Harsh drones crash like waves over the rumbling of hard-edged noise. There's this "storm brewing" feeling of uneasiness that runs through the cracks in the wall.

"Love Remembered (Redux)" is a full on heatwave of dense, unrelenting noise, easing only as it completes. If you're looking for some head-cleaner/palette cleanser, this blistering pressure washer is for you.

Part II: No More Cheering

"We All Do Fade As A Leaf" is hot vent ambience. Deeply submerged is a thin synthetic symphony, grasping at your heartstrings with ethereal fingertips. I got completely immersed in this piece and lost track of everything around me. The best type of experience, for me, to have.

"Redroofinn (Redux)" keeps the ventilation going, but brings those synth strings much further up in the mix. They're beautiful, and they almost sound like something you'd expect to accompany a Chopped & Screwed/Witch House track... a genre that got a lot of shit it didn't/doesn't deserve. There's a lot to feel here.

This is a great pairing of two sides of an artists psyche, yin and yang, if you will. I didn't see a physical offering for sale at this time, but maybe if there's enough shown interest... (I'm looking at you, reader). Add this one to your lists.



crucifiedwhitesaviour "Baptized In Punishment"

2024, Self Released | crucifiedwhitesaviour.bandcamp.com

crucifiedwhitesaviour is the tongue-in-cheek, but serious as a heart attack project from Ontario based artist Vincent Scabby Bones (whom I immediately want to nickname "Vinny Scabalerio"). The project uses sarcasm to point out all the fucked up shit going on around us, and how poorly it's all being handled, and "Baptized in Punishment" continues the theme.

This 5 track mini-LP packs a serious punch. "To Leave A Country..." flares with frequency stabs and rhythmically pulsing noise atop a bed of gentle keys.

"Hypernormalized Democide Fetish" is cutting Power Electronics. We're thrown into swirling chaos electronics while Vincent screams about the horrors happening in (presumed) Palestine, perpetrated by Israel and it's endless feedbag, right now; "Bag Over The Head / Eyes Covered From God / Pig Head Bullets / Hospital Bomb".

"We Always Wait Until They're Dead Or About To Die To Act Like We Care", with no vocals, speaks for itself.

"They Cheered When He Blew His Brains Out" is another ferocious PE slice. "Victimized Brutality / Fictionalized Enemy" rings ever true, while calls of torture burn and warble.

The closer, "Our Existence Will Be Pornography", starts light with gentle keys before a military march fades quickly in. In an instant, the track shifts to a blistering harsh wall. Momentary reprieves leave only the sounds of suffering and marching.

A tough listen, but only because it's honest, and reality is hard to swallow. If you love PE, or, you know, critical thinking, this one's for you.



Cicatrice / Pain Chain "Grief Eater"

2024, Mutual Aid | mutualaidrecords.bandcamp.com

... and here we have a fresh split from two trans titans of extreme music.

Part I: Pain Chain (Tracks 1-5)

"Celestial Secrets" eases us in with Malachites gentle, whispered vocal hanging just above eerie waves of glassy textures. "Give us flesh / my soul is waiting" repeats like a mantra.

"Grief Eater" features bowed strings, skittering electronics, an acoustic guitar (!?) and a droning bed of curdling sounds.

"Soft With Rot" is minimal on the soft, and maximal on the rot. Whirling dirges of noise cyclone around gently stuck keys (is that a xylophone?). Malachite recites an excerpt from what sounds like a Doctor's medical recommendation for surgical procedures before shifting to a narrative that ends abruptly with the phrase "Terrible Daughter".

"The Dream Room" bubbles and boils. Bright synths gently rise and fall. Before you can get too comfortable, the rug gets pulled right out from under your feet and the track cuts out.

"Hellflower", as a single, we covered in Issue 3. We still think it's great, and it closes out the Pain Chain side wonderfully.

Part II: Cicatrice (Tracks 6-9)

"Calcify" is a Sabbath-esque doom bomb. Heavy, distorted metal guitar riffs sludge along to machine drumming. Cicatrice projects growling vocals from the pit of their gut.

"Cut Off Every Hand" shows off Cicatrice's dark synth work. Chill drums, pulsing keys, soaring guitars, and spitfire vocals.

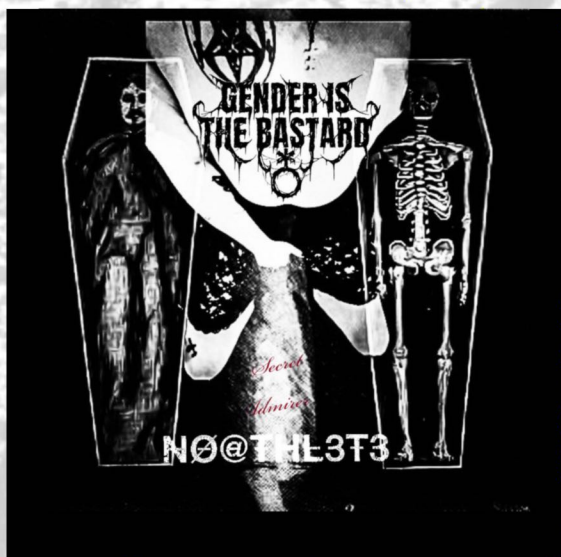
"Hate Is A Two Way Street" is a high speed chase. Adrenaline pumping, drums firing like pistons, anxiety synths stab and loop. The reciprocal hate coming out of Cicatrice's mouth is palpable. Samples of figures throughout history discussing various form of hate interject in brief knee-jerk moments.

"Lessons In Humiliation" is a slow burning, noise filled sledge. Pounding, singular drums crack skulls while contained harsh noise walls are wielded and bent to Cicatrice's will. Vocals are spoken and blown out, or screamed into oblivion; "Tooth And Nail / To No Avail". I can feel the frustration boil over just as the track cuts out.

Incredible split, brought to us courtesy of the honorable Mutual Aid Records. Grab those limited CDs before they're gone; I can't imagine they'll last very long!



mutualaidrecords.bigcartel.com



NØ@THL3T3 & GENDERISTHEBASTARD "Secret Admirer"

2024, Self Released | noathlete23666.bandcamp.com

This Valentine's Day surprise was self described by the bands as "The Valentines Gift your significant other is DYING to hear! Gross no coast noise from NØ@THL3T3 and pummeling Power Electronics/ Noise from GENDERISTHEBASTARD". Don't threaten me with a good time...

Part I: NØ@THL3T3

"Lovers Quarrel" is a dense harsh noise wall. Lots of stuttering electronics and grime covered drones, churning relentlessly.

"If You Like Me Check Yes Or NØ" continues the exhaust laden noise wave. This is the sound of a building burning and smoldering. Screams tap the surface from their burial spot deep within the mix.

"Love Tap" pushes the noise into the extremes. Crackling, grinding, flailing, it's all here. The density is equally matched by the intensity.

Part II: GENDERISTHEBASTARD

"Tomino" dials up the squelching and fried electronics. Motor humming makes up the backdrop of this blistering terror. Impossibly distorted vocals pierce the veil.

"Androgynous Desires" treads in that heatwave space that noise can make before going full furnace electronics. Utterly, and unapologetically abrasive.

"All My Friends Keep Dying" fires off sparking noise like a dentist's drill or pike. Squeaky frequencies really fuck with those earlobes. Mixers scream at maximum capacity.

This split is a certified cochlear fryer, but we'd expect nothing less from these two. Digital is name your price. Dunno if they made a physical version, but you could always ask.



uncertain "The Descending Spirals Of Time"

2024, Self Released | uncertain.bandcamp.com

You know her, you love her, and she's back again. Florian-Seraphim Fauna brings some cardinal experimentation on uncertain's "The Descending Spirals Of Time".

"Daughter Drowning In The Black River" is loaded with elements reserved for the sacred; gently ringing church chimes, a choir of reverent voices, to name a few. Slowly, the track morphs into a dark ambient, almost trip-hop type groove. Lots of interesting noises from all sides flood the senses while toms pound. Breaking through the darkness, bright shimmering drones lift us towards the light.

"The White Elk Mother Of The Sea And Moon" is a deep ambient dive. I hate to always make Coil comparisons (I mean, they ARE the gold standard), but this one gave me the same feelings "The Sea Priestess" does when I zone out to it. It's very delicately layered, builds in all the right spots, and is beautifully executed.

"Frail Child Dies Alone" starts with terrified vocal samples in an indiscernible language. Chanting (enochian?) accompanies a rising bed of noise and distortion until partially giving way to massively deep and booming percussion and searing drones. Unable to be contained, the extreme electronics burst forward and grind to infinity.

"Vulture Child Of Disease And Extinction" treats us to a variety of distorted and twisted animal sounds (hogs for certain). A child's crying makes it so utterly unsettling, as does the 'verbed out, military marching drums. Laser electronics flail and whip in sharp, cutting stabs. Sirens, gun fire, destruction all flood the senses.

This is another must have for me. It's got everything I love about experimental electronics. \$5 is a steal for a download of this opus.



Elka Bong “Without Walls”

2023, Love Earth Music | elkabong2.bandcamp.com

Elka Bong is the brainchild of experimental music titans Al Margolis and Walter Wright. For “Without Walls”, the pair have recruited the multidisciplinary artists Sara Bouchard to provide vocals, as well as her own brand of improvised musics.

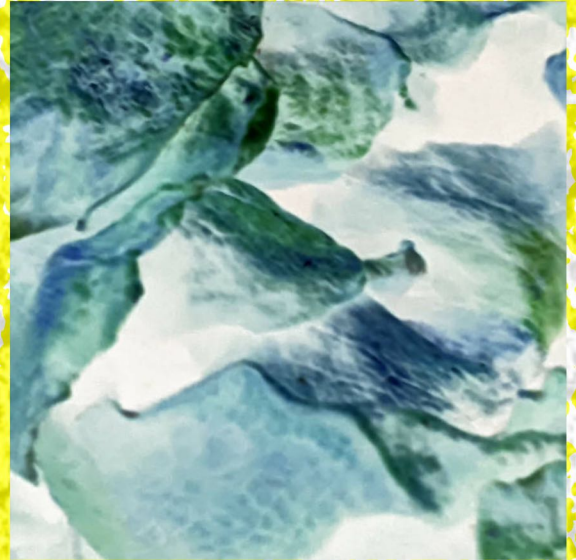
“An Eye For An Ear” sounds like something you would have heard on a raster-noton release; Electronic minimalism, vocal cut ups, wires buzzing, rippling bass/percussion. If you told me CoH was involved, I wouldn’t have been surprised, but it’s not Ivan . . . It’s Walter with an IFM Synth.

“Our Extended Skin” is a bit more musical. Vocals, while still chopped up and put back together again, are more sung than in the previous track. Breathing can be heard in the backdrop, I think through a tube of some kind; Maybe this is the trumpet that Al Margolis is credited as playing? The clipping and frequency fluxuations are far more sparse, but kick up a bit near the close.

“The Scent Of Time” pitters and patters. Field recordings of crickets occasionally join as an insect choir. Various objects can be heard dragging along guitar strings to varying effect. A fly-like buzz pops in random intervals.

“The Mechanical Bride” makes use of sustained, droning tones. While I can’t be 100% certain, I think these are created from Al’s alto clarinets. Walter’s IFM clips, blips, and ripples. Metallic shuffling bounces throughout (Sara’s aluminum foil, I presume).

Definitely an interesting project from some big names in weirdo electronics and experimentation. Their Bandcamp looks like they’ve been quite busy since this release, so go explore.



Adeline Wilhel “Scenes From A Mind”

2023, Self Released | adelinewilhel.bandcamp.com

Adeline Wilhel is a Black, Female experimental electronic artists coming from Northern California. Her recent remix of “BBL Drizzy” on her Soundcloud caught my attention to the degree that I had to check out her most recent album, which I’m now sharing with you.

There are some great grooves here. “Stuck In A Pinball” and “Try Not To Think About..” are giving me Cex vibes (think Maryland Mansions era). Tracks are less than 2 minutes long, which definitely leaves me wanting more.

“Grey Matter” is a more experimental piece, with cut up drums, whining electronics, and bitcrushed samples. This works well as a lead in to “In A Daze”, which is more of an airy, chilled out experience; breathy percussion, echoing keys, downtempo vibing.

“Clouded Self” leans into ambient territory. The sound of, I think, piano strings being plucked come and go. A gentle vocal whirrs and stutters about. “Release” keeps the ambient theme going, with more distant keys and synthetic melodies just out of arms reach.

“Are You Turning Back?” is a more song structured affair. Keys march along, almost joyfully, to a bed of sloshing liquidity. Initially, I was drawing connections with the keys and late era Coil. “Working Through It All” sorta does, too. It’s hard to explain it, but if you’re familiar with Coil, I think you’ll hear what I hear.

I think Adeline Wilhel’s an artist to keep your eyes on. Here, she showed what she can do when she wants to cook and be playful. I look forward to hearing her when she’s boiling over and razing ground.



iffIn

"Homage To Catatonia (Picaro Two)"

2024, Self Released | iffIn.bandcamp.com

iffIn is the Punk/Pop project from Seattle based artist, and proud Trans Lesbian, Miss Mira. On their latest EP, iffIn shine brightly at the intersection of R.E.M. and Elliott Smith.

"Document Of Descent" rings and floats gently with an uptempo beat. Mandolin jangling in the background perfectly accents the guitars. I can't help but get hung on the lyrics "My God Is Not An Awesome God / My God Is Not For Everyone".

"Cost Of Floss" is desperate, but still tries to shine through the murky clouds. I don't know what Good State's Day is, but I know there's a lot to think about when it comes around; Parental judgement, peer rejection, romantic complications, self doubt (and self care) are all waiting to be remembered and deconstructed.

"Pointless Walk" gives me White Album vibes, sonically. It has that almost harpsichord like jingle. Lyrically, we're joining Mira on a night walk while she tries to clear her head of all the things on her mind today; fading friendships, the power of forgiveness, and the shrinking of that dark shadow that looms over her and forces it's negativity into her mind. Tough demon to battle, I know!

"Kinderkings", which also rings brightly, seems to deal with Political Powers who do nothing but damage, deny, defame, and distort. Liars spewing madness with some spin and a smile. "Not As We Do But As We Say / Peace Be With Our Prey".

"Windows Left Open" takes an experimental approach to song structure, resulting in a sometimes jazzy composition. Vocals reverberate above, singing "What Have I Left To Say? / What Have You Left To Need?" before finally declaring "Don't Look At Me". I have more questions than answers, but that's a good thing!

Overall, this is a solid alt/indie offering. If you like "Out Of Time" era R.E.M., or some of Elliott Smith's brighter moments, you'll find something to like here.



Štarr W.

"Piano Rossi 18-24"

2024, Self Released | starr-w.bandcamp.com

Štarr W. is an experimental artist currently headquartered somewhere in Vienna. This release is a collection of piano based pieces arranged and recorded between 2018 and 2024.

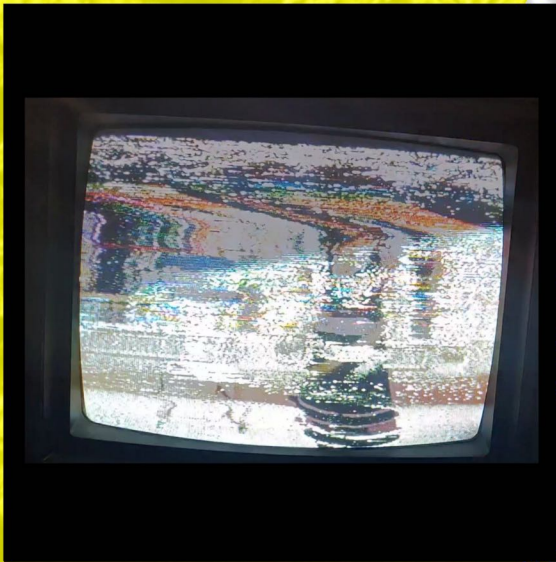
"Wind Theme" starts the album, with the shaking and clanging of thin metal objects. Piano keys pound while harp, courtesy of artist A.R., strums in crystalline formations. The metallics change from random clinking to rhythmic percussive patterns.

"Shepherds Waltz" is a beautiful take on a traditional waltz. We've got the 1-2-3, 1-2-3 pattern at times, but Štarr gleefully takes short breaks to leave open air, as well as dabble with the keys a bit. I found myself completely caught up in this one.

"Autonoma" is a moment of vintage horror. You could easily hear this being played over the silent frights of yesterday (Nosferatu, in particular, comes to mind).

"Vigilants Duette" brings in some vocals in the form of extremely strained inhalation and exhalation. Saxophone, courtesy again of A.R., accompanies the vocal strain as if to further blow it out. A gentle bell can be heard at times, as can the sound of dragging heavy chairs (or is that strained, oxygen deprived sax?). Lots going on here to dissect and analyze.

There are 13 pieces on this album, and I've only touched upon a few of them here. There's plenty for you to explore here, and at "Name Your Price", including \$0, you've really got nothing to lose. Give this one a virtual spin.



Signal Chain “Live From The Fallout Shelter”

2023, Self Released | thesignalchain.bandcamp.com

Here we've got a trio of fellow Massholes presenting what they like to call “Townie Punk” (this makes me laugh every time). What doesn't make me laugh, though, are the silky live jams found here, courtesy of WUML 91.5.

“Walk By” lives at the intersection of The Sound and The Replacements. The vocals, which at times sound like a strained Paul Westerberg, reinforce that position. “Realizer”, cut from the same cloth, is a steady post-punk burner. Drums are fast and rolling, guitars ascend and descend. You can feel it when the vocals sing “Then You Realize / What You Wanted Wasn't Right”.

“Holy Ghost” keeps the tempo up, and the people moving. Tinges of rockabilly soften the distorted edges. The guitar work on this one... wow. They are noodling all over the place, and it's truly a great listen.

“K & S” is full on high energy. Those high hats are taking a beating as the drums roll onward. The vocals and guitars scream while that bass line works double time to carry the track.

There are a pair of Wire covers on here, too. “Outdoor Miner” is just so slick here; a great take! And yes, they tackled “The 15th”, and did a faithful tribute.

There's more, but you'll have to hear it for yourself. If you love 80's alternative, or 90's indie darlings like Guided By Voices, or if you just like to let go and dance to some rock & roll, Signal Chain got you covered. Download is “name your price”, so have at it!



Pageant “?”

2024, Self Released | pageant-pv.bandcamp.com

I don't know if Pageant is giving no fucks, or all of the fucks, on their latest grind-trauma-violence EP “?”. I do know they deal with some very difficult emotions; ones that hit really close to home for me. While I genuinely wish no one had to go through all the things discussed, the visibility and reassurance that I'm not alone is refreshing.

“What's Your Life Worth?” ferociously tears into the garbage we're fed in this capitalist hellscape we're trapped inside of. Are we worth more than minimum wage? Are we valued in any sense by the lawmakers who ru(i)n our lives?

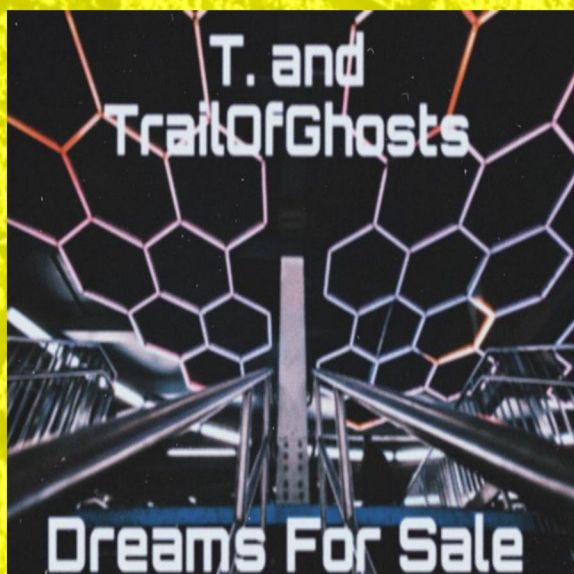
“Strike A Poser” feels like a strike against the scenesters who have to name drop every band in their record collection, and every member there-in. And we're not talking the people who share their passions with others... we're talking about those people desperate to prove they have more scene knowledge than you do, always missing the fucking point.

“I Don't Hit You Much, Do I?”... just the title alone. These fuckin' people; the down low who love you in private, but won't kiss you, or validate you... or, you know, respect you. Fuck 'em. Better yet, don't!

“No Good”, which is the single from the EP, is life with ADD/ADHD/AuDHD to a T. “Stop Yelling At Me / I'm Misunderstood / Nobody Listens / I Am No Good”. Christ, the times I've repeated similar things like a mantra after a day of frustratingly taking/eating shit from every angle.

“Poor Self Image” is another laundry list of frustrations and traumas. “Panic Attacks / Can't Relax / Love Is Gone / Can't Hang On”. I've felt this way more times than I can count, or dare try to recall.

This EP burns a hole right through you. If you're on the spectrum, you've felt some of this dealing with the neurotypical world. Instead of spending another night of screaming into your pillow to get out your frustrations, crank this fucker to 11 instead. Essential!



T. & TrailOfGhosts "Dreams For Sale"

2024, Beyond Death Recordings
beyonddeathrecordings.bandcamp.com

Another day, another split comes our way. This juicy tidbit is from noisemakers T. and TrailOfGhost, via Beyond Death Recordings. On "Dreams For Sale", we're treated to two distinct and visceral visions of a decaying, dystopian future.

Part I: T.

"A Dystopia Of Space And Time" is what I'd call spaced out acid noise. Yes, it's grindy, the fuzz is everywhere, and it's oppressive, but it's also trippy AF. Lots of droning synth work that, at times, echo early Tangerine Dream (a big comparison, I know, but put them through a Gristlizer and you'll see my point).

"Dreams For Sale, But Who Is Buying? Pt. 1" brings in some of that Harsh Noise Wall. Dense, red hot, and crispy as deep fried pork skins. There are noticeable environmental shifts, but the density makes it tough to wade through (the point of HNW).

"Dreams... Pt. 2" continues thematically, but the wall gives way pretty early here to make way for more isolated experiments. I think I'm getting a "guitar solo" in the mix here!? If it's not a guitar, T.'s found some way to solo a mixer or something that's quite wild.

"A Crushing, Endless Sleep of Happiness & Love" is another melter. Ear drum blowing low frequencies kick your head in, while the shuffling and clinking of organic matter seep through the barrage. Heavily distorted vocals shriek and moan like ghosts with a score to settle.

"A Glimpse Into A Future Yet To Come" features some searing, squealing electronics that shift between different styles of siren-like alarms. In quieter moments, which T. has graciously allowed us to have here, we get more of the "guitar" before harsh noise builds and howls like the whipping winds of a blizzard.

Part II: TrailOfGhosts

"Virtual Paradise" is an experimental electronic, downtempo jolt after T.'s noise assault. There's distortion here too, but these aren't anywhere near HNW tracks. Female vocals, cut up and distorted, pass through on waves above a gentle drum groove. Synths and guitars soar and dip.

"In A Dream, I Was More" is another chilled out experience. Kick drums make up the beat, which is sparse but occasionally doubled or accompanied by a washed out snare. Flanged noise, humming electronics, and some light guitar work make up the dark ambient bed.

"Awake Again" kicks up the tempo into dance floor territory. Fuzz bass walks in the background. Vocals are distorted, but gentle (think HEALTH). An unexpected ass shaker.

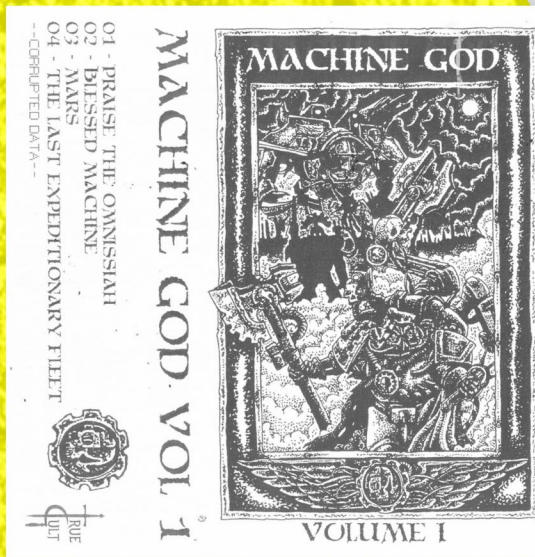
"Reality, The Nightmare" takes us back down and makes interesting use of digital clipping for percussion. Synths and guitars ring out like drones. Electronics chug and dance about. Excellent use of anxiety inducing negative space here; feels like I'm being stalked.

"Stasis" is a full on electronic drone. Wave after wave crash against virtual shores. A slight, humming pulse rises and dips in varying degrees of intensity. Suddenly, the bed shifts into tension, and we're faced with alarm-like synths before fading into nothing. Seems like someone's cryopod has malfunctioned... or has been tampered with.

This split was a lot of fun. Two very different approaches to the abrasive and unsettling. Beyond Death committed this exercise in brutality to tape, and they came out really nice. Go get 'em.



beyonddeathrecordings.bigcartel.com



Machine God "Volume 1"

2023, True Cult Records | truecultrecords.bandcamp.com

I used to paint miniatures for D&D. Never played much, just liked the painting. Through that hobby, I'm familiar with Warhammer 40k, which is the impassioned, grim-dark subject of Machine God's debut cassette "Volume 1".

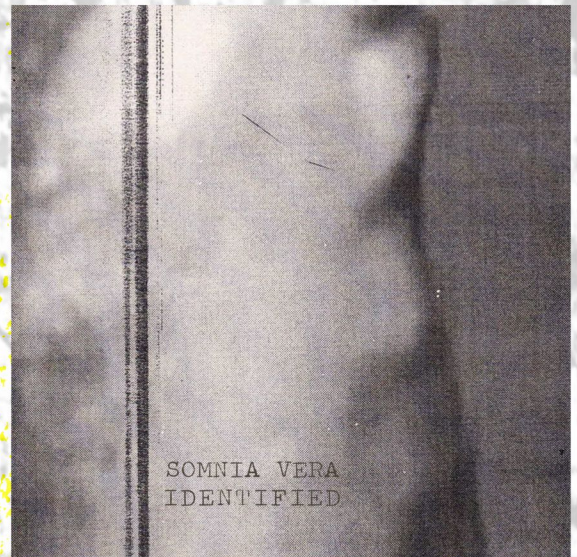
"Praise The Ommissiah" just dredges and burns, slowly building more and more dense. Guitars drone outward in opaque, stretched bursts. The pounding drums sound of the marching of an unstoppable military force.

"Blessed Machine", while still downtempo, is livelier, a bit more electronic and, dare I say, beat oriented. This is somewhere in industrial metal territory.

"Mars" kicks off with some pulsing, synthetic percussion and rolling hi-hats. The vibe is sorta trip-hop; I wouldn't have been shocked to hear some Tricky-esque vocal come through. Aggressive electronics pump and flash and give way to quieter, almost hip-hop moments. Slowly, the distortion builds before destroying all in its path. Sounds like terraforming Mars didn't pan out for the Space Marines.

Last track, "The Last Expeditionary Fleet", drones in with suspense building keys and reverb laden, pounding drums. Chugging guitars crash into the mix through experimental cut-ups. Electronics hum, chirp, and sputter in accompaniment before the track goes full on doom metal, sucking all hope out of existence.

This is a great first offering from anti-fascist ally Machine God. Cassettes are 10€, very limited, and look awesome. Definitely an artist to watch!



Somnia Vera "Identified"

2024, Self Released | somniavera.bandcamp.com

Somnia Vera is bringing you noise infused dark ambient, straight out of Berlin.

"Misdiagnosed" wisely uses harsh noise wall as an almost lead guitar to accompany the synthetic bass and percussion. Whirling dirges of exploding electronics rain sparks all over the piece before congealing into a wall of sound itself. I've felt the frustration of misdiagnosis; it is like this sometimes.

The title track, "Identified", churns and growls like a gas powered lawnmower, while precisely placed bursts of air form a percussive beat (I love when the noise comes with any sorta beat). Vocals are buried and stretched beyond comprehension. Metallic percussion crashes as the churning dials up to 11.

"Catatonic Party" makes me feel like I'm anything but. There's a blistering noise beat that forms a great groove that builds and builds and builds. It reminds me of the kind of sample-based drum work we've seen from many artists surrounding the Wax Trax label.

"Frühling 24" is a slightly frizzy electronic drone. Synths make up the body of this closing track. Air busts, whirring electronics, and other incorporated sounds come in go in looped waves before the track fades down to a simple drone before dissipating into thin air.

There's much more to explore if you can handle it. Album downloads are just €3 for 10 tracks.

ESSENTIALS

Recordings You May Have Missed

Reviews Written By Alpha-27

THIS IS A NEW SECTION WHERE WE WILL BE LOOKING AT SOMEWHAT RECENT ALBUMS THAT MAY HAVE SLIPPED UNDER THE RADAR, OR CLASSIC ALBUMS FROM DECADES AGO THAT NEWER GENERATIONS MAY NOT BE FAMILIAR WITH.



Papaphilia

"Remembrance Of Things To Come"

2021 Heavy Machinery Records

papaphilia.bandcamp.com

Papaphilia's full length debut album shows the Melbourne based queer sound and visual artist fully embrace the futuristic approach of industrial and electronic music that makes the rounds in recent years under the umbrella of deconstructed club, a more aggressive and mechanical direction of electronic and dance music. This is reflected right off the bat with the visually striking album cover and overall aesthetics. But while many artists have managed to replicate this type of sound and push the envelope, very rarely are the results as immaculate and refreshing as with Remembrance Of things To Come. It has a lot of things working out in its benefit, from acid synths that give a nostalgic 90s vibe, alongside

dynamic hard hitting beats, and a dystopian setting showcasing the oppressive political powers of Australia through the artistic lens of a very creative individual. Cultural expression shines all over this album, with the use of tribal percussion, instrumentation, and heavily manipulated vocals that feel like something straight out of traditional South Asian music. All this accompanied with dark futuristic production, something like a post apocalyptic cyberpunk setting with colonial powers trying to strip away those elements of culture from marginalized communities. Producers Various Asses and Kuya Neil make those ideas come to fruition in an excellent and impactful way. And even if the album seems to become one dimensional as it goes on, it gets the job done in just 6 tracks and 31 minutes, not overstaying its welcome, and just being straightforward and to the point. This has undoubtedly been one of the most pleasant discoveries out of nowhere that I can think of recently, and has already become one of my favorite electronic releases of this decade. The blend of old school synths and beats, ethereal vocals and experimental mechanical soundscapes is something that is worth to experience and digest.



Jacques 'n' Their Box "Horsey"

2023 Muteant Sounds
muteantsoundsnetlabel.bandcamp.com

Jacques 'n' Their Box is an electronic musician and drag artist from Warrington, Cheshire, whose output on avant-garde and experimental art is not something that can go unnoticed just at very first glance. The deeply unsettling, eclectic and peculiar nature of their work is showcased in a very interesting manner with an EP done in 2023 that caught me off guard considering how this has become one of the most standout experimental releases that I can think of in recent memory. Power electronics and spoken word usually make for great combos, and their voice is used as a main tool of expression rather than just an additional driving force that happens to just be there. The eclectic performance style in the vocal parts of these tracks, alongside the multiple effects and processing, from delay to distortion, and techniques of panning and glitch, are what makes this project shine through its vast majority. It's a short project themed around horses, and is also in response to the horse racing deaths at the 2023 Grand national, that quickly becomes obscure and unnerving. With highlights being the bizarre chant at the end of the tracks Pwongco un and Pwongco dau, to HorseStuff which is 6 minutes of a conversation in an interview style that builds up with distorted effects coming from the conversation itself. Musically you also get some nice elements of feedback noise, and a project that seems to share quite some influence from the works of Whitehouse or Consumer Electronics, but being less straightforward and in your face, yet still evoking this feeling of discomfort. So if you're looking for something similar to this style of power electronics, with a huge emphasis on narration and speech style, Horsey is for you. A quite special release that manages in just 24 minutes to be varied and have many different ideas to it, and it deserves your attention.



niku daruma "love is an excessive thing"

2023 Orb Tapes
orbtapes.bandcamp.com

My reviews on Niku Daruma over the years have shown my appreciation of the unfiltered and unapologetic approach on noise music from this Pittsburgh group. From intense live performances to striking imagery and sounds, Niku Daruma's raw and relentless output makes sure to entrap you in its hellish and unsettling soundscapes. And Love is an excessive thing is another great example of their capabilities on making extreme noise music. Instead of becoming redundant after a couple releases, Niku Daruma not only achieve to keep up with the energy and ferocity of what makes their works stand out in the first place, but this is also one of their best releases to date. Another case of an album that combines chaos and anger with powerful emotions and a sense of vulnerability. The intense screams and ear piercing microphone feedback still play a big role in the album, as it has become the staple for the vast majority of their releases, but it's not the main aspect, as it experiments a lot with free improvised distorted frequencies and a constant use of cutoff and resonance. The ferocious nature of the album leads to the closer having The Calling's classic Whenever You Will Go playing at the radio in the background, as noise feedback leaves its final remark. It's like a feeling of nostalgia, for moments we cherish. This is another case of an album from Niku Daruma that feels personal. It's not just noise, the screams and spoken word parts tell a story, there's pain and anger that you can feel as if it's straight at your vicinity. It's an expression of self. It's torturous, it hurts, but you can't look away. That immersion is what makes Niku Daruma works so special and so impactful. This balance between love and rage shines once again to what I consider to be one of the most intriguing and captivating harsh noise and power electronics releases I've heard this past decade. Essential for anyone who's looking for something intense and challenging.

Live Report

ALL 4 U boston's queer
pop party
presents...
**party
up!**
a night of
Prince
at ZUZU
Cambridge MA
Tuesday Sep. 3
music at 9 pm

DJs
Mr. 617
&
Væpors

21+ only
be glad
that it is...
FREE

*ALL 4 U presents...
"Party Up! A Night Of Prince"
With DJs: Vaepors & Mr. 617*

Photos by: Darling Vikki

Oh me, oh my, was this an absolute blast 4 the purple children; they were in desperate need of some... stimulation, and boy did Loren Jan Wilson of Vaepors and 2XYA, and DJ Mr. 617 (the mad genius behind ALL 4 U) deliver!

When eye walked into Zuzu (it was my 1st time), eye was very happy 2 see the walls were all purple with lots of gold trim everywhere; gotta love when the venue's all decked out in PRNC flair.

DJ Mr. 617 reached his hand waaaay down in2 the deep cuts afterworld, pulling up some totally surprising Tyka Nelson material!





The fun didn't stop there, of course. Shortly thereafter, we're treated 2 material from protégé projects and associated artists like Apollonia 6, André Cymone, Jill Jones, The Family, Vanity 6, Sheila E, and more!

Now, it is important 2 note that the vast majority of these tracks were remixes/ edits done by Væpors mastermind Loren Jan Wilson (who looked fabulous in a tight YSL dress, flaunting azure lipstick and mirrored headphones).

Both DJs were working overtime, but the music was effortlessly pounding, and the dance floor was loaded with a sea of literal rainbow children; so many colors, so many genders, so many asses shakin'!

One remix/edit that really stuck out 2 me was a Væpors take on Jill Jones' "Mia Bocca". Eye don't think Eye've ever felt that track with this level of dance floor intensity before. It really shook me in the best possible way.

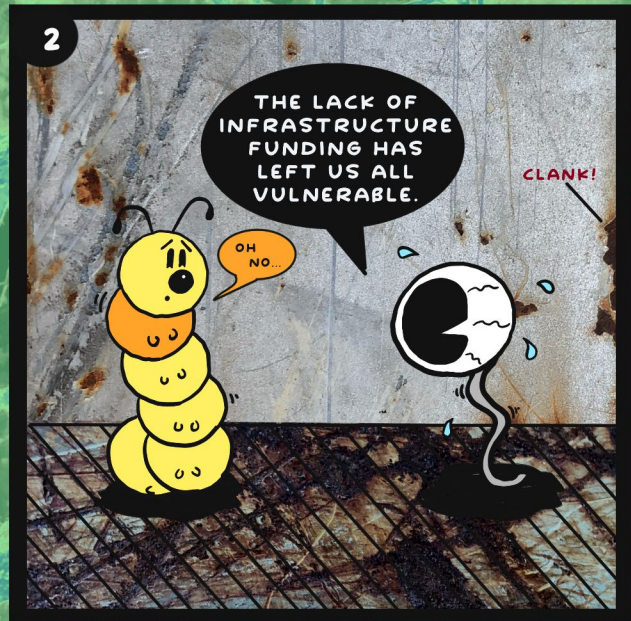
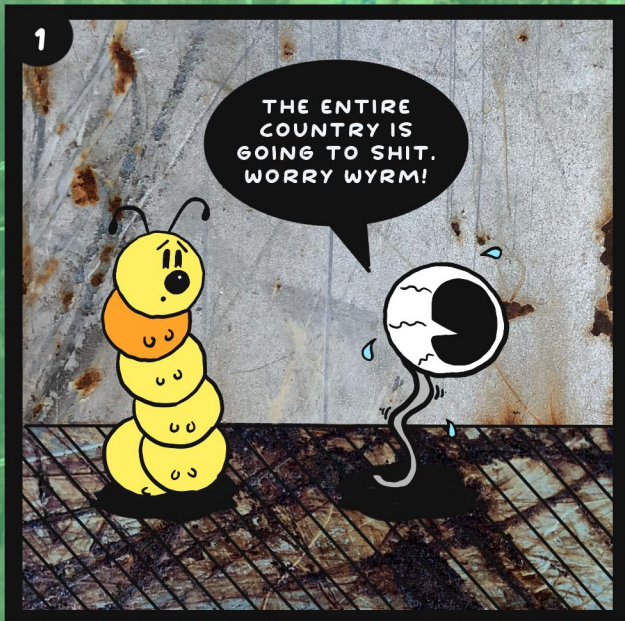
Eye mean, it's hard 2 beat the Purple One at his game, and Eye'm known for not being... polite... to those who try (sorry Videodrome... Eye should have behaved much better than Eye did back then). That being said, Væpors and DJ Mr. 617 were able 2 mess with the sacred works and, in some cases, elevate them 2 a higher plane... "a world of never ending happiness..."; if U will.

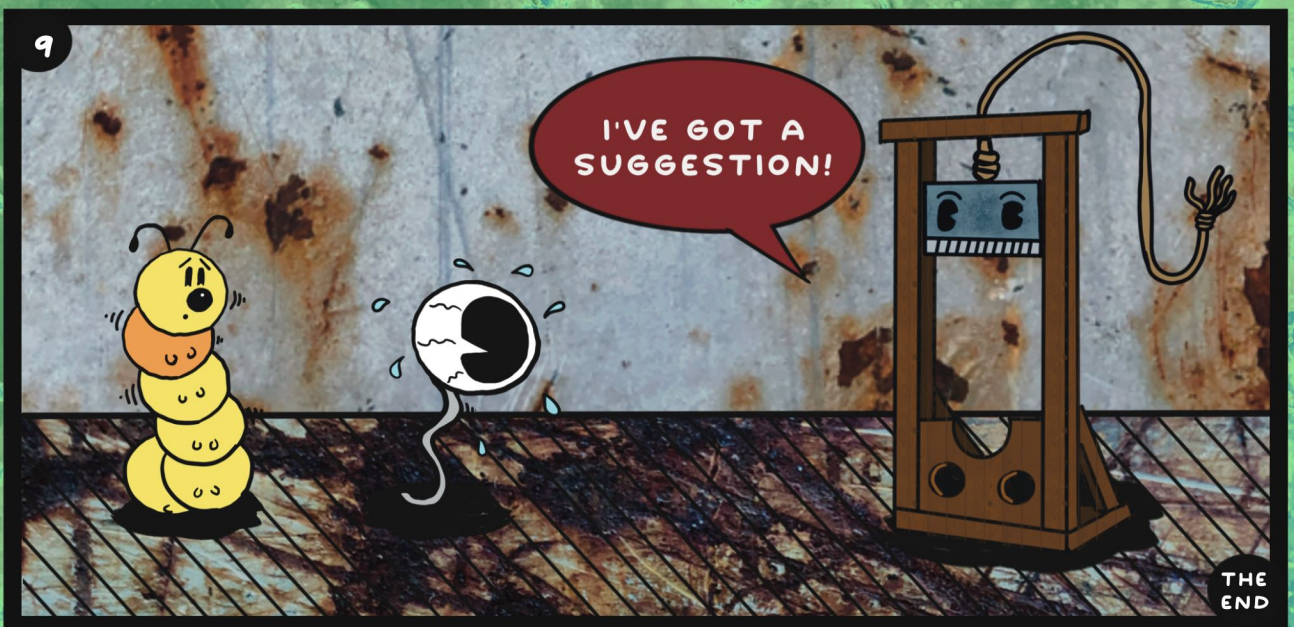
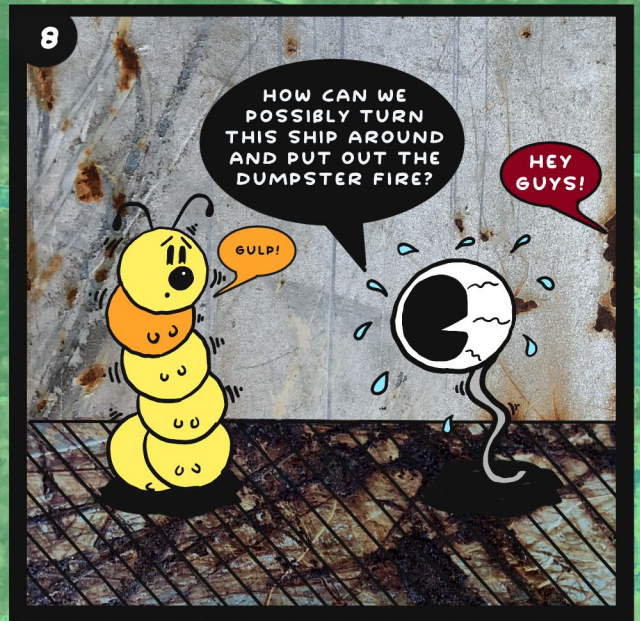
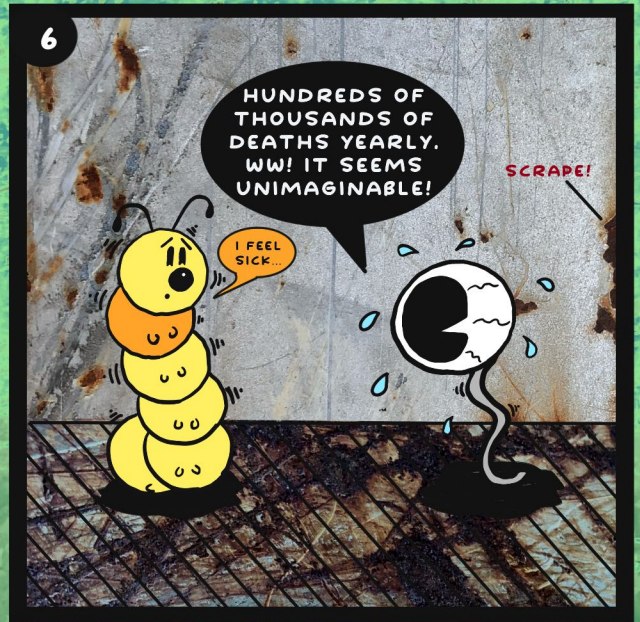
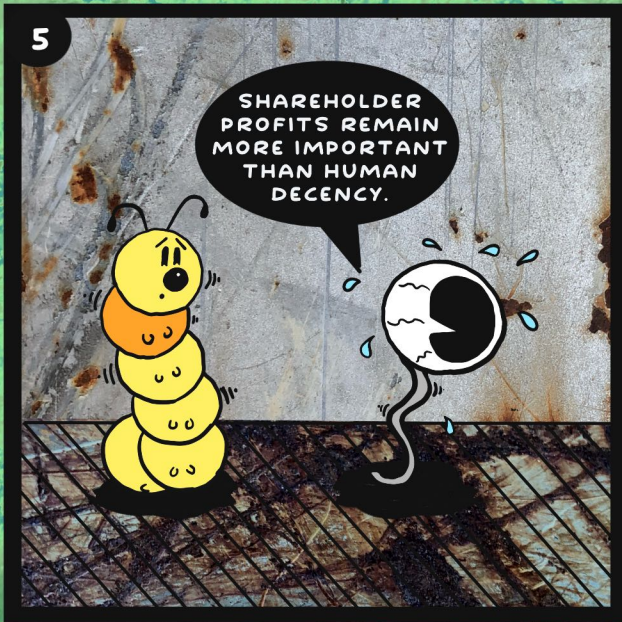
Eye don't know when the next "Party Up!" will B, but U better make sure U R there! Attendance is mandatory.

The Anxiety Riddled Life Of Mr. Disembodied Eye



by R. Ferent





CREDITS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR (P. 4)

Written by Robert Ferent. Layout by Robert Ferent.

HOT RAT SUMMER (P. 6)

Artwork, Photography, and Commentary by Anonymous. Layout by Robert Ferent.

THIS IS DETROIT BURLESQUE (P. 17)

Photography and Interviews by Nicole Alef. "Burlesque is a Protest" piece by Aqua Tofana. Layout by Robert Ferent.

THE OSTEOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF DAVID MÜLLER (P. 32)

Photography by David Müller. Layout by Robert Ferent.

THROUGH FADING EYES (P. 42)

Article by Rae C. Photography by @serverue (IG). Layout by Robert Ferent.

WORLD IN MY EYES (P. 48)

Written by Devin Howe. Layout by Robert Ferent.

THE FAB & KINKY WORLD OF FOXTROT ECHO AND COUM TRANSMISSIONS (P. 52)

Article and Interview by Matthew Levi Stevens. Portrait of Foxtrot Echo by Bertie Taylor. Other photographs from the archives of Foxtrot Echo (used with their permission). Layout by Robert Ferent.

SPLIFFS AND DILFS: AN INTERVIEW WITH KLOVIS GAYNOR & THE URINAL CAKES (P. 66)

Interview and Layout by Robert Ferent. Photography and Sketchbook Graphics by Klovis Gaynor.

AMERICAN DREAMING: AN INTERVIEW WITH IMAN ESSIET (P. 78)

Interview and Layout by Robert Ferent. Graphics and Photography by Iman Essiet.

BLIZZARD OF NOISE: AN INTERVIEW
WITH SNOWBEASTS (P. 88)

Interview and Layout by Robert Ferent.
Photography by Mandi Martini. Video Stills
from the "Devour" video Directed by Luke
Haughwout.

ON TOUR WITH JONBENÉT BATAILLE (P.
100)

Written by Thomas Boettner. Photography
by Sporesick. Flyers by Andrew Hurtado,
Jason Hodges, Yoyzeret Sheydim, Kyle
Tetro, and Thomas Boettner. Layout by
Robert Ferent.

BOOK REVIEWS (P. 110)

Written by Robert Ferent. Layout by Robert
Ferent.

MUSIC REVIEWS (P. 114)

Written by Robert Ferent. Layout by Robert
Ferent.

ESSENTIALS (P. 128)

Written by Alpha-27. Layout by Robert
Ferent.

LIVE REPORT: PARTY UP! A NIGHT OF
PRINCE MUSIC (P. 130)

Written by Robert Ferent. Photography by
Vicky Cai. Layout by Robert Ferent.

THE ANXIETY RIDDLED LIFE OF MR.
DISEMBODIED EYE (P. 132)

Story, Illustration, and Layout by Robert
Ferent.

PETS ARE AWESOME (P. 136)

Photography by Art Tuttle. Layout by
Robert Ferent.

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review.

EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS BURNING CAPITALIST NIGHTMARE HELLSCAPE ABSOLUTELY FUCKING SUCKS, BUT...

PETS ARE AWESOME!



AND JUST WHO IS THIS GOOD BOY?

Name: Kimchi

Known Aliases: K-dog

Age: 7

Type/Breed: Dog / Shiba Inu

Proud Owner: Art Tuttle & Mia Hwang

Photo By: Art Tuttle

Wanna feature your pet in a future issue? Send a picture and some basic info about your pet to FANEmag@gmail.com and who knows... next issue's featured pet could very well be yours!

NIFE

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**And
More!**



Desk Art



