

# ZERO SIGNAL

MAGAZINE

4

JANUARY FEBRUARY 2015

GENUINE SYNDROME

SARAH PIPPIN

XX RATED WOMEN IN MUSIC

THE ATLAS MOOTH

FLUENT DISORDER: A NIGHT WITH EYEHATEGOD

MISSETTS / THE ATTACK!

UNDERGROUND MUSIC COALITION

O'DONNA

HUMANITY'S LAST BREATH

AND MORE

UNDER A NIGHTMARE

MARK SCIONE/AUX/DAVID HAYES

DAWN OF THE UNDERGROUND

GRAHAM MASTERTON

CHRIS KELSO

ROB MORAN

GUAR

DAX RIGGS

MULE SKINNER

EXPLICIT  
GUARANTEED  
CONTENT

Moran





We are a unique photo and video business provider located in Pensacola, FL. We offer live performance coverage, as well as video interviews with big name stars, and aspiring locals. Kristina Wright is our professional photographer, and she has a passion for music, as well as the live energy created at performances. Check out our website and Facebook page!

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# INTRO

A new year is upon us and that means the prospect of many grand adventures in a bold new time. 2014 was a busy and exciting year full of new things (like Zero Signal Magazine), tragedy (many great people died, including my Grandma Dodge) and all of the other things that remind us we're alive. Now here we are, it's January 2015 and this is the fourth issue of our darling little zine to hit the virtual shelves. We've gained and lost: staff, contributors and friends. That's the way the world works, though. You win some and you lose some.

This issue is jam packed with great interviews, awesome reviews and our cover artist, Rob Moran, did a spectacular job of keeping our streak of great covers intact. He also proved to have a great sense of humor which is good since my interview questions tend to meander into the silly side with alarming regularity. He came right back and proved that even though we won the Revolution, the British are still superior to us in all of the most important ways. I mean, just look at the spectacular dentistry...

I realize that you're probably bored and now you're also annoyed by my wandering narrative but guess what, you now have over a hundred pages of great shit to read after this. When you finish reading this brand new issue of Zero Signal Magazine be sure to mosey over to our website (<http://zerosignalmagazine.com>) and check out our new look. It's still a work-in-progress but we're happy with the way things are heading and we think you will be too. If you haven't already downloaded our first three issues, maybe #4 will convince you to track them down and get your FREE dose of awesomeness courtesy of the staff here at ZSM. Thanks for your support and have a great new year!

**Jim Dodge**



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# A HOT BED OF HORROR PUNK IN THE GREAT WHITE NORTH WITH

## UNDER A NIGHTMARE



Pennsylvania band Under A Nightmare may not be a household name but that's not their fault. They've been keeping horror punk alive in New England since 2002 with their lively music and, I assume, amazing live shows. Since they haven't made it close enough to my part of Florida for me to witness their on-stage splendor I can't be entirely sure they rock the live set but no band makes it for more than a decade without bringing something special to their fans.

**Jim Dodge)** Under A Nightmare has been around since 2002. How many albums have you released during that time?

Keenan Murphy) We've technically been in the studio to do an album (in our minds) probably seven times-ish I believe, but realistically we've had five albums and two longer demos. So at that rate it was going at near an album every two years till recently.

**Jim)** There was a lot of growth from the time you released *Cemetery Getaway* until you released *Toxic Spills & Graveyard Thrills*. What do you think led most to this evolution in your sound?

Keenan) Honestly, and don't get me wrong we loved our original lineup and members...but the member changes probably had a lot to do with it. Marky and I still wrote every song musically and lyrically but having a different drummer on both of those albums definitely changed things up a bit, a little more expansion if you will. Also we believe we try to kick it up a notch every album we do, we get older, but our sound shouldn't rot like the album art zombies.

**Jim)** One of the catchiest songs on *Toxic Spills...* is 'Drinking Trioxin' and it's based on the *Return of the Living Dead* movies, I'm guessing. Is it possible that you actually like those shitty movies or did the idea just click during one of those dark, lonely nights when it was just you and WTBS?

Keenan) I absolutely love *Return Of The Living Dead*, haha. It was a childhood/teenage favorite of mine, all the crazy punk rock characters and wacko older people in the movie along with the Tar-man are something that stuck with me forever. The idea of raining down this gas/liquid clicked for the idea of the song and then people started brewing up their own beer ideas, a really fun time. I collect thousands of what most would say are horrible B-horror movies especially on VHS from the 1980's, it's a great time.



**Jim) In the past when we've talked you've mentioned line-up problems. Have you managed to keep the same guys around lately or is there still a lack of dedication on the parts of your band mates?**

Keenan) It started with myself in 2002 and Marky jumped on board in 2003 and we've been the driving force since then, bouncing ideas off each other. It's pretty much a blood pact; we will run this thing till the grave. Everyone that's ever been a member in our band has been a great person; the other three have just had "life" stuff that has taken them down the other roads. Marky and I are fine with that, in the end, this band is about fun, dedication, and I guess not to be too cheesy, a punk rock brotherhood. We will always treasure the old members and they're welcome back anytime. We've even jammed with them time to time.

**Jim) As horror punks I'm sure you're a fan of The Misfits. What do you think of the current Jerry Only-led version of these rock legends?**

Keenan) A giant can of worms that subject has turned into in the past ten or so years it seems. I love Danzig era and Graves era, and we got to share the stage with the new Jerry era and he was really nice to us. That's all I'm going to say about it I guess, haha. It's all those dudes' business. But, I will say, like a million others, a true reunion would be epic.

**Jim) Why aren't a great bunch of guys like you touring the world yet? I don't want to hear any excuses I just want to know when you'll be playing near my home town so I can come crash the show.**

Keenan) The day that Marky or I win the lottery, it will be the first thing that happens. We're just doing it all ourselves since the start, so it's a long process that will eventually work out. We've toured almost all of the states so far and won't stop until we finally do get to go overseas and down to South America and the great white north. We'll be doing it when we have true booking and everything else involved that most bands do to get it done.

**Jim) What did you do to celebrate the full moon that fell on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> in June?**

Keenan) I love Friday the 13ths, Mr. Voorhees is actually my all time favorite horror person/image. We probably ate pizza and watched some horror VHS.

**Jim) How hard is it to find topics that are scary enough to keep you writing song lyrics when you live in such a peaceful place like Pennsylvania? Is the close up view of Canada the inspiration for your Halloween hits?**



Keenan) In the beginning we did as most horror bands and strove to get lyrical ideas from movies. Lately the past couple albums most things have been metaphors and memories. For example the song, "Spider In The Poolhouse", is actually about my grandparents' home in West Virginia. When I was like five, my dad told me this story about this massive spider that caught giant rats and mice in its web and lurked around the top of the pool house or room on the property. Every time I went in there and still do, I check for that monster. So it was kind of a tribute to my family in that sense as well. I know Marky's song, "No Tomorrow" deals with real life stuff to, the world we're coming to, war and all that stuff.

**Jim) Would it bother you to hear Justin Bieber playing one of your songs?**

Keenan) Dude would definitely pick "Go Go Zombie" I'm sure...and throw some babies in there, instant hit for him. Bother me, probably, throw me a million bucks so we can get UAN moving along...I'd shudder the thought of that decision making process!

**Jim) How many shows does UAN play a year? Does the crowd get crazy and throw beer bottles or are they the calm, quiet types?**

Keenan) Hmmm, I don't really know the number...I think I counted once in the ol' MySpace days...I think 2006-2007 we played at least 100 shows, often paring back to back mini tours, we covered a lot of area then. Lately in the past couple years it's definitely slowed to more in the ten to twenty range...we've had





to pick and choose the right times to do them because we've been trying to record a new album and it's taking a snail's pace.

**Jim) Is there anything new on the horizon for fans of Under A Nightmare to look forward to?**

Keenan) Yes! We are bringing it full force back to life, first album in four years very soon. There's probably over 100 songs written, we'll pick and choose and release an album or two, some EPs, split vinyls with other bands that have been in the works for years and a ton of new merch. Once that is ready, we're hitting the road driving through the wilds like we're from *Mad Max* until whatever transport we have can no longer take us there.

**Jim) If you could kill one person and know you would get away with it, where would you hide the body?**

Keenan) I actually watch a lot of Forensic Files and other programs like that late at night with my girlfriend... So I'd definitely have to think on that one a while. Modern technology is awesome for solving those types of things. I don't think I'd get away with it, but I'd probably have to pick something I liked from a favorite horror movie to honor. I dunno, the first thing that comes to my mind for some reason is the Toxic Avenger...so I'll say I'll take him/her to the nearest toxic waste facility, haha. Thanks for having us, Jim!!





# **WELCOME TO**

# **CANNIBAL FAT CAMP**

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## **ABOUT YOURSELVES WHILE YOU CONSUME EACH OTHER!**

**Mark Scioneaux. DAVID HAYES.** Who are these two demented individuals and how did they become the men they are today? Are they clinically insane? What kinds of drugs are they on? Are they just a couple of nerds living in their mothers' basements? Well, I didn't really cover any of those last three topics in this interview but we did discuss other important things like literature, hillbillies and zombies. That's pretty much all there is to talk about these days so I guess we're in line with mainstream society. NOT!

**Jim Dodge)** How long have you two known each other?

Mark Scioneaux) It feels like forever at this point, but we met at the World Horror Convention in Salt Lake City, UT in 2012. We just hit it off from the start with each of us having a witty, sick humor and ordering a pizza during some snooty party or ceremony. I don't remember. We weren't paying attention.

David Hayes) It was a pepperoni, sausage and onion. Mark ate most of it.

**Jim)** What made you decide to put your heads together for *Cannibal Fat Camp*?

Mark) David approached me with the idea he had for a book involving obese rich kids who became cannibals and I loved the idea. Originally the story was to be told through letters, newspaper articles, and journal entries...but then we realized the book would be about fifteen pages long. I put together a rough outline of how I wanted the novel to go and he made his suggestions. From there we had a solid outline and we started the writing process. Collaborating can be tricky but we found the process to flow naturally.

David) Right. The original story was a bit different but we decided that having a message was equally as important as the grue. This is satire, after all. Or Splattire. Teehee.

**Jim)** I can't decide whether you loved *Lord of the Flies* and were inspired by it or if you despise that book and wanted to trash it. Which is it?

Mark) In my case, neither. *Lord of the Flies* is a classic, but it wasn't in my head as inspiration until the kids were alone on the island and anarchy ensued. But that's what made the book such a success with readers. They all saw *Lord of the Flies* in it, and loved it because of that. So now I proudly say that *Cannibal Fat Camp* is like *Lord of the Flies*...a gory, disgusting, hilarious *Lord of the Flies*.

David) *Lord of the Flies* was on my mind but so was *The Biggest Loser* and other shows that trample self-esteem. That is the key, I think. To be topical and say something poignant but make sure there is enough cannibalism, sweaty fat people sex and violence to hold anyone's interest.

**Jim)** What childhood traumas caused you to become the sickos you are today?

Mark) No childhood traumas to report over here. I was lucky to grow up in a stable home with two successful parents who made sure my sister and myself never wanted for anything. But I've always been interested in things that were taboo, gross, or scary. I think the best way to explain would be that my personal life is so free of chaos and trauma, that through writing I was able to introduce it into my life in a controlled state. For me, I just love telling a story and entertaining. I also love shocking people with the things I say, whether they be funny, inappropriate, or a blend of the two.

David) I've been a lard-o my whole life. Stable home, loving family but my early school experience was similar to Miles. Like I said, we really wanted to say something about how we perceive our own bodies.

**Jim) Are you in therapy or are you enjoying the effects of your mental illness too much to let it go?**

Mark) Writing is my therapy. Besides, if I sat on a couch with a therapist and told him/her the thoughts that run through my head on a daily basis, I would probably be institutionalized. And my mom would nag me. A funny thing she said once was, "Your father and I gave you a great life. Why can't you write about happy things?" Well, because happy things are boring!

David) Mark is my therapist. I send him \$30 every month and he tells me I am talented and handsome.



**Jim) What other kinds of messed up things do you two write?**

Mark) I have a few books out there floating around the interwebs. *Slipway Grey* (coauthored with Dane T. Hatchell) is a fun book where a sexy serial killer and a blood thirsty shark team up and create mayhem. *Family Dinner* is another favorite of mine. It's a classic-style zombie tale of a man trying to get back to his family as the world goes to hell.

David) I'm all over the map, but most of it is dark satire. I have *American Guignol* out through Blood Bound Books and *Cherub* through Bizarro Pulp Press. The second part of our (Mark and myself) Splattire Series is out now. *Die, You Zombie Crackers!* is available from Bizarro Pulp Press. *Keeping Molly* is my newest.



**Jim) Have you considered writing children's books?**

Mark) Sort of. I played around with the idea of a young reader series, but R.L. Stine pretty much took every idea imaginable so that was the end of that.

David) Sure, because I like prison. That sounds like fun.

**Jim) If you could control the minds of zombies during the apocalypse, what would you make them do?**

Mark) Probably do the dance from 'Thriller' until I lost interest, or learned the moves myself. Being horrifically white, it would take me a long time to learn the dance moves and the zombies would either break down to nothing or turn on me. In the spare time I would have them do daily runs for food, weapons, and porno mags.

David) I would start my own professional wrestling organization with them.



**Jim) Assuming the zombies never rise and the end of the world never happens, what will you do with your emergency supplies of food, weapons and porno mags?**

Mark) I'd live the American dream and get horrifically obese while shooting guns in the air and reading porno mags. Only the articles, of course. Hell, this is practically what I do in my normal life as it is.

David) I'm confused. Emergency supplies? What do you people do on the weekends?

**Jim) What other deviant acts have you two been up to?**

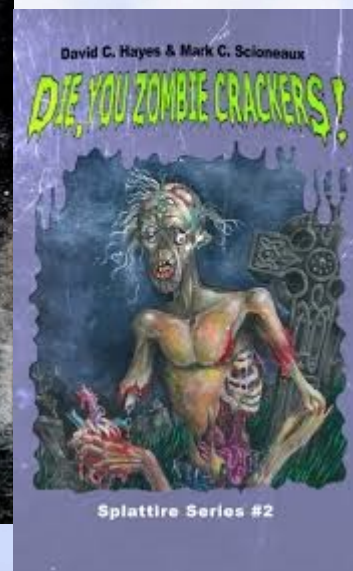
Mark) We collaborated on another story following the festive theme of *Cannibal Fat Camp* and our coined term "Splattire" which is a mixture of Splattpunk and Satire. The book is called *Die, You Zombie Crackers!* and it is a fun zombie tale of hillbillies mixing medical waste with homemade moonshine. There's everything from moonshine fights, lovable inflatable sheep, lesbians (every book should have that), and George W. Bush as a spirit guide. Don't ask, just read. Currently we are working on our third book in the series, *America's Next Dead Model*, which is a fun slasher book starring beautiful models and a machete wielding maniac. It's like *Jason X* if they would have been smart and set Jason on a tropical island. Hmmm...maybe Hayes and I should make that movie.

David) Yeah! What he said! Add in some short stories, too. I had a role in the upcoming films *Dead Quiet* and *Werewolves in Heat*, so keep an eye out for that, too.

**Jim) What can fans expect from the demonic duo of Scioneaux and Hayes in the near future?**

Mark) Hopefully wrapping up *America's Next Dead Model* and then working on the next literary abortion in the Splattire Series. But if I can be serious, it is rare to find a person and writing partner where you just click immediately. Hayes brings with him so much talent, life experience, and knowledge that I just don't have. And when I think I've written the most fucked-up thing imaginable, he out-does me every single time. And I wouldn't have it any other way.

David) Awww, I'm blushing. We are definitely going to wrap up *America's Next Dead Model* and figure out where we go from there. We have plenty of stories to tell. Mark is grounded in his prose which keeps me from going too far afield. I couldn't ask for a better partner. Unless he were rich. With really big boobs. And a girl.

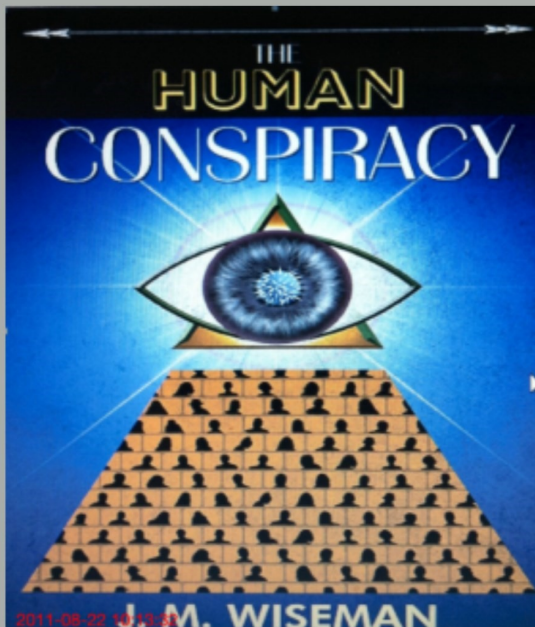




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# The Human Conspiracy

J.M. Wiseman



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The Human Conspiracy by J. M. Wiseman is a gripping tale that explores the growing suspicion that beneath the apparent march of progress and history are monstrous vested interest groups who will stop at nothing to thwart anything and anyone who stands in their relentless pursuit of power, money, and control.

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# Dawn of the Underground

"Akuna Mata ta, what a wonderful phrase" it means no worries for the rest of our days - if only everything life were as simple as a Disney movie - living, dying, and all the moments in between. In this ever-repetitive process of rebirth - the days, the years, and yes even the holidays - lose their meaning. Life becomes less like a Disney movie, and more like Scary Movie 3 - leaving us to shake our heads at the satirical outcomes, like actors in a play where the cynics are laughing from the sidelines at our series of misfortunes.

Maybe we are just adding random letters together, and somehow making a sentence.

Maybe we believe that we need more, and more to be happy.

I need this, I need that  
I'm not complete with what I have  
If I do this, If I buy that  
I'll get mine, I'll get mine

Nothing More "Mr. MTV"

Or maybe we just need to understand that life is a cycle.

Every day's another complication  
A journey through another maze  
Gemini Syndrome "Mourning Star"

And that we all need someone to help us through

You were lost and fading away,  
I was holding the line  
3 Years Hollow "For Life"

"Rock is Dead!"

But like a phoenix rising from its ashes I believe it has been reborn.

Bands like Nothing More, Gemini Syndrome, Adelitas Way, Venrez, and more have been breaking the mold, not being held by the previously held conventions of what ROCK is supposed to be, and have created something NEW, but its still ROCK and ROCK and I like it.

I have been branching out to support not only local and national musicians, but also becoming a part of the entertainment community. I met with actors/actresses of the upcoming SyFy channel fall line-up at the SyFy press tour. Make sure to check out Ascension, ZNation, and more this fall. I met with Gemini Syndrome, Nonpoint, 3 Years Hollow and Puddle of Mudd at the Kink Music Festival, and have been following the adventures of Chris Jericho "Fozzy", Love in Vein, MEGOSH,





Gemini Syndrome, Dreamboat Armada, Ballyhoo, and more as they travel the country spreading the ROCK and ROLL gospel.

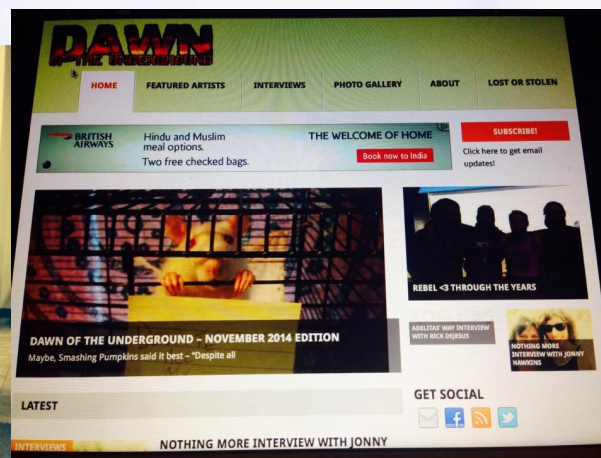
Make sure you check out my new website [www.dawnoftheunderground.com](http://www.dawnoftheunderground.com) and this month's featured artist – REBEL.INC. Submit your band or your content to [dawnoftheunderground@gmail.com](mailto:dawnoftheunderground@gmail.com) for consideration in upcoming website updates.

Peas, <3 and ROCK and safe travels to all that are living the dream.

Support your music scene, GO TO A SHOW, BUY a CD, and tell them Dawn of the Underground sent you.

Til next time, follow me as I support my family, the musicians, comedians, and the fans that love them while I am out and about bringing the music and entertainment that we love into the light!

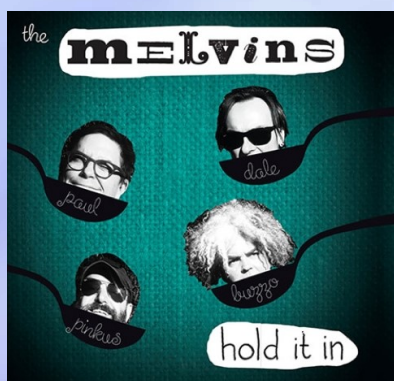
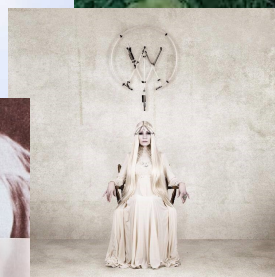
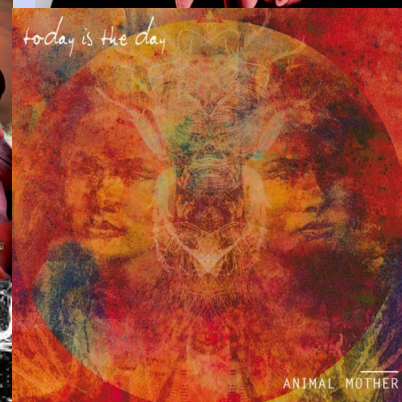
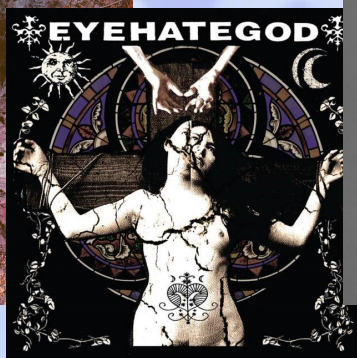
**Signed,  
Dawn of the Underground**





# Jez Feral's Top 10 (15) List for 2014

1. Eyehategod - self-titled.
2. Today is the Day - Animal Mother
3. Trap Them - Blissfucker
4. YOB - Clearing the Path to Ascend
5. Brody Dalle - Diploid Love
6. Fistula - Vermin Prolificus
7. Pig Destroyer - Mass & Volume
8. The Body/ Thou - Released from Love
9. Earth - Primitive and Deadly
10. LAE - Break the Clasp
11. The Atlas Moth—The Old Believer
12. Lana Del Ray—Ultraviolence
13. Melvins - Hold It In
14. Wormwood - Wormwood
15. Thou - Heathen





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THE ONLY THING WE HAVE TO FEAR IS...

# Graham Masterton

Part of the lore my wife and I share about our lives circles around a book, a book that scared us so much that, to this day, we still tell other people how much it scared us and that they should share in the terror by reading it for themselves. I first read this book in high school and later convinced Amy to pick it up. Through this shared experience we created memories that still give us the temptation to turn on a light when we go to bed. That book is *Walkers* (Tom Doherty Associates LLC 1990) by Graham Masterton. This isn't the only book of his that I've read but it is the one that disturbed my sleep the most. I highly recommend picking up one of his books, any of his books, and reading it before the sun goes down. If you're not shivering in delightful fear by bedtime you're a stronger person than I am.

**Jim Dodge)** I read your book *Walkers* in high school and years later had my wife read it. It scared both of us so bad we still talk about the experience. How did you come up with such a terrifying book idea and how does it feel to know you have had such an impact on your readers?

Graham Masterton) *Walkers*, of course, was the novel in which the patients in a hospital for the criminally insane tried to escape by physically entering the walls of the building, and were still inside them when our hero decided to buy the abandoned asylum and turn it into a country club. With, of course, very scary results. I am not entirely sure where this idea originated although it was inspired by a building I saw when I was visiting Wisconsin as the editor of Penthouse magazine. (We used to be printed by Wisconsin Cuneo Press.) I think we are all frightened by the idea of having intruders secretly hiding somewhere in our house and there have been several movies about people living inside the cavity walls of some old properties, although none as far as I know were physically able to enter the plaster as the characters in *Walkers* are able to do. As a writer, you are never really aware what impact you have made on your readers until years later when (like you) they come back to you and say "I couldn't sleep for years because of you." Personally I am not frightened by horror stories and I don't believe in the traditional concept of ghosts. I do however think that when we believe that we are in contact with the "supernatural" we are sensing a wider part of existence which we don't have the brainpower to grasp. There are statistically too many coincidences in life for this not to be true, too many events which appear to be serendipity.

**Jim)** You have written a lot of books during your writing career. Which ones are you most proud of? Are there any you wish you hadn't published?

Graham) I was trained as a newspaper reporter and worked for nearly ten years as a magazine editor so writing for me has always been my job. I have probably published about 120 books since I started writing novels and sex manuals full-time in 1975 and in their different ways I am proud of all of them. My sex manual *How to Drive Your Man Wild in Bed* was the first non-medical sex book published in Poland after the fall of Communism (under the title *Magia Seksu*). When I visit Poland these days I invariably meet some middle-aged woman who thanks me for transforming her marriage. I have even had praise from Polish doctors for the information I gave their patients.

There are some novels for which I have special feelings. *Trauma* (aka *Bonnie Winter*) about a woman crime-scene cleaner who is gradually falling apart because of the horrors of her job and her terrible marriage. *Descendant*, which is one of the only books I have ever written about vampires, because I wanted to show that the classic idea of a pale handsome man biting a swooning woman's neck is clichéd and preposterous. And the series of Irish crime novels on which I am still engaged at the moment, featuring Detective Superintendent Katie Maguire, who not only has to contend with hideous crimes but misogynistic fellow officers.

There has never been a book which I wish had never been published, although sometimes I look back at them and think I could tweak them here and there, if only I had the time. There was a book which I am probably glad didn't get published, a sex manual for religious couples called *Love Thy Lover, Love Thy God* which was commissioned (and paid for) by Pillar Books the inspirational publishers. They accepted it, and I think they quite liked it, but there was a change of editors and it never made it into print. Quiet sighs of relief all round.

**Jim) Horror fans tend to be pretty dedicated to their favorite authors. How do you handle the people who act a little too crazy for comfort?**

Graham) I have no readers who act crazy. None. It has never happened. And I don't ever call them fans. I'm not Justin Bieber. If somebody has bought or downloaded one of my books and paid good money for it, and then got back to me and told me how much they liked it, then as far as I'm concerned they're a friend.

**Jim) Have you ever ended up in a situation that made you wonder if you had just stepped into one of your own books?**

Graham) Late one October evening we were being driven from Katowice in Poland to Poznan, a distance of about 375 km. The taxi-driver had already worked a full day and kept nodding off, and apart from that we kept running into unexpected banks of dense fog. There was utter darkness all around, and there we were, swerving from one side of the road to the other, and even when I started shouting at the driver he still kept on dropping off to sleep. In the end I made him stop the taxi and pull into the side of the road. He was a big unshaven fellow but I slapped him twice across the face and told him that if he didn't wake up and drive properly then I would drive instead. After that he stayed awake and eventually we reached the lights of Poznan. It was still in the Communist era and the bar at the hotel had already closed, but when we went in and explained that our nerves were shot, they opened it up for us and gave us a much-needed drink.



**Jim) Do you ever delve into any other creative genre besides writing?**

Graham) I have always drawn cartoon characters, which I do for my friends and my grandchildren. When I was younger I wrote and drew my own comic called "Flash" which I did purely for my own amusement. I was offered a scholarship at a British art college and I considered being a commercial artist but at the last moment the vacancy on the local newspaper came up and I fancied that more.

**Jim) If you had been a talentless hack (like I am) what kind of career do you think you would have fallen into?**

Graham) I think I would have stayed as a newspaper reporter. I loved it because you met new people every day and it is extraordinary what intimate details people are just bursting to tell you about themselves if you learn how to ask the right questions and patiently and sympathetically listen to them. I may have just stuck on some provincial newspaper for the rest of my life, but I still would have enjoyed it. I was very fortunate to land the job of deputy editor of *Mayfair* the new men's magazine at the age of twenty one and then go on to edit *Penthouse* at the age of twenty four. I didn't think I was young at the time!

**Jim) Other than horror, what genre of fiction is your favorite? Are there any particular authors that you enjoy reading?**



(Graham drawing for orphans at the Dom Dziecka home in Gorzecz, Poland)



Graham) One of my greatest regrets being a full-time author is that I no longer derive any pleasure out of reading fiction. I used to love the tough American authors like Nelson Algren and Herman Wouk and I used to like Len Deighton too, but now at the end of the day the last thing I want to do is read fiction. I am hypercritical of my own work and just as hypercritical of other writer's work, so if they come up with a clumsy sentence or a badly-written scene it completely wrecks my suspension of disbelief. I can even tell when a writer is feeling hungry as he or she gets towards the end of a chapter. I was very impressed as a teenager by the Beat generation and the writing of Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso and William Burroughs, and I later became friends with William Burroughs when he lived in London and I wrote a novel in his "cut-up" style with his involvement and co-operation (and foreword), *Rules of Duel*. Although the style is

difficult to read and somewhat obscure, it dismantles language and puts it back together again to extract the maximum amount of meaning from it, and that was something that William and I discussed and worked on a great deal...to write so that the reader is totally unaware of the author's presence. In other words, to make a novel cinematic, but maybe even more than cinematic, because you can not only conjure up the landscape and the weather and the sounds and the smells, but you can get inside the character's heads, too, which even the best movie can't do. These days I always work extremely hard to get the rhythm of a sentence just right so that the story is completely believable...because the more believable it is, the more frightening it's going to be.

**Jim) What are some of the downsides of being a successful author that people may not be aware of?**

Graham) Sitting on your rear end on your own day after day. Having people say "I've written a novel, would you read it and comment on it and maybe give me a quote for the front cover." The upside of course is that you have managed to touch the lives of so many people and in Poland in particular I seem to have touched the lives of a lot of very pretty young girls. My late wife Wiescka was Polish, which was how I started to publish books in Poland in the first place, way back in 1989. *The Manitou* was the first Western horror novel to be published in Poland since World War Two, and I have already mentioned *Magia Seksu*. I visit Poland two or three times a year. This year I was in Bialystok and Olsztyn and Wroclaw and Strzelin, as well as Warsaw, and I am now a supporter of a children's orphanage in Strzelin.

**Jim) Do you ever wonder if your books have contributed to the sales of night lights or prescription sedatives?**

Graham) I have been told by some readers that they have kept the lights on after reading one of my books. There is a short story in my latest collection *Figures of Fear* called "What The Dark Does" and I have had several complaints that people were afraid to go to sleep after reading that. They were certainly afraid to hang a dressing-gown on the back of their bedroom door, ever again.

**Jim) What's next for the legendary Graham Masterton?**

Graham) I'm not sure about the "legendary." It's my job and as I've said I really enjoy it. There's a new Manitou novel *Plague of the Manitou* due out in 2015, featuring one of my favorite characters Harry Erskine who is probably closer to me in personality than any of the other characters I have written about. (I also tell fortunes with Tarot-type cards). The success of my Irish crime novels has meant that I have been commissioned by my publishers Head of Zeus to write three more, so I am very busy doing that, but I don't think my horror readers will be disappointed by them, since there is a great deal of horror in the world of crime. I am mentoring a young woman to write her first novel (so I have been reading some fiction) and that is a very interesting and satisfying diversion. I have an idea for several really scary novels, one of them a ghost story and one based on the international trade in second-hand clothes, believe it or not, called *Empty Coat*. Time is the main enemy. I shall never be able to finish all of the books that I want to write in my lifetime.





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## TOP 10 WRITERS I HAVE KNOWN

### GRAHAM MASTERTON

These are just some of the writers I have known personally. They are not necessarily listed in order of their writing ability, but by a combination of that and their personality and the circumstances in which I knew them.

**1) Jan Cremer:** made his name with his notorious autobiography *I Jan Cremer* in the 1960s, which he wrote for fame and money. He is a terrific travel writer, and also a world-renowned artist. He made me irredeemably jealous by having an affair with Jayne Mansfield. He now lives in Amsterdam with his very attractive wife Babette.

**2) John Steinbeck Jr:** the son of John Steinbeck who wrote *The Grapes of Wrath*, but a brilliant journalist and writer in his own right. At the *Penthouse* Christmas party in 1973 he started to chat up my editorial assistant Wiescka and invited her to go out with him afterwards, but I needed her to come to dinner at the 21 Club with my printers, so she had to decline. Four months later Wiescka and I moved in together and later married. John said to me later "What happened to that gorgeous assistant of yours? Is she still working for you?" John fought a hard battle with drugs and alcohol and died after an operation in 1991.

**3) Kingsley Amis:** good old crusty old Kingsley, who used to write my wine column for me, amongst other things. He would phone me up with a list of the wines he wanted to drink and it was our job to procure them for him. The only time he got really cross with me is when the wine merchants refused to give us a free bottle of Hungarian Tokaj, which was about £50 even in those days. His writing, though, was brilliant: economical and incisive and always amusing. Long gone to the great wine-tasting in the sky.

**4) Brian Aldiss:** the venerable science fiction Grand Master, anthologist and artist, who could be relied upon to write a wonderful piece on anything you asked him to. I once asked him to write me a piece on Twelve Magnificent Ways to Die. I can't remember all of them, but they were very poetic and one of them was floating down a river to the sound of opera.

**5) James Herbert:** always entertaining, sharp-witted and friendly, although I made the mistake once of inviting him to dinner with a senior executive of British Gas, whose wife was not exactly the most diplomatic of women, apart from having a face like a bagful of badgers, as we used to say in Cork. After a few glasses of wine she told Jim that his books were rubbish, and she couldn't stand them. He looked around the dining room and said "I can't stand this wallpaper, but I'm not so bloody rude as to say so." Jim passed away much too soon.

**6) William Burroughs:** dry, funny, highly eccentric, but a hugely innovative and influential writer and thinker. He and I got into too many scrapes to list here, but I recall one evening at a Lebanese restaurant in London when he got very drunk and started shouting that we should "bomb all the Ay-rabs." We were politely asked to leave and I had to keep him upright in the middle of Covent Garden while we went to find a taxi.

**7) Les Dawson:** apart from being a great comedian, Les was a hugely accomplished writer. His memoirs of a childhood in the North of England were hilarious and every time I phoned him to ask for a new article we would both end up weak with laughter. "We were so poor my mother used to take the bones out of her corset to boil for soup."

**8) Stephen Laws:** it's been much too long since I've been in touch with Stephen but he is a Grade-A horror writer with an amazing talent for making his stories believable and thoroughly creeping out his readers.

**9) Brion Gysin:** Brion was an artist and a poet with a healthy disregard for literary convention. He used to say that writing was years behind painting and one of his famous quotes was "Writers don't own their words. Since when do words belong to anybody? "Your very own words," indeed ! And who are you?" He gave me his astonishing novel *The Process* on the day of its publication in 1970, signed "Yours in Present Time." Passed away in 1986.

**10) Allen Ginsberg:** I had to include Allen because I always found him to be a gloopy, self-centred pain in the rear end. And also because one night in William Burroughs' flat in London he curled up on the floor for a nap and rested his greasy long curls against my brand-new pale-suede Italian shoe. I have never been so tempted to kick a world-renowned poet in the left ear in my life.





**Gemini Syndrome- Live at Club L.A. Destin,  
FL :11/14/2014**

Gemini Syndrome is based out of Los Angeles, California. Classified as alternative metal, the band consists of vocalist Aaron Nordstrom (former touring guitarist for Otep), guitarist Mike Salerno, drummer Brian Steele Medina, and bassist Alessandro Paveri. Their debut album "Lux" was released on Warner Bros. Records in September 2013, and the band has been touring ever since.



On the line-up for this show was 3 Years Hollow, Islander, Gemini Syndrome, and Nonpoint. 3

Years Hollow actually fit the bill quite nicely, sounding quite a bit like Nonpoint in the early days. When Islander took the stage, we actually had to walk outside. Not very much to please the ears from that band.

Gemini Syndrome took the stage third, and honestly, I think they should have been the headliners. This band has only released one album, but the following they have amassed is incredible. The effort and dedication invested into their music is unbelievable. Every single person in that room felt like Aaron was speaking directly to them. Brian Steele Medina was first to the stage, taking a moment of silence to collect and meditate upon his drum stool before Aaron, Mike, and AP took the stage. During our interview with Brian before the show, we learned why he takes that special sixty seconds to collect his thoughts. Opening the show with "Falling Apart", the guys had the entire crowd jumping to the beat. The rest of the set included "Basement", "Syndrome", "Stardust", "Ressurrection", "Morning Star" (my personal favorite), and they ended with "Pleasure and Pain. I have seen these guys four times now, and EVERY single show is better than the last.

Nonpoint went on to headline the night, but in my opinion, 3 Years Hollow did a better job of sounding like them. Something just didn't connect for me. Don't get me wrong, I love Nonpoint. Something in the music and the crowd wasn't meshing the way a band should intertwine with their fans.

Overall, I would DEFINITELY recommend checking out Gemini Syndrome anytime you have the opportunity. They even have a name for their die-hard fans. So let's just say I am officially a Synner, and will always be.

**[www.geminisyndrome.com](http://www.geminisyndrome.com)**

**Kristina Wright**



# COME! ENTER KELSO'S BIZARRE... IF YOU DARE



**Chris Kelso is an author who falls within the genre 'bizarro fiction.' Most of the books I've read that fall into this category haven't seemed very bizarre to me but I think that says more about me than it does about those books. Chris's book *Terence, Mephisto and Viscera Eyes* is the first bizarro title I've encountered that actually came across to me as being enough out of the ordinary to actually be categorized this way and I was glad to read it. It's a strange tale that starts out with a dog named Terence (who may be a man who looks like a dog or a dog who looks like a man) who wants to be a writer. He ends up as part of the collective organism known as Mephisto. That's all I'm going to tell you except to say that they live in the Slave State. That should be enough to pique your interest and if it isn't maybe you shouldn't read any further. If you're still curious, keep reading. You might just be glad you did.**

**Jim Dodge) I don't know anything about you except the fact that you write bizarro fiction. What are the basic facts people should know about Chris Kelso?**

Chris Kelso) It doesn't surprise me you haven't heard of me, I'm not very famous. You should know for future reference that I'm Scottish, I'm a librarian and I'm a big softy who likes romantic jaunts in the Ayrshire outback.

**Jim) How many books have you written? Is writing your main source of employment?**

Chris) I've written eight books so far, but by 2015 I'll have ten or eleven out there – maybe more. That's not taking into consideration all the short fiction written, anthologies edited or the time I devote to the fledgling magazine *Imperial Youth Review*. I wish I was able to write full-time! Unfortunately, fate gave me a sizeable penchant for nihilistic yarns about depression viruses and the ever expanding solitude of the cosmos, so anything I wrote was only ever going to follow in the same vein – which, of course, isn't very marketable or well-liked. By day I work in a library stacking books, cataloging and generally sentencing my soul to suicide...

**Jim) What kind of feedback do you usually get from people who have read your work?**

Chris) It's mixed really. There are times when a book of mine falls into the wrong audience's hands and they subsequently tear it apart for being too smart-arse for its own good, or 'messy' or 'lacking in likeable characters'. Maybe they're right! It's funny, science fiction fans don't like the horror aspect of my work, horror fans don't like the slow wordy, philosophical bits and high-lit lovers, well, maybe they're too







ANYONE. If you e-mail me, I'll respond pretty quickly, I'll happily offer advice and do my best for other young authors. If I ever taste even a modicum of success in my 'career' as a 'writer' I'm determined that I won't let it go to my head and start being a cunt to everyone.

**Jim) If you were offered the chance to write children's books, what would you write about? How would you respond to the angry mobs of parents who appeared on your doorstep with torches and pitchforks?**

Chris) I'd write something appropriate. I'd write about a kid with the Black Dog depression virus and do it like an internal monologue, because I know how to flesh out that character. To the parent's I'd say 'Look at your kid. If they picked up this horrendous book I wrote, maybe you should take a look at how you're parenting...'

**Jim) What will there be for your fans to look forward to in 2015?**

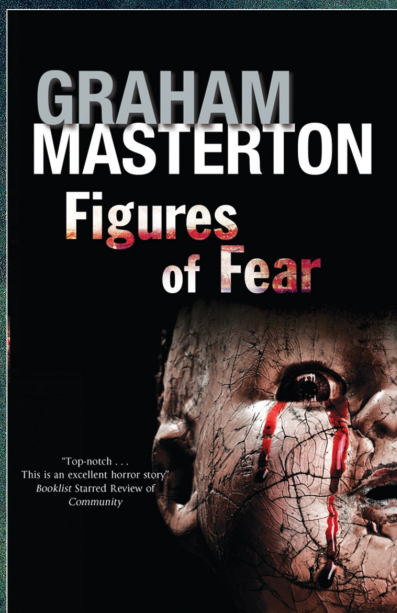
Chris) Oaft! Lots and lots and lots! I've got my next novel 'The Dissolving Zinc Theatre' coming out through Villipede which I'm ecstatic about. I'll have the slave state anthology sorted and ready by April (hopefully!) and Omnium Gatherum have agreed to publish – again, I'm really happy with how that's going! THEN my book 'Rattled by the Rush' is coming out, my third through Bizarro Pulp Press and the final chapter in the slave state mythos \*SHOCK\* \*HORROR\*. I also have a few other projects that include a comic and another anthology that might turn out to be the biggest thing I've ever been part of. I hope 2015 will be the year you know who I am (apart from the fact I write a kind-of-bizarro fiction), at least know me for my terrible reputation!

**(Hal Duncan, Neil Williamson and Chris Kelso)**





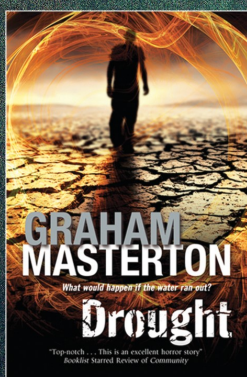
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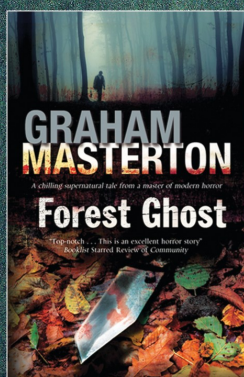
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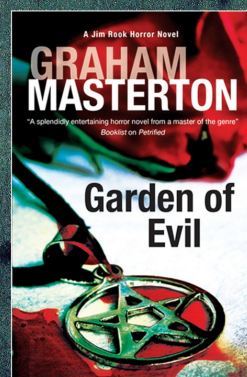
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# XX RATED!!!

**This is dedicated to talented women in music today, and this section is to pay homage to these women who you may or may not know about and their bands.**

**Cop Problem** is a politically motivated hardcore, d-beat band from Philadelphia. They have supported acts such as Converge and Dropdead. Their latest release *Buried Beneath White Noise* was recorded in September 2013 released via The Compound/Earsplit. This is their second release since 2012's, self-titled effort. If you like political crust/punk, you will like this album.

Deb Cohen – vocals  
Randon Martin – Guitar  
Joshua Cohen – Drums  
George G. – Bass

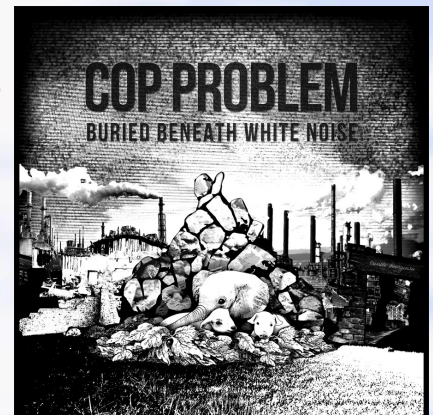
<https://www.facebook.com/CopProblem>  
<http://www.copproblem.com/>

**Shroud Eater** is a sludge, doom, and stoner metal. Shroud Eater was formed in Miami, Florida in 2009. They released the EP, "Dead Ends" in 2013. This is one of the two EP's released as well as one full length release. They have opened for acts such as Kylesa and High On Fire. If you are into stoner/doom you will like this. You can get their entire discography via their Bandcamp page.

Jean Saiz guitars/vocals  
Janette Valentine bass/back-up vocals  
Davin Sosa drums/percussion  
<https://www.facebook.com/shroudeater>  
<http://shroudeater.bandcamp.com/>

**Mandatory Abortions** is described as hardcore, thrash, punk and dirty blues founded in 2009 in Chicago, Illinois. They have gone through two different vocalists. Viki is the best, because she also plays guitar. They currently play the tight knit punk DIY scene in Chicago. They are currently recording new material. Until then you can catch their music via their Reverbnation page. They like to mix genres, not sticking to the norm of just any label.

Viki V on Vox & Vtar  
Jungle Big Drums  
InGrog on Bass  
<https://www.facebook.com/ManAbort>  
<http://www.reverbnation.com/mandatoryabortions>





**Windhand** originates in Richmond, Virginia and has been a band for eight years. Their most recent release, "Soma" is being followed up by a split, and a new record out soon. Dorthia's haunting vocals over down-tuned stoner rock is beautiful. A must have for your collection.

Asechiah Bogdan: Guitar

Dorthia Cottrell: Vocals

Parker Chandler: Bass

Ryan Wolfe: Drums

Garrett Morris: Guitar

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

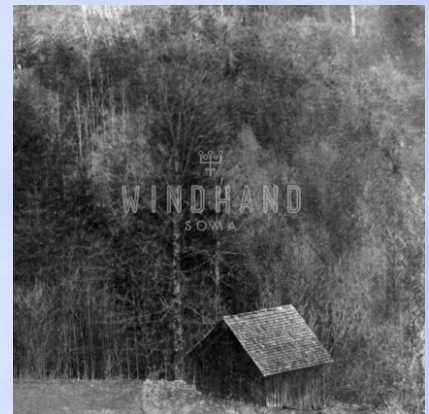
[https://www.facebook.com/WindhandVA?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/WindhandVA?ref=br_tf)

**Oathbreaker** is from Ghent, Belgium. Their most recent release is Eros|Anteros. Caro has one of the most extreme screams out there right now. No one else sounds like her. I highly recommend this album.

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

**Made Out of Babies**; Julie Christmas is one of the most eclectic women in music. Though Made Out of Babies broke up in 2012 after a seven year stint. The album Coward which was released on Neurot Recordings is one of the best albums to date. They released three albums including Coward.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Made\\_Out\\_of\\_Babies](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Made_Out_of_Babies)



SEE OUR NE**XX**T ISSUE FOR  
MORE WOMEN IN MUSIC!!!

# TOP TEN FROM THE TOP DOG

Daniel Forst is the founder and HMFIC of the Underground Music Coalition, an online group that exists solely to help musicians connect with other musicians, venues and record labels. Through his hard work and dedication to the UMC he has created a community that has helped many bands to reach out to much wider audiences than they were able to without Mr. Forst. I would personally like to thank him for all that he does for the musical community, not just in the USA but worldwide, and I know the bands and musicians he has helped agree. After a friendly query Daniel was kind enough to send in a Top Ten List for Zero Signal Magazine's January issue. First up, bands. –Jim Dodge

1) **Baby Godzilla:** anything they do but most importantly this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX-QaUNTbng&index=12&list=PLBgsChQ1phgeUsIUdVEpirInfBYyDktqG>

2) **Loyal Until Death:** Born of Violence

3) **Forged in the Furnace of the Sun:** Ben is very down to earth and his music is killer

4) **Proven:** another band I dig way too much (and shouldn't as an adult)

5) **American Standards:** the death of rhythm and blues and hungry hands, because I dig that shit and give not an iota of fuck what you think.

6) **Broken By the Burden:** I will always love this band. "Running of the Fools" sounds immense and sonically enriching to a degree that I will probably grade all other EP's to this standard. The music, the production, and the overall arrangement. This is the best line up and batch of songs they've done.

7) **Napalm Death:** because just when I say I've heard them enough, they go ahead and make more music and like a puppy, I follow.

8) **All of the other bands in the UMC:** I don't mean to pick favorites (and it comes off that way). I could listen to **Taken By the Tide** all day long, just as much as **sicksicksick** or **Dead Animal Assembly Plant** or **Yakk**. There's so much talent in that group.

9) **Crowbar:** *Symmetry in White*. Just because it's new. **Crowbar** could find ways to crush mass in a black hole. Yes they're heavy and they write some thick ass grooves to go with it.

10) Last but not least: **Femaregionsix:** Shane brings it old school punk and it sounds amazing. If there was a way for me to physically be in the Lake Chuck (Lake Charles, Louisiana) area, I would beg to play in this band. That simple. Fast, reliant and caustic. The way it should be. Because honesty doesn't care if you like it, it's just what it is. Same with **Femaregionsix**.

## Top 10 Movies

1) **The Raid 2**

2) **Tai Chi Master**

3) **The Edge of Tomorrow**

4) **Lone Survivor**

5) **Ebony Wives of Porn Valley**

6) **Horrible Bosses 2**

7) Any Marvel Flick (**Guardians of the Galaxy**) also includes TV shows about Marvel

8) **Assault on Arkham**

9) **Widows Tour** (w/ Tombstones) home video (that fucking weasel had me rolling)

10) **Slow Southern Steel** (I included it for this year because this is when I finally saw it)

I feel no need to justify why I picked one thing over another except that I am a highly impulsive animal and care not what you or anyone thinks. I do things (listen or watch ....gasp, even do....) things purely for my enjoyment. Take what you will from these two lists. If you like em, cool, if you don't, fuck you. My taste matters too. (I'm kidding).

–Daniel Forst



FLUENT DISORDER:  
A NIGHT WITH  
EYEHATEGOD,  
PIG DESTROYER,  
OSSACRUX  
AND FAT STUPID UGLY PEOPLE

**EyeHateGod/Pig Destroyer/Ossacrux/Fat Stupid Ugly People at One Eyed Jack's in New Orleans, Louisiana on November 22, 2014**

I arrived at One Eyed Jacks and stood in line for about twenty minutes. I was supposed to be on the guest list, but they couldn't find my name. I had no idea what band list Liz from Earsplit put my name under. I had already reserved my ticket two months in advance before getting put on the guest list, so I didn't really care. I went to the bar and got an over-priced Jack and Coke, and made my way to the second half of the venue where the stage was located.

**Fat Stupid Ugly People** started, and I was excited, because this was my first time seeing them play. Their drummer, Chris, is multi-talented, and is also a guitarist. He didn't miss a beat. For missing a bass player, they ripped ass. There was an old-fashioned circle pit, which I haven't seen in years. Good power violence, with song titles like, "Ask Me If I Give a Fuck." Or as they would put it, "Murder Capitol Powerviolence." Fat Stupid Ugly People got their name from taking negative words they endured growing up and turning them into a positive. They have been a band since 2004, which gives them a decade of credibility. The founding members and current line-up are Hollise Murphy, the vocalist and lyrical assassin, Angus Schex on guitar and backing vocals, and Chris Prince on drums. Keep an eye out for a record release show, and a vinyl to be released sometime in early to mid 2015.

**Ossacrux**...I had no idea what to expect, because I had never heard their music. They were second on the bill, and I was pleasantly surprised at how good they were. They're a three piece band from New Orleans that can roughly be described as D-beat / Hardcore / Crust. Their name means, "cross of bones." I remember turning around Hollise and saying, "Jesus that guy is brutal," in reference to Jason Smith, the bass player / vocalist. The band also consists of Chad Vanko on guitar and Rob Lovell on drums. Ossacrux just started ripping through songs like shredding through the crowd. People were going insane with the fast-paced d-beat. I have listened to their 7", "Orgy of Atrocities," and they are so much more aggressive live. They have so much energy, and the vocals sounds more intense. I'm a sucker for good vocalists, and I was really impressed. He was demanding and strong. The pit was going crazy. I was toward the back on the main floor. Gradually as Ossacrux left the stage and Pig Destroyer began to play, I was on the outside of the pit. It was chaos and I loved every minute of it. It reminded me of why I love music. Even when I was being slammed into the stage during EyeHateGod, I loved every minute of it. It got so brutal during Pig Destroyer, people kept leaving the floor and I kept inching closer to the stage. By the end of their set, I was in the front sitting on the stage waiting for EyeHateGod to come on stage.

(Pig Destroyer)



(EyeHateGod)







(Fat Stupid Ugly People)



(Ossacrux)

**Pig Destroyer**, hailing from Virginia since 1997, had never played the South before. There were some technical difficulties in the beginning. The mic kept shorting out, and the guitarist wasn't plugged in for the first song. Scott Hull was playing a Strandberg headless guitar. I pointed it out to the guy standing next to me who had no idea what I was talking about. Blake Harrison on the keyboard really hyped up the crowd. I secretly hoped by this slim chance that Kat Katz [Ex Salome / Agoraphobic Nosebleed] would have shown up with Pig Destroyer. She's on some of the tracks from the album, "Book Burner." I still remember the first time I heard, "Piss Angel" for the first time. "Piss Angel" was amazing to finally hear live. I wanted to lose my mind. Another song that stood out was, "The Bug." Their most recent release is 2014's *Mass & Volume*. Jr Hayes, the vocalist, laid it down. I also want to say Adam Jarvis, the drummer, was a master behind the kit. John Jarvis was on bass.

I was sitting on stage waiting for **EyeHateGod** to come on. Mike IX Williams peeked his head out from behind the curtain to give the crowd a "cheers" with his beer. Finally the curtain opened and it was immaculate bliss. I had to balance myself with my knee pressed into the stage to keep from going head first into Jimmy Bower's "Registered Coonass" sticker on his guitar. If you aren't from Louisiana or are not familiar with Louisiana, you're not going to get it. Mike IX Williams looked at me and all I could do was mouth the word, "Shit." They started playing "Sisterfucker" and before I knew it, the mic was right in front of my face. I only did what was natural and started screaming into the mic, "Burn her!" When Mike IX made the gesture that I wasn't that bad at vocals, it made my fucking night. He's a major influence musically and as a poet/writer. People went out of control when EyeHateGod played "Methamphetamine." I noticed that you can tell when EyeHateGod is toward the end of their set, because it's marked by them playing, "Dixie Whiskey." My feet were hurting, and I had lines of bruises on my legs from being smashed against the stage. Miraculously, I dodged getting kicked in the face a few times by dudes attempting to crowd surf. It was cool to see the members of Pig Destroyer on the side of the stage watching EyeHateGod play. Hollise from Fat Stupid Ugly people went on the stage and started dancing. Hands down, that night goes down in history for me as a die-hard fan of EyeHateGod. They are also super respectful, at least to me. Jimmy Bower was flipping off the crowd, and we made eye contact. He was like, "Not you!" And we laughed. EyeHateGod released their self-titled album in March of 2014. RIP Joey LaCaze. [Former drummer] Brian Patton is the other guitarist, as well as Gary Madar on bass.

I tried to wait so I could talk to Mike IX, but there were too many drunk, obnoxious people trying to get his attention. It's okay though because I gave him a heads up on how great the show was, and he commented on my status after the show. The room was clearing out and I ended up talking with a Feminazi [her own words] after the show. She bought me a drink as we discussed women's rights and pro-choice. I told her how people think I'm nuts for traveling by myself. She exclaimed that she goes everywhere alone because you can't depend on anyone but yourself. I couldn't agree more. My phone went completely dead mysteriously during the show. A man at the bar said that's because it's hard to get a signal inside the venue, your phone is always roaming which drains the battery. Lauren, the Feminazi, let me use her phone. After about three attempts on Google through her phone, and failure to get a cab, I finally had success. I exited the bar after thanking Lauren, and waited in front for all of maybe five minutes. The cab pulled up and I got in. The cab driver was the nicest man ever. I loved him, figuratively speaking.

**Jez Feral**



# TOP TEN UNLIKELY MOVIE TITLES FOR 2015

While most people are making New Year's resolutions that they will never stick to, I'm sitting around in my pajamas coming up with stupid ideas that turn into top ten lists; like this one. Instead of sticking to the "Top Ten Albums of 2014" formula (Body Count – Manslaughter, Cancerslug – Rootwork, CJ Ramone – Last Chance to Dance, EyeHateGod – EyeHateGod, Greenleaf – Trails & Passes, In This Moment – Black Widow, Nick Oliveri – Uncontrollable, Primus and the Fungi Ensemble – Primus & the Chocolate Factory, Skull Pin – Bullet, Wo Fat – The Conjuring) I created my own category, which, as you can see, is the Top Ten Unlikely Movie Titles for 2015\* (contains bonus materials not available in all areas). I tried to hit a wide array of companies and genres in order to make this a well thought-out list of films that we aren't going to see in the next twelve months and probably will never see because they're just that fucked up. If you're a young filmmaker trying to break into the industry and would like to make one of these movies, hit me up and we'll talk royalties.

- 1) Marmaduke Vs. The Babadook
- 2) Jason Voorhees and the Argonauts
- 3) Pacific Rimjob
- 4) Star Wars Episode VI 1/2: A New Revenue Stream
- 5) Cocaine & Waffles: The Story of Rick James
- 6) Santa Claus Saves Ferguson, Missouri
- 7) Illegal Alien Vs. Sexual Predator
- 8) Harry Potter and the Washed Up Weasley
- 9) Studio Ghibli presents My Neighbor Tarantino
- 10) Disney Pixar presents The Shrek and Donkey Show
- \*) Come Out of the Closet Charlie Brown

Jim Dodge





## **GWAR/Corrosion of Conformity/American Sharks at Vinyl Music Hall in Pensacola, Florida on December 4, 2014**

As I drove home from Pensacola early this morning, covered in red and green GWAR goo, I pondered the ramifications of the events that I had just witnessed. It was a night full of comedy, tragedy and high octane rock and roll. Listen closely as I attempt to use paltry words to tell a story that's nearly beyond human comprehension.

### **American Sharks**

This band was new to me. I had no idea what to expect so I opened my ears and tried to keep an open mind. What I came away with is this: American Sharks are a band that loves to play rock and roll and they don't like to slow down for very long. Even when they did let off the gas pedal they never played any weak ass slow song or love ballad. Instead they found a power groove and rode it to its glorious conclusion. With a sound that crosses the line between 70s stoner rock and modern punk rock, American Sharks whipped the crowd into a frenzy and got the most pit warmed up for what was to follow.



### **Corrosion of Conformity**

Pepper Keenan was nowhere to be seen but that didn't keep COC from pounding through a set of sludgy rock that had the crowd moving like angry poltergeists. While Mike Dean obviously isn't worried about enunciation but nobody seemed to care. These rock legends played their set with the energy of a band half their age and kept the pit moving, the bodies moving until it was time for them to leave the stage. I'm not a COC fan so I can't say I recognized any of the songs but judging by the crowd's response, they knew every song that was played. It was nice to see a band with that kind of legacy getting the respect they deserved.







## GWAR

The Scumdogs are back for the GWAR Eternal Tour and they're looking for their lost leader, Oderus Urungus who has gotten lost in time. Together with some new scum they're using their time machine in the hopes of bringing him back to lead them on to more of their horrible and disgusting travels across planet Earth. With Blothar at the helm (a man who has a surprising resemblance to Beefcake the Mighty) they will attempt to lure Oderus back from space. With other new friends including Vulvatron and Pustulus Maximus they battle monsters (other than themselves), order pizza and smoke crack most egregiously all the while lamenting the loss of their great leader. The story is heart wrenching, comical and even completely fucking ridiculously entertaining and while the band claims Oderus is not dead, just missing, their dramatic reenactment of their quest to find him has a decidedly funereal tone. It's obvious the Scumdogs aren't the same without him. Will they find him, alive and well, or is this the end of GWAR as we know it? Will Bonesnapper, or perhaps Sawborg, usurp Blothar's eminence or will this massive (and eerily familiar) creature reign supreme? What about that sexy ass Vulvatron, will she mate with mere humans? If so, who will the lucky victims be? I won't answer these questions, partly because I don't know the answers and partly to be mysterious. What I do know is that there is no shortage of blood or toxic green goo on the GWAR Mothership. My shirt was still soaked when I got home two and a half hours after the concert ended. This story is at times sad, with the loss of such a prominent member of the band but it's always a lot of fucking fun to watch and the surviving members do a great tribute to their fallen brother. Did you realize this chapter in the story of GWAR has a moral? It does! I'll tell you what it is. That's not an udder. It's a bad of dicks.

**Jim Dodge**







Zero Signal Magazine usual runs an interview with its cover artist in the issue they do the cover for. Our cover artist for our third issue was Sarah Pippin who lives in Texas. Well since Sarah's interview didn't run in that issue it's running in this issue, as I'm sure you can tell by reading this. So without further delay here we go.

**Jason Bonton) What got your attention when you were younger that made you say I want to try to paint?**

Sarah Pippin) I've always had an active imagination, and I think, for me, it was largely about putting down what I saw in my head.

**Jason) What would you say influenced you the most when it comes to your art no matter the medium?**

Sarah) Fantasy, mythology, history. When I was a kid it was largely fairy tales. I was a bit obsessed with mythological creatures, and stories about Robin Hood. I loved the artwork of Brian Froud, and classical artists like John Waterhouse. As a teenager I became obsessed with pirate history, so the work of Howard Pyle, as well.

**Jason) If you could have one day with any artist who would it be and why?**

Sarah) If I could live in the shadow of any artist for a day, I think I would go classical. DaVinci. An artist like that isn't just talented.

They are a genius of deconstructing the world around them and turning it into something magical. I could only hope some of that genius would rub off.

**Jason) What do you do when you lose confidence in what you do? How do you get out of the state of mind?**

Sarah) Take a break. Sometimes it's easy to become too boxed in to what you're doing. You lose perspective. Take a breath, and start again.

**Jason) All artists have something they do before they start to work whether it be listening to music to just sitting outside in the quiet, what is yours?**

Sarah) Hm. I can't say that I have any one ritual, per se. I have a little girl, so I have to wait until after bedtime. I like it quiet. Or, if there's any noise, I like something in the background that makes me happy, or feel creative. I had *Sherlock* playing for a lot of my recent paintings. It helps me zone out.

**Jason) What was your first full art show like and how did it affect you?**

Sarah) My first art show was in late 2004, at the Visual Arts Center in Panama City, Florida. I'm not really sure that it got a whole lot of attention, but it was fulfilling and validating to be recognized as an artist, and as someone worth showing.

**Jason) Your last set of paintings was for an art show, had a animal theme to them while still being fantastical in aspect, what made you decide on that theme?**

Sarah) My friend actually invited to the art show. He was already working on a series of black and white pieces. I decided to build on that theme. Keeping them black and white was also practical because of the time constraints we were under. The fantastical aspect of the series is just what comes naturally to me.

**Jason) What is the best part of creating art to you?**



Sarah) Just having a release. And, always being able to work at getting better. I always hope that my next painting will be better than my last.

**Jason) What is your feelings on the world of modern art where you have people that create amazing paintings to just someone that puts a basketball in a fish tank and calls it art?**

Sarah) I am very much not an art snob. If you like it, good for you. If you're buying something for the coolness factor, you're probably not going to get that much fulfillment from it. There is so much creativity in the world. I do have a lot more respect for someone that is just trying to create something meaningful to themselves, than someone who has a consumerist mindset.



**Jason) Everybody that does art always tries to advance their style by one means or another, what do you think is the next step in your artwork?**

Sarah) I feel like I'm still taking a breath after my last show. I'm not really sure what direction I'll be going next. I think I may take a break from painting on canvases for a while and try my hand at something more 3 dimensional. I tend to be a victim of my creative whims. When a whim hits me, I'll follow it.

**Jason) Do you believe environment or locale effects the ability to create and what comes out as a finished product and why?**

Sarah) Definitely. I am very affected by my space in general. If it's cluttered, I feel claustrophobic. If I'm stressed, I can't focus. If I'm uncomfortable while I'm working, whatever I'm doing tends to come out rushed, or feeling incomplete. I like quiet, and room to spread out while I'm working.

**Jason) Have you ever wanted to create a painting just to be shocking, and if so what would it be?**

Sarah) As a teenager, during a tumultuous time, I worked on some pieces that were bondage themed. It was just a reflection of how I was feeling at the time, but I think most people just didn't know how to respond.

**Jason) What is the best advice you ever received when it comes to art?**

Sarah) I remember being told by a guy once... well, it wasn't advice at all, but it had an effect on me. He said, "You should really keep working on your art, because it's really unusual to see a girl with talent." It was so insulting, and it pissed me off so bad. I think I would keep making art for the rest of my life just



to give the finger to people who think like that.

**Jason) How has your style changed over the years to you?**

Sarah) I've become much more detail oriented. When I was younger it was a much more emotional, less technical experience for me. A painting was like an emotional explosion. I think I have become much more tempered over the years. I still drench what I do in emotion, but everything is much more thought out.

**Jason) What film would you say everyone needs to see and why?**

I'm a romantic, so *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. It's visually pleasing, quirky, funny, and heart wrenching. It's not a cliché love story, but it's fabulously romantic.

**Jason) What book are you looking forward to coming out?**

Sarah) I'm afraid I'm terribly out of the loop in regards to what is coming out. I tend to switch between reading fiction and history. Right now I'm reading *Trail of Tears*. I look forward to reading Neil Gaiman's newest *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* sometime soon.

**Jason) What film are you looking forward to seeing?**

Sarah) *Mood Indigo*. It's made by Michel Gondry (of *Eternal Sunshine*) and stars Audrey Tautou (of *Amélie*). It looks whimsical, and romantic, and fantastical, and I can't wait to see it.





# **Don't be a jackass!**

## **Check out**



**Mule Skinner is a hardcore grind band from New Orleans that was founded in 1990. Mule Skinner has this renowned "bayou" grind sound that is prodigious. Last year the band decided to get back together to start fresh with a new vocalist. They recruited Ryan Ashmore, and now the band is complete. They have recorded new songs, and they are playing shows all around Louisiana now. Listen to this band! You will not be disappointed! I got to speak with the original founding member Tony Salisbury, and this is what we had to talk about.**

**Todd Capiton - Drums  
Ryan Ashmore - Vocals  
Michael Howes - Guitar  
Tony Salisbury - Bass**

**Jez Feral) How are you today?**

Tony Salisbury) Very good thanks...

**Jez Feral) You're in the band Mule Skinner? What's your role in the band as well as your other band mates??**

Tony Salisbury) I play bass in the band, and I am a founding member. Michael Howes is the guitar player, and is also a founding member. Todd Capiton plays drums, and has been in the band since we recorded Abuse. Ryan Ashmore is the vocalist and newest member.

**Jez Feral) You had a previous vocalist, right?**

Tony Salisbury) Yes, Bobby Carney was the original vocalist.

**Jez Feral) Why did you decide to get a new vocalist?**

Tony Salisbury) We've been working on reviving Mule Skinner for many years and Bobby was going to be a part of that but due to personal issues Bobby couldn't do it...there's no bad blood between him and the band, we're still friends. Over years of "hit and miss" with the band we finally ran across Ryan and we're



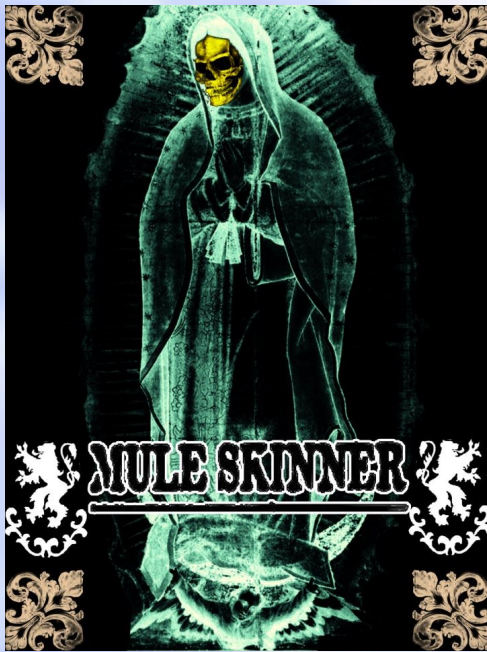
very impressed with his style and creativity. He is very easy to work with and perfect fit with the band which was very important to us.

**Jez Feral) How long has Mule Skinner been around?**

Tony Salisbury) We started Mule Skinner in the early 90s with Damien Howes on drums and Bobby Carney on vocals after we decided to retire our previous project Rude Awakening which was basically the same players with the exception of the vocalist.

**Jez Feral) What's the history of Mule Skinner?**

Tony Salisbury) When we started Mule Skinner we wanted play hardcore/grindcore which was a completely different direction we had been playing. At the time we started Mule Skinner there weren't many bands playing the style. We all came up listening to S.O.D., D.R.I., Pungent Stench and Napalm Death and wanted to emulate those styles. There weren't many other bands that were doing "death" styled metal in Nola in those days. We recorded some demo's that got us some label attention but didn't pan out immediately so we kinda shelved the project and moved on to some other things. We were approached a couple years later by Sludge Records out of France about recording a full length which we had always wanted to do, so we regrouped to record Abuse at which time Damien decided he didn't want be involved any longer and we recruited Todd Capiton from Flesh Parade to play drums. We recorded the LP and again put the project on the shelf never playing most of that music live. Once we got things rolling again in 2013 we recorded the first 3 songs since 1996 and played our first show with the Abuse lineup ever in 2014.



**Jez Feral) I heard you went into the studio and recorded a new EP. When did you actually go into the studio?**

Tony Salisbury) We recorded the Crushing Breakdown EP early this year (2014) at a friend's home studio and had it mixed by a friend of band Chris Messina (Swamp Gas). We're very happy on how it turned out.

**Jez Feral) What's it like working with a new vocalist?**

Tony Salisbury) Ryan is very easy to work with. He's always ready for anything we throw at him. We're stoked about releasing an LP with him.

**Jez Feral) Do you see Mule Skinner doing any kind of touring even if it's a short tour of the south?**

Tony Salisbury) Touring would be great in my opinion, but a couple of the guys have a lot going on family wise so any touring will be limited and have to be well planned out.

**Jez Feral) Have you written any newer material since your EP? If so, do you plan on recording any time soon?**

Tony Salisbury) Oh yeah, we got a lot of new material in the works. It's a lot more dynamic then the older material but still very much Mule Skinner. We're gonna start demoing the new stuff soon and hopefully start tracking for the LP by early 2015...or sooner. We have some big news to report on the release of the LP hopefully this fall...all I can say on it is stay posted to the Mule page.

<http://themuleskinner.bandcamp.com/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/TheMuleSkinner/>  
<http://www.reverbnation.com/themuleskinner>





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JASPER BARK

\*

ROB MORAN

2015



# What in the WORLD is The Atlas Moth?



The Atlas Moth is a band blending and taking from many genres in the metal world. There is no one label to put on this band. They have their own sound all on their own. The Atlas Moth was founded in 2007 by Vocalist/Guitarist Stavros Giannopoulos. They are based out of Chicago, IL. The Atlas Moth's last release and most recent release has been on Profound Lore Records. Their third and most emotional full length release being, *The Old Believer*. They have been quoted by Pitchfork as being "Militantly adventurous heavy metal." This is an interview with Stavros that touched on many subjects from his band, his personal music label, to women in music, the story behind the new album and his side project.

**Sludge. Psychedelic. Metal. Doom.**

**Stavros Giannopoulos - Guitar/Vocals  
Andrew Ragin- Synth/Guitar  
David Kush - Guitar/Vocals  
Daniel Lasek - Drums  
Alex Klein - Bass**

**Jez) Tell me a little bit about yourself and your band, and how long you have been together.**

Stavros) I'm Stavros. I'm 31, an Aquarius. I like long walks on the beach and delivery sushi. I started The Atlas Moth way back in 2007 to prove ex-bandmates/girlfriend wrong, and I'm still here today. I think I did well.

**Jez) How did you come up with your band name? Do you have an affinity for the meaning behind the actual Atlas Moth?**

Stavros) It was actually named after a documentary called The Atlas Moth. I just found out after a long conversation with Brann from Mastodon that it is his favorite movie. I recommend it to all.

**Jez) *The Old Believer* is your third studio LP. How is this one different from your last two albums?**

Stavros) I think it was a natural progression from our last record. I think we have come a long way as song writers, and it shows greatly on this record. I'd also say it is our most personal record to date.

**Jez) What would you say in your own words that is different or stands out with *The Old Believer* in comparison to the other two full lengths *A Glorified Piece of Blue-Sky* and *An Ache for the Distance*?**

Stavros) It definitely comes from a very dark place, and I don't think it is an easy listen. It's a record that commands to be listened to as a whole and really digested. It's not immediate; you have to spend some time with it to understand it fully.





**Jez) What is *The Old Believer* about? I know your mother had previously passed [I'm sorry to hear that] Was this record about the experience of mourning?**

Stavros) It's about losing someone who has shown you a path on life. Someone who was there for you, through better or worse. The feelings of confusion, helplessness, anger, sadness, recklessness. Everything that comes with it.

**Jez) As far as your lyrics being so emotional at times and mourning your mother, did it ever bother you to be that open with yourself and what some would call private matters?**

Stavros) It still bothers me. Part of me regrets it slightly as I have a hard time listening to the record and performing the songs live. On the other hand, if our songs can help even one person deal with a hard time, I feel like it was worth it. There are a lot of records out there that helped me through very hard times and if I can repay that favor to someone else, my job is done.

**Jez) Have you always been able to do your style of vocals? Did it come naturally or did it take practice?**

Stavros) I feel like I have progressed on every record. It's not like I try to do one thing or not do something else. It's a learning experience and I constantly try to push myself into new ground while perfecting past techniques.

**Jez) What I like about your band is that you don't purposely stand out, you just are what you are. The musicianship in the band is incredible, and it all comes together to create this sound that is unlike any band out there. What are your thoughts on that?**

Stavros) I think you are on point, we don't try to be anything but ourselves. We shoot from the hip which I find to be rare nowadays especially with so much cookie cutter straight forward metal happening. I find that boring.



**Jez) What is your reaction when people call you post-metal or put you into a genre/category in general?**

Stavros) I can't say that we were not influenced by post metal but I think it's a disservice to put us in one category. We definitely don't sit in one genre by any means and we have always strived to be outside the box.

**Jez) You said that the band found themselves *during An Ache For Distance*. Do you have the solidarity now to know that you can progress and grow as a band on solid ground? If that makes sense...**

Stavros) I don't think that you can ever find solid ground in the music business and if you do, you sacrifice your fire to keep moving forward. We are in a good place as a band at the moment but we are completely unsatisfied and are always looking to push forward.

**Jez) You have toured the country with some great bands. What stands out as your all time favorite show and/or band that you've toured with? And what is your favorite location to play?**

Stavros) I'd say Gojira and Devin Townsend was my favorite tour we have ever done. Not only were the shows just excellent but it opened us up to an audience that otherwise probably would never have heard us. It was a great experience and both those bands and their crew treated us brilliantly. We love em all to death. I love playing Chicago and New York the most.



**Jez) Are there any bands out there that are underrated, or that you've played with on tour that deserve attention in your opinion?**

Stavros) There is a band that I just recently released their new EP on my label called *The Proselyte* who I think are fantastic. Also my buds from Chicago Jar'd Loose are on some new shit that I think it fantastic

**Jez) There was a live telephone conversation for Metal Sucks??? Can't precisely remember who it was for. It made me laugh, because you talked about not dating women in metal, because they always want to measure their metal dick with you. (laughs) Does this still ring true from your stand point. Is it better to stray outside of the metal world to find someone?**



Stavros) (laughs) We do a lot of talking with those guys. I just started doing a monthly segment with them called "Story Time with Stavros" where I regale road stories with them. It's a super fun time. I personally gave up on women in the metal scene, most particularly in Chicago, cause it's such a small scene here and I feel like everyone is in everyone's business. Also I prefer to not have a pissing contest with a woman I date. I've also been dating my non-metal girlfriend for a couple years now so I don't necessarily need to look.

**Jez) What is your disposition on women in metal as musicians and vocalists besides the bull-shit out there like In This Moment?**

Stavros) I personally don't think there is anything reason to differentiate between whether someone is male, female, black, green, gay, alien etc etc. If the music is good, then it's good. I don't agree with people using things like race or gender as a selling point like some do. I find that cheap and fake. Whoever is the best for the job is usually the right move in my opinion.

**Jez) Tell us about the project Twilight that you lent your vocals and guitar too with Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth?**

Stavros) Twilight started without me back in 2006 I believe? I joined them for their second record in 2009. Jef, Sanford and Neill are some of my closest friends in the music industry and I always love writing with them. Thurston expressed interest in working with us and we loved having him around. It was an honor to work with him on something he otherwise would not have released. We keep talking about doing something else together which I hope will happen.

**Jez) I would love to know about your record label.**

Stavros) The record label is called Gypsy Blood records. I started it last year with my friends John (clean teeth frontman from NYC) and his brother Rob McKinney. It's been pretty mellow and fun so far. Nothing more than that. It's nice to be able to inflict our flavor on the world.

**Jez) What are some tunes you've been spinning lately?**

Stavros) Since it's year-end time, I had to go back and revisit some favorites of mine from this year including run the jewels, thou, Yob.

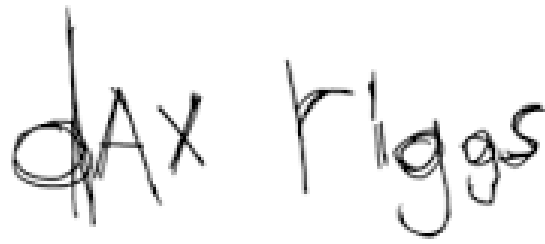
**Jez) Any last words?**

**Stavros)** Thank you for the interview!

**<https://www.facebook.com/theatlasmothband>**





A handwritten signature in black ink on a white rectangular background. The signature reads "DAX Riggs" in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The "D" is large and loops around the "A", and the "Riggs" is written in a fluid, connected script.

## *universal mind, unearthly music*

**This interview was an incredible honor to be a part of. I have been a fan of Dax Riggs for over ten years and to be able to stand with this man was definitely a bucket list moment. I had always wondered what it would be like to have a legitimate conversation with him, what his viewpoints would be, how he felt about the world, and what he has gained from his life. I never, ever, thought it would actually happen. Dax turned out to be one of the most down to Earth musicians I've had the pleasure of interviewing, and it is an experience I will not soon forget.**

**Kristina Wright) So when did you decide to play music?**

Dax Riggs) I think I was very young when I did. I used to draw pictures of myself kinda, when I was a little kid. Like what I thought I might play would be, and play music. I think I really enjoyed it and connected with singing sometimes. My grandpa would play a lot of traditional songs and also John Denver type songs mixed in there, so I didn't know the difference between the really old Cripple Creek. So my grandpa would play and I mean I loved singing with him, and I just felt like an automatic connection with the music. When I was very young I used to listen to music and cry, it would affect me really heavy and I've always been very affected by music. So I think from the get go I've always thought I would play music, I never really considered anything else. Maybe drawing comics or something, I probably considered that. I'm talking ten years old. But I just always kinda thought I would do it, it's just always been the thing that's always lit up my world, you know like made me like, "I really enjoy singing."

**Kristina) You can tell! It comes across.**

Dax) Something comes out that's not always coming out, you know

**Kristina) I have to say you are very sincere, on that stage though, there's something that comes out of you.**

Dax) It feels weird. I really feel like I go somewhere else like I'm in outer space, that I'm alone. Not in a bad way, in a good way, like I feel in tune with my ancients and stuff.

**(We played pong for a few turns)**

**Kristina) Ok, so with Corruption and Golgatha, how did you get from that to Acid Bath?**

Dax) Basically it was like half of Acid Bath. I met them through a girl that I knew, they knew. They lived a couple hours away, an hour away, and that's how we got together and hung out with all of them. I was really into the golden age of thrash, that's something you don't hear a lot about, it's almost like it was forgotten about. But there was this time when every record that these thrash bands seemed to put out was amazing, and it's over. Now I have a great affection for it and love for it, but it just, I just wished I loved more new bands and I don't.

**Kristina) It's just not the same. The heart just isn't in it.**





Dax) So that's what we were doing at that time. You know. Where I came from, when I was like twelve years old we like moved down here to Florida, well I was thirteen. But barely thirteen. I moved down here with some guys I met from Louisiana that had connections down here. We started a thrash band, we lived together and played down here in Gulf Breeze actually. First place I ever took acid, and it was a wonderful experience. We all worked for like telephone operators, like timeshare shit, so we all lived together and we played like one party and it was a big deal. So anyway, I moved out to Louisiana afterwards, and I met those guys, and that was half of Acid Bath. Then the other half was in another band I used to play with and then we just decided to just combine the two.

**(Played a few more turns in pong)**

**Kristina) With Acid Bath, were there any particular memories that stuck with you that you still think about?**

Dax) So many. I guess I'm kinda haunted by it in a way. My friend, my best friends you know, it's like we're doing it and we lived together, we loved the same music. The guy that died was killed, struck down by a drunk driver, and he was just going to Wal-Mart during the day with his family and everyone was killed except his little brother who survived. I mean that's the thing that sticks out and haunts me to this day. Sometimes I go to a convenience store and see someone that looks like him. It's just like, I mean that's the first thing that I think about all the time. There's many other things, that's like my high school band I think of it like the way the Stooges must have felt. They all lived together. They just did

what they had to do to make it happen. That's the way we were. We lived together. I lived with almost everybody or slept on their floor. We just really wanted to make music.

**Kristina) Whatever it took to get there?**

Dax) Yeah. But that's the main thing, our love of music, and my loss from the time of a good friend who liked Cannibal Corpse and Tori Amos at the same time, simultaneously and wholeheartedly. That was the basis of that band. We both felt that way. We both loved extreme stuff and we also loved great songs and emotional type songwriting and stuff. So that's where we vibed, and then that was gone. Things had gone kinda outta control. When you get kinda popular in a band sometimes you separate and you get into your own little niche. Everybody separates and gets their little group around them. That was starting to happen, and when he died, it just couldn't be fixed for me. I basically went home, moved back into my old room, where I lived as a teenager. I mean, that's how I dealt with everything.

**Kristina) Then came Daisyhead and the Mooncrickets, right?**

Dax) That was actually before, that was during Acid Bath. That was just like a solo thing. I mean, I wrote a lot of songs that turned into Acid Bath parts. Parts of songs, like "The Nation of the Locusts" that was like a whole song. That was just an acoustic song, then I took a part of it and put it into a song. Lots of things like that, "I am the dead man" and "could not get the dead man, he's sleeping" kinda thing. That was basically jam nights, like ten, fifteen minutes straight to get that one riff down (sings riff) and I was kinda vibing on that, like scat. I had those lyrics and a couple of lines, but I would just go off on other things.

**Kristina) I think for me, for Acid Bath that's how I found you. There was actually a guy named Dax, because of you, who loved you so much, he just started calling himself Dax. He's like "You HAVE to check this out!" and for me, it was like "Cassie Eats Cockroaches". The whole song I just) couldn't go anywhere else. Then "Pagan Terrorism Tactics", I fell in love. Literally. You have this effect on people and I know for me, it's like a completely different place, like shut off from the world. Like you go into another universe...**



Dax) That's what music does to me. When I hear it, I'm transported to some other place. I mean I still feel that way. All the stuff I listen to now, I'm a voracious music collector. I think of my songs, I'm not like a real "musician", but I think of songs all the time by listening to other songs. I listen to a lot of African music, and even country music and everything in between. That's what makes me think of new songs. It makes me inspired to do new things. I'm always loving music, so it's an easy thing for me to be inspired in the future.

**Kristina) How did you go from Acid Bath to Daisyhead and the Mooncrickets to Agents (Agents of Oblivion, Dax's band after Acid Bath)?**

Dax) It was about two years after. It seems like I just fucked around for a long time, but I just wanted to be. Things had kinda gotten dark for me, at the end of Acid Bath. Not just because my friend died, but previous to that we'd all kinda separated and it wasn't family, although we still had to be together all the time. So I felt like I needed to like wash my soul a little bit. Go home and work on my songs and my lyrics and stuff. Once you're not out there playing all the time, it's harder to be creative. It's like a battle between doing it, you love it all but at home you're really creative. On the road, you're doing your job. You're bringing the sound that you want to people. So, I don't know exactly. I mean I was definitely going that way already, I was writing with other people, friends of mine at home. It was just like a bunch of songs I had written that I wasn't even that serious about, but everybody put a lot into them, so they came out really good.

**Kristina) They don't strike me as something you would intentionally write and bring forth. It's more like a "I'm hiding it", and then all of a sudden "I'll show you NOW" like it's the right time. Like a Stephen King book. You're holding back on it until everyone is just ready for it. It seems like it was a good plan.**

Dax) I mean there really wasn't, there's not much thought that goes into all that. It's all kinda like the hand of fate, which I'm into. I believe that the hand of fate is what I have to listen to the universe, what it tells me to do, is what I have to do.



**Kristina) I'm so happy you said that!**



Dax) Because it's how I feel about things. I try to listen to myself, like what is my soul telling me to do? It's mainly I'm just moved, like I said when I was a child I used to listen to songs and cry. I mean little bitty kid, like really moved by songs, and I still am that way. I'm still exactly the same way. I'm very moved by music and inspired by music, and I collect lots and lots of different stuff. I love Pyrenean music, and a lot of Middle Eastern psychedelic music, and African heavy metal from the 70's, it's fucking unreal. The Nagozi family and this band called "Witch" from there; it's great stuff.

**Kristina) This is the segment where we say "Dax recommends."**

Dax) I highly recommend.

**Kristina) Do you have any new material coming?**

Dax) Yeah, I'm working on it right now. I'm trying not to go too far from home, so I can put more time into making a recording. That's what I'm going to do.



**Kristina) I know we definitely appreciate seeing you. I've been a fan for over half my life.**

Dax) I appreciate it. It's a weird experience to get the time to talk to people that care so much about what I care about. To me, it's not some problem. I love to talk to everyone that is moved by the same thing I'm moved by. That's what I like about playing music. Going out and actually playing for people, talking to them is inspiring and it means a lot to people, because it means a lot to me.

**Kristina) I think it's amazing that you are so humble. You don't have the ego that someone of your caliber, (by all rights you are allowed to) but you don't, and to me that's amazing.**

Dax) That's poison to your soul. If you are foolish enough to believe that you are above these people, then you're a fool, because you're not. I've been around a lot of "rock star" type people, and I don't like that. I don't like how they act, some of them. I'm a fan of people. I know what it means to someone to care about somebody's music and it's important to their lives.

**Kristina) It definitely is. I know for me personally, your voice has carried me through so many things. The ups and downs of the teenage years, awful times for everybody. For me, just knowing that you were so dark in some places, it made me feel like I wasn't alone.**

Dax) I think that's what songs do. When you really connect with a song, it makes you realize that you're not an insular being, that you're not just disconnected from the world. You are totally connected to me, and the world, and the animals, plants and the universe. Everything is connected. That's how I think "God" (if you want to use that word) exists in the universe, and inside us. Because inside us is part, we're from the universe, so it makes perfect sense. I wrestled with religion as a very young child. I was a very religious child. I knew Jehovah's Witnesses would go door to door giving talks and stuff. I wrestled with that at a very early age, when someone I loved was taken from me. It didn't make sense to me, because of what I had been told. I was very angry and I kinda went berserk. At an early age I was like "I don't care about what you're saying, and all the bullshit you're trying to put on me." I went nuts for a long time, but it's helped me come to a realization and understanding of the way things are.

**Kristina) To me that's... 'amazing' is the only word I can think of. I've struggled with that myself, trying to come to terms with what people are telling you, and how you feel. The universe comes up, and I'm happy that I'm not alone in that. Where we come from, it's so huge to know that you can dig through all of that, and people just connect to you.**

Dax) People get stuck in the same mind, and I often feel sorry for them. I feel like your mind is nothing more than a computer, like an organic computer that you can upgrade, and you can have more understanding and more compassion for every living thing around you. If you upgrade your mind, it's just a matter of upgrading and feeling like you are connected to the animals and plants. We are. Our true brothers and sisters are animals and plants on this planet, and all the people. That's why I love music from other parts of the world, because it makes me love them. I don't understand them, I'm not from their world, their clan so it's not easy for me to feel like everyone feels. "They're war-like, they're savages", and it's not really true. It's propaganda. People are people, and we get fooled by the war machine because they want money. That's what they get from killing people. That's Satanism. That's the thing that is truly against humanity and life.

**Kristina) I appreciate that you took the time to interview with us. It's impressive to see because not a lot of folks are like that. A lot of folks are standoffish, like "Why do you wanna talk about our music?"**

Dax) A lot of people get caught in their own bullshit, and they have to be the tough guy all the time. I know those motherfuckers like the back of my hand. Love is the answer.

**Kristina) "Love is the answer" Dax says. Of all the people in the world, Dax says love is the answer.**







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MINISTRO HALESTORM QUEENSRYCHE TESTAMENT  
MICE MEN SCOTT WEILAND AND THE WILD ABOUTS LIVE HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

20

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA • PERIPHERY • NONPOINT  
EXODUS • FOZZY • BEARTOOTH • UPON A BURNING BODY  
SONS OF TEXAS • RED SUN RISING • WORLD GONE

15

SUNDAY 4.26

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breaking benjamin PAPA ROACH THE PRETTY RECKLESS IN THIS MOMENT  
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AT



**The Attack! and the Misfits**  
**Vinyl Music Hall- Pensacola, FL December 6, 2014**  
**\m/\m/\m/\m/\n/**

This single Friday was one of the most interesting ways I've ever been able to cover a show. Originally, I wasn't even going to be able to make it. The night before, I had contacted The Attack in reference to covering the show as media, with very little expectation of a response. Friday afternoon, a good friend was gracious enough to alert me to a spare ticket. Surprisingly, twenty minutes later there was a response from the band. Literally, three hours before the show. So, here I am, basking in the fact that not only do I get to cover a Florida band, but they are also opening for the Misfits. Can you imagine the thirteen year old girl jumping up and down inside my head?

I get to the venue and take my place by the faithful photo pit, awaiting the incredible band I'm one hundred percent behind, if only because they are local. I had never heard these guys, but the energy and atmosphere they brought to the venue was incredible. Their particular brand of punk made me very happy I stepped outside my comfort zone, and broke the ice. In a very fast paced, Rise Against meets Anti-Flag merge of brilliance, The Attack had the entire crowd moving in one way or another. This is a band you can see only once, or a hundred times, and it will always be amazing.

Originally, I was told I wouldn't be able to photograph the Misfits at all, due to restrictions. I was given the gracious opportunity to, but with a price. Either way, I am still grateful I was able to knock this one off the musical bucket list. At the end of the night, I was introduced to another incredible band, and had the pleasure of shooting for a band I have been in love with for over a decade.

**[www.theattack.us](http://www.theattack.us)**

**Kristina Wright**

**HAVE A FIENDISH NEW YEAR!**



# U·M·C

UNDERGROUND MUSIC COALITION

## PRESENTS



# SLANTPIECE





**Jim Dodge) How long has your band been around?**

Joe Whittle) We have been a complete band for just about two years now. Rob, Darren and I (Joe) started a few months before that, writing material with a drum machine before finally finding Dave to fill in the beats. In fact, the January edition of this magazine coincides with our anniversary ha.

**Jim) How would you classify your music? What genre do you fall into?**

Joe) I often wonder about this. There's a big old school Death Metal influence in there but we're not technical as most modern bands of the genre are. There's a touch of old Thrash/Hardcore in there, as well. We like to just call it heavy, that covers a multitude but lets you know what we do. Definitely a lot of groove in the mix too.

**Jim) What kind of crowd response do you get at your shows?**

Joe) It varies. We like to get every crowd moving and we usually succeed. More people need to get out there and catch these live shows, it adds to the atmosphere a lot more, and you may just find that hidden gem, it also has the added bonus of supporting local music scenes. If you can, catch us live and say hi.

**Jim) Have you recorded any music?**

Joe) We have a five song "demo" CD at the moment, and are gathering funds and making plans to start recording our first album, hopefully have that on self release Autumn/Winter 2015. You can download some tracks from [www.reverbnation.com/allconsumed](http://www.reverbnation.com/allconsumed)

**Jim) Are you hard partiers or sober businessmen when it comes to your band?**

Joe) As older musicians, the party days are fading into the distance. But we've all been there and done that, and if pushed, can show the youngsters a thing or two. We tend to keep it calm so we don't mess up too much before doing a live show, but we still want to be coherent when chatting to fans and other bands.

**Jim) Which one of you do the groupies like best?**

Joe) Modern day U.K. is probably the worst place on Earth for groupies. Our guitarist, Darren is the closest we have to a "pretty boy" though.

**Jim) When you embark on your first arena headlining tour who will you choose to be your opening acts?**

Joe) We'll remember our local friends, Nihilism Incarnate and Sinpathetic.

**Jim) What's coming up next?**

Joe) As I write this, we have just played our last gig of 2014, a tribute gig to the late Dimebag Darrell, now it's time for a quick rest over the Christmas period (As being older musicians, we have families) then back to writing/ finalising for the album, and playing shows. We have a few booked in for next summer and have some in the pipeline for earlier in the year, more news to follow on these on our social media pages.

([www.reverbnation.com/allconsumed](http://www.reverbnation.com/allconsumed))

([www.facebook.com/AllConsumed](https://www.facebook.com/AllConsumed))

([www.youtube.com/user/AllConsumedOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/user/AllConsumedOfficial)) (<https://twitter.com/AllConsumed>)







**Jim Dodge) How long has your band been around?**

Ben Kelly) Our guitarist, Taz, and I first suggested forming a band in 2012. I'd been out of the music scene for a couple of years and Taz's band had recently split. We'd been to a gig and I happened to mention to him that I felt the time was right and wanted to make a racket! Taz pursued me relentlessly to get something started and we ended up contacting Colin, bassist in Taz's previous band, and Tony, drummer with Bolton metallic hardcore band Fall of Ruin. We started practicing January 2013 and spent a year writing and practicing.

**Jim) How would you classify your music? What genre do you fall into?**

Ben) Ah man, that's a hard one!!! Initially I gave Taz a list of bands to listen to, the only one he came back with that he liked was Converge!! So, we thought let's take them as an influence and see what happens?!! Add a little bit of crust, a smidge of metal and we have Forged in the Furnace of the Sun! So, as for the genre, I think we all agree that we're hardcore/crust but with Taz's ever increasing musical complexity that might change!!

**Jim) What kind of crowd response do you get at your shows?**

Ben) One of the first shows we played was a crust/grind/powerviolence show at The Mad Ferret, Preston (organized by Craig of Nihilism Incarnate, one of our UMC brothers). You'd expect a show with such an array of heavy music to go off!!! Bands like Mother Brain (US), Dept of Corrections (FRA), Gets Worse (Leeds), they're all mental!!! The crowd was really reserved though, watched and clapped/applauded! Really good gig though and an honour to share the stage with such great bands. More recently we played with The Death of Us (featuring four members of Raging Speedhorn), bodies flying everywhere, mosh pits...absolute carnage!!!! We aim for the latter response!!

**Jim) Have you recorded any music?**

Ben) We have recently finished recording our debut EP *A Monument to the Future* with Bri Doom, from crust legends, Doom, at the 1 in 12 Studio, Bradford. It was an honour to work with Bri, we're very happy with the results and we're planning to release the EP any time now (we've been arguing over cover art and the actual name of the EP!). We're aiming for a December 2014 release date...

**Jim) Are you hard partiers or sober businessmen when it comes to your band?**

Ben) Top of the partying food chain in our band would have to be Colin (bassist), the lad can shovel away the beer and cider!! Then it'd have to be Tony (drums), he's partial to a beer or ten at the weekends! I like to think I can party but a sniff of the barman's apron strings and I'm wrecked, but I am second oldest in the band! Taz (guitar) is the sober business man in the band. He's all about the music, doesn't drink and spends the majority of his time writing new material, seriously, all day, every day!!! He has an albums worth of new material written at the moment and churns new songs out like a machine!!!

**Jim) Which one of you do the groupies like best?**

Ben) Me, obviously!! I'm the self-proclaimed band heart-throb!! I can honestly say we haven't had any groupie attention, it doesn't tend to happen in crust punk really!! Plus, Tony and I are both married, so any attention would have to be aimed at Colin or Taz....not that they'd be averse to any female attention!!

**Jim) When you embark on your first arena headlining tour who will you choose to be your opening acts?**

Ben) Our idea of an arena would be something like Manchester's Academy or the Star and Garter, basically dirty little club style venues, actively encouraging stage-diving and random acts of violence...well,



moshing!! But choosing opening acts, ah man, that's another tough one! There are so many decent underground acts out there at the moment, bands that deserve recognition. Bands we'd choose to gig with include Nihilism Incarnate, Boss Keloid, All Consumed, basically anyone on the UMC roster and so many more besides (the only requirement would be that they're heavy!!).

**Jim) What's coming up next?**

Ben) We're in the process of organizing shows for next year, we've been in contact with loads of venues and promoters, not saying too much yet, but if all goes to plan we may have a busy year!! In addition, we've discussed recording an album, again using the recording/production talents of Bri Doom. So, basically recording and playing, but that's why we do this, play music, spread the word and have a laugh in the process!!



**Jim Dodge) How long has your band been around?**

Chris Wood) Mike, Loz and I have been jamming since summer 2012, Adam and Si came on board late that year and we've been gigging since spring 2013 as a fully formed entity.

**Jim) How would you classify your music? What genre do you fall into?**

Chris) Probably Sludge/Doom, that's the sort of line up we tend to play on but we have Hardcore and Old School Death Metal influenced tracks and less harsh vocals than a lot of our peers. To keep it simple let's just say we're fucking loud and fucking heavy.

**Jim) What kind of crowd response do you get at your shows?**

Chris) Pretty damn positive! We're still at the dues paying stage so we play quite early a lot of the time before people have had chance to get a few beers down them and loosen up but they still enjoy themselves and we always get good feedback. Got our first headline slot later this month so we'll see how it goes down then!

**Jim) Have you recorded any music?**



Chris) We've done four tracks with a friend called Bernie Steer, two of which are on [soundcloud.com/barbarianhermit](https://soundcloud.com/barbarianhermit) right now and another two that still need some tweaks and overdubs. We have another we recorded with the guys from Warped Studios at SSR in Manchester that's ready to be mixed and should see the light of day pretty soon. We hope to do a split EP with Bradford ruffians Lizard Tongue early next year.

**Jim) Are you hard partiers or sober businessmen when it comes to your band?**

Chris) We approach the business side of things with a fairly strict DIY attitude but we're all a bit older now so we know when to be serious and when we can blow off some steam. We still party hard when the time is right.

**Jim) Which one of you do the groupies like best?**

Chris) Groupies? Ha, we're all either married or in relationships! We all live with our significant others so groupies are a thing of the past, even in the unlikely event someone actually fancied us.

**Jim) When you embark on your first arena headlining tour who will you choose to be your opening acts?**

Chris) It would have to be someone we respected and could party with. We all love Bong Cauldron and we all really get on with the guys from Ten Foot Wizard too so they would be obvious picks. Probably find a way to get out bros in Lizard Tongue and Boss Keloid on there too.

**Jim) What's coming up next?**

Chris) Releasing the split EP with Lizard Tongue, maybe go on the road with Boss Keloid if we can find a way to make it work around jobs and families. Other than that writing more material, which is a constant thing for us, playing shows and maybe getting more recording done at Skyhammer or No Studios for a release later next year.



**Jim Dodge) How long has your band been around?**

Derek Johnson) Slantpiece formed in January, 2012 here in Kearney, Nebraska. We all were in other bands and decided to jam one day. The rest is history.

**Jim) How would you classify your music? What genre do you fall into?**

Derek) I'd have to say just metal. We're rooted in classic riffing metal, but have a modern heaviness too. Sound wise we get comparisons to Black Label, Pantera, and Corrosion of Conformity.



**Jim) What kind of crowd response do you get at your shows?**

Derek) Crowd response is usually really good. At home, you'd expect it, but even when we've played venues where hardly anyone knows us we get people up front and having a good time. Definitely makes the shows fun.

**Jim) Have you recorded any music?**

Derek) We recorded our debut album *Get You Some* with producer Michael Beck from SoundVision recording studio and released it October, 2013. You wrote up a great review for it! And, this October we recorded our second EP *Second Wind*, again with Mr. Beck.

**Jim) Are you hard partiers or sober businessmen when it comes to your band?**

Derek) Definitely hard core partiers. We kind of take it to the next level. The best part of playing shows is being out in the crowd and meeting and hanging with people! Our shows are a drunken riot!

**Jim) Which one of you do the groupies like best?**

Derek) I'd like to think me, but the fellas hold their own on that subject. (Just don't let my wife read this.)

**Jim) When you embark on your first arena headlining tour who will you choose to be your opening acts?**

Derek) We would have to take our fellow Nebraska metal brothers (and sister) TenDead and Dollarhyde. The TenDollarSlant tour has been kicked around, and anytime we get together is chaos and a killer show.

**Jim) What's coming up next?**

Derek) Up next is gearing up for our release of *Second Wind* in early 2015; lots of promo and marketing trying to get the word out. We feel this a solid follow up album, and one that people will be very excited to hear! We should have a date for the CD release party soon!





# Digital Apocalypse:

## Itunes, Spotify, Illegal Downloading and the End of the Physical Release.

"I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots." -Albert Einstein

I used to get up every day thankful that I live to see another day. That is something I used to cherish deeply. I got to see my nephew and my grandma, I went to college to see some of my friends and have a nice and cheerful day but somewhere along the highway I lost that feeling. As the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses I get more and more disillusioned with certain aspects of modern life mainly the overused of technology I can understand *Facebook* as it is a great page to get in contact with family and friends you haven't seen in many years and it is also a great way to get in contact with some of your favorite bands and even buy merch directly from them. *Facebook* in many aspects is an excellent thing, however as much as it is a blessing it's also a curse when it enables ignorance and bigots to pass judgment. Everyone can be high and mighty behind a computer screen where no one can harm or hit you. *Facebook* has enabled an entire generation full of rambling idiots to think they are bigger than God while at the same time causing such taboo subjects like bullying and sexual harassment to be done from the safety of your own house. It's sickening what humans can do with words but then again this is the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are no moral values. Kindness, tolerance and patience have been lost and the way the human race has been acting assures me that the end is near. When you go out of your way to humiliate and disrespect things that make others happy you have to wonder if there is such a thing as freedom of speech.

With that thought out of the way I return to why I no longer enjoy getting up in the morning, and apart from the above statement there is something that worries me and wakes me up each night wondering and that is the demise of physical music releases. CDs, vinyls, cassettes and DVDs are thing that I enjoy on a daily basis since I bought my first CD in 1999 (Korn's *Issues* was the very first album I ever owned and paid for with my money). I was hooked. I would spend hours and hours in the local record store talking with some of the clerks who worked there and I learned so much about music and bands. It was during this period of my life that I had an awakening of sorts. I realized what I wanted to do in life and that was to own and operate my own record shop. It was The Thing I wanted to do and I started saving up money to afford it once I got older and wiser but as time started to pass by some of the local record stores started to go out of business. At the time I thought it was a normal thing for stores come and go. Nothing lasts forever but I later found that there was an ominous link connecting all of the local stores closing and it was a little thing called Itunes. At the time of its founding in 2001 Itunes had yet to make an impact but Nerd Jesus himself, Steve Jobs, saw the bigger picture and knew that this was going to be the next big thing, the thing that would enable Hipsters and Scene Kids to download albums without having to go out of your house and buy the record. For the first three years of its existence Itunes did well and the music industry continued to bring in billions and billions of dollars in revenue yearly. I continue to go to my favorite local shop to buy CDs and vinyls but in 2006 everything change for the worst. Itunes exploded and after that things would not be the same.

I continued to purchase physical releases, being the traditionalist I've always been, but one rainy afternoon in April of 2007 my life changed forever. I went to the Music Zone to purchase the new releases as I always did on Wednesdays and I saw a sight I never thought I would witness. The store had an eighty percent discount sign on the front door and a going-out-of-business sign in front of the register. My world was turned upside down. I'm not being dramatic but I had been going religiously since 2001 and seeing the store that brought me so much joy (and filled my collection with some of the rarest titles and underground bands I was listening to at the time) I realized that I was no longer going to walk in greet the clerks who had become some of my friends and talk about the different metal scenes all over the world. It was really disheartening; it was a bittersweet feeling. I walked out of the store with nearly four ten-by-ten boxes filled with vinyls, t-shirts, and CDs. To date that has been the biggest purchase of my life (with only 220 dollars I got nearly 400 CDs and a 100 Vinyls and over twenty band shirts) but at the same time that would be the last time I would ever walk in to the Music Zone.



My curiosity as to why the store was closing down was huge and when I talked to Julio (Julio was one of my close friends and he worked on the store since it opened in '96 and in many ways he was my mentor in all things extreme metal) I asked him why the store was closing and he simply told me that no one wanted to buy CDs anymore and that everyone wanted to download albums or buy them on iTunes and in a moment of infinite wisdom he told me by 2012 the music industry would decline as digital releases would overtake the industry and as much as I did not want to believe him he was right. iTunes had single handedly become the biggest (or in my opinion the worst) thing to happen to buying music. By 2012 Spotify had emerged and surpassed iTunes in terms of popularity. Personally I view both services as legitimate bullshit. Who in their right mind prefers to download an album instead of buying it physically?? I can understand we're living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and things have changed substantially but music and reading are two of the last remaining classic art forms in existence but the fact that people prefer to steal music or download it is somewhat idiotic. Downloading, no matter what form it takes, will continue to ruin physical releases. I can only imagine where will the music industry will be in ten years and it's a safe bet that it will be in much worse shape than it is right now. Only time will tell. Until then I will continue to support the artists by buying CDs and vinyls. I have never been tempted to download or buy any sort of digital media. I can live without it.

**Carlos Luis**

# NOLA GETS HARDCORE!

Gristnam is a hardcore grind band from New Orleans that is unmistakably one of the best bands at what they do. I got a chance to see them in late October at Banks St Bar, and I was blown away as how tight knit and intense they were as a bands. They are members of ex Haarp and ex Omean that decided to start a band, and got their name sitting in a restaurant, eating before jamming as they always do. They have a split coming out with Fulgora, and are working on new material as I type this mini bio. Check out what John, who plays bass, and Keith, who plays drums, had to say to in this brilliant interview.



**Steve** – BC Rich Guitars, Ampeg SS150 amps, Avatar and Mesa cabinets

**John** – ESP/Ltd and Ibanez 5 string active basses, Ampeg amps and cabinets, Boss effects

**Greg** – ESP/Ltd Guitars, Ampeg and Mesa/Boogie amps, Aftershock 6x12 cabinets, Monster Cables

**Keith** – Knives, Skull Drums, Dragon Skins, Saw Blade Cymbals, Box Cutters

**Shaun** – Natural American Spirits Mellow Menthols, Abita Purple Haze

**Jez Feral)** How are you guys doing?

Keith Sierra Jr.) Everyone is fine as far as I know. You always have to check on Shaun though, he's a wild card.

**Jez)** I saw you guys play at Banks St Bar in New Orleans and I was amazed. I love how Shaun gets right in your face. I love confident aggressive vocalists. Who's in the band and who plays what? I know Steve and Greg are brothers.

Keith) Steve and Greg are indeed brothers. Shaun and I have been friends and playing music together for so long, we might as well be brothers too.

**Jez)** How did you come up with your band name?

Keith) Ah, the old band name question. Band names are possibly one of the worst things in the world to come up with. Between everything being taken and names that sound like a parody of themselves. It's pretty tough coming up with something, unless you want something comical which is often easier. We basically threw ideas around trying to get something, and one day Steve and I mixed a few ideas together. It was out of the blue and just kind of worked out. We always go out together and have a meal before we jam, so we mixed that idea together with one of our favorite styles of food.

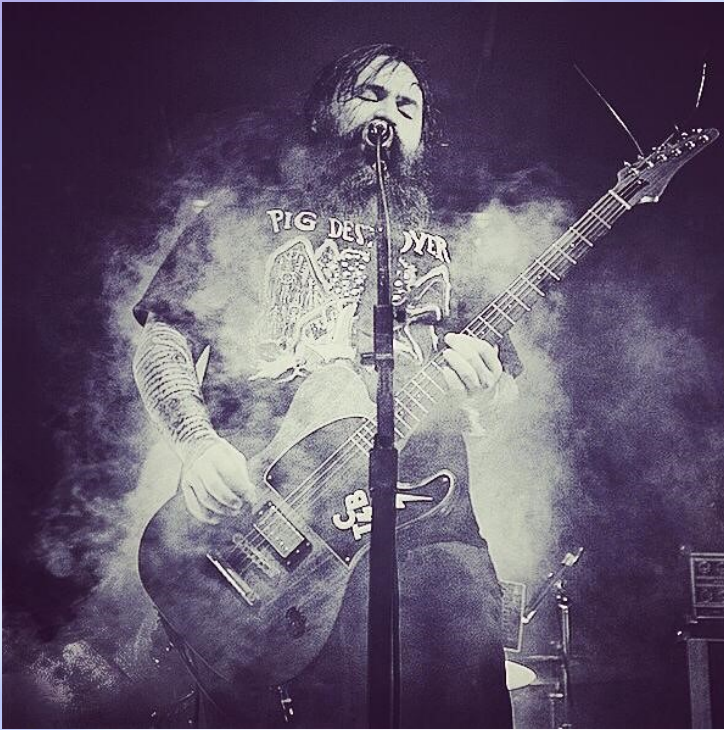
**Jez)** How long have you been playing as a band?

John Miskimmin) About two years.

**Jez)** I know half of you were in Omean and the half Haarp...how did Gristnam come together?

Keith) Shaun and I have known Greg and Steve for a while from playing shows together and just talking





and liking similar music. When Haarp ended, we immediately started thinking of people to continue playing music with. They were some of the first people that came to mind. A few phone calls and messages later, we were in the room writing our first song. We invited John to come play with us after the guy who was originally playing bass had to step aside, and it was a very smooth, seamless transition. We hadn't written too much or played any shows at that time, so he is basically an original member in my eyes.

**Jez) Are any of you in other bands?**

John) I also play guitar in a local band called **Zombie Legion**.

**Jez) I heard your drummer Keith was taking a break for family, but you guys just opened for Today is the Day on the 21st?**

Keith) Yes, I am taking a short break to spend some time with my wife and newborn son. The other four guys are still getting together though. They write and arrange parts and send them to me so I can map out drums. The band is not at a standstill.

We're just waiting to actually get back in the room together and finish up the songs. They're doing a great job, and my life will be easy when I finally get with them again. As for the show, we had to take that one. TITD is a band that we respect and like, and it was a great chance to share the stage with them. The club was only twenty minutes from my house, so if I had to run for family reasons it would have been no big deal.

**Jez) What are you guys' goals for Gristnam?**

John) Continue writing, jamming, playing shows and generally having a blast doing it all. It's top priority for us to always work on new song riffs and ideas. It keeps things from getting stale, and keeps us moving.

**Jez) Was there ever a show that inspired you or band for that matter that made you say "I want to do this" or "this is what I'm going to do?" Tell us about some of your music experiences.**

John) Too many shows and bands to count really. With the five of us, you would probably need a hundred page book to answer this one completely. I've been playing guitar and such since I was about six-years-old. So after thirty years, here I am.

Keith) Personally, just hearing music at a young age made me want to start playing. As far as bands or shows, there were some eye opening moments but nothing really solidified the need to play and write as much as jamming with others and being lucky enough to have played with some seriously talented bandmates over the years. While I am inspired by outside bands, I find that playing and the camaraderie of writing with other like-minded people has always meant more to me than outside sources. I'll always remember hearing Napalm Death's, "From Enslavement to Obliteration" for the first time (I heard it before Scum), and just having my mind blown. I wore that cassette out. It really changed the way I heard music, and I understood the idea that there were no boundaries. As much as that changed music for me, it doesn't even compare to the moment that Scott Williams showed me that not only did I already know what odd time signatures were, I already used them in my playing. The smirk on his face as he showed me that I knew what I insisted I didn't will forever be burned into my memory.

**Jez) What are your musical influences?**





John) Damn, do you have a month with nothing to do but read the list?

**Jez) What are some tunes you've been spinning recently?**

Keith) I listen to a lot of different music, although most of it is heavy metal based. Dawnbringer, Ozzy, PLF, Brutal Truth, Kill the Client, Cannibal Corpse, Steven Wilson/Porcupine Tree, The Dreamers, Scorn, Rotten Sound, Uneathly Trance, Motorhead, 16, Master, Led Zeppelin, Repulsion, early Swans to even new Swans, all sorts of stuff. People are like, "God, you listen to that?" Yeah, I mean, we listen to all sorts.

John) Same here, I listen to stuff that's all over the place, as long as it's heavy. And heavy in my book is anything that moves me. It doesn't really mean it's all metal. Old Celtic flute music can be heavy if it hits me the right way, which a lot of it does! You will not find me listening to anything that has to do with rap, hip/hop, etc. I have no interest at all for any of it if it's on the radio, unless it's a classic rock song.

**Jez) What's a favorite recent show you've been able to share with everyone? All time?**

John) Ah man, we've had a lot of good ones. The Creepy Fest show we did in August was great. Of course the Today Is The Day show was awesome. We had a great time opening for Cannibal Corpse as well. I guess those are three. I can't choose. I have a blast at all of our shows though, so they're all my favorite. How's that for a cover all?

**Jez) When was the last time you recorded material or are you planning to record new material?**

Keith) We recorded earlier in the spring, and those songs will be available on Bandcamp very soon. We are recording two new songs in November or December for a split 7" with Fulgora. That will come out on Housecore Records and for a 7" compilation that Bobby Bergeron from the band **A Hanging** and **Paranoize Zine** is putting out. One original and one cover song mashup by one of our favorite bands.

**Jez) Have you guys toured or plan on touring in the future?**

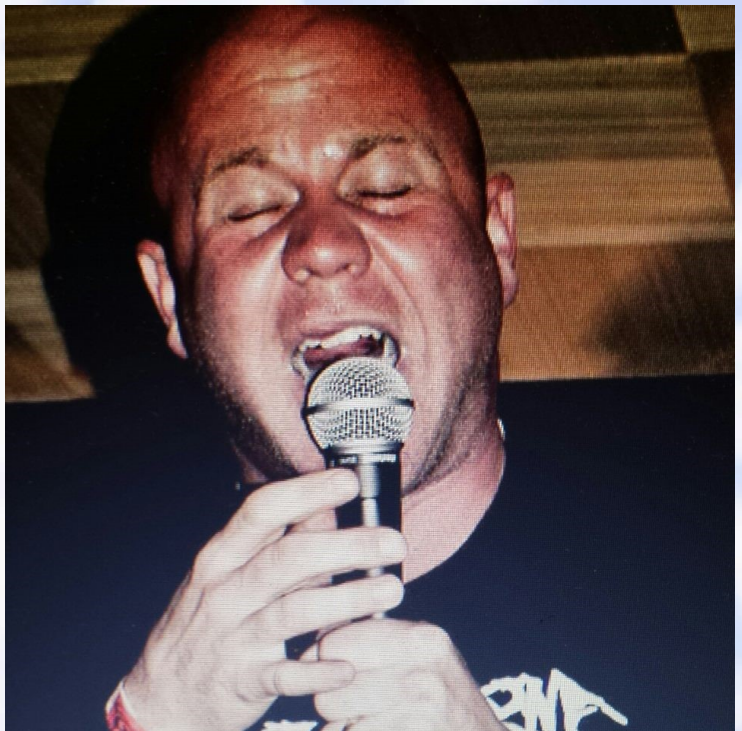
John) No tours as of yet. We may do some small regional trips down the road a bit if the opportunity presents itself, and our schedules all line up to where we can.

**Jez) What are you guys doing when you're not playing shows or practicing?**

John) We are kind of like a gang in a sense. Not a thug kind of gang. More like a gang from the late '50s early '60s. If we had lived then, we would probably all have been Greasers instead of Soc's if you are familiar with those terms. If you're not, watch The Outsiders. We all talk almost every day, get together and go to shows, hangout and that bit. Normal people, close friends type stuff. Now stay gold, Ponyboy.

**Jez) What bands would you love to play with?**

John) Alright, for bigger name locals I think it would be cool to play with Soilent Green. National acts, go for the gusto, how about Brutal Truth. There are so many killer bands. International, again, the list is long, but I'll go left field and say Yngwie Malmsteen heheheh.





**Jez) How can people get a copy of your music or hear it?**

John) You can download the first EP from our Bandcamp page at <https://gristnam.bandcamp.com/>, Reverb Nation has streams of that same EP at [www.reverbnation.com/gristnam](http://www.reverbnation.com/gristnam). Check out our Facebook page for any updates and what not, just google "Gristnam" and you'll find it.

**Jez) Any crazy stories or experiences?**

John) Well, there was this one time where there was this sheep, a little naked Venusian pygmy, 4 and a half strippers, a roll of electrical tape, a bottle of eye drops.....but then there was the time with the chainsaw, the alligator, and Marie Laveau's ghost.....hahaha just kidding. There are quite a few stories and experiences but nothing too far out of the ordinary. But remember, this is New Orleans, so ordinary here isn't really the same as ordinary anywhere else.

**Jez) Do you have any messages, if any, in your lyrics?**

Keith) Yes, there are some messages in there, but it is usually to ourselves. Little reminders of things we've been through, or people we've known. Nothing prolific or wise. Probably the exact opposite to be honest. I'm sure that sounds vague and like a non-answer, but it's the truth. I'll put it like this, we aren't saying anything that will change anyone's lives.

**Jez) How would you describe your sound?**

John) Heavy, violent, chaotic, and groovy hahaha.

**Jez) Who does the writing or how is the writing process?**

John) Everyone in the band writes, arranges and contributes, music wise. We'll come in with riffs, ideas, or patterns and build from there. As chaotic as our stuff seems, everything is thought out and gone over until it is just as we want it. So there is method to the madness. Keith and Shaun generally handle the lyrics.

**Jez) How did you get signed to Housecore Records?**

John) Well, recently Philip Anselmo really got into bonsai trees, raising them, shaping them, pruning, all that. He called us up and had us over and when we got there, there were all these little bonsai trees shaped into the phrase HOUSECORE + GRISTNAM = <3 with a path made out of the little trees and Japanese lanterns leading out to the Lair. When we walked in the studio they had it all set up to roll tape and he asked if we wanted to make a record. We said yeah, and off we went.

**Jez) Any last words?**

John) Watch for our next releases, and if anybody is ever in town and want to see a killer, street level punisher of a show, come see us live. If you've never heard us, check out the releases on Bandcamp and watch for the upcoming Housecore release and splits. Support your local underground scenes and bands. That's where everything stays real.



# Top Ten Video Game Movies We're Still Waiting For

We all have a few of our favorite video games that still have not been made into movies despite all the makings for one, so here is my list. Frankly I'm surprised all the ones listed here are not already movies. Since video games play out like movies already, one simply has to watch the trailer for the game to get a glimpse of what a movie might be like. The problem with video game movies is that it is hard to condense such broad and drawn out storylines down into a featured length. In addition we must also consider the fact that you can never please everybody and there are always the diehard fans that will never be satisfied with any final product. Much like when movies are made from books, when a video game is big enough to warrant a movie it already has its loyal and dedicated followers ready to critique the hell out of anything that touches their beloved title. So for what it's worth, here's my list. Just note that I do not like every game listed here, however that doesn't mean it still wouldn't make for an epic movie:

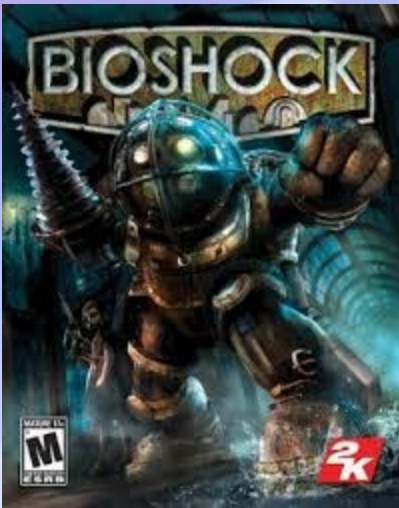
**10. Call of Duty:** I don't usually like the first shooter play so I know nothing about these games. However they have amassed quite a following and would probably make for a successful movie, even if the final product didn't turn out so well. The reason I put this at number ten is because despite its popularity, it's just another war type game that would make for just another cliché war movie. This kind of plot and story line has been done countless times and I just don't really see anything exceptional about a movie based on this game. But again, I think its popularity more than justifies a movie; not to mention the countless potential sequels...

**9. Bioshock:** Another one of those games that I don't like, but to be honest I really liked the concept. I really tried to get into this game since I loved the idea of roaming around an underwater city; the pace was just far too slow for me. However this has quite a fan-base that loved the scare-tactics of the game. The atmosphere really carried this game with its eerie imagery and mysterious plot. A good movie would be a nice cross of The Abyss meets Silent Hill with a touch of that David Lynch artistic filmmaking style. Alas, underwater movies are always hard and expensive to make, so I don't really see this one being done, but that's not to say it wouldn't be interesting if someone ever did decide to make it.

**8. Splatterhouse:** This was just a hella fun game that would make for an equally fun movie. Of course this dates back to the original Sega Genesis console, but what I am talking about is the newly re-vamped and updated version. Gratuitous gore and heavy metal music alongside some heavy laden Lovecraftian themes are all that is needed for this guilty pleasure. Even with a flimsy storyline this would still make for one uniquely dark comedy/horror film. This certainly wouldn't win any awards or ever stand out as any cinema classic. No, this one is just for the fun.

**7. Lost Planet:** What we have here is the potential to make what Pacific Rim should have been; epic giant monster/robot battles but with much better writing and characters. You can't go wrong with this concept; traveling to distant planets to fight off a variety of giant beasts. I see a lot of potential with a movie like this. The box office success of movies like Pacific Rim and the recent Godzilla is proof that people love their gigantic monster movies, myself included. This means the potential to reach a much wider audience aside from just the fans of the game. Good writing accompanied by a good director could take the lessons learned from the aforementioned movies, like better writing, characters and no shortage of epic fight scenes to make a truly masterful monster movie.





**6. Devil May Cry-DmC:** While I liked all the games in the Devil May Cry series, I liked the most recent DmC version the best and I think it would make for the better movie. It's more updated and contemporary and is able to be set in a time and place that is more relatable to an audience. Here is a classic good versus evil storyline where the hero Dante uses both sword and gun to enact his justice. The similarities of the storyline and events within the game to the real world were undeniably direct: the diabolical corporations simultaneously spreading hidden agendas and infectious evil while continuously dumbing down the population with their propaganda. It's a theme I think everyone can rally behind. Plus I also think jumping back and forth between the real world and Limbo would be an interesting aspect in a movie version. It would likely be reminiscent of the movie Constantine with Keanu Reeves, but hopefully with better casting.

**5. Prototype:** I think this movie could really be epic if it was done right. It has all the makings for one of those superhero, special-effects extravaganza movies. The storyline is a bit cliché with a government manufactured virus that gets out and causes an outbreak, turning people into mutant/zombies alongside some pretty bad ass Resident Evil style monsters wreaking havoc throughout the city. I know how that sounds, but hear me out. The hero Alex Mercer is infected with a rare and unique form of the virus which allows him to manipulate and change the cells and his body as well as consume other humans and take their form, like if Mystique and Spawn had a...well a spawn. You get the idea. How superhero is that!?! See, it is already off to a good start and just wait until you see the kind of powers and abilities Mercer has; it is a pinnacle in sheer badassness. He could easily compete with the greatest of superheroes and this could easily be on par with those movies.

**4. Ninja Gaiden:** One of my favorite games dating all the way back to the original Nintendo. With all the martial arts style movies I can totally see this movie working. I can already envision those Matrix style action sequences that we all love, but there is also a solid storyline here as well. The games can have some pretty complex plots with the villains including demons and monsters as well as the standard ninjas warriors. Once you allow for a more grandiose storyline that consists of black magic and demonic evil rather than the confines of the typical and rather boring ninja on ninja action, I think one could really raise the bar and set a new standard for martial arts movies. At least it would for me anyway. I think this genre of movies is more than overdue for an overhaul and revamping of the basic formula, and NG is just the series of games to do it! What else needs to be said?



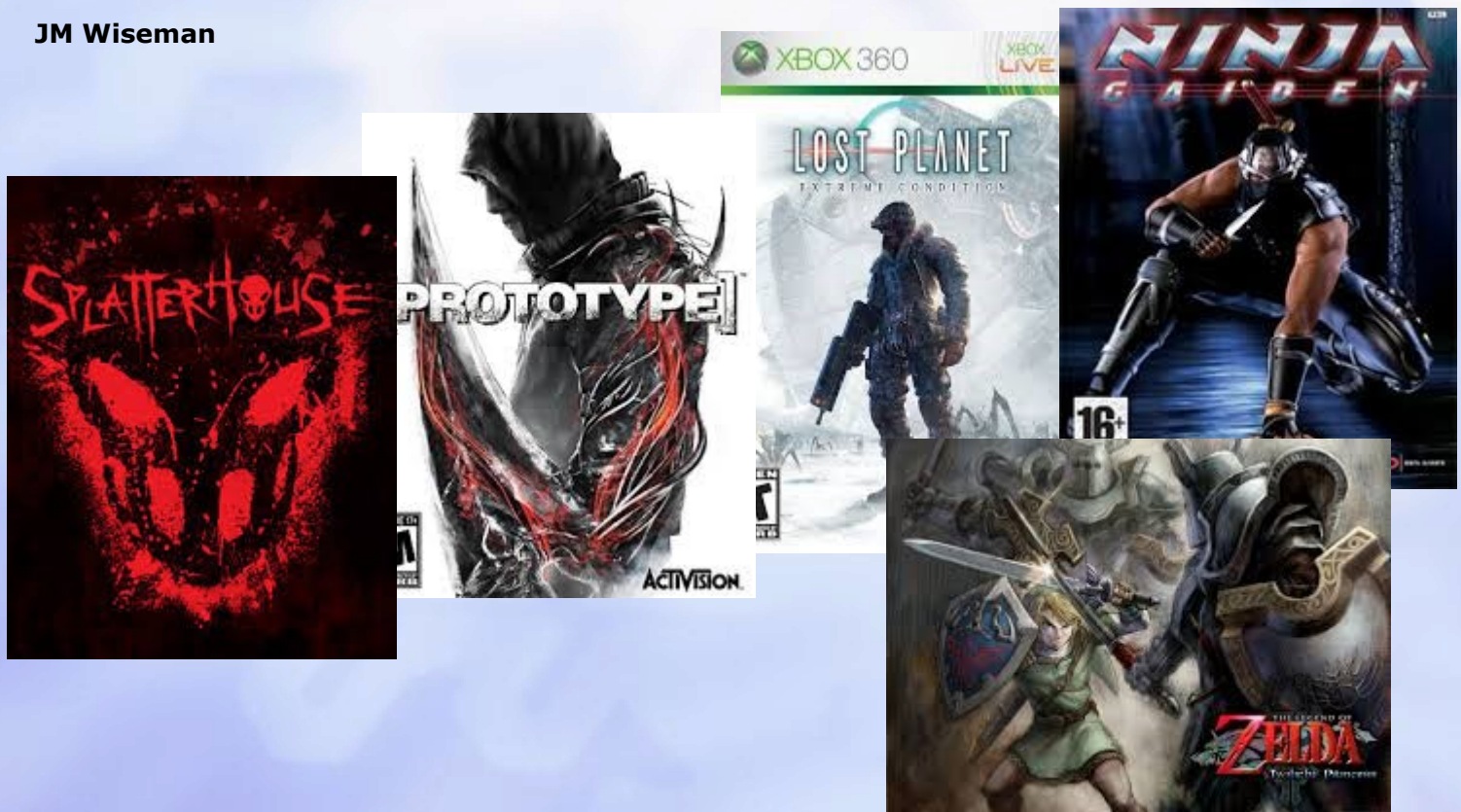
**3. Halo:** I literally know nothing about this game. Again, one of those first shooter games where I think a movie version would definitely be worth watching. There have already been lots of rumors buzzing around about a movie being made, which only fuels the already frenzied fans. Considering this is one of the most successful video games ever made it borders on Hollywood embarrassment that a movie still has yet to be made. Fighting aliens in distant galaxies, I mean what the hell are they waiting for!?!

**2. The Legend of Zelda:** Does a movie version of this game even need a discussion? Here is yet another movie just dying to be made with an endless supply of sequels. Think The Lord of the Rings meets Ridley Scott's Legend and I think we have a recipe for another epic fantasy tale of heroism and princesses that need saving. There is so much potential with this movie that you could easily stretch it out into six or maybe even seven movies, just like Harry Potter, if you were to trace it as far back as the original Nintendo games. There is such a long and cherished history here that I feel there is no way that this movie wouldn't strike gold at the box office, especially with the success of The LOTR and more recently The Hobbit. I guess you could say I've been waiting for this movie to be made since I was a kid, so I am starting to lose hope with this one. But with as many Zelda games as they have out now, just think of the kind of potential grandiose epicness this movie would have. Please someone get this done...

**1. God of War:** This is hands-down *the* number one video game that needs to be made into a movie. This is my all time favorite video game and the definitive answer to the question of which gaming console is superior; that of course being the PlayStation on account of GOW not being available on Xbox. As with a lot of extreme fans, I too am guilty of that overzealous syndrome where I fear that a movie will not be done right. A specific fear of mine is that they would turn it into the something reminiscent of the more recent Hercules movies, which we all know were utter garbage to put it mildly. It should however be quite easy since this game is completely perfect as is, even down to the epic music score. I think the direction needs to be in the style of the original Conan the Barbarian and 300. The fallen hero Kratos is very stoic and statuesque, much like Arnold Schwarzenegger's character was in the first Conan (the sequel was absolute shit as far as the writing, as was the remake). Plus with all those badass moves performed with the Chaos Blades you would need a bit of that slow/fast-motion action sequences similar to the style of 300. The only real challenge would be condensing it down into a good two, two and a half hour time slot while still keeping the more crucial elements of the story. Which by the way is all based on Greek mythology, so already we have some classic Clash of the Titans nostalgia going on here. All you need now is a superb script along with a fine casting and we have ourselves one of the greatest fantasy adventure movies ever made! If they let me make the movie that is. As I said, the game is so perfect as is that there really isn't much to be said in the way of arguing for a movie; just play the game and you'll see what I mean. The other nine games listed above would have nothing on this movie!

Now if none of the games listed here ever get made, well then Hollywood has some serious issues they need to work out. With their current trend of disappointments they really have nothing to lose!

**JM Wiseman**





Humanity's Last Breath is that kind of band that you are always waiting around for. From the very first listen you are completely blown away and just can't get enough. If you are into bands like Meshuggah and Vildhjarta then HLB will no doubt strike a chord with their perfected blend of brutal technicality. The offbeat riffs and rhythm patterns are not over done to the point where the tracks sound less like songs and more like pure chaos. Rather these are nice and heavy with enough of those steady downbeats to keep a sturdy structure to their songs. I always say the Scandinavian region is the motherland for that technical math metal, particularly Sweden. And with only two albums out HLB is already among my top favorites. It was love at first listen; the kind of band that gets you full of that excitement at having discovered something new and invigorating. Yes, in other words this band is the shit! I simply had to talk to these guys, and I was finally able to get in touch with drummer Buster Odeholm. First of all, exceptionally nice guys and it was quite an honor to get to talk with him. Truthfully I was a bit nervous and star-struck, but he was a cool guy and we had a great conversation. I learned quite a bit about HLB as the band has recently gone through some rather drastic changes. But lo and behold, this interview also turned into somewhat of a Vildhjarta update as well, but I'll let Buster explain. Here is what he had to say about everything that's been going on in HLB along with some other future endeavors in the making:



**JM Wiseman) Just let me say that the new album was phenomenal; I was completely blown away. It is one of those albums where every track is great so I just keep going back to it. Unfortunately I don't hear enough about Humanity's Last Breath, so can you start by telling me how the band got started and how you came up with the name?**

Buster Odeholm) I had a death metal band that I started I think in 2006 called Dissimulate. It was a lot of blast beats, like Morbid Angel kind of stuff. I knew some other guys that played in a band called Justice Shall Prevail that were my friends. I knew they were skilled but I had never played with them, so we decided to play together. So from Dissimulate it was me and the bassist, from Justice Shall Prevail it was the guitarist and vocalist. I was all about playing more brutal stuff and back in 2006 we were all into eight-strings; we thought that was really cool. We soon realized the only thing we thought was cool was to tune down. You don't really need eight strings to tune down so we just tuned like an eight-string but removed the extra strings. We started playing deathcore stuff, kind of Whitechapel-ish.

**JM) Whitechapel is a great band; I just saw them recently [**\*\*be sure to check out my interview with their drummer Ben in this issue!**]. So you don't use eight-string guitars anymore?**

Buster) No; in the beginning we used seven-strings because that was the only guitar he had. But we realized we didn't need it and we would rather play a baritone six-string because that allows you to tune down and you don't have to reach over eight-strings. To play a six-string is a lot easier, especially when you play stuff like we do. So for us six-strings are enough. But the thing is I'm the only one left in the band right now [laughs], so I can't really speak for the other guys.

**JM) Holy shit, really!?! [this completely caught me off-guard]. What happened?**

Buster) Well I've always written all the music and always recorded everything; playing the bass, guitar and drums. The only thing I didn't record were the vocals of course. The thing is those guys were not able to play live anymore. So I was like 'if you don't play live you don't do anything at all.'

**JM) I think that is understandable.**

Buster) Yeah, so now I joined Vildhjarta as their drummer and will play with them live and just do HLB as a studio thing I guess.

**JM) That was a lot to take in; I just want to make sure that you do intend to keep going with HLB...**

Buster) Oh yeah. Like one minute ago literally I finished the last song of the upcoming EP.

**JM) Nice. You had me scared there for a second...**

Buster) [laughs]

**JM) Well that definitely gives us something to look forward to. I know you've probably heard the comparison to Meshuggah; has that band been an influence for you?**

Buster) Of course...I don't listen to Meshuggah that much now, but the first time I saw them was in 2005, I was like thirteen. So I've listened to them a long time and seen them live like a thousand times so they are not really that fun for me anymore [laughs].

**JM) Well they are still one of my favorites and one of the reasons I like HLB so much. I mean you both have that great guitar tone and those technical, off-time riffs.**

Buster) We usually get bashed because they say I am a rip off of Vildjhartá, which I totally understand. But I am actually in the band now, so...[laughs]

**JM) They can't say shit now [as I join in the laughter].**

Buster) No they can't.

**JM) Were you on the most recent EP 'Thousands of Evils?'**

Buster) No. The thing is I'm the drummer and they usually program the drums. But I just joined the band a couple of months ago. We are writing right now so hopefully I will record real drums for the upcoming stuff.

**JM) I'll be looking forward to that as well. I think it's bad ass that you joined up with Vildjhartá since I'm such a big fan of them as well. Rip off or not, there are just not enough bands like this out there.**

Buster) Everyone rips off Meshuggah [another shared laugh].

**JM) It does seem like just about everything has already been done, so if you're going to copy anyone it might as well be the best.**

Buster) Well with the new HLB stuff I feel like it's really more my take on black and death metal, but with a progressive thing going on...it'll have synths and effects as well as a bit of orchestral stuff. It will have a very horror-ish feeling.

**JM) Again, not enough bands like that out there. Even though it is starting to change, I think a lot of bands are still kind of technophobic and don't like to ad in a lot of digital sounds. I don't see why not since it can ad so much to the music.**

Buster) Yeah I tested it a bit on the self-titled album; there are some heavy synths. The main use for the synths are for techno, but I thought if I took a really low note it would sound more metal [laughs], so I did that.

**JM) Well I for one love what you're doing so keep it up!**

Buster) Thank you.

**JM) Is there any potential U.S. tour anywhere in the future?**

Buster) I don't think so. The thing is I play with Vildjhartá now and I don't have any members for HLB. As far as I am concerned right now we won't be playing live. But if we were to play live in the future I won't play drums anymore, I will play guitar. Because like I said, I write all the riffs and stuff so I would like to be a guitarist instead.

**JM) I hear you. Being a drummer as well I know how much it sucks to tote all that shit around [as we both share yet another laugh]. So what about Vildjhartá; could there be a potential U.S. tour with them?**

Buster) Yeah, maybe. We've had offers here and there, but I'm studying full-time and the other guys are working, so I don't really know about that. But we are writing now so that's the main thing. We are playing Europe next month and after that we have nothing booked at all.





**JM) Since you are the newest member of Vildjharta, maybe I can ask you this question: does the name mean 'wild heart' or is it the name of a magical forest in the Swedish version of Dungeons & Dragons?**

Buster) Yeah that's where it came from. It does mean 'wild heart,' but the name came from the game. That's what I heard so I'm pretty sure it's from that game.

**JM) Well I do hope you can make it over to the States with one of your bands here soon. So until then, good luck with the rest of the writing and thank you so much for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk with us.**

Buster) No problem; thank you!





**O'Donna is someone who has been in music for many years and gone through many artistic changes. For one she was the artist formerly known as Una Thompson. With the new name of O'Donna she has still maintained her fresh and spiritual sound while circulating through the local scenes. I first saw O'Donna perform at a beachfront restaurant. While she was mostly performing covers that day, I could tell she had a very artistic aura about her. She radiates a passion with her playing and after I approached her my initial impression was immediately confirmed. She was such a pleasant woman with a sweet voice and a warmth about her that was felt instantly. She was very intriguing and I knew right away I had to find out more about this unique artist.**

**JM Wiseman) When did you get started in music?**

O'Donna) I realized I could sing when I was about five and I just went with it, [she laughs and flashes that bright smile].

**JM) When did you pick up the guitar?**

O'Donna) I was a teenager and I borrowed a guitar for my neighbor. Then my brother gave me a Beatles book he found that someone had thrown away and I started learning how to play. And I played until my fingers actually bled.

**JM) We all shed a little blood for the music, don't we?**

O'Donna) [laughs again]. Yeah we do.

**JM) So what are some of your influences?**

O'Donna) I would say Heart, Led Zeppelin and The Beatles. Joni Mitchell and of course Bob Dylan are the writer influences. I even like Motown and some alternative stuff. Vocally I would say more Heart lately. It kind of varies, depending on the mood.

**JM) Can you describe your music to someone who hasn't heard you before?**

O'Donna) Acoustic rock, but people have compared me to Kate Bush. It's mostly acoustic; my performances are solo acoustic right now and I write with an acoustic guitar. Sometimes I perform in a band situation, which if I'm not playing guitar allows me to cut loose vocally more easily. I've had plenty of bands, but the same thing always happens [another heartfelt laugh].

**JM) Oh yeah; what's that?**

O'Donna) I love full bands, but when it breaks up it's always sad. It's kind of like a relationship except it involves more people, which can make things harder. Sometimes it's their lives or schedules that pull them out of the band; sometimes it's drama or whatever.

**JM) So tell me about your album 'Tender Mercies?' How did you come up with that title?**

O'Donna) There's a lot of things about that I just kind of asked the Universe about. I said 'oh my gosh, I've got to come up with a title; its tender mercies.' I can't really explain it, but I can tell you how I got my name though. It was the same kind of thing. My name is Donna and I wanted to come up with a cool



stage name but it was too hard for me. It's a very big deal to come up with a stage name I think. So I kind of gave it up to the Universe. I sat in the studio and closed my eyes and saw my name written in lit candles, and when the candles melted down they spelled Una.

**JM) And now you go by O'Donna; why the change?**

O'Donna) Just lightening it up a bit [laughs].

**JM) Where does your lyrical inspiration come from?**

O'Donna) I've got some stuff on there that was inspired by Lewis Carroll [Alice in Wonderland] and some of them are dreams. *Within the Ring* was actually inspired by a dream of trying to get somewhere and driving roads you know like the back of your hand, but then all of a sudden the roads change and they're going different places than they normally go. Some of them are life situations and some of them are just thoughts.

**JM) Would you say a lot of them are very personal?**

O'Donna) Yeah, it is pretty personal.

**JM) Do you ever feel a little vulnerable throwing yourself out there like that?**

O'Donna) Yeah...[she says laughing through her warm smile]. Just doing this interview makes me feel a little vulnerable...[and we both share a laugh].

**JM) You do strike me as one of those shy, artistic types.**

O'Donna) I really am, I am a shy musician. It's so weird too because you have to get up there and be in front of a lot of people, but then it's okay...I love to play the music, so if I can do the best job at that then I feel I am okay. If I suck it's another story...[more laughter]. But if I do something that will get everybody's attention and make them happy, which is my goal to do something purely good, then everything is okay.

**JM) So what got you more into the local scene here and mixing in some cover tracks to your set?**

O'Donna) Well like I said I love the music and I love to play, plus it is good practice.

**JM) Which of your songs do you usually play live?**

O'Donna) I like to play *Message to Your Brother*, which is one where I kind of hit the guitar and let the strings ring out.

**JM) And that is the single you have out now?**

O'Donna) Yeah, on my Facebook and Reverbnation pages. In fact those are some of the ones I like to play the most because I worked on them just acoustically and I didn't have the whole band thing going on, so I kind of treasure those. A couple of the other ones that I have up online that I like to play out are *Is That You?* which is very acoustic. It also has a little hand drum in it, and I just really like the message in that. It's about someone who can't be emotionally open, someone who can't seem to love.

**JM) So it's about men?**

O'Donna) Yeah [she gives a slight smile before we both burst into laughter] Well certain men. The line that I think illustrates it is "Haven't you had enough of trying to fight the world? Acting tough is tough enough; even Frankenstein loved that little girl [She sings her lines a cappella].

**JM) Tell me a little about the new album you have coming out? Is there a title for it yet?**



O'Donna) I don't have a title for it yet, but it will come to me. I will ask the Universe; it will speak [flashes another bright smile].

**JM) She seems to be quite helpful and inspirational for you.**

O'Donna) Yeah, I'm blessed [she says with another smile].

**JM) What is the new material going to sound like?**

O'Donna) Well it's got some really strong beats on some of it; kind of jaunty as contrast to the folksy singer/songwriter stuff. I'll probably have both types on there. Also I tend to have a couple of goofy songs on each release [we both share another laugh because we know which songs she is talking about].

**JM) With all that sentimentality, it's probably good to throw in some humor every so often.**

O'Donna) Yeah. I've got some things that have been compared to David Bowie in the lyrics and then I have another one that's kind of country called *Money Talks*, it goes 'money talks, I want to listen. It tells me all the things that I've been missing. It won't tell me no lies. Money talks and it tells quite a story. Money talks but it's always saying goodbye.'

**JM) Yeah it is always telling me goodbye.**

O'Donna) [laughs] Yeah, me too. So I don't know if that's country or blues.

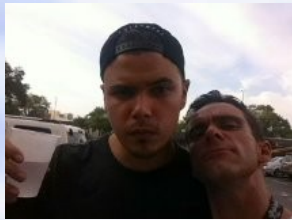
**JM) Probably both. Well I just want to leave you with the final thought, if there's anything you'd like to say or any message you have for your fans?**

O'Donna) Just how much I appreciate them giving me the opportunity to craft my art and have them give me feedback. I really do appreciate their time and their honesty and it all makes me a lucky person to be able to put it out there.

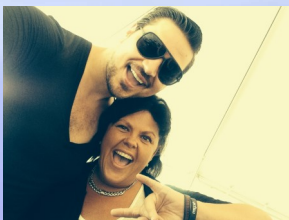
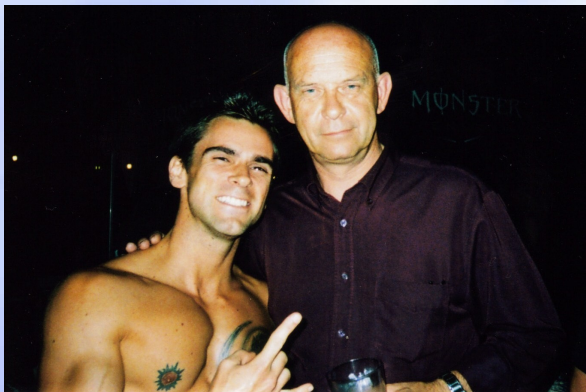
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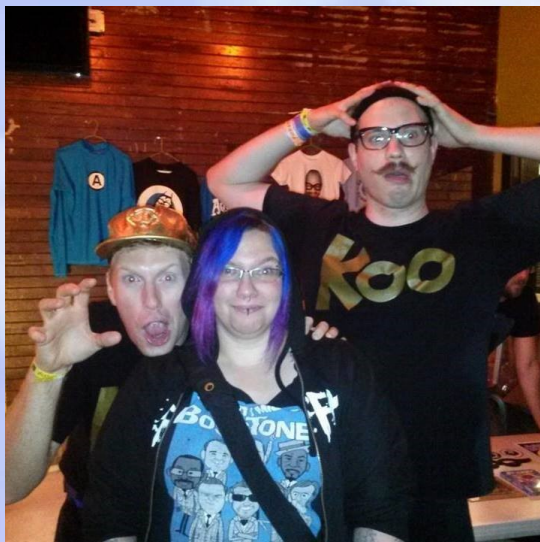
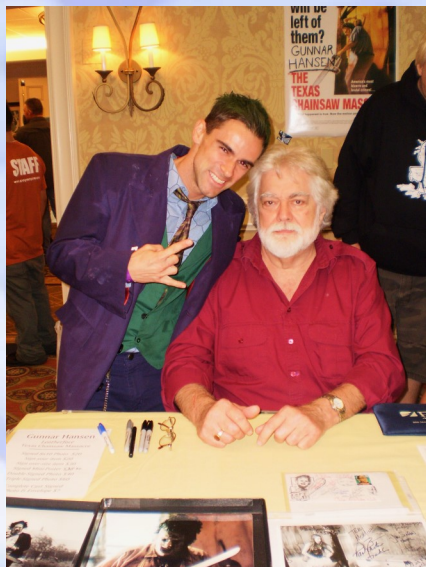
# 2014 in the Rear View



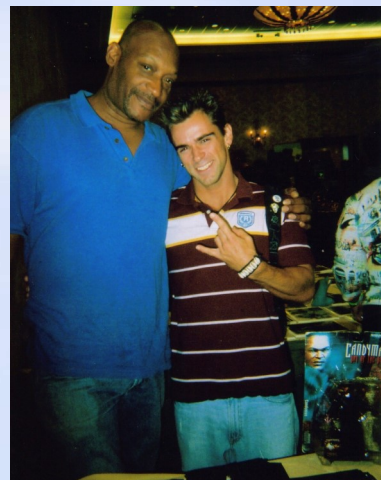
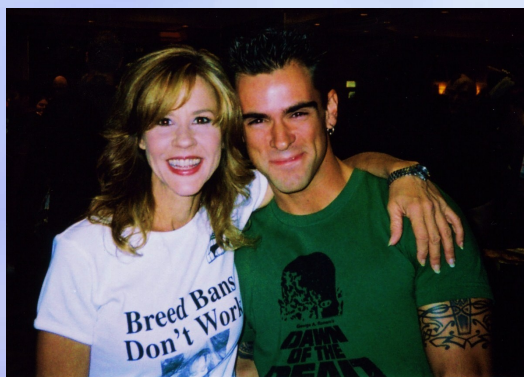








What you see on these three pages: JM Wiseman with nearly everybody cool and the rest of us with part of the other 1%. 2014 was a great year and 2015 should be even better! Thanks for downloading and reading our zine! We love you all! -Jim





# The Noir Art of Rob Moran

**Art is a funny thing. To some, multi-colored paintings of soup cans are high art. To others a completely realistic landscape is the height of culture. For me, I love the kind of art that makes me scared, excited and maybe even offended all at the same time. That's why the Noir Art of Rob Moran (check it out on Facebook) caught my eye. His work is stark, often gruesome and quite possibly dredged from the same place the Christian Devil supposedly dwells. Rob Moran also does a lot of work with and for the deliriously demented Jasper Bark. That's how I knew he would be a great person to interview and I was stoked when he graciously agreed to do the totally fucking amazing cover art for this issue of Zero Signal Magazine. That makes four great covers in a row and I hope that streak never ends. Anyway, here's what Rob Moran had to say about, well, Rob Moran.**

**Jim Dodge) Most of the art you post on Facebook is black and white, stark art that nevertheless manages to convey the horrific ideas you seem to be trying to express. How did you develop this style?**

Rob Moran) My style, such as it is, took a loooooong time to develop; I went through many styles, down many roads and smashed my head against countless walls. I even stopped drawing comics for a few years, spent my time writing and concentrated on my fine art/painting. Comics are a drug though and I began to need a fix so I started drawing them again. When I did this I stripped away any pretensions or desire to be stylistically hip or trendy; I went back to the artists who I loved in my childhood, the ones who first inspired me to do comics at all. Most of them draw or drew in the 'classical' style and I realized I wanted to do that too. One of my strengths as an artist was/is my ability to use a brush or steel pen when inking or rendering and that lends itself to the classical style of comic art. The weird thing is that when I started to produce art in this style it very rapidly got a lot of reaction; people loved this stuff I was doing, as a fan of mine said, "I suddenly got 'golden'.."

**Jim) When did you first realize that you had the desire and the ability to be an artist?**

Rob) I could read and write from the age of three and started drawing then, too. My childhood was spent reading comics and books voraciously and drawing my own comic stories. I was telling people from the age of seven that I was going to draw comics when I grew up and never wavered from that. I was an obnoxious, mouthy little punk; unfortunately I was an obnoxious, mouthy little punk who just happened to be brighter than everyone around him. It got me into a lot of shit back then...still does.

When I was fourteen I got so bored of the shitty white walls of the box called my bedroom so I decided to paint a mural that went round the whole room; my theme was the Garden of Eden, featured me as a life-size bollock-naked Adam. My model for Eve was the seventeen year old daughter of my mother's best friend, who I had seen naked more than once; I painted the whole thing in one night and when my psycho-bitch mother saw it she went fucking ballistic. She repainted those walls white thirty-seven times and you could still see the damn thing. Happy days.

I got into art school and kicked out again after four months for hanging a tutor out a third floor window when he pissed me off, I don't know why everyone made such a fuss about that...it's not like I fucking dropped him.

**Jim) Do you make a living as an artist or do you have to keep a 'day job' to keep the bills paid?**

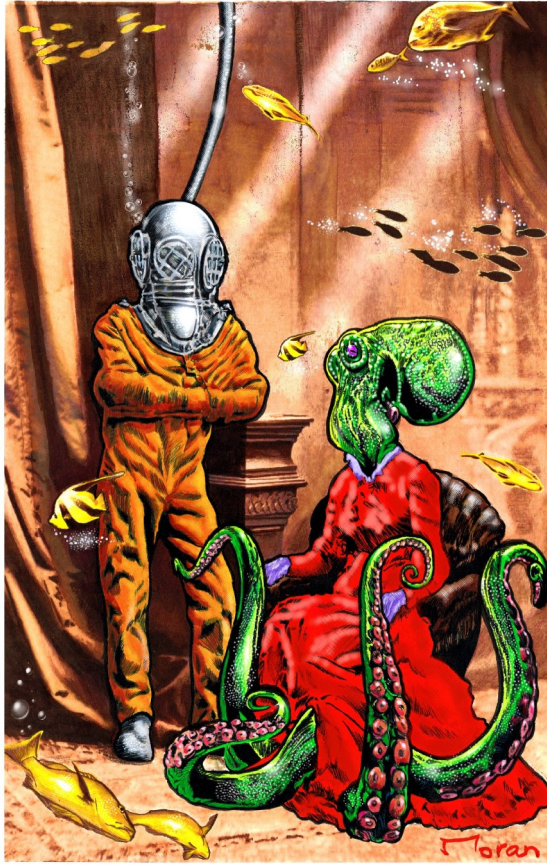
Rob) Nope, no 'Day Job'...producing comic art, illustration, cover art is how I earn a crust and like most comic book artists it tends to be feast or famine.





These are the first seven pages of Beyond Lovecraft #1. I know I want to see every page of every issue. All hail Rob Moran!





**Jim) What are some of the bigger influences and inspirations for your art?**

Rob) Jeez Jim, have you got a couple of years to spare? Okay, here goes: Jim Holdaway, Frank Bellamy, David Wright, Jesus Blasco, Solano-Lopez, Frank Hampson, Al Williamson, Angelo Torres, Alex Raymond, Frank Robbins, Hal Foster, Nick Cardy, Jim Aparo, Neal Adams, Stan Drake, Ken Bald, Joe Kubert, Hugo Pratt, Dino Battaglia, Sergio Toppi, Esteban Maroto, Jose Gonzalez, Bernie Wrightson, Gene Colan, Auraleon, Jose Ortiz, John Bolton, Don Lawrence, Fra-zetta, John M. Burns, Luis Garcia Mozos, Fernando Fernandez, Paul Gulacy, Russ Heath, Enrique Breccia...ah Hell I'm leaving dozens out but those guys are my Art Gods. One thing they all have in common, apart from being brilliant is that they were/are all truly brilliant at black and white art.

**Jim) How do you set the mood for those times when you are creating new pieces?**

Rob) I read a lot of artists talking about what music they listen to, to get 'inspired'...I don't do any of that bollocks.

I was diagnosed as a manic depressive at eighteen and constantly working, drawing, painting is one of the few things that keeps the evil monkey in my brain from running riot. My wife says I actually get dangerous when I'm bored so I try to never let that happen; I practically live in my studio, often sleeping there; then wake up and paint or draw, then eat, then paint or draw, then eat then paint or draw until I fall asleep...then get up and do it again.

Don't take holidays or days off...don't really like leaving my studio in case I encounter other humans and get that urge to hunt them, skin them and use their innards to create sculpture.

**Jim) Has PETA ever thrown red paint on your paintings in order to protest the damage your art does to unsuspecting animals who may view your work in their owners' homes?**

Rob) PETA would worship me as a Deity; I don't eat meat and adore animals much more than people...I have a menagerie of critters at my home...my wife calls me The God of Cats...and I am.

**Jim) Has exposure to Jasper Bark contributed to your obvious dementia?**

Rob) Actually, quite the reverse; my own mind is so twisted and dark nothing Monkey-Boy Bark writes disturbs me. He knows if his stories make me laugh they will make everyone else bleed from the eyes and shit out frogs. The only truly disturbing thing Jasper has sent me are naked pictures of his ass...he used to be a 'professional buttock model' in his younger days and likes to flaunt it. I do love Jasper, though; he's like the idiot savant little brother I never wanted or asked for but somehow seem to have acquired.

**Jim) Just what is your relationship with Dame Edna and are you worried that the world will find out about this torrid affair?**

Rob) Can't help it Jim; I am irresistibly attracted to the 'Granny Fanny', the 'Gummy Hummer', no one performs a 'Rusty Trombone' like an older gal...'50 Shades of Gray' is a very different thing with ladies over a certain age and Dame Edna is a God-damned Sexual Tyrannosaurus in the sack!

**Jim) Do you think your friends and family will ever forgive you for your part in the plot to assassinate JFK?**

Rob) Aw Christ, Jim...I told you that in confidence...did not think you'd go mouthing off about it all over the interweb. Suppose I should be bloody grateful you never mentioned my role in Princess Di's demise!

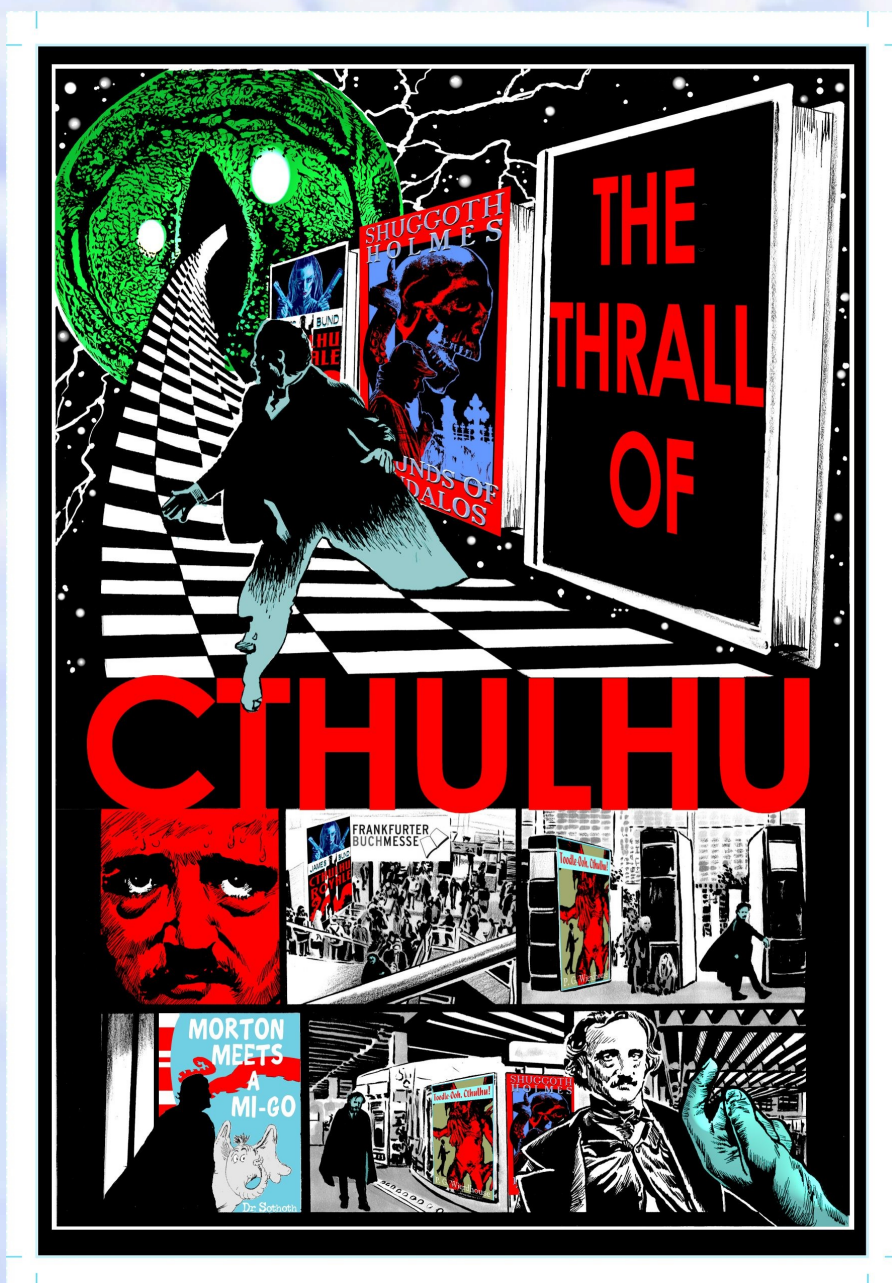
**Jim) What's the next big thing on the horizon for the one and only Rob Moran? How will you spend the millions of pounds you earn from this endeavor?**

Rob) The next big thing on the horizon is...'BEYOND LOVECRAFT', a four part series coming out from



Markosia Publishing in 2015 created and crafted by myself and Sir Jasper Bark. This is our big, howling mad, epic love letter to the divine Lovecraft and all his works. Jasper is writing mad bat-shit crazy stuff no one has ever read before and I will be drawing pages that will blind you to the mundane and dynamite the doors of perception. It will be really good...honest!

As for the fortune in funds I will reap from this book it shall all go toward Jasper getting a full sex change with working robot lady- parts whereupon I shall pimp him out as a cyber-whore on the streets of Shinjuku...then we'll make some real money.



# CARLOS LUIS

# GOES TOP TEN

## Top Ten Albums

**Kayo Dot-** Coffins on Io

**Azar Swan-** And Blow Us a Kiss

**Behemoth-** The Satanist

**Triptykon-** Melana Chasmata

**Nero di Marte-** Derivae

**Orange Goblin-** Back From the Abyss

**Torch Runner-** Endless Nothing

**Baptists-** Bloodmines

**The Atlas Moth-** The Old Believer

**Wolvhammer-** Clawing Into Black Sun

## Top Ten Movies

**Gone Girl**

**Incompresa**

**Birdman**

**Nymphomaniac**

**Boyhood**

**Interstellar**

**Guardians of the Galaxy**

**The Grand Budapest Hotel**

**A Million Ways to Die in the West**

**Deliver Us From Evil**



One day I was browsing through a group on Facebook, and the name of a band caught my eye. You've got to have some balls to name your band "Mandatory Abortions" just for the controversy alone. The name is a joke over the controversy itself. It's not meant to offend, but if you are, move along. Mandatory Abortions is a punk band from the south-side of Chicago in the DIY community. I spoke with from woman Vik Vargas and InGrog WeTrust throughout the process of getting the interview done. Nice ladies that just want to do music. Vik plays guitar and does vocals. InGrog is the bassist. Their drummer is lightly named Jungle Big Shot.



**Jez Feral)** Was there ever a show that inspired you or band for that matter that made you say "I want to do this" or "this is what I'm going to do?" Tell us about some of your music experiences.

Vik Serious) I guess every show, been booking shows since 2001 and surrounded myself with music and art.

**Jez)** What is a favorite recent show you've been able to share with everyone? All time?

Vik) Slayer was amazing live, Ghoul...

**Jez)** When was the last time you recorded material or are you planning to record new material? Any record labels in progress or is this all DIY?

Vik) We recorded our first demo early 2014 in a friend's studio. We are about to record our first album. All DIY. We set up our own recording studio, and are doing live recordings.

**Jez)** Have you guys toured or plan on touring in the future?

Vik) Yes, this summer we would like to hit up Texas and the West Coast. We have been to New York. New Jersey has been our best show to date. So much love.

**Jez)** What are you guys doing when you're not playing shows or practicing?

Vik) Writing new music. Practicing our instruments on our own. We are in the studio four days a week.

**Jez)** What's next for the band? shows? writing?

Vik) All the above shows, tours recording, always writing, DIY music videos and whatever else comes our way



**Jez)** What bands would you love to play with?

Vik) I wanted to play with GWAR. We played with Mobile Death Camp, one member at a time. Joan Jett!

**Jez)** How can people get a copy of your music or hear it?

Vik) Come to a show or visit our reverbnation page.

<http://www.reverbnation.com/mandatoryabortionschicago>





**Jez) What are the roles of each of you in the band...writing the lyrics, etc.**

Vik) We all write our own parts and encourage each other.

**Jez) Do you have any messages, if any, in your lyrics?**

Vik) Just life as we know it.

**Jez) How would you describe your sound?**

Vik) I would hope it would make you wanna shake your ass.

**Jez) Any last words?**

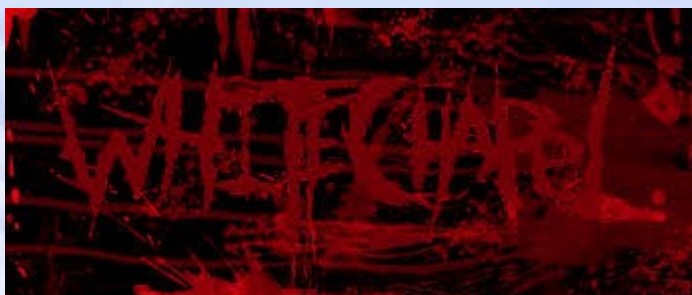
[Mandatory Abortions | Punk from Chicago, IL](http://www.reverbnation.com)  
[www.reverbnation.com](http://www.reverbnation.com)

[https://www.facebook.com/ManAbort?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/ManAbort?ref=br_tf)





# THIS CHAPEL HAUNTS YOU...



So yeah, I recently saw Whitechapel with DevilDriver, but I just can't get enough of this band. Plus they were with Upon A Burning Body. Or so I thought. I'll go ahead and get the bad news out of the way and tell you that the cliché broken down van excuse prevented UABB from attending that night's performance. But I did not know this at the time I pulled into the venue to meet up with Whitechapel's drummer Ben Harclerode. But we'll get to that. In the meantime Ben and I had a good discussion where he told me some of the pros and cons of touring along with a pretty funny fire alarm story:

**JM Wiseman) How did you guys come up with the 'saw-blade' logo?**

Ben Harclerode) I think Dave came up with that one actually. Dave came up with the idea and the old drummer mocked it up.

**JM) This new album seemed to be a little more political than your previous albums; what made you guys decide on 'Our Endless War' as the title?**

Ben) I guess there was a number of reasons. One of the songs is kind of political...

**JM) The title track?**

Ben) Yeah. Honestly, the initial idea was financially things have been a little rocky the last couple of years. That and bad management calls basically. The last couple of years we've just been trying to pull ourselves back together. Initially it kind of came from the idea of our constant struggle to just keep this band rolling. There is always something; always some pile of shit that gets thrown our way. So that was the initial idea and then we kind of tied it into other things, like the political title track. But that's the beauty of music. Most people have no idea where comes from; it's all up to interpretation.

**JM) I have to say that you guys really nailed it with *The Saw is the Law*. That song is just epic!**

Ben) Thanks, dude.

**JM) Lyrically it had kind of a 'rally behind us' feel to it. Was unity the message of the song?**

Ben) I have no idea, man [laughs]. Lyrics aren't my thing. I don't even know what the hell Phil is saying until the damn record's already done and then it's like 'well, I guess that's what this song is about.' I understand the meaning of that song about as much as anyone else who listens to it.

**JM) So if I asked you about '*...the Digital Age*' it would be the same response then?**

Ben) Oh yeah [we both share a laugh]. I play drums, brother.

**JM) Well moving on then. So how has this tour been going for you guys? How has the crowd reaction been to the new material?**

Ben) It's been good. We played some other newer material on the last couple of runs we've done. We've played some stuff on this tour that we haven't played before and people seem to be into it, like the song *Let Me Burn*. I personally don't like playing that song much but all our fans loved it so it's like 'well I hate the damn song, but if you guys like it I'll play it for you all night long.'



**JM) That was going to be my next question; what would you say has been your hit in the pits lately?**

Ben) Honestly *The Saw is the Law* always gets a good reaction; kids just start bouncing.

**JM) Is there any particular song you do like to play live?**

Ben) Honestly *Our Endless War* is probably my favorite song to play live, at least from the new stuff. It's just high energy and there's actually interesting drum parts in it. *Let Me Burn* is kind of the victim of 'pre-pro syndrome;' guitar players writing drum riffs on computers and then getting attached to them because they're used to hearing them.

**JM) Now you have to play it that way.**

Ben) Yeah, it's like 'well I hate this, but what if I try this?' 'No, just stick to what we wrote.' Well okay, [laughs].

**JM) Yeah, I've been in that situation myself in the past.**

Ben) So that song to me is kind of bland, there's not a lot to it drumming wise. And then *Our Endless War*, like I said I feel like I put a little bit more thought into that song. There's more going on, it's more challenging, and it's more high energy. It's just a much more fun song to play all together.

**JM) I wanted to tell you that your cover of Pantera's *Strength Beyond Strength* was heavy as fuck; better than the original. What made you decide to cover that song?**

Ben) Yeah I thought that was great too, man...we just figured if we were going to cover a band, Pantera is that southern metal that kind of fits.

**JM) Are there any other potential covers you might do in the future?**

Ben) I don't know, we've talked about it. There's been talk of some sort of EP; you know obviously there will be a cover or two on there, but nothing specific yet.

**JM) So we've got some songs down; are there any bands you particularly like to tour with?**

Ben) I mean there's a lot of them. I've toured with some really good bands over the last couple of years. Honestly, doing this tour thing makes me not even really care about metal or listening to music in general. It kind of burns me out on music altogether. So for me, I'm more concerned with being around people that are good to be around for a month at a time. There have been a handful of them. Devil Wears Prada are good friends of ours and that band Deez Nuts from Australia. There's just so many bands that we've toured with that if I could I would just always tour with them and have a great time.



**JM) On that note, do you have any beef with any bands?**





Ben) No man, I get along with everybody. You have to be real pile of shit for me to go out of my way to dislike you.

**JM) I know you haven't been with the band as long, but have you been in long enough to get any crazy road stories? I'm sure you've got at least one fucked up story to tell...**

Ben) I mean I have a handful of them. There was this one time, it was honestly one of my first tours with the band ever. Me and Gabe got all hammered off some Jack Daniels. Impending Doom was there too and their drummer Brandon was involved. We all got a little drunk, I think me and Gabe were really drunk. They have these shitty Formula One hotels in Germany and it's basically like a two level hotel. All the bathrooms and showers are in the middle of the floor; it's like community stuff. Every night you go into those hotels and there's this corner table under the TV in the corner of the room and there's all these like razor marks. It's the kind of hotel you go to in Germany to spend forty bucks a night to go do blow and bang a hooker [we both share a laugh; sounds like fun]. So that's what that is; we were staying at a Formula One hotel and we got there all drunk as shit. And another thing too, like I said it's not a very high-class establishment nor is it high-security. There is one camera in the entryway and that's it; nothing on any of the floors...well first we went into David's room, the bass player of Impending Doom, and took the mattress off his bed and hung it



halfway out of the window of his room. And then after that me, Gabe and Brandon thought it would be a good idea to grab the fire extinguisher and just light it off down the hallway. So we did that and the whole hallway was just filled with this like smoky, fire extinguisher stuff [laughs]. The fire alarms go off and the whole fucking building gets evacuated. Me and Gabe were like 'there's no cameras here; they can't prove shit.' So we just run back to our room, turn off the light, get in our beds and act like we don't know what's going on. Then security comes knocking on our door, 'you guys have to get out of here, they're evacuating the building because the fire alarm was set off.' We were like 'what...uh what's going on...um okay.' [another shared laugh. I'm sure all of us who have engaged in a little mischief from time to time can relate to this story]. So we went down to the outside of the hotel where everybody else was. It was us, Acacia Strain and Impending Doom. So it's all three bands, tour managers, drivers, everybody that was on the tour package. It was probably twenty-five people and everybody is standing outside of the hotel when police and fire trucks all show up. Then you look up at the hotel and hanging out of David's hotel window is his fucking mattress hanging halfway out. So what it looks like to everybody is that in the panic and the frenzy of the fire alarm going off somebody went crazy and was going to throw their mattress out of the window to jump and save their life or something...so it was a big ordeal. Like I said, they couldn't prove shit. It was like 'well who did this?' 'I uh; I don't know.' [picture us both shrugging our shoulders together along with more laughter]. Everybody was freaking out like we were going to go to jail, but it's just don't be an idiot and say anything and they can't prove anything. It was really stupid, [he says with a smile]. I feel like that is one of the few appropriate stories that I can tell you without endangering anyone's safety.

**JM) That's perfect man; total Rockstar. So now what is in the future for Whitechapel?**

Ben) We just let our old manager go that we've had with us for about six, seven years I want to say. We've moved on to a different company and they have a lot of stuff in the works for next year that we're all really excited about. Things are starting to look like they could turn around for us.



(JM Wiseman on right with Ben Harclerode from Whitechapel)



**JM) I'll leave you with the final thought in case there's anything you'd like to say or any message you have for your fans?**

**Ben) To the fans, we all appreciate you guys all coming out and supporting us and picking up our CD, picking up merch, whatever it is. Anything you do to support us we really appreciate it. That's pretty much why we keep doing what we do. Without that we're fucked, so thank you guys!**

**After hanging backstage a little bit longer with the guys, it was time to go check out that evenings opening band, Glass Cloud. Truthfully I had never heard any of their music before, but after seeing them play live I have to say I rather enjoyed their performance. Of course I figured they would be**

**heavy, otherwise they wouldn't be on this tour. However heavy doesn't always mean it's going to be good, but that was not the case here. Their sound was very similar to UABB's style so they fit in well on this tour. Perhaps most impressive to me was their African American guitarist who was absolutely shredding that eight-string guitar. I got to catch up with him and singer Jerry Roush backstage after the show. Both were very nice guys and I had a great time hanging out with them. They seemed very appreciative to have gained a new fan, as Jerry stated: "That's what's so great about coming to shows; discovering a new band you hadn't heard before." Overall GC put on a high energy show that was a great way to start things off. If you're a fan of the other two bands on this tour then I see no reason why you wouldn't get into Glass Cloud, so go check them out. And speaking of checking bands out, guess who made a guest appearance? You probably won't, so I'll just tell you: John Matos from Abiotic! This was an unexpected and pleasant surprise. If you haven't heard of this rad ass band yet, then you need to change that. This is an extremely talented up and coming technical band whose second album 'Symbiosis' was well received by both fans and critics. So now I'm getting to share a drink with John as he tells me a little bit about the upcoming new album. Of course it's always loud and hard to hear at these concerts, so he agreed to have a more formal discussion with me at a later date.**



(JM on right with Jerry Roush, vocalist for Glass Cloud)



(JM with Abiotic guitarists John Matos and Matt Mendez)



Meanwhile, by the end of Glass Cloud's performance word had already spread about UABB's absence. You could feel the disappointment in the air, as I too shared in that disappointment. Even though I have seen UABB before, I have yet to see them live since the release of their newest album 'The World is My Enemy Now.' I was really looking forward to hearing the new material live, but apparently it wasn't meant to be. Fortunately for all of us Whitechapel really came through by playing an extended set. This definitely helped make up for having no UABB; I mean just check out this set list:

1. Intro
  2. Our Endless War
  3. The Saw Is The Law
  4. Section 8
  5. Let Me Burn
  6. Possession
  7. Darkest Day of Man
  8. Prostatic Fluid Asphyxiation
  9. Mono
  10. Worship The Digital Age
  11. This Is Exile
  12. I, Dementia
  13. Faces
  14. Possibilities Of An Impossible Existence
- Encore: Diggs Road

Most fans will never get to see that much Whitechapel at one time and we were all loving it! As always with this band, the crowd was rowdy and fired up. And this particular crowd was quite entertaining with raging pits, flashing titties and even a guy in a giant yellow chicken mask. Whitechapel really had that place bouncing. Perhaps it was because they were under the added pressure of having to make up for UABB, but they were on fire! Relentlessly playing hit after hit, they kept that intense energy alive in the place as band and crowd raged on together into the night, united through the power of the music. Even with an extended set list we still couldn't get enough of that high! It still hung thick in the air even after Whitechapel had played their last song, but alas it came to an end as all good things do. A few of the band members did a meet and greet after the show with some of the fans while Ben and I went backstage again to share some more 'common interests.' A few more drinks, laughs and good times were had before it was time for the bands to board up and head out to the next show. As you can read, this was another great show given by two very distinctly talented bands. I'm sure they will come around again soon, so don't miss your chance to experience the Whitechapel district!



# they call him



When you get to interview somebody you tend to think that the little bit you know about them is pretty much all there is. Then you start to ask questions and realize that what you know about them is actually just the tip of the iceberg. Let's use Anthony "Tiny" Biuso for an example. On August 23, 2014 my family and I were in Atlanta for a weekend getaway. We visited The Georgia Aquarium and The World of Coca-Cola but the highlight of our Saturday was the Doyle show that night at The Masquerade. We knew that The Abominable Dr. Chud was no longer a part of Doyle's band and that a man called "Tiny" had taken the drum throne. We didn't know how well he would be able to perform with only a short time to rehearse songs and prepare for the stage. Where did he come from? How did they know to contact this mystery man? Why are large men always called "Tiny"? Well, Tiny blew the audience away. Not only did he nail the songs perfectly, his live presence was stunning. That was one of the best shows I've ever seen and I would gladly go see it again. As a matter of fact, I'd love to see Tiny play again, no matter who he was bashing the skins for. Not only is he an amazing drummer, he's a great guy who looks big and scary but proves to be actually big and cuddly; he's deeply involved in charity work... I love complex personalities.

**Jim Dodge)** How did you get hooked up with Doyle?

Anthony "Tiny" Biuso) His management called me on a Tuesday night and asked me to jump on a plane and learn their set to play the first show Friday in Rochester. I of course said yes.

**Jim)** How difficult was it to pick up with the band in the middle of a tour and with only a single rehearsal before your first appearance with them?

Tiny) Well it wasn't the middle of the tour it was just a few days before they were to begin and they had some issues with their drummer so I jumped in and learned twelve songs initially. Then we just kept adding songs every day for about a week until we had a seventeen song set. The set consisted of almost every song off Doyle's Annihilator solo record and about seven Misfits songs it was great.

**Jim)** Are there any plans for you join them for the next album or any upcoming tours?

Tiny) We are working on that now.

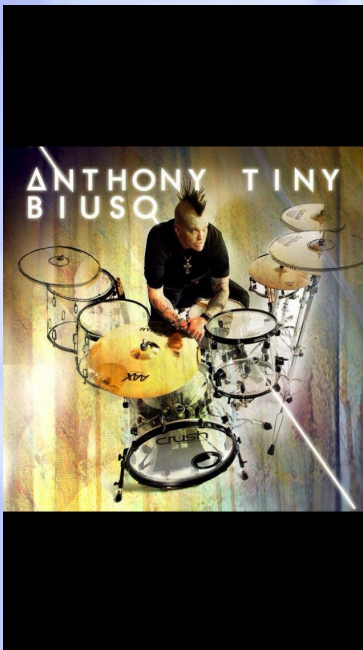
**Jim)** I know the crowd at the Masquerade in Atlanta cheered for you like the hero you are for saving that tour. Was that a consistent reaction from Doyle's fans during the rest of *Annihilate America*?

Tiny) Yeah the Doyle fans were really great. Every show I had a dozen or more people coming up thanking me for taking the seat. And of course through Facebook I've had tons of accolades and a lot of added friends which has been wonderful! I really appreciate the Misfits fans and I certainly appreciate all the Doyle fans.

**Jim)** You posted pictures of you with Jerry Only and mentioned jamming with him at a venue. Did you get caught up in whatever animosity there may be between the two brothers or did you just enjoy yourself and avoid the subject of sibling rivalry?



Tiny) I don't really pay any attention to that shit. I've been a Misfits fan since I was very young and I was honored to jump up and do it. Travis Barker played the night before with them at the Hollywood house of blues. And I played with them in Anaheim. My very first tour with the Dickies in 2003 was with the Misfits 1950s Project and Jerry and I just got along great and we went out to dinner a bunch of times with Dez and we've been friends ever since. I love the Misfits crew; I love all the guys that are in the band.



**Jim) Besides playing with Doyle, and saving the tour, what other things do you do with your time?**

Tiny) I play drums for pro BMX legend Rick Thorne. And I also play with a punk band in Los Angeles called the X Members. But one of my real true passions right now is charity and giving to others and helping animals and stuff like that. I know it sounds cliché but I try to have direct results and direct contact with people that need help and places that need a hand. Try it out see

how great how great it is. I also sell a great BOOM TSHIRT!!!!

**Jim) If you could paste your ass to the drum throne of any band, who would it be and why?**

Tiny) Metallica because they really need a drummer.

**Jim) Have you had a chance to meet many of your musical heroes? Did they hold up to the ideal you had in your head?**

Tiny) I have had a chance to meet a lot of my musical heroes as I was a child growing up and I would say it's a 50-50 ratio... Some are great and summer total tools. We won't get into it. Ha-hah

**Jim) What's the craziest shit you've ever seen at a show, either from the stage or as a member of the audience?**

Tiny) Well being in TSOL for ten years I've seen way too many bashings and violence. But I would have to say seeing people jump from crazy heights into the pit is the craziest!!

**Jim) What are some of the things your fans can expect to see from you in 2015?**





Tiny) Well I am scheduled to be in a movie called the Bridge which stars Joe Elliott from Def Leppard and Al Jorgensen. That's gonna be awesome. Look for it on FB. We are doing a crowd funding right now!!! I will also be performing shows with Rick Thorne and the X members coming up real soon as well as shooting more episodes of my Sullen TV show *Tiny Talk* which you can see on YouTube right now.

In the meantime check me out on FB  
Anthony Tiny Biuso  
And INSTAGRAM TinyBubz

And my website [www.anthonytinybiuso.com](http://www.anthonytinybiuso.com)  
Or text BOOM to 58885 to get on my email list.





# THE WHOREHOUSE MASSACRE



The Whorehouse Massacre is a sludge band from Canada that stood out to me because of their distinct sound. You can hear the influence of *Fistula* indefinitely, and that adds to the great sound. The band resides in British Columbia and focuses on the music rather than bullshit labels that you can get caught up in. All initials no names. It even reads on their Facebook a different location than where they are originally from. WP seems to be the mastermind behind this pandemonium. I respect this band for relying on the music to speak for itself.

WP) Before we get started I would just like to say thanks a lot for the interview!

**Jez Feral) You are so welcome! I dig your band, and I wanted to know more about you guys. So how are you guys doing?**

WP) Not bad all things considered.

**Jez) How many members and who plays what?**

WP) I usually play drums or guitar and do vocals. RJB played drums on the new album, and KH played some bass. There might be some more contributors to the album before all is said and done.

**Jez) I noticed that you only use initials to represent yourselves.**

WP) We only use initials because we leave our egos behind and focus on the art itself.

**Jez) I came across you guys on Twitter, because your band name caught my eye. How did the band name come into creation?**

WP) The band name came about as I was sitting in a vortex of hate that crossed fantasy and reality. I had *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* on TV, *Taxi Driver* on my PC and I was reading about a serial killer who killed hookers for twenty five years. The name came together from there.

**Jez) Has anyone ever said that your band reminds them of *Fistula*?**

WP) If someone said that to me I would take it as a compliment. They are one of my favourite bands and a huge influence on me.

**Jez) How long has Whorehouse been playing as a band?**

WP) Live shows started around 2010. I created it in 2005. We generally play as a three piece.

**Jez) Do you have a big following where you are from?**

WP) I'm not sure we have a big following anywhere. I don't pay much attention.

**Jez) What are your musical influences? What drove you guys to start the band and be in a band as individuals?**

WP) The biggest influences would definitely be Ohio Sludge, Black Sabbath, and many of the bands that make up the genres of Stoner, Doom, Sludge, and Hardcore. The people in this band are in it because being a musician is who they are. They really enjoy making music. It's definitely a way to let off steam, criticize society, and exorcize any demons that manifest in you from this fucked up planet.

**Jez) I originally thought you were from Xenia, Ohio, because that's what it said on your Facebook. Plus, it seemed to fit well. I thought you were Ohio Sludge, but in fact you are from Canada.**

WP) I chose Xenia, because it is the setting in Gummo, hehe.

**Jez) Where do you guys play a lot in Canada?**

WP) Most of our shows to this point have been in Calgary, Alberta. My favourite venue is Vern's.

**Jez) What's the biggest band you've ever played with?**

WP) We were booked to play with Church of Misery, but then shit happened.

**Jez) Are any of you in other bands?**

WP) KH is in a crossover hardcore punk/thrash band. RJB has been in some punk bands. I've made recordings for the Sludge/Doom *Witchsnake* and the soon to be *Deadly Sin (Sloth)* sludge band.

**Jez) What are some tunes you've been spinning lately?**

WP) Great question. Last week I spent about three days straight listening to OFF!. I listen to Fistula pretty much every day. Danzig *III* has been in there and Weedeater's, "Jason The Dragon" and "God Luck and Goodspeed" have been pretty regular too. Sludgethrone, Corrupted, Ultralord, EHG. The list could go on. I listen to music all day every day.

**Jez) What is a favorite recent show you've been to? All time?**

WP) Seeing Weedeater, Black Sabbath, and Danzig in one summer was mind blowing. All of those shows were very memorable. The most recent show I went to was Dayglo Abortions, and it was fucking great. Lots of crazy show stories. I don't even know where to begin.

**Jez) When was the last time you recorded material or are you planning to record new material? Any record labels in progress or is this all DIY?**

WP) Yeah there should be a new album recorded in a month or two called "Always Has and Never Has Been." Transcending Obscurity Records is releasing *Altar of the Goat Skull* and *VI* on one CD very soon as well.

**Jez) Staff Writer Carlos Luiz wrote a great review of "Altar of the Goat Skull" and VI. Have you guys toured or plan on touring in the future?**

WP) We haven't toured, but I hope to one day.

**Jez) Do you guys have any last words?**

WP) Sludge til' death.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Whorehouse-Massacre/217400374962973>  
<http://thewhorehousemassacre.bandcamp.com/>





So here we are and I'm supposed to write up a top ten list for this issue. The really hard part is narrowing down what all happened this year to just ten items, but I'll try.



**10) Revival** – I've always been a fan of Stephen King and with his latest novel it seems to me he is back to where he was in the 80's and 90's. One of his fastest, prose wise, read books in a long time.

**9) Snow Piercer** – The film that almost didn't come out due to the director wouldn't let Harvey Weinstein make cuts to his film, came out to a small limited release and regulated to mostly DVD and Blu-ray sale as punishment. Sometimes it's worth standing up for your vision and this is testament to that.

**8) The Blacklist** – After the first season ending on a cliff hanger, the second season starts off a couple months later with a stronger central storyline and James Spader still chewing the scenery like a pro. Still waiting for the show to just say that Elizabeth is Red's daughter though since we all know she is.

**7) Guardians of the Galaxy** – After *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* taking the Marvel Universe films into a more adult territory, *Guardians...* comes out and brings the fun back to movies by not taking itself too seriously and is able to hold up to multiple viewings not losing any of its charm.

**6) Scar Symmetry - The Singularity, Phase 1: Neohumanity** – After Scar Symmetry's last album, *The Unseen Empire*, being okay but seeming just to be more of a collection of songs we are giving what seems to be a brand new band that embraces taking chances again.



**5) Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D.** – After an uneven first season that thankfully picked up pace toward the end, the second season hit the ground running and completely changed the Marvel film and TV universe with the mid-season finale.

**4) True Detective Season One** – Even though I knew the series was going to be worth watching, I really had no idea how good it would be. In fact this was probably the best TV had to offer this year.

**3) Nightbreed: The Directors Cut** – After years of waiting for the true version of the film to come out we are giving what the film was supposed to have been, a dark fantasy rather than a slasher with monsters in it, thanks to Scream Factory.

**2) Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens trailer** – Though only showing snippets of what is to come, the trailer went full blast once the Star Wars theme started playing and Millennium Falcon was shown. More than anything the trailer shows that there is still a possibility that a decent Star Wars film that can hold up to the original trilogy might exist.

1) Well this one is pretty much a given and that is what you are reading right now. Yep, **Zero Signal Magazine** itself. With the opportunity that it has given Jim and I more and better is to come

Jason Bonton



# REVIEWS

## BOOKS

**Stuck on You and Other Prime Cuts – Jasper Bark: Crystal Lake Publishing 2014**

**Plot:**

*Stuck on You and Other Prime Cuts* is a delightfully wicked collection of short stories. There is no continuous plot that I can discern other than to keep your skin crawling and your night light burning.

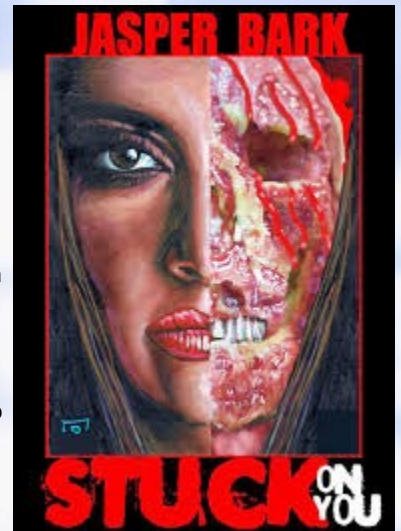
**Review:**

Always a treat, the stories of Jasper Bark are messy, disturbing looks into the mind of a deranged subject of Her Royal Majesty's United Kingdom. Twisted (definitely), gory (when the situation calls for it) and unbelievably memorable (stock up on Xanax and light bulbs), *Stuck on You and Other Prime Cuts* will surprise and dismay you and yet you'll want to read this one from beginning to end without any breaks for oxygen or psychiatric therapy. As you delve our way into the mind of this (mad bastard) literary genius you'll discover that Jasper isn't someone dimensional writer with nothing to say. He is, in fact, a fan/student of the earlier masters like H.P. Lovecraft and Robert Bloch. With the books of Mr. Bark you get a few guarantees. You're guaranteed to enjoy the horror, the sheer terror of his work. You're guaranteed to want to read it more than once. You're also guaranteed to be so disgusted at times that you're tempted to keep a wastebasket handy to catch any stray vomit that may spew forth from your mouth so your reading isn't interrupted by trips to the bathroom.

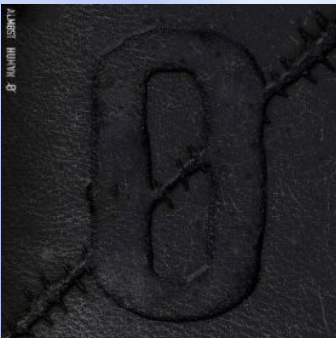
**Hit or Miss Moment:**

As soon as you get to the end of *Stuck on You*, the first story in this collection, you'll be hooked. Very few writers can turn a tale around on its tail with such a masterful stroke.

**Jim Dodge**



## MUSIC



**Almost Human – 0: 2014**  
**\m/\m/\m/\m/**

This Swiss band sent me a copy of their five song EP through the mail, a novelty in this age of the digital download. It was a joy to experience the cover art, the packaging and the thrill of holding their actual CD in my hot little hands. My delight grew when I played the music that was contained within. With a sound that leans toward the industrial metal flavor of American Head Charge with a dash of Damageplan these five songs are at once eerily familiar and freshly presented. I don't know how many days I've spent listening to 0 (that's a zero just in case you were wondering) over and over but I know that there have been at least two dozen spins of this disc since I received, even amidst the tsunami of other music I've bought and been given since I got this wonderful package from my postal carrier. I am prejudiced against EPs as you may well know but this one has definitely made me want to hear whatever this band has in store next. While I wait I'll just have to keep these songs on 'repeat' until they satisfy my LP needs.

<http://www.almost-human.ch>

**Jim Dodge**





**American Heritage – Prolapse: Solar Flare Records 2014**  
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*Prolapse* is one monster of an album. It first starts out of very thrash, but that's little to what they have in store for you. This is **American Heritage's** sixth release on France's Solar Flare Records. **American Heritage** has been at it since 1996 with their 1998 EP release *The Rosewood Union*. They have done 7" inch splits with the likes of Mastodon. They have toured alongside Baroness, Pelican, Mastodon and countless others. *Prolapse* was produced by none other than Sanford Parker. *Prolapse* comes in at thirty-three minutes of pure hardcore thrash. Things seemed to switch up on the song, "Constant and Consuming Fear of Death and Dying" which was a track that immediately caught my attention. Their cover of Girls Against Boys', "Bulletproof Cupid" is incredible. Other covers they seem to own on this record are, "Hurtin' Crue" by the Descendents and "Thirsty and Miserable" by Blag Flag. This is a most definite record for you collection. Release date: November 24, 2014.

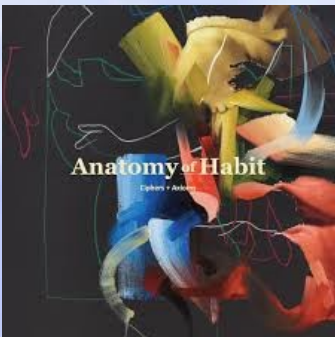
<https://www.facebook.com/americanheritageband>

<http://americanheritage.bandcamp.com>

<http://www.twitter.com/fuckingheritage>

<http://solarflarerds.blogspot.com>

Jez Feral



**Anatomy of Habit - Ciphers + Axioms: Relapse Records 2014**  
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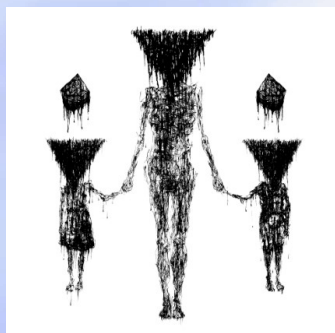
The term super-group is thrown around loosely in this day and age but Anatomy of Habit break the monotony of the term with their second album *Ciphers+ Axioms* the band features in their ranks the legendary Mark Solotroff (of Noise legends Bloodyminded) on vocals, Will Lindsay(Nachtmystium, Indian ,A Storm of Lights, Wolves in the Throne Room and Abigail Williams) on guitars, Kenny Rasmussen on bass, Theo Katsaounis on percussion and another legend in his own right the mighty John McEntire (Tortoise, The Sea and Cake, Gastr del Sol) on drums. The band plays a different type of post metal sometimes going in a more avant garde doom and noise rock similar to legendary noise masters Swans. The album starts off in a glorious and hellish way with 'Radicate and Recede,' a twenty minute journey through the very depths of hell.0' Recede...' is such an immense and haunting track; Mark Solotroff carries it with his nefarious orations and chants. His baritone vocals are terrifying throughout while the instrumentation varies from drone, post and doom metal picking up the pace midway, 'Recede...' drags the listener through Purgatory and Hell, never slowing down. It's truly a journey through the darkness.

'Then window' continues the journey through the depths of darkness. The band stomps and plays like Hell's own jam band. John McEntire's drumming is impeccable, Will Lindsay's riffs are heavy in nature reminiscent of Sunn 0))) but it is Solotroff's voice that once again steals the show, chanting 'Axioms and Ciphers' throughout the entire song like a Gregorian monk, however at the 5 minute mark 'Window...' changes paths leaving the depths of Hell and taking their journey to a place of beauty and peace; a place similar to Heaven and the instrumentation is soothing with calming textures. It's a fitting and emotional end to an interesting album.

Anatomy of Habit manages to create an interesting and thought-provoking album that has so many emotions attached to it from despair and anguish to calm and peace and the real shocking thing is that they manage to do this with two songs each clocking at twenty minutes each and they take the listener to Hell and Heaven. If the idea of Swans and Neurosis joining Death in June and Locrian doing a collaborative album sounds appealing to you then *Ciphers+ Axioms* is the album for you!!!!

[https://www.facebook.com/anatomyofhabit?ref=br\\_tf](https://www.facebook.com/anatomyofhabit?ref=br_tf)

Carlos Luis



**Author & Punisher - Women & Children: Seventh Rule 2013**  
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**Author & Punisher** is a one-man manipulator of industrial and doom. Tristan Shone is the one man behind the machine. There is a unique presence about *Woman & Children*; true creativity at its finest. The distorted bass down to his insane vocals make these tracks amazing. **Author & Punisher** is definitely standing alone in a crowded room when it comes to everything else that is out there today. That's not a bad thing, but rather a very great thing. There is a hint of intensity that you find in the band Mouth of the Architect. The eerie hymns of, "Tame as a Lion" invite you in wearily with his clean singing that is on point. The piano in this song fit well with the overlapping sinister vocals. It's one of his slower songs, but well written. It could be classified as an industrial ballad, which is something I haven't encountered before. This album is filled with a gutting manner of cathartic doom and industrial layers. A few songs that stand out are 'Fearce', 'Tame as a Lion', and 'Pain Myself'. I recommend this seven track album to all who are into eccentric beauty of doom with industrial blends. You will not be disappointed.

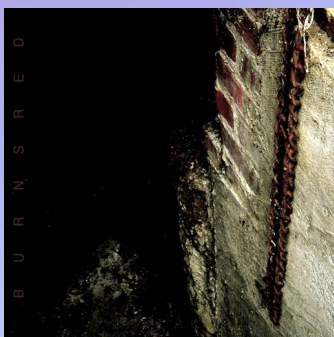
<http://www.tristanshone.com>

<http://authorandpunisher.bandcamp.com>

<http://www.seventhrule.com>

<http://www.thehousecorerecords.com>

Jez Feral



**Burnsred - S/T: 2011**  
 \m/\m/\n

This trio is based in San Francisco, California, and are fairly new to the scene, having formed in 2007. They are unsigned, touting this as their first self-released full-length. Attributing influences on their sound include acts such as: Neurosis, Burning Witch, Asunder, and Godspeed You! Black Emperor.

This outfit delivers a textured sound which is rich with atmosphere, galvanizing elements of sludge, post, black, and doom. With melodies cascading ambly between calm and harsh, they have acquired quite the range in sound. I was impressed with the production and quality of this release alone, being the first under their belt.

Personally, they remind me of blackened sludgers Eibon and Ensorcelor. Both rank top-notch in my book and are sure to catch the ears of anyone into this style. The track I'm drawn to the most is

'Cleanse CMXCIX' - incorporating groove and that down-tempo riffage we all know and love - which ties the rest of the album together nicely.

The vocals, albeit not terrible, seem better suited for a traditional black metal band, boring an audience to tears in some shitty underground club, complete with spike arm bands and leather clothing. They are not terrible in the least, but do not seem to complement what Burnsred are trying to pull off. Put those same vocals with an up and coming Norwegian black metal band still hopelessly clinging on to the days of what made the scene so great, and they would fit perfectly.

Burnsred pull off the sludge genre pretty flawlessly with one small minor complaint. The way they seem to meaninglessly throw in these sections that fit nowhere in the song, tends to bug me a bit. They seem to be doing it more or less to say they did it instead of letting the song flourish into its own beast. Call me crazy, but the release would have been far better off without those sections. Still, this is just a small issue I have, which really doesn't bring down the flow of this album too much.

What Burnsred accomplish with their self-titled release is an excellent notch in the belt of the sludge metal genre. Granted it's nothing new or exciting, it's just really good music which is all anyone can ask for nowadays. In a time where it seems the more extreme forms of music are getting more mediocre releases, Burnsred are definitely doing great things. The main problem with sludge releases is how they can suddenly become boring out of nowhere. Burnsred keep things fresh and interesting throughout the whole album.

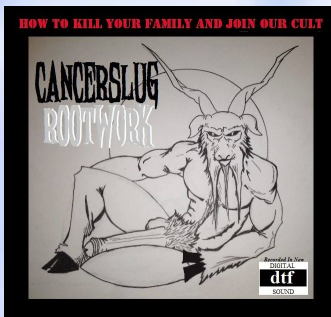
The release was put out in mid 2011. You can check them out on Bandcamp and acquire this in either CD or digital format for a mere five bucks. Teabag Approved!

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

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Burnsred/235594094676>

<http://www.burnsred.net/>

## Teabag Stallone



**Cancerslug - Rootwork: 2014**  
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Alex Story and company are back with a new album and they haven't lost a single bit of that which makes them great. Fifteen new shameless tracks, fifteen more reasons to love this band from Huntsville, Alabama. From album opener 'Leviathan' to closer 'Junkie' *Rootwork* is a primitive rock and roll monster. Cancerslug has been transforming horrifying things into musical magic since 1999 and they don't appear to be slowing down now. Stand out tracks include 'Rape Train,' which has a bit of a Rollins Band feel, 'Make War Not Love,' which is pure classic Cancerslug and 'Junkie' which showcases Alex's ability to mix the sounds of early 60s and 70s rock and roll with his own particular brand of horror punk. There are a shit ton of great quotable lyrics on *Rootwork* so I'll have to choose one randomly to let you know what demonic delights await your poor, doomed ears. "Nobody wants to take a ride on the rape train. Still they find themselves inside of the rape train. Life is gonna fuck you up the ass. We're not even gonna stop for gas." Yeah, it's that good. SLUGCULT RISE!!!

[www.officialcancerslug.com](http://www.officialcancerslug.com)

## Jim Dodge



**CHILD BITE - STRANGE WASTE: HOUSECORE RECORDS 2014**  
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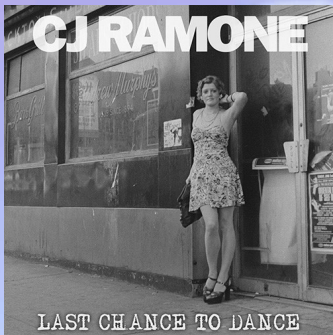
When I heard the first track, "Still Fucked Up After All These Years," I immediately thought, "This is a fucked version of Glassjaw doing Math Metal. But then, "Garbage Odyssey" came on, and it was Math Metal Gwar. The vocalist's bravado brings his own taste to the table. The fact that they are on Housecore makes it even more interesting to me. "Ancestral Ooze" has a nice breakdown with punk influenced drum beats. The title of their album, *Strange Waste* is a descriptive emporium to this album. The vocal is all over the fucking place, and it sounds good. I can't help but like this messy massacre of creation. "Foreign Tissue Purge" is the steadiest song on this album if that speaks anything at all. These are all short disgusting songs, and "disgusting" isn't a bad term. "Mongoloid Obsession" has to be the most fun song on the album that will get stuck in your head. It's probably not appropriate to get this song stuck in your head considering they're screaming "Mongoloid Obsession" repeatedly, but that's okay. I will make do with this taboo. Surprisingly, "In a Cloud of Blood Bog Infinity" has a beautiful acoustic introduction. The song has an eerie hymn that blends into unstable madness.

It's appropriately the longest song on the album. "You choke on your own dream"...the song "Obey the Wraith" bleeds into every shake of his voice. *Strange Waste* follows the EP, "Morbid Hits" which was an album of Anal Cunt covers with Phil Anselmo on vocals. In terms of vocals, I hear Mike Patton all over this. The whole album is merely nineteen minutes long. "Pigfuck mode" is an excellent way of summing up *Strange Waste*. Release date November 25, 2014.

<http://www.childbite.com>

## Jez Feral





**CJ Ramone – Last Chance to Dance: Fat Wreck Chords 2014**  
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While all four of the founding members of pioneering punk band The Ramones have gone to play that eternal concert in the sky, the three surviving former Ramones seem to be doing a great job of carrying the torch of our beloved brudders from Queens, NY. Most recently, CJ Ramone released his new album entitled *Last Chance to Dance* under the auspicious banner of Fat Wreck Chords. While I enjoyed the whole album, and will enjoy it many more times before the world ends, there are a few tracks I'd like to mention separately. 'Til The End' is a Joey Ramone style love ballad of the sort that we fell in love with way back on The Ramones' self titled debut album back in 1976. CJ really captured the heart and soul of Joey on this one and it makes my eyes mist up a little. 'Mr. Kalashnikov', while it may be taken as a sarcastic song about gun control is actually, I believe, a song that attempts to capture the joy of a gun enthusiast while firing his favorite weapon at the local shooting range. It makes me want to go shoot some holes, safely, in a few paper targets. While the first eleven tracks could have easily have been taken from the song books of The Ramones' earlier albums,

track twelve, 'Clusterfuck', is more reminiscent of the angrier punk I always associate with the UK scene. It's angrier and grittier than Joey and company usually put together. This is a great song, just wanted to point out that it stands out from the rest simply by being outside of the bubblegum punk moniker that The Ramones usually worked under. CJ Ramone has captured the spirit and the flesh of punk rock and has earned not only his surname and legacy but his place as a successful solo artist as well. I hope he puts out a whole lot more albums before he joins Joey, Dee Dee, Johnny and Tommy to sniff glue on the roof of a seedy Queens tenement.

[www.cjramone.com](http://www.cjramone.com)

Jim Dodge



**Cretin – Stranger: Relapse Records 2014**  
 \m/\m/\m/\n/

If you like more of the trash / speed metal side of things then Cretin will fit nicely with you. I'm all for women in music who kick ass and take names, but Marissa Martinez, who plays guitar and does vocals, doesn't stand out as a vocalist. Yes, it's impressive in the, "Oh that's a girl sense, but I have yet to be wowed. It has to been said that they fit outside of a genre or scene, but I have to disagree. I've heard this before. There is nothing that stands out about this band. Great band as a whole, but nothing that makes them stand alone. This has been their first release in eight years. Congrats to that, but what made their first release stand out. I have yet to find out, nor do I think I will want to waste my time. I can definitely hear old Napalm Death with homage paid. *Stranger* is just another mediocre album that disappoints me in the female empowerment in the metal world. Every song sounds the same. End of story. I don't even have to listen to the entire album for me to guess what the rest is going to sound like. If trash styled grind is up you alley, then by all means give them a listen.

<http://bit.ly/CretinStranger>

Jez Feral



**Cripper - Hyena: Metal Blade 2014**  
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The female fronted band, which hails from Hanover, Germany, is a mixture of old school and modern thrash metal. Britta Görtz, vocalist seemed monotonous with her vocals on their first track, "Hyena," but highlighted a little more non-monotonous vocal ability with the next track, "Tourniquet." Ripper has played numerous European festivals such as Summer Breeze, Wacken Rocks, Metalfest, and Rockharz Open Air. Bloodshot Monkey Eye slows things down just a tad from their thrash metal resemblance to straight up extreme metal highlighting Gortez's vocal abilities before going into a melodic ending. The band itself, which is comprised of Christian Bröhenhorst – guitars, Jonathan Stenger – guitars, Gerrit Mohrmann – bass and Dennis Weber - drums, have been around with a discography dating back to 2007 with self-made music videos as well. "A Dime for the Establishment" turns back up their familiar thrash roots. As mentioned above with their music festivals, they have also played the Brutal Assault festival in the Czech Republic, Bang Your Head in Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Austria, Switzerland, and they have been invited to perform at the Slovenian Metal-

days 5 times! After having been exposed to Ripper at Metaldays 2013, Metal Blade Records. Some have compared them to Arch Enemy, but in my opinion they are a little better than Arch Enemy, but of course I am not a fan of Arch Enemy what-so-ever. With their fourth studio album, I expect there will be more Ripper in the future ahead of us with more recognition.

[www.cripper.de](http://www.cripper.de)

[www.facebook.com/cripper.thrash](https://www.facebook.com/cripper.thrash)

[www.twitter.com/cripperthrash](https://www.twitter.com/cripperthrash)

<http://www.youtube.com/cripperthrash>

Jez Feral



**Decapitated - Blood Mantra: Nuclear Blast Records 2014**  
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I'm just grateful that Decapitated is still around. The tragic tour bus accident in Russia that claimed the life of drummer Witold 'Vitek' Kieltyka at the young age of twenty-three and put singer Adrian 'Covan' Kowanek into a coma threatened to destroy the band. Fortunately brother Wacław 'Vogg' Kieltyka found the courage and inspiration to carry on with Decapitated and brought in new drummer Kerim 'Krimh' Lechner and vocalist Rafał 'Rasta' Piotrowski. Their long awaited and triumphant return was entitled 'Carnival is Forever' and it was praised by fans and critics alike. Decapitated had overcome mounting adversity to release what many claimed to be their best work to date. Now the guys are back with their sixth studio album 'Blood Mantra' and they are showing no mercy! This album picks up where 'Carnival' left off to deliver another composition of intensely heavy grooves alongside a unique style of riffs and harmonies that make for a distinct sound that is easily recognizable. They



have a very gallopy style to a lot of their main riffs and breakdowns that I feel have become more prominent over the years. Another thing I found more prominent on 'Blood Mantra' that I started to notice on 'Carnival' is their departure from the more traditional death metal sound. Extremely talented and technical, this band has stood out from the beginning but the core of their sound also centered mostly on the death metal style. Indeed there were a few songs on this album where the riffs sounded to me a lot more mainstream than before but while still keeping its intensity and heaviness; if that makes sense. The best example of this was the track *Veins*, which to me sounded almost exactly like the band Skinlab. I was a big fan of (and still am) of Skinlab so this similarity did not bother me, but stylistically it was notably different from the typical Decapitated sound. It was still a good song except for the bridge in the middle, which was a slowed down part with some awkward sounding chords that I could've done without. In addition the title track, while being one of my favorite songs from the album, also had a bit of that mainstream style that again reminded me of Skinlab. This track however was really fast-paced and groovy with a much better middle part than *Veins*, which was why I thought it to be one of the better songs from the album. I'll be honest and say I didn't think the album got off to the best start with *Exiled in Flesh*. While it was an okay song and certainly sounded the most like older Decapitated, for some reason it still took a few listens to finally grow on me. It had all the blast beats and speed riffing, it just wasn't one of my favorites. *The Blasphemous Psalm to the Dummy God Creation* was the shortest song with the longest title. This track was the most reminiscent of 'Organic Hallucinosi's,' which I will go ahead and admit now, still remains my definitive Decapitated album. This song also has that thing they do where the guitars will stop or slow it to a more breakdown riff but the drums will keep up a fast tempo. While a lot of bands will pull this off, none do it quite like Decapitated. *Nest* was another great track from this album. It was mid-tempo and had more of that mainstream element to the verses and especially the ending, but it nonetheless had that dull and rusty edge that actually sharpened the catchier riff. Don't get me wrong, I am in no way saying they sold out on this album. Quite the contrary, I just feel that some of the riffs and melodies sounded more like what you might hear from some of the more popular bands, which are not usually death metal. To me this album had a balanced mix of the new and older Decapitated styles which show an evolution within the band into a direction that again is starting to veer away from the standard death metal style into something that is much more their own. *Instinct* was another one of my favorite tracks and had more of the older feel to it. This song was all over the place as one of the main riffs was basically a low-end guitar solo. It was fast and upbeat, but what really did this song justice was the galloping breakdown towards the end. This was probably my favorite riff on the whole album and I think they should've done more of the song with that riff. If you are a fan of this band then you have probably already seen the video, so you know what I am talking about. *Blindness* took a few listens for me to get into it because it's basically just the same riff for over seven minutes. They drop it and make it a little heavier the last minute and a half or so, and again if they would have done more of the song like that it would have been better. This felt more like a closing track to me than *Red Sun*, which was a complete waste of a track since it wasn't even really a song but rather just faint noise and a few chords strummed here and there. Fortunately there is a bonus track, *Moth Defect*. It got off to a slow start, but two minutes in it drops into a classic Decapitated-sounding melody that carries it enough for a strong finish. I have to say I like pretty much every song on this album, but to be fair I don't think any of them were quite as strong as songs like *Pest*, *404* and *Homo Sum* from 'Carnival is Forever.' However this is yet another blood-soaked entry into what was already a collection of brutal proportions. I think fans will really lose their heads over this album!

[www.decapitatedband.net](http://www.decapitatedband.net)

J. M. Wiseman



#### Devin Townsend Project – Z2/Sky Blue: Century Media 2014 \m/\m/\m/\m/

When I first heard Devin Townsend I didn't even know I was listening to him. I didn't listen to Steve Vai as I was never really a fan of guitar wankery so I didn't hear his voice when Devin Sand for him. Instead I first heard him play guitar on Front Line Assembly's *Millennium* though it wasn't until that band's album *Hard Wired* came out that it really caught my attention. Then I got a copy of Century Media's music sampler during that time, *Identity 3D*, where I first really heard of Devin Townsend and his band at the time Strapping Young Lad and their song *Detox*. Since then I've picked up every release Devin has put out. So here it is over twenty years later and I still look forward to what he does. Which brings us to the now and the release of *Z2* which is a double disc release. One disc is a Devin Townsend Project album and the second disc is long waited for *Ziltoid 2*.

The first disc I'm reviewing for the set is *Z2: Dark Matters*. I just want to put out there first that I really didn't like *Ziltoid the Omniscient*. It had it's good parts but something was missing from it.

*Dark Matters* though is a much more fun album to me as it is a rock opera plain and simple. There is no blank air once the album starts and it's a fun way to spend just a smidge over an hour listening to something. Though I'm sure a lot of people in general will be bored with the album halfway through, those that stay with it will enjoy Devin's space alien creation plot and plan and mess up. The one thing to remember about *Z2* is to not take it seriously. Have fun with it and it will not let you down. Stand out tracks include *March of the Poozers*, *Deathray*, and *Ziltoid Goes Home*. Though over half the album is meandering the whole album is a nice send off for Devin to take a break with after his performance of *Ziltoid 2* coming up in 2015 at Royal Albert Hall considering that he has been working on this for the past five years non-stop.

*Sky Blue*, the Devin Townsend Project disc to me though is where the most joy is to be had from a technical standpoint. Devin has always tried to push his music forward anyway he could, and once again he has. Though a lot of the songs has more of a pop tinge to a lot of them it is the progression he puts into the music here that pulls me in. While *Dark Matters* is heavy and more pure metal, *Sky Blue* is where we get a continuation of what he was doing on *Epicloud*. The range of music is what keeps the album flowing with stand outs being *Rejoice*, that keeps getting better as you listen to it, *Fallout*, and my favorite *Silent Militia*. When combined the two separate albums make one hell of prog release that will be hard to beat for fans as one of the best Devin Townsend has ever released.

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

Jason Bonton



#### Dimesland - Psychogenic Atrophy: 2014 \m/

*Dimesland* has been said that they are progressive metal, but they seem to not fit into any category. Their chaos of music puts them outside of any fit into any sort of genre. The Oakland quartet reigns from the Bay Area. *Psychogenic Atrophy* is a follow up to their *Creepmoon* EP. Their style is a blend of metal and chaos that seems to be all over the place. They are outside of any specific genre. The band lineup includes two brothers Nolan and Drew Cook. Nolan has been a hired hand guitarist for The Residents since 1998. "We like departing from the expected parts of metal," Nolan said. *Psychogenic Atrophy* is truly an experimental album. This album is filled with voice-



overs, technical guitar, and general tight musicianship that happens to have its own brand. Three fourths of Dimesland also plays in a black metal outfit called Wild Hunt. "The good thing about this is that there's never guidelines," said Drew. "Just live in the dark side," the song "That Cold Moment" has melody and sickening solo-esque blended guitar that seems to fit well within the abstract noise.

<http://www.facebook.com/DIMESLAND>  
<http://www.dimesland.com>

Jez Feral



**Falloch-This Island, Our Funeral: Candlelight Records 2015**  
**\m/\m/\m/\n**

Falloch was formed on February 2010 in Glasgow, Scotland. Members are Tony Dunn (vocals/guitars), Scott McLean (guitars/keyboards), Steve Scott (drums) and Ben Brown (bass). This is the bands second album release, the first being "Where Distant Spirits Remain" in 2011. There is a very haunting and tranquil atmosphere to this record, and I find myself leaving it on repeat to accomplish things and get me through the day, if you will.

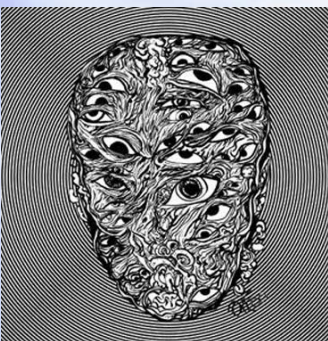
Opening with "Torradh", you are moved into a realm of sweet melody and lead by perfect guitar riffs which take you to a darker world beneath all the glitter. In "For Life", you get the first real glimpse of the range Tony Dunn is capable of as a vocalist. "For Dir" has an under-earth element that makes the track almost taboo to hear. With "Braham", the guitar and bass make their triumphant comeback with a more powerful intro, while the vocals and drums are at a slight distance in the background. "I Shall Build Mountains" features a very moving melody that actually doesn't allow you to stand still. It almost feels as though you are the essence, following every note on the instruments. Ending the

release with "Sanctuary", the guys give off the notion that there is always a safe haven for us to retire, in the last few minutes of someone's creative efforts.

I really enjoyed this album. There are so many instances where the different elements of creative openness blend into this perfect mix of flowing atmosphere and talent. "This Island, Our Funeral" will be released on January 27th, 2015 in North America. I highly suggest you check these guys out if you enjoy the softer, more harmonious side of rock.

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

Kristina Wright



**Fleshpress - No Return EP: Throne Records 2010**  
**\m/\m/\m/\m/\m/**

Finland's own Fleshpress are a 5-piece blackened-sludge / doom outfit that formed in 1998. Their first EP is pretty much NOLA worship done very well. Taking their name from a song off of Grief's "Dismal" album, they definitely manage to capture the same essence as far as sickness goes, and in earlier recordings their sound seems to induce the exact same feeling EyeHateGod brings out in fans.

Shortly after, when they came out with their self-titled '02 release, they began with the darker more blackened style, as opposed to the fuzzier stoner / sludge feel of the former. This is one disgruntled dude, and you can really feel the hate and misanthropy seeping through the filthy and aggressive vocal style.

Their Pillars release is definitely what you would call nihilistic blackened sludge, with more of a dronier, experimental direction, but they in no way lose their appeal by adopting that element. Clandestine Blaze, Deathspell Omega, and Stabat Mater. You will not be disappointed with the disenchanted Fleshpress.

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

Teabag Stallone



**Gale - Vol. 1: 2014**  
**\m/\m/\m/\n**

The track listings on this album made me want to listen to it out of order. The titles for each song were interesting in a simple way. Gale is said to be Doom/Sludge, but "Burn Your Person" speaks a different story. There are some black metal undertones, but classic sludge riffs. It goes back to the time of picking out a record in hopes it sounds good by the cover. Gale's black and white Vol. 1 cover fits the bill. "To Be Free" highlights the vocalist's abilities, from brutal to melodic reasoning. It's just a good fucking song, case closed, from start to finish. The band's take on what they do, "We play loud as fuck. This is rock n roll; it should be loud and dangerous. Phoenix, Arizona has their own take on Modern Doom, much like the band Sorse. Gale has an ability to captivate you with their hostile environment. I was looking forward to hearing what "To Build a Fire" sounded like. The song slid along the neck of the guitar like cutting a throat in a faithful manner. It's purely an instrumental song. "Unsung's" clean introduction is disturbed by a tidal wave affect, but you're dragging the water. There is nice guitar work on this song. There is a tasteful hint of black metal influence. Overall, this is a good listen, and was recorded in nearly one take. Release date October 21, 2014.

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

Jez Feral



### **In the Company of Serpents – Merging in Light: 2014** \m/\m/\m/

In the Company of Serpents are a doom metal band hailing from Denver, Colorado. The band specializes in a brand of slow paced sludge and doom metal reminiscent of Fistula, Iron Monkey and Goatsblood and is comprised of vocalist/guitarist Grant Nerzog and drummer Joseph Weller Myer. They create a haunting three song EP in *Merging in Light*; from the opening notes of 'Breed, Consume, Die' this will not be an easy listening 'Breed...' is a haunting track and serves as a great opener of what's to come. It is slow in its delivery but effective almost as if you're being buried alive and dragged down to purgatory. 'Breed...' is amazing from start to end.

'Third Mind' follows things in a more upbeat and relentless way. 'Third...' is a great song as it weathers the storm between sludge and doom, fast and slow; it is a standout track full of relentless riffs and punishing drumming. Here In the Company of Serpents show their strengths as musicians. 'Third...' is simply effective!

The album ends on a lackluster note with 'A Union of Opposites.' 'Union...' returns to the slow funeral doom of Breed but in a more monotonous way. It's not a bad song by any means it is just repetitive and overindulgent overall. In the Company of Serpents manages to create an aura of sonic darkness and evil on *Merging in Light*. It's not great but it is good, nonetheless it's a slab of sonic chaos and pure doom evilness.

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

Carlos Luis



### **In This Moment – Black Widow: Atlantic Records 2014** \m/\m/\m/\m/

The first time I listened to this album I wasn't sure if I liked it or not. Some of the songs were fucking awesome but others I wasn't sure about. *Blood* (Century Media 2012) was such a strong, amazing album that I was overly worried about being disappointed with the follow up, especially since the band went from indie label Century Media to major label Atlantic Records before this album was recorded. After several days of repeated listening I still had doubts as to whether *Black Widow* was a good album or if it just had a few good song on it. That's when I realized that I had enjoyed the entire album every time I listened to it. Otherwise I wouldn't have played it so much and with so much enthusiasm. My discovery didn't stop there. During the time they spent touring for *Blood* ITM coined the term "Hellpop" for a description of their sound. The idea of pop music from somewhere south of Heaven shines through clearly from every song on *Black Widow*. Even when the guitars, bass and drums are grinding out gristly metal riffage, Maria Brink's vocals are capable of bringing pop divas to mind without diverging from the sound the band has been developing since 2007. While

I was originally dismayed by the rap/hip hop-style vocal in the verses of 'Sex Metal Barbie' and the poppy singing in parts of some of the other songs I came to realize that this is the natural evolution of In This Moment. What would seem to be a jarring break from the successful recipe they've used it's actually a fresh take on a style of music that I've loved for decades. In what is a rare turn of events for me, I decided to add a track-by-track look into *Black Widow* which I don't usually do because it seems like a bunch of unnecessary work. In this case I felt like it was the only way to do things right.

**The Infection** – This is a cool intro track that starts with a wonderfully creepy soundscape and turns into a short piece of industrialized metal. Even with no vocals this is a great way to start the album.

**Sex Metal Barbie** – While I have to say the idea of Maria Brink rapping isn't one that I looked forward to I have to admit that it works within the framework on this song. The choruses are more like what we're used to from this band. This isn't my favorite song on the album but it does work to create the listening experience that I believe ITM was going for.

**Big Bad Wolf** – Obviously inspired partially by The Three Little Pigs this song seems to actually be a way for Maria to work through some emotional baggage. This one is nice and heavy yet retains that electronic flavor of *Blood*. The chorus on this one is nice and catchy and also perfectly angry sounding.

**Dirty Pretty** – As much as it pains me to say this, 'Dirty Pretty' could just as easily be a Lady Gaga song if you took the heavy guitar work out of the track. I think that we can expect In This Moment to delve further into this "Hellpop" sound as highlighted on this track on their next album since that seems to be the direction of their evolution. That said, I do like this song with its driving beat and the lyrics' stern refusal to bow to anybody else's will.

**Black Widow** – The title track of the album starts off with a sound bite that must have come off of an old middle school film strip. The narrator tells us a few interesting facts about the black widow spider just before the song kicks in, fangs bared and venom dripping. Dark and sexy, I think they chose well using this song's title for the name of the album. It seems to perfectly encapsulate the sound they've developed.

**Sexual Hallucination (featuring Brent Smith of Shinedown)** – This is the most radio friendly track on the album being mostly a sensual duet between the lovely Maria Brink and Brent Smith. Here they sing to each other about sex, of course, since sex, drugs and death are the three most common topics in music. I usually don't like songs with this much commercial potential but 'Sexual Hallucination' still sounds like In This Moment and even with this one being on the wimpy side it's still a good tune.

**Sick Like Me** – One of the best songs on the album and also one of the three teaser tracks that were released to help promote the album in the weeks before its release, 'Sick Like Me' will work you into a frenzy. If you liked the previous album, *Blood*, you will most likely love this song. Right from the beginning this song is gritty, raw and violent as hell. Maria's lyrics once again work to draw the listeners into the song, to make the fans feel like they're more a part of the band than apart from them. The chorus is also extremely well done with a little bit of a turnaround of words that are actually a bit romantic until she ends it with "even at your ugliest I always say you're beautiful and sick like me." That line brings a sadistic little smile to my face every time I hear it.

**Bloody Creature Poster Girl** – Here is another song that, with a little work on the instrumental arrangement, could have come from the songbook of a pop diva rather than the set list of one of my favorite heavy metal bands. Maria sings with a bit more of a jazzy style than I expected to hear but it works. The detuned, distorted guitar riffs combine perfectly well with this singing style to create one of the most interesting songs on *Black Widow*. The sexy and violent lyrics...well it wouldn't be the same without ITM's signature mixture of the light and dark sides of life.



The Fighter – This song sounds like a deeply personal look into the mind of Maria Brink. Starting with some piano accompaniment, she sings to us a song of determination and the refusal to allow the opinions of others to bring even a shred of doubt into her life. I know this sounds familiar. The idea of not allowing detractors ('haters' to the younger generation) to determine the course of her life is a common one on this album. The Fighter definitely counts as a slow song but it works to give the album some dynamic flair which it wouldn't be complete without.

Bones – Possibly a song about a love lost, I think this one could have as many different meanings as there are people to listen to it. It seems to illustrate a low point in a person's life which they realize that they will eventually overcome but are more than willing to wallow in for the time being. There's also a certain amount of a realization that the dependence on somebody/something else has ended irrevocably and that the future has to be faced without them, no matter how much that sucks.

Natural Born Sinner – Listening to this song I debate (with myself) about whether Maria Brink has had a religious reawakening recently or if she's always held some spiritual beliefs and is now expressing herself in those terms. Thematically it is similar to 'Dirty Pretty' and 'The Fighter' with its ideas of making your own decisions in life and preventing those who disagree from diminishing your view of the world. In the lyrics she points that the best way to alienate somebody is to try to cram your beliefs down their throats even after they've made it clear they don't share them. There's also a spelling lesson near the end so pay attention. There may be a quiz later.

Into the Darkness – Psychiatry in a song, this track seems to be one way for Maria to express her pain and anger about the physical and sexual abuse she faced as a younger person. In the interviews I've read she didn't go into detail about who or when these events occurred but traumas like those never go away and the victims spend their whole lives learning to cope with the mental scars. I guess calling this a song is misleading, it's more like one of the non-musical tracks you'd find on an Otep album (ad nauseum, having a bunch of non-songs that are full of ideas that would be best shared with a therapist is why I don't listen to Otep much) in between the actual songs. I understand why this appears on this album but I hope ITM sticks to filling their albums with songs rather than artsy spoken word tracks.

Out of Hell – Piano, vocals and a few sound effects are utilized to create this powerful song that sounds like a musing on what life could be like if someone was to give up when times are tough rather than working through them and coming out stronger in the end. 'Out of Hell' is beautiful, poignant and heart-breaking. Usually I dislike it when an album finishes on a down note but in this case I think they chose the track order well. *Black Widow* flows masterfully creating an unforgettable listening experience for the audience.

[www.inthismomentofficial.com](http://www.inthismomentofficial.com)

Jim Dodge



**Inter Arma - The Cavern: Relapse Records 2014**  
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Richmond Virginia's Inter Arma are back with the monumental *The Cavern*. The quintet comprised of Mike Paparo on vocals, Steve Russell and Trey Dalton on guitars, Joe Kerkes on bass and T.J Childers on drums follow up the savage and career defining *Sky Burial* with a single song forty five minute journey into the realms of madness. The song starts off strong with a repetitive but effective pattern full of blackened sludge greatness. Midway the band changes the tempo to a southern groove reminiscent of Mastodon's early days before the commercial sound think of *Remission* and *Leviathan* but with a bleaker and blacker atmosphere full of grooves and odd time signatures. So far the band are conveying a range of emotions that are almost hypnotic and claustrophobic in nature.

The band returns to the blackened sludge sound with an almost angelic vibe that is simply beautiful while at the same time changing the tempos from slow to southern rock. The feelings that the music are transmitting are too emotional and evocative to describe.

The EP then goes straight to a somber tempo that goes in for the kill in a kind and almost dirge-y way. Think of it as if your funeral was passing you by. The band alternates one last time between slow, southern, blackened sludge and post metal to end things perfectly. Inter Arma manages to create a perfect song filled with so much depth, emotion and feeling that it is simply astonishing; hands down one of the band's finest hours and a step forward from *Sky Burial*. What most bands in this day and age takes a few releases to achieve Inter Arma does in just a single song, hands down one of the most moving pieces of music of 2014. Inter Arma simply cannot do wrong. The band continues to impress each passing day by being innovative and unique in a somewhat monotonous age of repetition and over processing. They stay true to their roots while thinking outside of the box to create sonic and aural emotions. Keep an eye out. Inter Arma are poised for big things in 2015. For now enjoy *The Cavern*, one of the most beautiful and thought provoking songs of their young career. Only big things will continue to come out from these Richmond, Virginia trailblazers! Enjoy!!!!

<http://interarma.bandcamp.com/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/INTERARMA>

Carlos Luis



**Job for a Cowboy- Sun Eater: Metal Blade Records 2014**  
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Arizona death metallers Job for a Cowboy are back with their fourth album *Sun Eater*, the follow up to 2012's *Demonocracy*. The band is comprised of vocalist Jonny Davy, guitarists Tony Sannicandro and Al Glassman and bassist extraordinaire Nick Schendzielos (who also plays with hydro grind legends Cephalic Carnage). For *Sun Eater* the band enlisted the services of soon to be legendary drummer Danny Walker (of Uphill Battle, Intronaut, Murder Construct and Exhumed fame). The band continues their experimental change from deathcore darlings to full on death metal. *Sun...* however has a more progressive vibe to it. From the opening moments of 'Eating the Vision of the Gods' we're in for a different album from JFAC; the song starts with a full on and powerful bass line by Schendzielos and amazing guitar work from Sannicandro. 'Eating' sets the tone for the rest of the album and 'Sun of Nihilism' follows suit. It's a moody jam to say the least; with prog and doom undertones the song is highlighted by Sannicandro's guitar playing and Schendzielos' bass work is phenomenal throughout. 'The Stone Cross' and 'The Synthetic Sea' are reminiscent of old JFAC and here



it's where Jonny Davy shines although his vocals have become too predictable and holds the music back at certain times. 'A Global Shift' is a combination of all JFAC styles and it gives Danny Walker an outlet to showcase his many percussive abilities from odd time signatures to full on blasting. With a solid bass pattern and shred work courtesy of Sannicandro it's by far one of the stand out tracks on *Sun Eater*.

Immediately following the carnage left by 'A Global Shift' 'The Celestial Antidote' goes full on rage through its duration. Everything blends perfectly; Davy's vocal delivery is haunting and to the point, Glassman and Sannicandro play like men possessed, delivering amazing lead after amazing lead all while Walker and Schendzielos lay a powerful and potent backline. 'The Celestial Antidote' is simply astonishing. 'Encircled by Mirrors' and 'Buried Monuments' are solid and carry the same intensity, the former having a strong post metal and doom vibe while the latter is monotonous. The only saving graces of the aforementioned tracks are the lethal combination of Walker and Schendzielos drumming and bass work, respectively. The album goes out on a positive note though with 'Worming Nightfall' which is an epic clocking in at six minutes. The song blends together doom, prog, post and technical death metal into one single bad ass song. Everyone shines in it. Jonny Davy steals the show however as dull and repetitious his vocal style has become he manages to turn it around. Meanwhile Sannicandro and Glassman's playing is superb all the way through while Schendzielos manages to lead the way with his groovy bass lines and Danny Walker manages to master the calm and the chaos and in turn leads to one of most versatile performances.

All in all *Sun Eater* continues to be JFAC's turning point from mediocre deathcore ramblings into a potent and powerful progressive technical death metal band. Hopefully by album number five the band will have successfully achieved its intended change. For now let's enjoy *Sun Eater*; it's one strong motherfucker of an album!!!!

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

Carlos Luis



#### Justin Symbol - Voidhead: 2014

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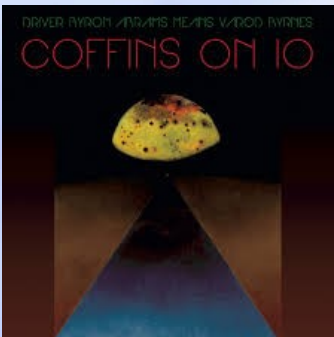
Justin Symbol and his band are a very vocally distorted industrial collective with a few EDM, alternative, and post-punk influences. The unique Justin has self-labeled their style "Digital Rock", which actually fits it perfectly. He's not afraid to cover the tough topics, such as foreign issues, school shootings, and the lapse of care in a world full of emotionless beings under a blanket of ignorance. The band is made up by Justin Symbol (vocals, bass, programming), Baba Yaga (synths, keytar, programming), Matt Minion (guitar), and Joe Livingston (drums).

The title track "Voidhead" showcases the underground intensity that is the heart of any industrial song, as well as free thinking. "Digital Penetration" has the feel of being immune to the violence of everyday life, due to the desensitizing by the media. "Black Friday 1" pushes you into a very fast paced cyclone of direct frenzy caused by fear. "Purgatory" features Daisy Berkowitz and has a slight-ly slower trance vibe, mellowing out the ride so far. "Possession" takes you into a deeper level of the S&M world most of us only imagine, focusing on introducing master and slave. "The Fear" almost has an early Frankenstein's Castle feel to it, as if any moment you will be overrun by angry villagers. Ending the release with "Grey Snow" you feel more of a backing out sensation, as if things are where they need to be and the narrator is no longer needed.

I'm not a hundred percent sure I would actually carry this album around with me. I did enjoy what I heard, but nothing particularly stood out to make me connect with the band. I can agree that the vocals are a bit uncomfortable at times, steering right into the heart of the chaos. I didn't feel compelled to defend his cause, and I don't feel like I would recommend this album to my friends, unless they are indeed capital industrial fans.

<http://www.justinsymbol.com>

Kristina Wright



#### Kayo dot - Coffins on Io: The Flenser 2014

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Throughout its existence Kayo Dot have always been innovators each album is different and more challenging to listen to but in this day and age they are truly pioneers and are critically acclaimed for being risk takers and innovators. The group, led by the wonderfully deranged virtuoso Toby Driver have pushed the envelope since their masterful debut *Choirs of the Eyes*. The band has experimented in each subsequent release, being more and more intense and thought provoking. All seven releases from Kayo Dot up to *Hubardo* were amazing and experimental; the group consistently delivered amazing Avant-garde rock, Experimental weirdness and post rock/metal brilliance in more ways than one. *Hubardo* marked the end of an era in KD.

With their eighth studio album *Coffins on Io* the band transitioned from a metallic Avant-gardian beast into a more gothic rock, electronica and dark wave sound reminiscent of Type O Negative and the Sisters of Mercy. The album opens with "The Mortality of Doves" a nearly twelve minute masterpiece of pure gothic and melancholic greatness. At times Driver channels Peter Steele in his bass playing and vocals. The song works so well in laying the groundwork for the rest of the album 'Doves...' is flawless in its delivery. The instrumentation is almost too surreal at times conveying a range of emotions that leads into "Offramp Cycle Pattern 22" and here is where the album gets interesting. The drumming here is superb. Keith Abrams plays with a soothing calm while Ron Varod's guitar theatrics are minimalist but effective. Add to that Tim Byrnes' amazing synth work while Driver's vocal delivery is almost too perfect to describe, delivering a beautiful line like "I choke on the fumes as the world in a blur falls away but leaves me clouded and hollow" followed by a haunting chorus that goes "blood on my hands, and a thing in the backseat that used to be human"; almost too beautiful to describe the feelings I felt listening to 'Offramp...' By far the album has exceeded all of my expectations. Keep in mind that that these are the first two songs.

'Long Disturbance on the Miracle Mile' is short, sweet and to the point. it echoes the era of synth rock a throwback to the 80s synth pop and post punk grandiosity. Driver delivers another top notch vocal performance augmented by the excellent instrumentation of Byrnes, Varod and Abrams; everything is perfect on 'Long...'



'Library Subterranean' is the album's highlight from the opening bass line and keyboards to Driver's performance with the opening line of "suffer the gulf of a hundred million years the sand that buried centuries the burden that drew it's shadow long that tried in vain to hide unfathomed." The amount of feelings ranging through my body are hard to describe all while the instrumentation varies here from Abrams thundering drums and Byrnes synth lines. It almost feels as if Vangelis is actually playing the keyboards and leading us on a journey through the depths of space. Midway through 'Library...' the song picks up the pace and it returns to Kayo Dot's roots of avant-gardian weirdness augmented by Daniel Means' frenetic sax playing. 'Library...' ends on an almost chaotic and beautiful; way hands down the album's highlight (but then again every single song on *Coffins* stands out on their own). 'The Assassination of Adam' is effective as it serves as the album's second to last song. 'Assassination...' starts in a very upbeat way but quickly goes into an interlude that immediately alters the rest of the song in an almost frenetic way and at times it induces head banging and calmness at the same time and it sets the stage for the album's triumphant ending. 'Spirit Photography' ends things in a calm and soothing way. The song can be interpreted as a ballad but we're talking about Kayo Dot here so some sort of musical twist is bound to happen but here's the kicker; the song remains calm throughout its ten minute duration with Daniel Means' sax solos carrying the song while Varod's guitar playing is simple and effective, Abrams' time keeping is superb and Driver's voice is haunting. The album ends on a powerful note and in turn Kayo Dot creates arguably the best album of 2014. In this day and age KD manages to be creative and unique in an era where everything is over processed and repetitive. KD stands alone and if this is the new direction the band is headed then what a way to start a new chapter in the already legendary book of Kayo Dot, hands down one if not the best albums of 2014!!!

<http://www.kayodot.net/>  
<http://kayodot.bandcamp.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/kayodot.official>

Carlos Luis



#### **LAE - Break the Clasp: The Compound/Battleground 2014** \m/\m/\m/\m/\m/

*Break the Clasp* is unlike anything else out there currently. I love the alternative rock attempt at a love song that is successful. "Reunion" is beautiful to fresh listeners who aren't familiar with **LAE**. With previously being *LAE-TSEU*, back in 2001, I wasn't too familiar with them either. I can see why people compare them to Sonic Youth, even though Sonic Youth can be so experimental that it gets processed and repetitively annoying at times. This is a lessened version of when Sonic Youth was simple. Steve Austin, who produced this album, is a diversely amazing contribution that was added smoothly to this new record. Austin became a permanent addition to **LAE** after being so enthralled with the songs; he became the vocalist while producing the album in Montreal. "Sister" is definitely an incarnate of Sonic Youth. Steve Austin's screams add more pleasure to a well written song. **LAE** is an attest to Steve Austin's talent as a producer that is so well diverse. "Let Me Die in the Memory of Her Arms" will make you expectriate with thought. I really hate saying this as there is more respect for this band than what I aforementioned, but there is a taste of old Smashing Pumpkins to this album, mainly because of Steve Austin's vocals. There is nothing but smooth prog rock with "17 Queen." The samples that are specifically chosen for certain songs are prerequisites for what is expected. "Cold Dark Drive" creeps slovenly with its electric haunt that breathes down your insides. The intermediate songs on the record like "Space Travel" and "Let Me Die in the Memory of Her Arms" are gaunt and beautiful with no words spoken.

<http://laetseu.com>  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/LAE-Band/614579391922975>

Jez Feral



#### **Lagwagon - Hang: Fat Wreck Chords 2014** \m/\m/\m/\m/\n/

Lagwagon is a classic 90's punk band. They have been through numerous member changes over the years, and have recorded ten albums. These guys stuck to the grit through their career, and never chose to go quite mainstream. Current members are Joey Cape (vocals), Chris Flippin (guitar), Joe Raposo (bass), Chris Rest (guitar), and Dave Raun (drums).

Their eleventh studio album "Hang" really is an evolution of the band. There is almost a decade between this release and "Resolve". Opening the effort with "Burden of Proof", the boys start out very mellow and smooth. In typical Lagwagon fashion, you are carried into "Reign" without skipping a beat, but thrust into the fast paced drums and guitar riffs the band is known for. "Made of Broken Parts" feels like the anthem for those of us who never felt quite "functional". With "Obsolete Absolute", you are carried along a minute of instrumental that takes you into the heart of a stability that is no longer sufficient. "Burning Out in Style" embarks on a journey of one hiding behind an image, but suffering all the same. "Drag" is a harder, darker reincarnation of the band, inspiring chills as while feeling the surrounding air thicken and pull you down deeper into another level. "You Know Me" feels like the near hit that comes from years of believing someone isn't who they appeared to be. "In Your Wake" ends out this incredible album by fast tracking you to the end of the road, showing the damage being close minded can create.

Officially speaking, this is exactly the way I had hoped Lagwagon would make a comeback. I have waited a long time for these guys to create more work, and I am not disappointed. The album "Hang" hits stores on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014. I highly recommend making this purchase. It feels like exactly the adjustment those of us still living with the 90's era punk era needs to function in the world today.

<http://lagwagon.com/>

Kristina Wright





**Liar in Wait - Translations of the Lost: Profound Lore Records 2013**  
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Liar in Wait are a gothic rock/post punk band from Minneapolis and Chicago respectively. The band, which features in its ranks Jeff Wilson (Wolvhammer, Nachtmystium, Abigail Williams, Chrome Waves and Doomsday) on guitars, Adam Clemans (Wolvhammer, Veil of Maya) on vocals and tThe band is rounded out by Jim Adolphson and Peter Clarke

On *Translations of the Lost* the band conjures the spirits of the 80s gothic rock genre particularly The Sisters of Mercy, Bauhaus and Fields of the Nephilim. The EP starts off strong with 'Faithless,' a melancholic track which showcases the band's ability to reach deep within the realms of sadness. Clemans' hypnotic voice is soothing and enthralling meanwhile the instrumentation sounds as it comes straight out of the 80s heyday a la Joy Division and New Order. Jeff Wilson's guitar playing is eerie in its delivery and evokes so much feeling and power. 'Faithless...' is simply beautiful.

'Conversations in Violet' and 'Fall With Me' round up the EP. Both tracks are thoroughly beautiful slabs of gothic brilliance and post punk elegance. Trying to review both tracks separately is not an easy task as both are too powerful and emotional to describe.

The EP ends on a dreary high note with a cover of Fields of the Nephilim's 'And There Will Your Heart be Also'. Liar in Wait manages to be unique in an almost melancholic and beautiful way. I discovered this band this year thanks to Jeff Wilson and once I've heard them I haven't looked back. Nearly a year after the EP was released it was one of 2013s hidden gems and hopefully their upcoming album in 2015 will continue their journey unto the depths of beauty, horror and melancholy. Never stop the sadness!!!

<http://liarinwait.bandcamp.com/album/translations-of-the-lost>  
<https://www.facebook.com/liarinwait>

Carlos Luis



**Meghan Trainor - Title EP: Epic Records 2014**

I am probably going to get some hate mail over this review; a price I graciously accept because I need to vent some frustrations over what I've had to hear redundantly for far too long. Here we have an artist (and I use that term loosely) that has tried to bring that doo-wop sound of the fifties and sixties back by fusing it with a more contemporary style. I applaud her efforts in that it is something slightly original and they only reason it gained any rating at all. However I feel it is a fad to be short lived; a guilty pleasure if you will. Certainly not for me; I hated this entire EP. What prompted this review is more of a distaste for Trainor's lyrics. Like many movies, theses lyrics are nowhere grounded in reality and regardless of what she says I sense some serious insecurity issues going on here. For instance take her first single 'All About That Bass'. For starters there isn't even much bass in this song despite the title, but I have since been informed that 'bass' is now another slang term for booty. I get the play on words; however you actually *do* need some treble if you want an overall quality sound, but whatever. This is really a 'fat-girl pride' kind of song. Take that line 'I'm bringing booty back; go ahead and tell them skinny bitches that.' This was reminiscent of Justin Timberlake's 'Sexy

Back' to me, and the same thing applies. You can't bring it back if it never left in the first place. And besides Meghan, if anyone brought 'booty back' it certainly wasn't you but rather someone else like the Kardashians or Nicki Minaj (whom she poked fun at in her video for the song), and I think they brought it back a little too much. She also wants us to know that she has "all the right junk in all the right places." More like just junk in all the places. But there's more. Her 'mama she told me don't worry about your size...boys like a little more booty to hold at night.' Apparently mama also told her not to worry about cholesterol, heart disease or premature death. Now I'm not saying she's overly fat or that everyone should be expected to look like a cover model, but what I *am* saying is that I *do* have a problem with people saying it's okay to be overweight and unhealthy, and even more that you should be proud of it. It's not just about looks and appearances, it's also about being healthy on the inside and having some self respect about something other than just what's on the outside. Isn't that what people like this are always saying; it's what's inside that counts? Well they're right, but chances are it's what's inside that is worse. Now before you get mad at me just remember that people complain all the time, especially parents and the conservative groups. They wouldn't hesitate to express their discontent whenever someone condones drugs or promiscuous sex and yet obesity related issues kill far more people and is much more deadly than most everything else. My intentions are noble so just get over it; meanwhile Trainor will continue to tell people it's okay to be unhealthy and not care about it. I can tell you something else about Trainor as well; she's not very bright when it comes to dating. If you listen to the words on the title track (quite literally in this case) you'll hear her whine about giving her that 'title.' She doesn't want to be called just 'a friend' but wants an official status. Well here's a news flash for you Meghan, you're just the booty call. Maybe if you weren't so stuck on yourself and content with your mediocre appearance maybe you could get that title. And as if I weren't already annoyed enough with this EP, here comes 'Dear Future Husband' and you can probably guess the kind of lyrical nonsense this track contains. Once again her unjustifiable and overly inflated ego comes in about how she thinks she deserves to be treated, blah blah. Apparently one is expected to treat her like a lady even when she is acting crazy. No, thank you. This is a real 'girl-power' song too and I can definitely see why women love this garbage so much. The overall message is to not care about how unhealthy you are and that men should treat you like a princess even when you haven't done anything to warrant such treatment. If it was only that easy, am I right girls? Frankly this is just more of the same, lackluster music from the same, monotonous Pop genre. Even doing this review is starting to give me a headache, so the only thing left to say is that you can have this one ladies. Enjoy.

[www.meghan-trainor.com](http://www.meghan-trainor.com)

J. M. Wiseman



**Meshuggah-I [Remastered]: Nuclear Blast 2014**  
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Often imitated but never equaled, Meshuggah is one of those bands that really fit their name. A Jewish word meaning crazy, these Swedish technical masters are just that. This is one of my all-time favorite bands and has remained so for years. Everything they release is a testament to the heaviness and technical supremacy of this pioneering band in the math-metal genre. In fact there are many, (including myself) who credit Meshuggah as being the original 'math-metal' band, taking their off-time and sometimes even jazzy drum beats and technical guitar rhythms to a level never before seen in metal. Since their inception as far back as 1989 they have raised the bar with every release



and continued on to gain worldwide success as well as spawning many imitators. But sometimes 'Nothing' can replace the original. It would also appear that lightning really can strike twice as the newly re-released and re-mastered EP 'I' has shown. It was originally released via the label Fractured Transmitter, run by Mushroomhead's Jason Popson. Not to bash the man's production value, but the original release did sound a bit muddy, especially in the beginning. I think the first noticeable change on the newer version was the improvement to the sound quality. It was more crisp and balanced and sounded much like Meshuggah should sound; clear and heavy. As for the track *I* itself, there's really no need to break it down. Due to its twenty-one minute length it encompasses the wide range of Meshuggah sound and style. There are fast beats, breakdown beats, some of those quiet and off-sounding chords and a lot of technicality. The song sounds more like the 'Contradictions Collapse/Destroy, Erase, Improve' era than the newer material, but there were plenty of parts in this track that had the type of sound and style that was a foreshadowing of what was to come on future releases. But it's all the same since everything this band touches is golden! If you are a fan of this band and you are *meshuggah* enough not to have heard 'I' yet, then here is your second chance! And what an enhanced second chance it is. Not only is the title track re-mastered for a better sound but there are three bonus tracks here as well. Two of them are the live tracks *Bleed* and *Dancers to a Discordant System* along with a new version of the track *Pitch Black* that was originally released as a single via Scion AV. The song was originally recorded back in 2003 but was released as a free download from the label's website. In case you missed out on this single then again, here is your second chance so don't say Meshuggah never gave you anything...

[www.meshuggah.net](http://www.meshuggah.net)

J. M. Wiseman



#### Minsk – Burning: Lisa Falzone Recordings Demo 2003

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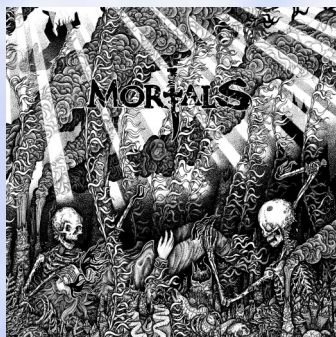
Minsk formed in 2002 out of Peoria, Illinois. They play an other-worldly form of post-sludge / doom that is highly psychedelic and atmospheric. The band's songs tend to start off slow with a certain calmness to them, only to turn into something very intricate and complex, almost organic when you hear the tribal drumming patterns. Their sound is very deep and spiritual, in a way, whilst retaining that heaviness through the aggressively echoed vocal style and synth instrumentation.

In regards to their name, Minsk is the capital of Belarus, which has been burned to the ground more than once. Lyrically, they draw most inspiration from the Belarussian city where survival through suffering is inherent.

Consisting of 4 members, they produced a demo entitled *Burning* in '03 around the same time as their appearance at The Templars of Doom Festival, gaining them more attention and a new fan-base. They later released their first full-length in '05 with the help of notable underground producer and current bassist, Sanford Parker, of Buried at Sea.

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

Teabag Stallone



#### Mortals - Cursed to See the Future: Relapse Records 2014

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**Mortals** is a band made up of three women who play black metal from Brooklyn, New York. They've been around since 2009. The band evolved into their current sound with 2014's ***Cursed to See the Future***, for their previous work sounds lighter. I don't know who comes up with some of the bullshit under bios for the bands, but some of the statements are dead wrong. A footnote read that if you like EyeHateGod, then you will like Mortals. There is no similarity to these two bands at all. A cool fact about this band is the lead singer/bassist Lesley Wolf and drummer Caryn Havlik play in a Slayer tribute band that is all female called, "Slaywhore." I admittedly get very cynical when it comes to women in metal. It's an admitted fault. These are my thoughts on Mortals. I was already predispositioned to be skeptical, because they are on Relapse. ***Cursed to See the Future*** was recorded in the summer of 2013. Immediately following, **Mortals** went on tour. When they came back from touring, they listened to what they had recorded. What they heard they disliked. This is where, "View From a Tower" comes in where guitarist Elizabeth Cline states that that song sums up what Mortals is about. They re-recorded some songs as well. I'm not saying the song is horrible, but

I also don't think it's their best.

"View From A Tower" isn't my favorite, minus the vocals, which are unmerciful and powerful. This song is mediocre to me, and I skipped the last 2 minutes of the song. It was too repetitive. **Mortals** wrote "View From A Tower" in the studio. Guitarist Elizabeth Cline has stated that this song is quintessential to **Mortals**, and that "View From A Tower" represents **Mortals**. "Epochryphal Gloom" makes up for the albums introduction song. It has blast beats and great guitar riffs. "The Summoning" is a vicious assault on the attempted mass' that would be their crowd if it were a live show. Lesley Wolf, vocalist as well as bassist, is a spit fury of madness with her voice. She has a great voice for metal, as well as a great range, which is hard to come by with women in extreme music. "The Summoning" has its own groove to it that gets looped in your head like a spinning wheel. The black metal undertones are smooth. "Devilspell" has an evil break down that is slow like a snake, then speeds up to strike what's in its path. It's pure black metal with great drumming by Caryn Havlik. There isn't much differentiation on the album. I don't know who got the idea that this album was sludge. The final song, "Anchored in Time" is a hook that will not let you forget its motion.

All in all, I wasn't disappointed.

<https://www.facebook.com/mortalstheband>  
<http://mortals.bandcamp.com/>

Jez Feral





### My Dying Bride-The Vaulted Shadows: Peaceville 2014 \m/ \m/ \n

Don't get your hopes up, this is just a combination of two previously released albums, 'The Manuscript' and the single song EP 'The Barghest O' Whitby,' which alone clocked in at twenty-seven minutes. As with any song of that length it had its good and bad parts, it just sucks having to skim through all the not so good parts just to get to the good ones. So before I critique any further I would like to say how much I really love and appreciate this band and will always follow anything that they do. I'm that fan that actually liked and still listens to '34.788%...Complete.' Sure it was different, but it still had some good tracks and afterwards they went right back to their glooms n' dooms roots, which showed they were just experimenting a little and I can't fault them for that. But being a realist as well, I think most fans would probably agree with me when I say that they're just not quite as good as they used to be. However considering MDB has been around for twenty five years now, that is an impressive career and this band by no means has pasted their creative years. MDB still has a lot to offer musically, I think the problem now is that the ratio has changed. Whereas on the earlier albums either all the tracks or most of them were

great with just a few okay songs, but recently there are more just okay songs with a few great ones. I know it hurts to hear this, and it pains me to say it. For me that changing moment was precisely when Martin Powell left the band. They went without the violin for awhile and in addition I felt that the keyboard and orchestral work was never quite the same or as good as when Powell was in the band. Even when they got finally got female violinist Katie Stone on 'For Lies I Sire,' the tone and overall sound just wasn't as good as Powell. I would even go as far as to say the production quality has diminished recently as well instead of getting better. It's like they regressed back towards the more raw sound of their earlier recordings, and while the songs were better as I just said, the production quality was a little lacking in the beginning. It got better over time so I'm not really sure what happened with the production on the last few releases. In my opinion the last great MDB album was 'Songs of Darkness, Words of Light.' Plus that was one of their best album covers. That album really got my hopes up that MDB were returning more to form, but then 'A Line of Deathless Kings' came out and turned out to be my least favorite album of theirs ever released. The next two studio albums were a little better, but still fell short of even lowered expectations. I will say I thought 'Evinta' was a beautiful and elegant musical collection of all orchestral versions of some of their songs, and it was perfect for a band like MDB. So despite where they may stand today, that spot still towers above many and we will continue on enthusiastically with MDB, content with a vast catalog of superior and truly innovative music. If you want the best in bleak, dark and depressing doom metal then there is none more suiting to the mood that My Dying Bride! There is new material in the works and soon there will be another dark, musical journey to embark upon. So bust out all your black clothes and candles because it'll be time again to mourn!

[www.mydyingbride.net](http://www.mydyingbride.net)

J. M. Wiseman



### Near Ruin – No End: 2014 \m/\m/\m/

Melodic metalcore; it's an interesting sounding genre as well as being alliterative. Near Ruin hails from Maidstone, Kent, UK and they're one of the many bands that work within that style. While I find metalcore interesting I have yet to find it captivating. For me, this album is something to play if you want decent background music but you want to have your focus on something else. There are some decent hooks in the songs, the music is well-produced and there is no sloppy playing. I do really like the way the lead work and the piano/keyboard parts bring out the songs and I think there are a lot of bands who would benefit from using some of the techniques on *No End* to spice up their own music. I don't hate this album and I would like to hear more music from Near Ruin but I won't be first in line at their concert. If melodic metalcore appeals to you then I believe you'll like this band a whole lot more than I do, being the crotchety old man that I am. That being said I am going to listen to the album again just because I want to...

[www.youtube.com/nearruinmusic](http://www.youtube.com/nearruinmusic)

Jim Dodge



### Nostalghia – Chrysalis: 110 Records 2014 \m/\m/\m/\m/

When this album started playing, the first few notes worried me. I wanted to be able to give this one a good review but I felt certain that I was going to hate it. I'm a hard rock/metal guy and this is just about as far from that as one can get. Still, I soldiered on and made myself wait until the vocals kicked in before I began to form a real opinion. At that point I realized I was wrong. I didn't hate it. As a matter of fact I liked it quite a bit. Singer Ciscandra really carries the day with her amazing voice and her apparent case of Dissociative Identity Disorder. At different points she sounds French, German and even South African, using whatever syllables she needs to turn each song into a perfect vessel for her lyrics. The music itself is nearly impossible to categorize. It is sometimes haunting and ethereal, other times poppy and even violent occasionally. My overall feeling was that this album would be a great soundtrack for an art school film made by somebody with actual talent rather than some poor hack who decided not to become a doctor just to piss off their parents. My personal favorite song is track two, 'Cool For Chaos' even though I believe 'Sunshiny Milk' is the lead single. Both are great tracks and exemplify the sound of Nostalghia and

make *Chrysalis* a wonderful experience. I'd say this one is for fans of 80's pop, The Cure and brilliant female singers. No matter what you might say about this band, you can't say they're boring. In fact, this is one of the most interesting albums I've heard in a long time.

<http://www.nostalghiamusic.com>

Jim Dodge





### **Numenorean - Demo 2014: Filth Regime Records 2014** **\m/\m/\m/\n**

Hailing from Calgary Alberta Canada *Numenorean*, which comprises of Byron Lemley on drums and guitars, Steven Tillapaugh on bass, Roger Leblanc on guitars and Brandon Lemley on vocals, have created an amazing and effective take on post black metal on *Demo 2014*. The band achieves an almost cavernous and bleak sound which channels Woods of Ypres and Agalloch while maintaining a unique sound which surely will get them attention for their impressive take on Post BM. The demo begins with "Let Me In" an eight minute journey into the bleakest of lands. 'Let me...' showcases the band's strengths which are really astonishing considering the fact that this is their very first recording. The band channels their fellow countrymen Woods of Ypres in their almost bleak and melancholic music, which is also very moving.

In keeping with their BM roots, "Follow the Sun" starts things off with an amazing riff straight from the book of old school BM and suddenly changes into a beautiful piece of music that could've easily be the best song Agalloch never recorded. For its ten minute duration we go on a journey of gor-

geous icy lands and vast terrains that would make Immortal jealous. All in all, Numenorean offer a unique and surprising take on Post Black Metal while at the same time keeping things fresh and interesting. I look forward to their debut full length in 2015 as *Demo 2014* is short but sweet and to the point. Expect nothing but great things from Numenorean in 2015. For now sit back and enjoy this masterful debut!!!

<https://www.facebook.com/Numenoreanofficial>  
<https://numenorean.bandcamp.com/album/demo-2014>

**Carlos Luis**



### **Obituary- Inked in Blood: Relapse Records 2014** **\m/\m/\m/\m/\n**

Legendary Florida death metallers Obituary are back stronger than ever with their ninth album *Inked in Blood*. The band comprises vocalist John Tardy, guitarist Trevor Peres and drummer Donald Tardy and rounding out the lineup are the legendary Terry Butler (Massacre, Six Feet Under and Death) on bass and new lead guitarist Kenny Andrews.

The album starts off in grand fashion with 'Centuries of Lies.' The band's trademark sound remains intact nearly thirty years after their start 'Centuries...' showcases the band at their most aggressive and pummeling, full of amazing riffs and pounding double bass drum work courtesy of Andrews and Donald Tardy. 'Centuries...' is simply crushing. What a great way to start an album. The album continues to crush the ears and induces head banging at the same time with the three way split of 'Violent By Nature', 'Pain Inside' and 'Visions in my Head'. All three songs are essential Obituary doomy, slow tempo grooves and crushing musicianship. Trying to review all three separately is not an easy task; after all we're talking about Obituary, one of the most consistent bands in the history

of death metal. 'Violent...', 'Pain...' and 'Visions...' are pure Floridian death metal gold.

'Back on Top' is a slow tempo groove-filled track reminiscent of the band's comeback album *Frozen in Time*. 'Back...' is a simple and effective track that has everything Obituary is known for; at times the band goes deeper into the music without sacrificing their trademark style and sound.

'Violence' continues the onslaught. Here the band channel their heroes, the mighty Celtic Frost. 'Violence...' is the closest thing we will hear to a new CF album with its lo-fi aesthetics, down tuned guitars and slow drumming pattern. All is perfect in 'Violence...'

'Inked in Blood', 'Deny You' and 'Within A Dying Breed' are excellent but somewhat lackluster tracks. Don't get me wrong, the tracks are effective but they feel monotonous and repetitive at times. Still, they're great slabs of old school DM greatness.

'Minds of the World' picks up the pace up and returns us to 1990, the golden age of death metal. 'Minds...' is one of the better and faster Obituary tracks. Here the band are able to let loose and crush their respective instruments: Donald Tardy shines playing the drums like a man hell bent on destroying the world, Trevor and Kenny's guitars are in synch delivering blistering riff after blistering riff, John Tardy's voice is as menacing and powerful as it was in 1989 and Terry butler lays a solid bass rhythm. 'Minds...' is easily the album's highlight.

The album ends on a somewhat questionable note. 'Out for Blood' and 'Paralyzed' are good/not great tracks. They could've been left off the finished product. All in all the album is an excellent throwback to a time were death metal was actually played live, not over processed by computers. Obituary continues to carry the flag for old school death metal. Sure, the band at times seems destined to be the AC/DC of the death metal scene but if the pattern of repetition works for legendary acts like Motorhead and Marduk then I don't see why Obituary should be pigeon-holed. After all, they are constantly putting out great record after great record and *Inked in Blood* continues the band's successful return after nearly ten years after the masterful *Frozen in Time*; by far one 2014's best metal records. Enjoy this fine slab of brutality by the masters!!!

<http://www.obituary.cc/>  
<http://obituary.bandcamp.com>

**Carlos Luis**

**J. M. Wiseman**



## Punk Goes Pop Volume 6: Fearless Records 2014 \m/ \m/ \m/ \m/

What an interesting idea this is; heavier bands covering pop songs! I have to admit I was a bit skeptical at first, but I must say that this turned out to be a rather fun listen. I feel the name is somewhat misleading here as some of these bands aren't exactly punk but rather quite metal. Case in point being Upon A Burning Body. I am a huge fan of this band and frankly their cover of Lil' Jon's *Turn Down For What* featuring Ice-T was the main reason I bothered to check out this compilation. And I have to be honest, I really liked this song. I could have done without Ice-T though as UABB carried this song quite nicely on their own and he sort of dragged things down a bit, but overall this is a stellar and highly energetic song. They even played a quick riff from Metallica's *Sad but True* towards the end. Since the original song didn't have many lyrics aside from the chorus, UABB got to throw some of their own in there that really added to that party metal element that'll just have you '...blasting' Pantera, drinking 'Ol E!' Now for me the rest of this CD fell a little short of expectations following this song. For one reason some of the songs still sound like Panic-Fallout Boy Pop songs. For examples: Crown the Empire's cover of Ellie Goulding's *Burn*,

State Champs version of Zedd's *Stay the Night* and Lorde's *Royals*, done by Youth in Revolt, which had but one brief heavy breakdown at the end. Set It Off even incorporated that infamous chorus line from (and I'm being completely serious) TLC's *Scrubs*. Back on volume five We Came As Romans did The Wanted's *Glad You Came*. I kind of liked their version, but this time around they covered Taylor Swift's *I Knew You Were Trouble* to a much less impressive degree. But let's be honest, Taylor Swift is just awful and hence anything relating to her is going to be just as bad by default. Hell, the singer even sounds a little like Swift. I will say August Burns Red did an interesting rendition of Miley Cyrus' *Wrecking Ball* that was worth a listen. Palisades also did a good job with *Happy*, (yes, the Despicable Me 2/Pharrell Williams song that we ALL know and are completely sick of). It was a welcomed change to hear some distortion in that song for a change, which made it slightly more tolerable. A few other noteworthy mentions were Oceans Ate Alaska covering Beyoncé and Jay Z's *Drunk In Love* and Volumes version of Drake's *Hold On, We're Going Home*. I'm not sure if this was overall impressive enough for me to go back and give the previous volumes a try, but again I can really appreciate the concept. I think it's a good idea, I just wish the songs were heavier and didn't sound so much like Pop songs themselves. Obviously UABB's song dominated this compilation for me and unfortunately for the rest of the bands set the bar really high. I will say though that I am interested in seeing who else will come out the next time around to take over the Pop scene and show them how it's done right!

J. M. Wiseman



## Riwen - Riwen EP: Indie Recordings 2014 \m/\m/\m/

*Riwen* are a hardcore band from Sweden that was founded by guitarist and vocalist Johannes Persson (if the name sounds familiar it's because Persson plays in post metal masters *Cult of Luna*). Rounding out the lineup are Fredrik Lindkvist on vocals, Christoffer Rostlund Jonsson on bass, Christian Augustin on drums and Marita Jonsson Matlik on guitar. On their debut EP the quintet plays a brand of metallic and crust infused hardcore best exemplified on album opener 'Nature Calls us Back' is a crushing and powerful track full of D-Beat drumming greatness, distorted guitars and menacing vocals reminiscent of *Disfear*. 'Values' continues the same pattern of 'Nature...' although in a more upbeat way and with a mid to fast tempo transition that works perfectly in capturing all of the instruments and Fredrik's voice is in top form here showcasing his abilities as a vocalist. The EP ends on a surprising note however. 'Karlsgrundet' is a radical departure from the other two tracks and it is reminiscent of earlier *Cult of Luna* but with a more hardcore and crust vibe and it manages to move in between slow and fast tempos in six minutes. Overall *Riwen* show so much promise on their debut EP and are capable of so much more. For now let's enjoy these three songs until the full length arrives; highly recommended!

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

Carlos Luis



## Scar Symmetry - The Singularity (Phase I: Neohumanity): Nuclear Blast 2014 \m/\m/\m/\m/\m/

Melodic death metal isn't for everybody. Whether it be due to some of the vocals, the change up the music takes multiple times in a song, or just the more melodic parts of a song there is something there that some people will not like. Fans of the original line up for Scar Symmetry decried for the demise of the band when singer Christian Alvestam left and even more when the band got not one but two new vocalists in Lars Palmquist for clean vocals and Robert Karlsson for the guttural death metal parts. The following two albums after this, *Dark Matter Dimensions* and *The Unseen Empire*, too many seemed like a step or two down what has come before. Yet upon listening to those albums multiple times they did get better and were not as bad as upon first hearing them. Each of these albums tried something new with the music I realized while trying to push the music forward and not get stuck in just one spot.

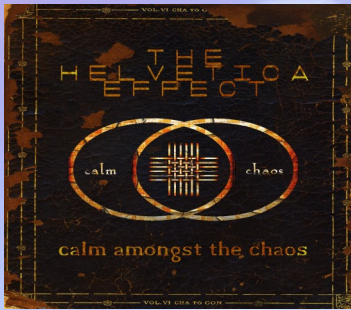
*The Singularity (Phase 1: Neohumanity)* is truly a step forward for the band. Actually it could be called a leap. This album is the first of three concept albums all telling one long story of humanity

and synthetically enhanced human hybrids tasked with converting the entire population with the threat of death if nothing else works to change their mind and even then death will not save them from being converted and what follows after the conversion happens. Scar Symmetry has moved from melodic death metal to full on prog metal with this album and the band sounds the best they have in years. The diversity of the album is one of its main draws from melodic harmonies to crushing driven guitars this album has something for almost everyone, except for those that only like punk, even with it being almost AOR (Album Oriented Rock) in parts. Every track is a standout track in its own right, but one standout track is 'Limits to Infinity' being the almost radio friendly with a catchy chorus that would fit with what is considered pop rock now, though so much better, and guitar riffs that never stop showcases the best what this album is all about music wise. I put this album in my top ten of the year due to the fact that I can listen to it over and over again and not get tired of it, which only two or three other album have been able to pull off. In fact I would put this album as essential listening to metal fans that shows that there are still new areas to explore in the genre without being pigeonholed to doing the same thing over and over again.

[www.scarsymmetry.com](http://www.scarsymmetry.com)

Jason Bonton





### The Helvetica Effect - Calm Amongst The Chaos: Unsigned 2014 \m/\m/\m/\m/\m/

The best thing about The Helvetica Effect (to me) is the fact that I've watched them come to be. The band was formed in Fort Walton Beach, Florida in 2009, not far from my corner of the world. I found out about these guys from a mutual friend, and I've been in love since. The first time I saw them perform was at an Autism Benefit at my musical home, The Grunge Bar. The sound produced is an incredible compilation of all the little details you've come to know from memorable rock acts such as Chevelle and Finger Eleven, as well as the beautiful creativity that a diverse group of brilliant musicians can produce, when given the chance. I swear, these guys are almost flying off the stage when they perform, and it's awe inspiring to witness. The band consists of Rob Perez-(vocals, guitar, piano), Matt Cyrus-(drums, piano, backing vocals) and Will Mcloone-(bass, backing vocals).

"Calm Amongst The Chaos" begins with "Tragic". This was a great song to introduce the group, giving a small glimpse into their view of the darker world of loss. "Liars" speeds things up a bit, showing more aggressive riffs and a lyrical journey that showcases the beautiful melody the trio thrives on. I think "Death Becomes Her" is a perfect example of the rolling gait that a great rock song carries you into, with a chorus that shakes you to the bones. "Something New" is the one song that stuck out for me the most. Simultaneously bringing me tears and chills, the way the emotion carries over into the listener really surprised me. You may not have had the experience, but you can easily become a voyeur through this track. "The Big Letdown" brings the pace back up with the angst and aggression that comes from fighting the world on your shoulders everyday. The title track "Calm Amongst The Chaos" really does emulate the feel of the album, making a way through the unruly with the poise and feel of one in control. "Won't Back Down" is every bit the defiance and stand from one who has officially found stable ground. "The Day I Tried To Save The World" shares the loss of one who wasn't able to make it in time, and it sticks with you. I found myself singing it out loud in the grocery store. The guys end the release with an emotionally fulfilling instrumental titled "Where Angels Lose Their Way", which completely sums up the experience an album like this is supposed to leave you with, the need to see them perform, and belt all this perfection out.

I am beyond stoked that I had the chance to see this talented trio break through all the hype and create something beautiful that hits every nerve in your body, mind and soul. This isn't a band you just walk into half heartedly. You are either all in, or will be swept along for the ride. Ultimately, I can't wait to see these guys perform again, and again. It NEVER gets old; the music only strengthens the bond.

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

Kristina Wright



### The Shrine - Waiting for the War 12": Tankcrimes 2014 \m/\m/\m/

The Shrine are a skate rock band from Venice Beach California. The self-described "Destroyers of Rock and Roll" manage to live up to their moniker on their new 12" *Waiting for the War*. The trio are on top form with the title track kicking things off in a fast way 'Waiting...' is a straight to the point song that will induce automatic head banging and feelings of breaking stuff up. It's a simple but effective song. 'Rare Breed' follows suit channeling Sabbath and the glory days of the 70s. 'Breed...' is almost too nostalgic and it reminds us about the better days of heavy metal; when everything was organic and natural, not over processed and fucked up with Pro Tools. The 12" ends with an instrumental version of 'Waiting For the War'. In many ways is a fitting end to a great EP/12." I cannot wait for the full length to be released as The Shrine deliver a dose of retro-greatness. For now let's enjoy *Waiting for the War*!!!!

<https://www.facebook.com/theshrinefuzz>  
<http://theshrinefuzz.tumblr.com/>

Carlos Luis



### The Whorehouse Massacre - Altar of the Goat Skull: 2014 \m/\m/\m/\m/

The Whorehouse Massacre are a Sludge/Funeral doom band from Canada that specializes in a brand of down tempo sludge reminiscent of Fistula, Weedeater and Sourvein but with a more dirtier and lo fi sound. On their seven song EP, the aptly titled *Altar of the Goat Skull*, the band manages to keep things interesting with an intense and at times claustrophobic aura best exemplified on opener "Indignation" which could easily be the entrance theme for the gates of Purgatory. Following 'Indignation...' comes a two way experimental gem simply entitled "A.C.S.4 and A.C.S.3." Although it can be said that these two tracks were mostly put there for time or filler reasons they're actually two experimental noise pieces that serve their purpose on the EP.

The rest of the EP is actually good but somewhat repetitive and I don't mean this in a negative way and to be fair they're excellent tracks but they feel repetitious in a good way. "Altar of the Goat Skull" and "The Black Coast" are fairly similar in their delivery. The former is full of doomy riffs and a haunting atmosphere while the latter is the highlight of the album. It starts off in an almost mel-

ancholic and sinister vibe, picking up the pace midway like some sort of apocalyptic revelation leaving destruction in its path which leads to the glorious ending of "Sewer Dreams" which completely delivers in an almost bittersweet way. It's an outstanding track but it's the album closer. Overall The Whorehouse Massacre are an outstanding band which deliver a dose of pure evil funeral doom/sludge reminiscent of the early days of metal where everything was perfect and not messed up with computers. By far a truly great gem by an up and coming band highly recommended for fans of Fistula, Goatsblood, Fister and Grief.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Whorehouse-Massacre/217400374962973>  
<https://thewhorehousemassacre.bandcamp.com/>

Carlos Luis



### Thomas Giles - Modern Noise: Metal Blade Records 2014 \m/\m/\m/\m/\m/

Keep this in mind when listening to this record, "The noise we make is our memory." *Thomas Giles* has an amazing voice, and always has. His vocal talents, between to the core, gut-growls to his switches of clean vocals is pure talent as a vocalist. *Giles* collaborated with Between the Buried and Me's drummer Will Goodyear, who worked on Between the Buried and Me's self-titled release, as well as their previous band, Prayer for Cleansing. Into the third song, I had to switch from my shitty headphones to clearer ones just to get the full effect of the catharsis of *Giles'* voice, it was that amazing. Going a fifth into this album, I knew I was going to love it. For this album being on Metal Blade, it shows a sense of loyalty to *Giles'* work with Between the Buried and Me. While there is metal in this album, it's much more mellow than what you would expect from a Metal Blade release. This is not *Thomas Giles'* first solo release. He released, "Pulse" back in 2004 as a solo album. *Thomas Giles'* talent as a vocalist was highlighted on Between the Buried and Me's, "The Anatomy Of." The first song on *Modern Noise*, "Wise and Silent" is a pure electronic instrumental attempt. "Mutilated World" is a symphony of the forgotten, beautifully incarnated into a sound. The

atmosphere of this song is the repertoire in the taste of Radiohead, but heavier and better in a *Giles* manner. As the twisting guitar positivity in a mental case's hands, "Siphon the Blood" is alternative in taste but far more heavy than any kind of alternative attempt alone. "I'm insane, but I'm not enough. I'm insane, but it's not enough" is the steam on the pavement for, "I Appear Disappear." The blues guitar that is laid down on this track is massive. Though it wasn't expected, it was a good ending to an amazing song. "Blueberry Queen" is a nice, short jazz song that came out of left field but was a home run as far as depth and eclectic attempts at songwriting on *Modern Noise*. When you listen to *Modern Noise*, you will learn quickly that there are new instruments to every inch of song writing for this album. For example, "We Wander Lonely" opens with organs and easily transcends into electronica. The metaphors used lyrically is impeccable....*The snow pours in our minds chewing down to the bone*. The more I listen to this album the more I am reminded of Silverchair's third album and on. "Noise Upon" is a minute and thirty seconds of amazing piano work on *Giles'* part. This is a record I will keep listening to. If you don't mind the mellow side of things with clean vocals, this is an album to consider. Release date: November 25, 2014.

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

Jez Feral

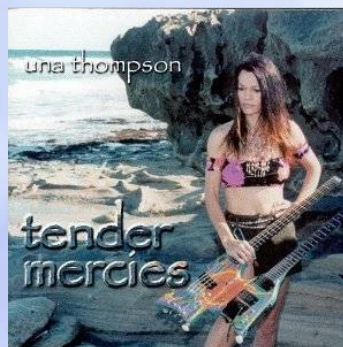


### U2 - Songs of Innocence: Interscope Records 2014 \m/

Will someone please get this album off my iTunes?

[www.U2.com](http://www.U2.com)

J. M. Wiseman



### Una Thompson - Tender Mercies: Sleeping Cheetah Music 1999 \m/ \m/ \m/ \n

Una Thompson, or rather the artist formerly known as, is a free-spirited and lovely woman. She has gone through some artistic changes recently after taking a break from music for a few years and she now goes by the name O'Donna. But every once in a while I like to do a real throw-back and I felt this one deserved a revisit. When you first hear her soft, sweet voice on *Sifting Ashes* it's very sweet and soothing. The melody is very pleasant and catchy with maybe a tinge of heart ache. When the guitar solo kicks in the acoustics are reminiscent to me of Saigon Kick. *These Candles* picks up the pace a little bit with more of a rustic sound, something a bit like Bon Jovi's *Blaze of Glory*. Already O'Donna is showing her versatility as *Within the Ring* comes in with another distinct type of sound and vocal style that reminded me a little of The Counting Crows. Of course with the line 'we'll dance and sing within the ring of fire,' one can't help but wonder if some Johnny Cash didn't play a bit of influence. *I Know* slowed things back down somewhat. This was one of my favorite tracks from the album because it reminded me of VAST's newer material, and again just shows off the kind of range she has within her music. I'm not sure if *Hey Joe (Ann)* is at

all a reference to Jimi Hendrix's *Hey Joe*, but this song has a slightly different twist. It tells of a girl that I presume finds out her boyfriend is a cross dresser. I can't say I relate to this particular subject matter, but this song really had that 'girl-power' vibe to it so it probably goes over well in front of an audience. *Sooner or Later* had a very 80's pop metal feel. I can't say that this was my favorite song, but it's catchy and had a bit of that commercial sound so I can see why people like it. I guess I prefer tracks more like *Sifting Ashes* and *I Know*. *Like Clowns* was an interesting track. It was definitely the experimental song on the album and reminded me a lot of bands like Pink Floyd at first before shifting gears into something more funky and soulful. I think it's one of those songs that you can either appreciate it or you can't. But just when you thought you were getting a sense of sound on this record, this song will throw you for another loop with that stunning display of versatility in sound and style. The album ends appropriately with *Spaceship Monqui*. This song just felt like a closing track to me and was perhaps one of my other favorite songs from the album. It slows things down a final time and explores more of that deeper and sentimental side to this artist. O'Donna is great at capturing the mood and taking the listener on a musical journey of sound, emotional and spirituality. I don't know if I would call this mood music necessarily, but let O'Donna catch you and you'll see just how soothing and satisfying this album can be.

[Facebook.com/ODonnaRocks](https://www.facebook.com/ODonnaRocks)  
[Reverbnation.com/ODonna](https://www.reverbnation.com/ODonna)

J. M. Wiseman





### Underground Music Coalition – Liberation Through Music: 2014 \\m\\m\\m\\m\\m\\m\\

There aren't enough good things I can say about the Underground Music Coalition or its founder Daniel Forst. There are a shit ton of great people and great bands on this site and they're all willing to give away music for free in order to promote themselves and their friends. I do find it difficult to review each band individually on one of the UMC compilation albums but suffice it to say that there's never a disappointing track on any of the comps. I was a bit thrown off by Sr. Bam-ba's track 'Andando Em Circulos' just because it was the first Latin track I've ever heard from any of the UMC bands but it was great to hear something besides (great, amazing, awe inspiring) rock and metal from this community. If you want to hear amazing bands that no record label has yet had the wisdom to sign, just go to the UMC and download ALL of the compilations they have for FREE!!! Money is not a factor so you can't make excuses that won't get you beat up by a bunch of rabid musicians. UMC FOR LIFE!!!

<https://undergroundmusiccoalition.bandcamp.com/album/underground-music-coalition-presents->

[liberation-through-music](#)

Jim Dodge



### Usnea - Random Cosmic Violence: Relapse Records 2014 \\m\\m\\m\\n

**Usnea** unbars with "Lying to Ruin" unlatching a song of awe. But about four and a half minutes into the song, it became a slowed down spoken weird almost dialogue. Thankfully the distorted mayhem came back up. I don't think I could have dealt with much more of that, though it seems to be recurring in some parts of the album. There is sludgy/doom riffs and incredible strong vocals when they aren't putting you to sleep. The vocalist has such a wide range of vocals, it's impressive to say the least. From highs to lows to clean vocals that are almost spoken word. For this being a sludgy doom band, the vocals fit so well in this brutal mannerism that keeps your attention. For some reason, I am thoroughly surprised that this was released on Relapse Records. It doesn't sound like Relapse material. *Random Cosmic Violence* was released November 11, 2014. The only downside is that some songs sound the same in certain parts. The self-titled song has an acoustic opening that is a nice change from their vile explosions, keeping it more diverse than previously stated. The only thing I do not like about this band is the clean singing, especially on the acoustic/atmospheric title track. But don't fret, because it turns into a throat cutting display

for murderous pleasures. "Detritus" opens with an atmospheric lure that you already know will kick in with the guitars shortly with in a few minutes. Keep in mind, this is a four track release with each song being at least fourteen minutes long. It changes from mood music to a more diverse violence that can be predictable at times. All in all, this album isn't bad.

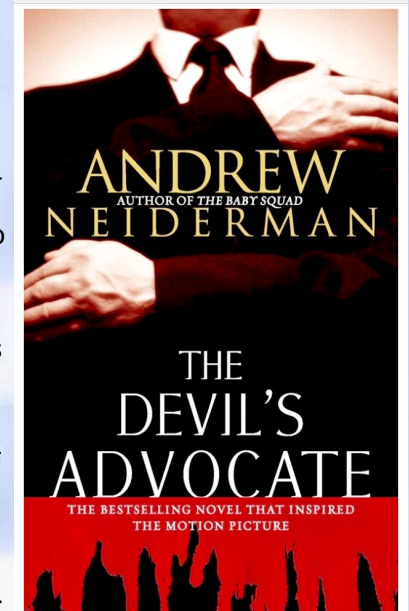
<https://www.facebook.com/usneadoom>  
<https://usneadoom.bandcamp.com>

Jez Feral

## The Movie's Advocate: A Comparative Essay of The Devil's Advocate

### **\*\*WARNING: Spoiler Alert\*\***

Most of us have seen *The Devil's Advocate* starring Al Pacino and Keanu Reeves. Normally I do not like the courtroom dramas, however given the subject matter of this movie I couldn't pass it up. I went in with lower expectations given the content, but I was completely blown away. I absolutely loved this movie, and I felt they did a great job by keeping it interesting and focusing just as much on what went on outside of the courtroom as inside. If you pay attention to the credits you'll know it was based on the novel by Andrew Neiderman, however I'm here to tell you that it was loosely based on that novel. Normally when a movie is based on a book, it is safe to assume that the book is probably better. This is not one of those times. While there are many movies based on books that stay relatively close in comparison, there are many others that take great liberties with rewrites even to the point of altering the story altogether. Sometimes this is for good and sometimes for ill, but in this particular case I would say it was definitely for the greater good. Obviously writing up a comparison based on a movie which stayed true to the book would likely be boring and redundant, but you will find there are plenty of differences here. In the interest of time I will assume we have all seen the movie so that I can focus more on the novel.



The main difference is of course the ending, which completely changed the whole story. However that is at the end and so it can wait until the end. Our first noticeable difference begins right away in both name and setting. The prologue opens with a member of John Milton and Associates, Richard Jaffee, leaving court to head back to the Milton building. He has just won a big case but his mind is preoccupied by his recently deceased wife, who died while giving birth to their child. There are hints at something sinister afoot, but of course nothing is revealed yet as Jaffee returns home only to jump from the balcony window, plunging to his own death.

Chapter one begins with our main character (played by Keanu Reeves in the movie), named Kevin Taylor, not Lomax, and his wife (played by Charlize Theron) named Miriam instead of Mary Ann. They also live outside of New York City rather than in Gainesville, Florida. The teacher that Kevin defends in the opening trial is not a male but a female accused of molesting another female student. Of course he gets her acquitted, although it does eat at his conscience slightly. It is here that he is approached by a member of Milton and Associates who offers him the job right away. So it's off to the city they go and right into the lavish condominium building owned by the mysterious John Milton. Kevin is weary at first since the apartment they move into was previously occupied by the late Richard Jaffee, but the fact is easily overlooked due to its extravagance. There are three top lawyers at the firm named Dave Kotein, Ted McCarthy and Paul Scholefield, with Kevin to replace the recently deceased fourth member. They are very warm, inviting, and seem very eager to have him onboard. He knows he's a good lawyer, but is he that good? Everything is happening so fast but something just doesn't feel right. Even when we are first introduced to John Milton, he seems to know a lot of small yet intimate details about their lives. This is also a good time to mention that there was a serious lack of presence by John Milton in the book, so consequently there were virtually no grandiose speeches given by Milton, which many of us would agree was one of the best aspects from the film. Milton had some very deep and even poignant speeches in the movie that really added to the overall atmosphere and mood. This definitely helped make the movie superior to the book in my opinion. I kept expecting to come across a few while I was reading the book but I was greatly disappointed.

So getting back to the novel, Kevin begins to have dreams in which he watches himself having rough and passionate sex with his wife, but he is powerless to do anything about this other self. In the morning his wife seems quite pleased with him and displays visible bruises from which Kevin has no recollection, although his wife seems quite pleased with his performance. At first he doesn't think anything of it and that perhaps it was just an episode of sleepwalking, but the events continue on and Kevin knows the bruises did not come from him. This brings up another major difference between book and movie; Kevin's wife Miriam actually really takes to their new way of life and instantly assimilates. The wives take her under their wing and show her all the ins and outs of high society as well as teaching her how to cope with her husband's high-profile job, which is basically just don't ever ask questions. As you may recall from the movie, Mary Ann quickly digressed after moving to New York City and progressively got worse. She seemed to be the only one to pick up on what was going on and to see things for what they really were. It is the exact opposite in the book. Kevin is the one who senses things aren't right with John Milton and the law firm and begins to doubt his decision, whereas Miriam couldn't be happier. Kevin is portrayed as the loving and virtually perfect husband. He begins to doubt himself and desperately wants to talk with



her and share his feelings, but she simply won't listen. She either changes the subject or ignores him altogether. He begins to hate the person his wife has become but there is nothing he can do to stop this transformation. It is as if she has been put under some sort of trance. Contrary to the movie, Kevin's wife actually does get pregnant. As you can recall, Mary Ann found out she was in fertile and believed it to be caused by the evil surrounding John Milton. Well Miriam couldn't be happier about having a baby; however Kevin has his doubts as to whether or not it's even his (more like John Milton's), and ultimately wants her to have an abortion. Further adding to his fears and enmity is one of the wives, Helen Scholefield. She has fallen into a depression since the death of the Jaffees and has since been ostracized by the other two wives. She too is now aware of what is going on and tries to warn Kevin a few times, but not surprisingly she is always interrupted before giving away any complete answers. Unfortunately Helen's fate is grim as her husband eventually has her admitted to a psychiatric ward for 'observation.' What Kevin is able to learn is that his predicament seems to be an exact facsimile to Jaffee's and he doesn't think it's a coincidence. The final stroke of detail in this sordid picture is when Kevin does his own investigating into Milton and Associates and discovers the files on future cases whose crimes haven't even been committed yet! It's no wonder this firm is the best; they know about the crime before it even happens. Not to prevent it, just to defend it.

By this point in the novel you can get the idea that things are going to play out differently than in the movie, but you have yet to find out just how different the two really are. Already there is a lack of John Milton as well as extreme differences in all the characters. Another hint that things would end differently is that we are never formally introduced to Kevin's mother. In fact it makes references to both Kevin and Miriam's parents, which is to say Kevin's father is still alive so John Milton could not be his real father. And remember Kevin's half-sister in the movie, Christabella (played by actress Connie Nielson); the one he was supposed to fornicate with in order to have the presumed antichrist? Yeah, her character isn't even in the book. Plus the Alexander Cullen homicide case that was so relative to the movie had little prevalence in the book other than to further Kevin's fears and distrust in the firm. There is a distinct and growing war of conscience that Kevin faces throughout the book that is absent in the movie. I must say I appreciated this aspect of the novel more than the movie. I believe it made Kevin's character more relatable and allowed the reader to empathize more with him as the tension mounted between him and his wife due to her utter happiness over their seemingly new and improved life.

Honestly the ending is so completely different that the only way to go about it is to just lay it out there layman style. So follow along, we are going to go a little fast: So now Kevin is becoming desperate. He fears that his wife will die during child birth and that they will suffer the same fate as the Jaffee's. He now has considerable reason to believe this once he finds out that the other three associates are none other than spawns of Milton. It seems they too all had mothers that died giving birth to them. And of course none of this appears strange to anyone else but Kevin, who is now the odd man out of the family as opposed to in the movie, which of course had Keanu Reeves as the lone son of Satan. Yes, the odds are constantly stacking against him and he is losing allies fast. Even District Attorney Bob McKensie, who appears to have been after Milton and Associates for years, can't believe Kevin's story. But he does refer him to a Father Vincent. So in the predictable fashion of stories that involve the devil, Kevin's search inevitably leads him to a priest. Here is another part in the book that was better than the movie. Father Vincent gives away all the literary references in the story. For example the Milton company chauffeur was named Charon, the ferryman that would carry the souls of the dead over to the Underworld. But of course the best and my favorite was John Milton himself, named after the famous author of the classic 'Paradise Lost,' the epic poem which tells of Lucifer's fall from grace. It portrays the fallen angel at first as the victim, but eventually as a leader and hero of the Genesis Bible story. Within its pages rings the classic line *"...better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven."* While the movie made no reference to these, I think it was better left unsaid. I felt it fit in well with the book, but it added to the overall atmosphere in the movie. It is a subtle difference, but I remember noticing Milton's name in the film and spending the duration of the movie wondering if they were ever going to make the reference. It was just nice to finally get the satisfaction in the book. While the priest explains this to Kevin he also stresses the point (with a distinct comparison to Milton), of how loyal the devil is to those who serve him, and the devil takes care of his own.

Anyway, after Kevin tells his story the priest agrees to help him by putting Milton through two tests, which if passed is proof of his devilry thus justifiable murder. So armed with a gift wrapped copy of the Holy Bible and a 'special dagger' in the form of a golden crucifix, Kevin ascends to Milton's suite atop his tower of power. Almost right away, without any grand speeches or rhetoric, Kevin performs the tests. He first hands Milton the wrapped Bible, who upon seeing it instantly recoils in horror. This is one test down with one to go. Kevin then holds the 'golden cross dagger' in front of Milton, who again recoils and shields his face as if staring into a bright light. This is Kevin's queue and he doesn't hesitate in plunging the dagger straight into Milton's heart, who actually dies right there on the spot, quite un-climatically. Or so we think...

Now Kevin is on trial for the murder of John Milton and he naturally decides to defend himself. Much to disagreement from all of his so called friends and family, Kevin feels this is his perfect opportunity to

expose Milton and Associates for what they really are; an evil empire intent on taking over the world. As you can probably guess, this defense doesn't exactly go over as well as expected and he ends up being found guilty of the murder of John Milton. He even made sure to have himself declared legally sane before the trial so as to further convince the jury that he was of sound mind and that his accusations are not coming from the delusions of a crazy person. As with all stories like this, you really feel for Kevin at this point in the story because we as the reader know that he is telling the truth. But his story is completely ridiculous and sounds like the ravings of a lunatic who has lost his grip on reality. So it's off to jail he goes. He is visited by his wife Miriam one last time, where he pleads with her to have that abortion before it is too late. The continued pregnancy of his wife was contrary to what Father Vincent said would happen once Milton was destroyed. The spawn of Satan growing inside Miriam was supposed to have miscarried, along with the evil that gripped her. Instead he finds his wife completely foreign to him as she was before he killed Milton, the date of both her delivery and death quickly approaching. It is here that Kevin completely gives up. He doesn't understand what has happened to him. He was so sure of himself and his resolve, yet things were ever worse with no redemption. He just doesn't understand, and neither does the audience. But then he is approached by some rather unsavory inmates, who have a proposition for him. You see many of the tenants there had done a great service for a certain someone but were seriously lacking in adequate representation after being sent away to prison. As long as Kevin is willing to help them with their retrials and parole hearings his stay there will be more pleasant than it would be otherwise. What choice does our fallen hero really have at this point? With a lowered head and defeated spirit he makes his way over to the prison library, which is run by someone who begins to look more and more familiar the closer he gets to the man. And who does this familiar person turn out to be? Why, none other than John Milton himself.

Here is where the story ends and we are left to put everything together. Obviously John Milton *was* the devil as Kevin claimed, or at least someone of high standing with the Prince of Darkness. It becomes clear that Kevin was just another piece in a masterful plot that was far beyond his scope of realization. It also becomes apparent just how many people are involved with Milton and how far his hand of influence extends. Not only does D.A. McKensie work behind the scenes with Milton, but he even has members of the cloth at his disposal. Father Vincent set Kevin up perfectly, and he fell right into the trap. His employment to the firm was only to replace Richard Jaffee, and now it's no wonder that the man killed himself. His fate was destined to be that of Kevin's; to inevitably end up in jail defending all the criminals that have been sentenced there in service to Milton. I would probably kill myself too rather than suffer that kind of end. Perhaps Kevin should have figured all this out sooner and saved himself such a miserable fate.

Now compare that to how the movie ended and tell me which one you prefer. I have to give props to director Taylor Hackford for taking what was already a good story and turning it into an exceptionally great movie. As you can tell I preferred the movie to the book. As I stated earlier, normally the book is better simply because there are more details in a book that often have to be left out of a movie due to time constraints, but this time the movie far outshined the book. This is not to say the novel wasn't good, it was just a good blueprint for what was to become a much better story. Hopefully this comparison has been viewed by you readers as worthwhile 'bonus features' with extra scenes and the revered alternate ending. Now which version will you 'advocate?'

**J. M. Wiseman**





# TOP TEN REASONS I DON'T WATCH THE TOP TEN TV SHOWS

## BY

### UNKA DEEB, CURMUDGEON-AT-LARGE (AND GETTING LARGER!)

If I ever make it onto "Jeopardy!" and they have a category on top-rated TV shows, I'm fucked. I just Googled the top ten shows, and I don't watch ANY of them. In fact, I don't watch any of the top 19 shows listed, and only sporadically watch #20, "Bones," and that's just because I have a thing for Emily Deschanel. In fact, my fingers kept writing the words "Boned" and "Boner" when I was trying to type her show's title.

I started wondering why I don't watch any of those shows. Since Jim Dodge has been rattling my cage for a contribution to ZSM, I thought I'd put my wonderings into the form of a year-end top ten list. I had briefly considered doing a top ten list of "Reasons I Hate Top Ten Lists," but my meta gland was already depleted from thinking about itself, so I'll do this instead.

Therefore, using TV.com as my, ahem, guide, I here present my Top Ten Reasons I Don't Watch the Top Ten TV Shows.

#10: Once Upon a Time (ABC) – To be honest, I've never even heard of this program. That might be because I hardly ever watch ABC in the first place, so I would never have seen a promo for it. But even if I'd seen it promoted, I would be unlikely to tune in. It's billed as a retelling of fairy tales, but set in today's world. I was raised in the era of "Fractured Fairy Tales" on the "Bullwinkle & Rocky" cartoons, as well as Shelly Duvall's excellent *Faerie Tale Theatre*, so I think I've had the best of fairy tale takeoffs. Add to those the outstanding stage musical (NOT the movie) "Into the Woods" by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, and frankly, I've had all the fairy tales I can handle in one lifetime.

#9: How I Met Your Mother (CBS) – I think I watched the first episode of this show, or at least enough of it to form an opinion, and my opinion was "Meh." It struck me as just another cookie-cutter sitcom, complete with a laugh-track so you'd know which lines were supposed to be funny. If a show has to tell you when to laugh, is it really funny? Usually not. There are exceptions, such as "Seinfeld," but generally speaking, if we need to be told when to laugh, it's a sign of bad directing, lazy writing, or both.

#8: Supernatural (The CW) – Essentially "The X-Files" without the authority of the FBI. This is another one I've never seen, but I have seen promos for it. Nothing in the promos or in the synopsis at TV.com makes me want to watch another program about, well, the supernatural. Incidentally, your Unka Deeb doesn't believe in anything supernatural, so that is bound to color my televisual decision-making.

#7: The Big Bang Theory (CBS) – I've tried watching this show from time to time, hoping that the nerdy premise would pay off more than the cost of the laugh track (see #9 above). But no, the scientific jargon is, as far as I can tell, merely sprinkled in to make the characters sound intelligent, while they continue to behave in the formulaic manner of most sitcom characters. A novel idea, perhaps, but it didn't live up to expectations.

#6: The Vampire Diaries (The CW) – Ugh. Two things I really hate are vampires of today's era, and soap operas of any era. I don't care about the loves and lives and losses of REAL people—why am I likely to care anymore when they're vampires?

#5: Coronation Street (ITV) – Another one I've never seen, and never would. A soap opera, but with English accents. As with #6, I just don't care about the made-up problems of made-up people, whether they're real or British, er, I mean, vampires. A soap is a soap. I got sick of "Lost" because it turned into a soaper, but I saw that through to the end, and I've regretted that decision ever since.

#4: Grey's Anatomy (ABC) – Ah, medical dramas, a staple of prime-time television. Barf. I watched "House, M.D." because I knew Hugh Laurie from PBS's "Blackadder" series, and that paid off for most of the show's run. But in general, the only reason to watch doctor-dramas is if you are an actual doctor and you want to amuse yourself watching for inaccuracies. But I'm not a doctor, nor do I play one on TV, nor do I like to watch them on TV. I have enough medical issues of my own, and I don't even like those!

#3: Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. (ABC) – A couple of forces are at play here. First is the issue mentioned in #10 above, the fact that I don't watch much of anything on ABC, so I'm less likely to be aware of their programming. Secondly, as soon as I see the name "Marvel" attached to a TV show, I tune out, both mentally and literally. I'm fed up with having my childhood memories of comic books milked for every last drop of "entertainment" value they contain. Perhaps that's my fault for having been born so long ago that we actually used to READ our comic books, before they were called "graphic novels," and before we got used to having them spoon-fed to us in a movie or TV form compatible with our diminishing attention spans. Rant continued on next program...

#2: Arrow (The CW) – What did I *just* say? Another comic-book-turned TV show, this one cashing in on DC's Green Arrow. Yeah, I know, this has been going on since Superman in the 1950s. But that doesn't mean I have to watch it. Besides, I saw Lynda Carter as "Wonder Woman" in the late 70s, and parts of me *still* haven't recovered from that. Which parts? The two that are usually credited for doing the thinking.

#1. Game of Thrones (HBO) – Yeah, that's right, I don't watch the most popular show on television. Why? Well, for one, I don't subscribe to HBO. Actually, that's probably the only reason I've never seen this show. Maybe when it comes out on DVD I'll give it a look. There are several premium-channel shows I've seen on DVD: HBO's *Oz*, *The Sopranos*, and *Deadwood*, and Showtime's *Weeds*, *Dead Like Me*, and *Penn & Teller's Bullshit*. For the most part, I give those networks credit for creating higher-quality programming than anything that's available on basic cable or satellite. But I prefer to save the monthly cost of those premium channels, and wait until time has told which ones are worth paying for. I just don't have that much need to see each episode on the day it's first shown. If it's that good, it'll keep.

That's it. Your Unka Deeb hopes you had a nice Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, Solstice, or December. And he hopes your 2014 was good, and that 2015 will be even better. But a word of advice: Don't spend too much time watching TV; most of it just isn't that good.





# Before They Sucked

## Episode 3

Okay this isn't going to be me saying something sucks so much, but I will say something does later on. Being the film editor for Zero Signal I try to stay on top of films that are coming out that I hear about that I think people should know about. Will I call every film great or good? No. If I did that I would be lying. I post about films that capture my attention in the news feed on the main page of our website. Yes, I posted recently about the sequel to Independence Day being green lit. Do I think it will be terrible? I don't know, I haven't heard anything else about the movie so far, seen it, or read the script so I can not make a judgment on it so far. As for the films I review, seeing that I have to pay for almost all the movies I review, except for the few companies that send me screeners or review copies (thank you to the ones that do), I try to be as fair as possible to all films. If I watch something that I don't like then review it I do not just say 'It SUCKS!', I put down why I think it was bad. Sometimes it is really easy to blast a movie, but when I do I explain why I didn't like it. It's is much harder to write a positive review because you want to find the words to explain why I though it was good. And for the films I loved, sometimes those are the hardest due to I have to try to remain fair.

So where is all this going? Well it is in response to a trailer that came out recently.

Yep that trailer. Star Wars: The Force Awakens.

I'll go ahead and say that I loved it. It didn't tell what is going on. It just gave hints about what is coming. Did I love every second of it? No, but the overall feel of the trailer won out, which to me was one of that a evil is coming that no one is ready for, and erased those too few parts I didn't like, like the R2 Balldroid. Yet I still smiled at it though while thinking that this droid just looks funny.

The internet reaction at the trailer is a different story. While there are those that loved it and those that are willing to give it a chance, there was a bigger reaction from the shit talkers about how every bit of it was terrible. From blasting the new design of the Stormtroopers to CG. No reason giving, just blasting it because they can. The worst blast I read about the trailer so far was about John Boyega. Their reason? Yep, because of his skin color. No other reason. This is what separates reviewers and the people that just want to say something sucks or they hate it. I do not know Boyega so I have to base my review on his acting ability. Not who he is as a person. In fact who someone is in real life should not effect a review at all. And skin color or religious leanings have no impact on reviews either. If I met someone in person and I didn't like them, that is a personal matter not a matter that should be brought up in reviews.

Other smack downs on the trailer is about the lightsaber that is shown in the wintery woods. I though it was interesting because it can be used in a different way, such as even though a lunge might miss, thanks to the two small light blades at the hilt, the chance of hitting something is doubled. It has a more medieval design which in truth seems to fit the Sith more to me. Yes, it looks like a broadsword, but everything changes. Nothing stays the same. So of course because it's different the internet slam jockeys had a field day with it. I know people have different opinions but next time try being more articulate and explain why you feel that way. You might be surprised by what you say. But do me a favor, wait until the film comes out before you bash the whole movie due to only seeing six short and one longer scene.

All the above is leading to this. Why do you hate? Explain yourself about why you didn't like the Millennium Falcon skimming the ground after flipping over on Tatooine. Not just saying it sucks. And not because it had a lens flare as your only reason. You want to be heard? Try expressing your opinions into a full sentence or better yet a paragraph.

And for bonus points when doing the above, do it without using swear words. Bet you can't.

Send me your opinion and I'll even post the best one online. Or are you afraid that what you do will be done to you in return?

**Jason Bonton**





# OUTRO

2014 has been an insanely fast carnival ride of musical chaos. There have most definitely been some really intense moments of loss, and gain in the other aspects of the world also. But for me, I believe this year was a HUGE leap into the music industry, on the out of spotlight side.

Zero Signal Magazine has been a driving force in my new and ever expanding opportunities to photograph, meet and interview some amazing national touring acts. I have been supporting my local musicians for a good length of time and now, I have a place to let the world hear their voices and talents as well.

The writers for this magazine have given their all to bring you every little bit of detail from this year, including music, movies, television and many others. I think 2015 is going to explode for us as a magazine, and I really hope you guys are along for the ride.

**Kristina Wright**

