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music & movie magazine

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32

ALIEN SEX FIEND



PAUL LEARY (The Cocky Bitches / Butthole Surfers)
MICK HARVEY (The Birthday Party / The Bad Seeds)
THE NAMES + THE BLADES + SIEBEN
CAUSTIC + SIMI NAH
WULFBAND

IntroRot

EILAND



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"EILAND"
cd



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"Ambient Nation 5"
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STARCH
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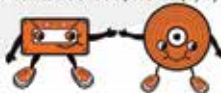
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WED054 Neon Electronics "Apollo" cd (April)



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In loving memory of our co-founder WARD DE PRINS
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Ward DE PRINS (RIP)

CAUSTIC

Set up in 2002 by Matt Fanale, Caustic became, especially in the US, a recognised sonic project involved with rhythmic-noise. Earlier this year, Negative Gain Productions released Caustic's new opus "American Carrion". While the lyrical themes clearly reflect the American society and life of today, the sound of Caustic never has been so elaborate and eclectic.

The album "American Carrion" was released earlier this year. How do you look back at the writing of this work and what are your main sources of satisfaction?

"American Carrion" was a big step forward for me in many ways. On the production side I upped my game quite a bit and musically I feel like it is some of the best stuff I've ever written. I took a lot more chances on this one, as I'm not typically considered a 'political' artist but given the way America is at the moment I realised I needed to say some things. It's time to pick a side and I did it in a way that hopefully doesn't come across as preachy. I needed to be honest and I feel good about the results.

The title of the album doesn't exactly sound 'happy' and clearly reflects some 'political' engagement. Do you want to say a bit more about it?

The album, while not a concept album at all, does explore the themes of what it's like in America right now in many ways. People are angry. People feel left behind. People are angry at the system. This is felt on both sides of the table but I was coming from one side. I'm definitely happy to have it out of my system and maybe happier at this point to get to work on some less serious stuff for a while. I said what I needed to.

Caustic has often been defined as 'industrial' music but I experience "American Carrion" as more sophisticated, becoming a fusion between industrial music, EBM and a few more influences. What kind of sound did you want to compose?

Caustic's 'sound' is a little of all things electronic. I described the sound on this one to a mixture of Wax Trax and 90s electronica but songs diverge from that all over the place. My earlier music was more in the punky power noise / rhythmic noise realm but has evolved into a nice distillation of all of my influences, whether EBM, dark-techno, synth-pop, or whatever. Frankly, I'm not good at sticking to one genre/subgenre/subsubsubsubgenre of electronic. I like to see where the track takes me and each idea blossoms/vomits from there. Not being a typical musician, I'm more like a kid in a candy store with Caustic, so I tend to gleefully jump around when I come up with something interesting. It's all about the passion.

I noticed the album has been also released as vinyl. What does this format mean to you and don't you think it's more a collector's item instead of a format people will use to hear music?

While I've released a few side projects on vinyl, I liked the thought of having at least ONE album on vinyl. I did my last album on tape. There's a certain nostalgia to it. Hell, I don't even have a turntable set up and needed to listen to the test pressings at a local record store. I think there's definitely a collectible aspect to vinyl, as it's a limited run and I doubt I'll

repress them but I also grew up with vinyl around so it's pretty cool having it to look at. I'm personally not big on physical media. I have too much crap to begin with but it was fun releasing it in that form and it sounded great.

You already self-released 2 (digital) albums with remixes from the "American Carrion" album. You clearly like to see your songs being remixed but what makes it that exciting and do you have some favourite Caustic-remixes?
"Dead Meat Volumes 1" and "2" were originally meant to be one release. I typically ask a lot of artists I admire to remix my stuff and, typically, a certain percentage don't finish in time or something else comes up, so I end up asking a lot more people than I think will come through for me. In this case all but one person was able to finish their remix, so instead of releasing a huge digital album I opted to split it in two to ensure none of the remixes were buried if they were among like 20 other remixes. Also, since I released "American Carrion" at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve it gave the album a little more publicity since it's been out almost 10 months already.

I like getting remixes done for a few reasons. The main one is I enjoy seeing my stuff re-interpreted by artists I enjoy. I also really like asking current, more 'buzzworthy' artists for remixes in an effort to get their name out there more. With that said, I never complain when more established friends like DoublePlusTen or Null Device do one either. It's always win-win to me.

Honestly, I really dig all of them (I asked people to do them for a reason - they don't suck at what they do) but a few favourites off the top of my head are the HAEX remix of "Stoma", Acidrodent's remix of "Fuck That Fascist Beat", Seeming's remix/rework of "The Coptic Staircase" (which he also released on a Seeming-EP) and the Sweat Boys mix of "One Nation Under Fear". Ask me tomorrow and I'll give you a totally different answer though.

You setup Caustic in 2002 and have released an impressive list of productions so far. How did you see yourself evolving as a musician and can you imagine an ultimate point you ever want to reach?

I don't think there's even an 'ultimate point' but I'm always working on my skill sets and try to, for lack of a better term, just do the damn work. Caustic was never meant to succeed but somehow I've stuck it out for hell of a lot longer than a lot of people in this scene. Tenacity, determination, and downright stubbornness go a long way, plus I absolutely love doing this.

My main goal is to always get better and to not get stuck in a rut. If I'm not surprising myself with my music I don't see much point in doing it. The big perk is that I now have a pretty dedicated audience that appreciates and encourages it. I've been having a lot of fun working on more collaborative projects the last year, the biggest of which is the new beat/early EBM influenced Klack.

I do that with Eric Oehler from Null Device (who also mixed American Carrion). That's taken off more than we'd expected, so it has been a fun ride exploring music with him on that project.

I just want to suck less every day. That's a pretty simple dream.

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

<https://caustic.bandcamp.com>

RADIOAKTIVISTS - RADIOKAT ONE (CD/DIGITAL)

(Dependent)



The German-based four piece Radioaktivists have returned after a five-year lay off to deliver an album of electronic-mastery. Radiokat One is the new and already highly acclaimed long-player five years after their strong debut on the compilation Dependence 2012, the band have created a ten-track song cycle which is both atmospheric and enjoyable, with an almost alternative sounding edge to it all, falling into a shoe-gaze of technical haze at its finest moments. Radiokat One is a highly enjoyable affair, made highly accessible through the electronic experimentation of a band who are only now getting into their stride. (...) Honest question from a fan at this point - why include a live rendition of Dirty Old Town as a bonus on an album of admittedly rousing stadium rockers? It just doesn't need to be here. [KB]

DEAD HIGH WIRE - Pray for us (CD/Vinyl)

(Wool-E Discs)



Imagine that you lock three passionate musicians in a humid cellar. And that you provide them with only drinks, whether fermented or spirituous or not. And that you're so excited that you also start to feed them. And imagine that a masterpiece is in the making. And that after a few weeks you hold an album in your hands ... like that ... Well Dead High Wire provides such a piece. I don't know how it came so nicely in its roughness. I don't know either how it took this sublime shape. But what I know for sure is that postpunk in Belgium is far from being dead. And that Dead High Wire released a wonderful debut with Pray For Us. They breathe in postpunk of a higher standard. The beauty for me lies in the fact that it sounds completely unpolished, raw, honest and varied. At some moments Joy Division seems resurrected (...) There are different kinds of debut albums. This is one is kind you need to have! [JB]

FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY - Eye On You (Digital)

(Dependent)



After almost five years Front Line Assembly returns from their recording studio with the brand new single Eye On You! Taken from the album "Wake Up The Coma" that can be expected in early 2019. Backing up this single are two remixes, one by Terence Fixmer who is delivering, as always, in his well known NU-EBM style and by Orphx who manages to extend the original 4'31" version to an exciting 7'00 minute long banging and danceable industrial music track. Like the credits of this single say, it apparently features Robert Görl of D.A.F. but who can tell? Not me anyway ... Nevertheless it's a strong track that makes us long even more for the new album. [HH]

BEAUTY IN CHAOS - Finding Beauty In Chaos (CD/Vinyl)

(33.3 Music Collective)



The most appropriately entitled album has come my way, "Finding Beauty In Chaos" by Beauty In Chaos, I do say appropriate for two reasons, Beauty In Chaos is a great band-name but there is a raw beauty in the music produced here, also I have just discovered them and found that beauty in the distorted chaos. After all that, because I like it will others? Very much so is the simple answer, it is an atomic bomb of an album, relentless power from start to finish, there is even a stunning reworking of the T.Rex classic; "20th Century Boy" which arrives midway through the album, it is both mischievous and powerfully delivered. Beauty In Chaos is not so much a band but a concept, an orchestra of sonic, shoe-gazed grunge created by Human Drama guitarist Michael Ciravolo, Ciravolo assembled a cast of music royalty who contribute in both performance and songwriting to 'Finding Beauty In Chaos', they include; Ice-T, Simon Gallup of The Cure, Wayne Hussey of The Mission and Al Jourgensen of Ministry. (...) [KB]

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WULFBAND



Photo © Luc Luyten

With Wulfband performing on the International EBM day in Belgium we decided to try and unveil some of the secrecy that surrounds this rather fresh and harsh Swedish EBM band. As we could have already guessed we didn't get to speak with the artists themselves but with their spokesman Wolfred Higgings.

Wulfband was formed in 2014, since then you've released two albums, played many shows in Sweden and Germany but this year you will be performing for the very first time in Belgium and this on the annual International EBM day event in St-Niklaas. How do you feel about that and what can we expect?

I know that the boys feel strongly about a global spread of the plague, so this is to be considered as progress. I reckon you can expect to profusely produce (blood) sweat (and tears).

The band prefers to stay anonymous and therefore performs as a masked duo. Why do they like making it so complicated for themselves?

Why does a king wear a crown? Why is Batman not running around wearing a fancy tuxedo? Why is Lady Gaga making a dress out of fresh meat? Think about these questions, therein lies the answer.

Both artists who appear on stage refer to themselves as Sieben and Neun ... How and why did they come up with those names?

It's actually 7 and 9 - and I am pretty sure that the simple answer is the other units didn't make the cut.

Who or what made them decide to set up this hardcore EBM project?

This I do not know. I contacted them the second I saw them perform in Stockholm, and I really haven't spoken

to them about the reasons for this mayhem.

Why did they choose to sing in German with this project and what are your lyrics usually about?

When you scream in German people tend to listen. The songs are about violence, cannibalism, chaos, destruction, disease, hatred etc. You know, feel-good stuff.

For instance what are the songs on your latest single Liebe Offensive / Amputieren about?

Liebe Offensive is a letter to the front, to take action now and do what needs to be done, whatever that is. Amputieren is basically just hammering home the theme of Platzmachen and Séparez - remove, and feel free to rebuild if you like.

This 7" single was released in May 2018 as only 100 copies ... No wonder it's been traded already for ridiculous prices ... Why did you release it in such limited numbers?

To introduce a little chaos I guess, but I really think you'd have to talk to the label about it.

Some say Wulfband is one of the few electronic music bands that succeed to meet with the energy levels of metal and punk concerts and this without using guitars. What is their secret and did or do they ever consider using real guitars in their recordings and/or on stage?

First off, Wulfband is not afraid of bringing guitars to the stage. And I'm pretty sure I can hear at least some in the recordings, however faintly. Second, whoever thinks that energy is about instruments should get out more. Then again, if you feel that guitars would destroy whatever you think Wulfband is about, stay at home.

www.wulfband.bandcamp.com
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MICK HARVEY

Mick Harvey started his career in 1996, after the release of "Intoxicated Man" – which could clearly be called one of the cult albums of 90s. After the success with the first album, Harvey continued working with the heritage of Serge Gainsbourg whilst remaining a member of The Bad Seeds. After leaving the band in 2009, Mick Harvey didn't stop his solo-career, working as a composer for different films and as a musician with his old friend PJ Harvey, and, of course, as a solo artist.

After your successful album in 2013 you took a break after which you released "Delirium Tremens" followed by "Intoxicated Woman". Looking ahead, can you tell us what should listeners expect from your next work ?

It's always hard to know. 2016 and 2017 saw me on tour for much of the time with PJ Harvey and in between times I had started working on a project with an English writer called Christopher Barker. That project, based on World War One poetry (editor's note: The Fall and Rise of Edgar Bouchier and the Horrors of War. Due for release on 11th November 2018 to coincide with the 100th Anniversary of the Armistice. Artist name will be Mick Harvey & Christopher Richard Barker), should be released in November this year so that doesn't even feel like my next work – that feels like something I've already completed. Beyond that I have the recording of a string quartet I composed for The Letter String Quartet in Melbourne which I have to mix and a third compilation of film works to finalise. Again these both feel like things I am completing rather than my next work.

In comparison with your album of 1995, "Intoxicated Women" sounds more lyrical and gloomy. Did you try to put the sound of one album up against another ?

I didn't try to put one album up against the other. I certainly don't go about comparing my own recordings. When you work on something you tend to follow your current inclinations.

Once you said that you heard about Serge for the first time while you were living in Berlin but by that time you had already succeeded as a musician being a member of The Birthday Party. In this case, can you say that the start of your solo-career was your "second birth" ?

Firstly, I did not first hear about Serge while I was living in Berlin. I had known about him for years. I just hadn't been broadly exposed to many of his recordings. But no, it was not a second birth, it was just a continuation of what I do in a different format. By the time I made a solo album I had been in The Birthday Party, 10 years in



The Bad Seeds and had made several albums with Crime & the City Solution and that band had also run for 6 years and finished. I had also been working on a number of film soundtracks as a composer. To move into being a «solo artist» was as much an accident and due to following inevitable circumstances as anything else I have done. It's just part of an ongoing set of choices.

Touching on the topic of your work in The Birthday Party. People I know always have called your shows something incredible. What do you think helped you to create and keep this crazy (in the best meaning of this word) energy ?

We just let it happen. That energy and intensity came together as a natural response to the music we had been writing and as a reaction to many things which had led us to that point musically. It was mostly out of our control. It required the particular chemistry of the band members and the right conditions. Some nights it would fall flat and not happen. It was a very organic thing – that intensity – which is why it was so powerful.

After the band's breakup you started the next project forming "The Bad Seeds". When did you understand that you want to continue the work with Nick ?

When he called me up and asked me to come into the studio. It had been a few months since the break-up of The Birthday Party and to be honest I was wondering ...

(continued on p. 13)

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Mick Harvey

(Continuation p. 10)

what I might do next. I was even considering venturing into film making. I was also unsure if Nick was still a bit pissed off with me for pushing the break-up of the band. So I was pleased to receive the call, actually, and was very happy to be involved in Nick's next project. I just had no idea it would be 25 more years of working together.

Looking back, can you say, in comparison with your work in The Birthday Party and The Bad Seeds, how different was the working process in these groups?

I have always said that The Birthday Party was a live band and The Bad Seeds was a studio band and that was broadly true until the end of the 1980s. The Bad Seeds have since become an excellent and commanding live band as well but the working process is always that way around – studio first, then live performance. With The Birthday Party we would always work out the songs in rehearsal and then by playing them live first.

How was it for you to work with your old colleagues after many years ? For example with Rowland. You produced both of his solo-albums.

I did not produce both his solo albums. I worked with him on the basic recordings and arrangements, which is a part of the production process, but I did not officially produce the albums and was not involved in the mixing of either. In general, though, it is interesting when one returns to working with someone again after many years. It is often a comfortable and familiar feeling and you know how to communicate and what each other can do – things like that. So it's enjoyable. Working with friends is the best anyway. I am rarely in a position where that is not the case.



Among other things, you are also known as a composer of music for films. Focusing on your work, is it hard for you to catch the right mood, represented by filmmakers or actors ?

It's always hard with the acting. I think it was Bruce Beresford who said that music trivialises the performance and broadly speaking I agree with that statement – that is the tendency, it's what music can do to a serious, intense performance. So with regard to the actors or acting it can be hard. Normally I would expect I am working in collaboration with the filmmakers so that again is a question of individual relationships and how well one is communicating and on the same wavelength. As with music I mostly work with friends or people I know on some level and when that is the case it is much easier to find the right atmospheric solutions and a good understanding in the communication process.

There are two categories of musicians. One of them can write something for weeks, thinking through the arrangements and lyrics. Others do everything spontaneously, almost at once. Do you belong to the first category or to the second ?

Both. But are you sure there are only those two options? Really, that's a very limiting way of looking at musicians and how they function. The possibilities run all the way from trained virtuosos who only play existing composed music all the way through to idiot savants who freely invent sounds with no technical musical background. In between there are hundreds of possibilities. Even to confine definitions to the two you have here, which seems to be referencing the types of musicians who are in rock bands, is far too limiting even to that genre choice.

One more question about your future plans. Have you ever thought about recording an arrangement of some Bowie's songs ?

No. That's not something which would make sense for me to do. I love much of his work but that really would be conducting a tribute. I need to be concentrating on original work now.

(Complete interview on www.peek-a-boo-magazine.be)

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Dan VOLOHOV

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SIMI NAH

To end in beauty, this is what Simi Nah wanted to do with her latest album release 'La terre est noire'. And did she succeed? Yes she did! This record has become a true gem. A dark gem, though, with many references to depression, insomnia, pain, death and suicide.

Hello there Simi Nah. I want to congratulate you for your album 'La terre est noire'. It's simply great. I would even dare to state it's amongst the best you have ever released. How do you evaluate this album?

Thanks for the compliment. I admit that I have the same feeling about this release. I have grown and became more matured. I really have enjoyed my performances in recent years, but I have also suffered. So yes, this record collects all these strong feelings, making it perhaps the deepest and most personal piece I have made.

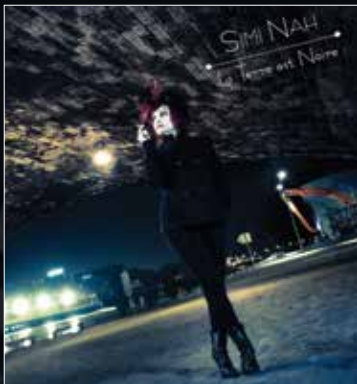
The album sounds very sad, with many references to death and even to suicide. I also feel that it became a very personal record. What has led you to make such a 'dark' record?

As I said before, it is perhaps that strange mix of pleasure and inner suffering. I realise that I am a complicated person, despite the beautiful appearance. Not easy to grasp. I constantly need change. Monotony makes me depressed and routine makes me crazy... I went through a very complex period in which I sometimes woke up in the morning with only 'dark' thoughts in my head... like death. Writing the album has given me the opportunity to not go down and overcome my fears.

It is gloomy, but still with that pop-ish touch that has accompanied you all your career. That is something that you have in common with Milène Farmer, with whom you have often been compared to? Ah, that comparison with Mylène Farmer... Actually, it does not bother me at all. She makes very nice things and the comparison can only be positive. Now there is no desire for me to look like her. I write words in my own native language, I play with words just like the words play with me, and I like dark and soft voices... So yes, inevitably there are some similarities.

After hearing the record I was quite surprised to hear that it would be your last one, especially when you apparently also decided not to promote the album by means of live concerts. Why this decision?

It's complicated... This album is a way for me to put an end to this ... to end in beauty, if you want. Life is fleeting, ephemeral. Everything is 'F.M.R.', and



sometimes it is better to go with a bang than to fade away. Together with Kenny, my partner in crime, we decided to radically change our lives. At this very moment we live in a small village in France where only the birds perform symphonies for us (...)

With 'La terre est noire' you also return to French as a language. I love your puns and your dealings with the French language. Why was this return important?

Actually, I never abandoned this way of writing. 'Be My Guest', which was not really a personal album, was just an exception. The two releases that came before that one were also almost entirely sung in French. For 'La terre est noire', the things I wanted to tell about were far too theatrical to use the language of Shakespeare. So I used the language of Molière instead to express myself.

Your first two albums contain a certain reflection on the role of women in society. What does the feminist movement mean to you today?

Nothing! I am not a feminist at all, I'm a woman, nothing more than that. I do not like to stick my words to such ideas. I rather have respect for everyone, man or woman. But I fear that will become a too long a debate here. The role of 'the woman' on my first records was rather sentimental in nature, rather than a general role in society. Having said this, I have more affinity with animals than with women or men (...)

What plans do you have now?

Living a serene life. Listening to 'Le chant des loups', the howl of the wolves... and the deer... The rest will follow.

Xavier KRUTH

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MIREXXX - Vault (CD)

(Echozone)



Stijn Szin and his fellow Posse started 10 years ago to bombard us with dark electro, with EBM fragments, sometimes slow and dragging, sometimes uptempo. We untangle fragments from early Suicide Commando and Hocico. Belgian electro from the good old days, which still today grabs too little attention. Vault, which is released on Echozone, is a full LP with 10 songs. (...) We've known for a long time that Belgium is the cradle of dark electronic music. We've also known that new beat and EBM have found here a fertile ground. But the fact that Mirexxx embraces all this and sticks to the dark electro from the early days to the present in this great LP is simply wonderful. Let's now hope that the band will get a broader recognition in

JO QUAIL - Exsolve (CD)

(Self-released)



At the beginning of November the fourth solo album of the British cello player Jo Quail has been self-released. There are only three tracks on it, of which the shortest one is still eleven minutes long. Armed with a classically trained background, an electric cello and looping station, she creates a unique universe with a dark atmosphere. It is incredible how she builds up the music in layers and knows perfectly well how long a particular sequence should last or which phrase/voice should occur or stop playing. And then there's still rhythm and harmony creating an interesting musical story to be done. She plays one instrument but knows how to transform herself into a real orchestra. On this album she is assisted by guitar players Dan Capp and Nik Sampson. There's also vocal reinforcement from Lucie Dehli. (...) Like slow food, this is slow music: there's no quick bite to it. Take your time as listener to discover and explore, to surrender and get indulged. This is music made with tremendous craftsmanship which no music lover can deny. [TP]

SADOMANCER - Dystopian Dawn (CD)

(Self-released)



I have recently discovered this first album of a new band called Sadomancer from Denmark, country of Leaether Strip. Let's say I was totally impressed from the first listen and pretty sure I will put them on the list of my favorite bands. This is the future, this is dark, this is queer... this is the spirit of Sadomancer. Their pure analogue sounds put you into a deep dark disturbing but hypnotizing and dancing mood. I can tell you the album contains one potential club hit after another but have a listen and convince yourself. In times when people complain and say it's over, I can promise you these guys are doing something new that will make you think again for sure and prove that this scene is still very alive! Highly recommended stuff for the Dark Elektroïdes Cyperpunk Ebm Freaks amongst us! [BW]

SELOFAN - Vitrioli (Vinyl/CD)

(Fabrika Records)



In the cold wave and minimal genre, which has recently got a bit more attention, Selofan has become a well-known act. With their fifth album Vitrioli they hit hard again. The Greek duo released it on their own label Dead Scarlet and Fabrika Records. It is already clear from the first second that the duo is experienced with the genre. Their analogue machinery grabs you by the throat. (...) The title song Vitrioli is a song where everyone will think of a certain Turkish band (there aren't that many, right?). It sounds defined, and anyone who knows Greek will surely understand something. I don't, but the music speaks for itself. (...) Vitrioli is a very strong album that goes deeper into the minimal and cold wave genre than before. There's a lot in it, you'll see sparks and smoke, but you won't get burnt so it is worth listening to it several times. Because there's not even 1 second you'll get bored. [JB]

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We have to admit, it is always something special when you do an interview with a band taking you back to your teenager years... the early years of new-wave, post-punk and related genres. The 80s had something magic because a lot of emerging bands were releasing songs that would become 'history'. Alien Sex Fiend was one of those bands. Set up in 1982 and driven by the creative spirit of Nik Fiend and Mrs. Fiend the band always remained active and never stopped releasing new productions and playing live. This year they released the new album "Possessed" (Cherry Red Records) revealing a band that hasn't really lost its original spirit and sound. I got in touch with the enigmatic duo: Nik Fiend and Mrs. Fiend.

"Possessed" is your first new album since "Death Trip" (2010) but still the first one that took that much time to achieve. How does it feel to be back with the new work and what kind of album did you want to compose?

Nik Fiend: We didn't spend that long on the album itself - in terms of coming up with ideas or working on the tracks. "Death Trip" was a very successful album so we did a lot of gigs after that was released. Simon 'Doc' Milton and Mat Pod came back on board in 2012 and the shows we'd played together had been reaching such a high point - it was such a great live line-up. We didn't think about recording new songs until around the beginning of 2015 when I started to get a very strong feeling that we really HAD to do some recording with that line-up - and soon!

Mrs Fiend: So we recorded a few ideas at home...

Nik Fiend: Just as a basic starting point...

Mrs Fiend: When we went into the studio we did not plan on starting to record an album, far from it, it was literally 'let's go record and see what happens'!

Nik Fiend: But when we went into the studio we were on a roll, and we kept coming up with ideas, some of the songs were written totally in the studio. We played a lot of it live in the studio as well, all of us together, so that we could work off each other as a unit, exactly as we'd been doing at the live shows. Initially I thought about a 7" single or an maybe an EP, we never had any thought it could become a double album!

Mrs Fiend: But that's how it turned out in the end.

Nik Fiend: We don't think about what kind of album we want to do, we never have done that. With ASF it's

always organic, we never have a set plan, the songs come out how they come out, they take on a life of their own. It's almost like the songs tell us what they want to be. You have to free your mind, then your arse will follow (laughs), tune into it...

Mrs Fiend: The actual recording was easy, straight forward, the problem came afterwards with a number of personal events and some family matters, that we won't go into here, but those events prevented us from continuing work on the album at the time, we just had to hang on, deal with the shit, and then eventually when things settled back down a little we were able to finish the tracks. So it's a massive relief in one way that the album is finally seeing the light of day.

Nik Fiend: It's brilliant that "Possessed" is now out and everyone can hear what we've been doing!



Photo © Per Ake Warn

SEX
FIEND

"Possessed" was the last work featuring Simon 'Doc' Milton (RIP) who played most of the guitar on the album. How do you remember him as a musician and the person he was? Any anecdotes you want to share with us?

Nik Fiend: Yes Doc played most of the guitar but Mat Pod also played guitar on "Ghost In The Machine" and he did the blistering guitar towards the end of "It's In My Blood".

Mrs Fiend: As we said a number of personal events caused delays on the album and Doc's death in September 2016 was one of those, it was very hard losing him, we still feel it now.

Nik Fiend: After such a fantastic run of gigs and then the euphoria of recording new songs to lose Doc was devastating. We'd known him for over 30 years, he was a friend, not just someone in the band with us. A total mate.

Mrs Fiend: We'd shared a lot, in the studio and on the

road on tour, he'd originally been in the band from around 1989 to 1992 and we did a LOT in that time, lots of recording, loads of shows, big US tours.

Nik Fiend: Yes we'd shared all sorts of shit with him. He'd been there and experienced things first hand, it's not a matter of going out and getting another guitarist off the shelf. Alien Sex Fiend is a state of mind and not a choreographed or rehearsed thing, it's a state of being. What was weird was that we couldn't shut him up in the studio when we were recording what would become the "Possessed" album, his Marshall amp was full blast - on 11. It was out of character for him, usually he would record one guitar track and then almost have to be persuaded to do more. He wasn't a 'shy and retiring' character but nor was he one of those 'look at me' guitarists or a 'show off' type of person! He had borrowed several guitars from friends and he'd brought his own and he was determined to record each and every one of them, which he did. So in hindsight it was strange that he recorded as many guitar tracks as he did. He was a really good interpreter of ideas, I can only play very basic guitar but I could show Doc my ideas and he could run with them and then add his own interpretations.

Mrs Fiend: As a person, he was very kind...

Nik Fiend: A gentle soul...

Mrs Fiend: A lot of fans have written about meeting him backstage at various gigs or festivals and what a nice person he was, easy to talk to, which is lovely. He didn't get phased either, on the road you have to cope with strange events, unplanned stuff and he didn't lose his cool, he was always quite calm. He was also really funny, he had a great sense of humour and could tell some great stories especially from when he was a studio sound engineer, about some of the idiots or people on ego trips that he had to deal with, unfortunately I can't name any names, but they were hilarious stories!

Your music has been often linked to 'punk' but I have always experienced your sound as a fusion between multiple influences and music genres, which makes it hard to define. Is it important for you to get labeled as one specific genre such as 'gothic', 'punk'... and what does 'punk' mean to you - especially today in 2018?

Mrs. Fiend: We'd agree with you that we're more about multiple influences and music genres than one specific genre ...

(Continuation p.20)



ALIEN SEX FIEND

(Continuation p. 19)

Some elements would be 'gothic', some 'punk' but some other elements don't fit in either category.

Nik Fiend: I call it a musical blender (liquidiser)...

Mrs Fiend: Yes, we like to combine different musical elements to create something new, it's like mixing the colour blue and the colour red, the result is purple, it's neither blue nor red but it's own colour, you know?

Nik Fiend: Musical alchemy! We never set out with an aim of being anything other than 'Alien Sex Fiend' - unto ourselves - but as time has progressed newer definitions and genres have come along. When punk was happening I found somewhere where I could exist, up until that point unless you were a top musician it was as if you weren't allowed to take part in music. What punk did was to open up music to everyone, including me, it allowed me to take part. It felt like anyone could do music in some way, however good or bad you were, or design clothes, or make art. Punk said 'no rules', so that was a catalyst for me personally.

Mrs Fiend: Of course our use of drum machines, synths and samples and so on - the electronic elements - wouldn't be considered 'punk' by most people which is OK but to me they are perfect 'punk' instruments because - as Nik said, you don't have to be a top musician or have studied at music college to use them, it may help, of course, but it's not necessary. I suppose that we were too electronic or spacey or weird to be termed 'punk', also as a genre it had already begun to fade when we started. We were originally called a 'Batcave band' or 'Positive Punk', which was a short-lived term in the early 80s to describe bands like us and Killing Joke, etc.

Nik Fiend: By the mid to late 1980s 'gothic' - then later 'goth' - became a genre and we were included in that. That whole genre has become bigger over time and has spread out and absorbed all sorts of different elements.

Mrs Fiend: We do understand that visually - our image, the artwork, the live show etc - and some of the lyrics would put us in the 'gothic' genre and that's OK. However the 'punk' element is also important... Maybe we should be 'gothic space punks'! (Laughs) We've always had that 'DIY' ethic of punk, that meant 'do-it-yourself',

create it yourself, so you would make and dye clothes...

Nik Fiend: Make your own magazines, make punk art, which is what I do, I think, because I didn't go to art college. Anything creative was possible, anyone could express themselves.

Mrs Fiend: To us today in 2018, it's the same... the do it yourself ethic that we had at the beginning is still there, and we still produce our Fiendzines (ASF's own magazine) the idea of doing those came from fanzines. (...)

I will always link Alien Sex Fiend with some of your early songs "Lips Can't Go" and "Ignore The Machine". How much of this early stuff and attitude do you still find in the new songs and how do you perceive your own evolution as musicians and performers over the past 35 years?

Nik Fiend: Fundamentally I don't think we've changed at all! (laughs) We've never made a statement like 'we're going funky' it's always just been 'Alien Sex Fiend'. We still have the same purpose as when we did when we created "Ignore The Machine" and "Lips Can't Go". When we started ASF it was about 'let's do something, let's make something happen and something good might happen', so I don't think we've really changed because that was how the "Possessed" album recording started! "Ignore The Machine" and "Lips Can't Go" are still as relevant to us as newer songs like "It's In My Blood" or "Shit's Coming Down", each of those earlier tracks we fought to release, we have stood by those decisions, believe me we've never compromised! And we never will, it's not in my nature. I am driven - once I have an idea then I will see that to its conclusion to the best of my ability, immaterial of other people laughing or saying it's shit or whatever - which is their prerogative - I just don't listen, it is my purpose and I will see it through, no I won't edit it, water it down (dilute it) in order to try to please other people. Luckily our music has found other free-thinking people who revere it and allow us to continue as ASF, and to continue exploring.

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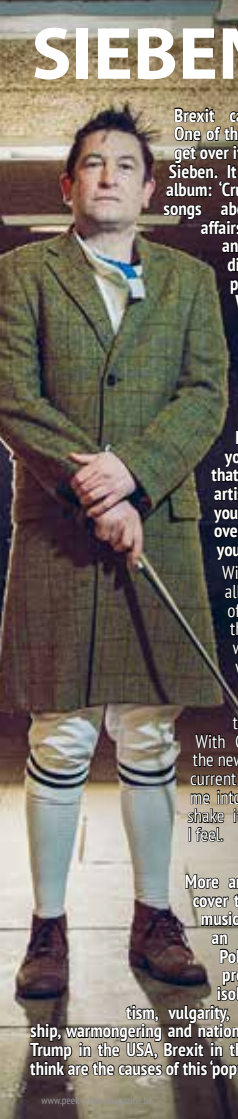
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SIEBEN



Brexit causes huge debate. One of the people who can not get over it is Matt Howden from Sieben. It resulted in a great album: 'Crumbs', a collection of songs about the state of affairs in the world. An angry disc, for sure, diluted with a generous portion of humour. We did our best to calm him down...

'Crumbs', your latest CD, is without doubt the most politically motivated one you have made. Up to now, you had an approach that was more purely artistic. What made you choose to make an overtly political stance in your work?

With previous Sieben albums, I would head off to my studio, shut the door and leave the world behind. The aim was to create my own world and a particular vibe that suited the theme of the music.

With Crumbs, world events, the news and the bad smell of current world politics followed me into the studio. I couldn't shake it. Nor the anger that I feel.

More artists seem to rediscover the power of engaged music but there is certainly an opposite movement. Political movements preaching xenophobia, isolationism, conservatism, vulgarity, authoritarian leadership, warmongering and nationalism are on the rise. Trump in the USA, Brexit in the UK... What do you think are the causes of this 'populist' movement?

The world is at a point of immense change. It has contracted and shrunk. Border walls are up. Populists thrive on division, division of people. Of attacking the intellectual, denigrating sanity and calm. It's an easy and dangerous route to power and control. For instance, who would have thought we could be back to a Cold War scenario, with the click of a finger? Almost as if two nations had decided to 'ramp up' pressure in order to garner popular support for themselves at home, to push their own agendas, to profit massively from the chaos that ensues.

One must love a title as 'I Will Ignore The Apocalypse' with the sentence 'A better nature will endure'. Or the satire of 'Here's The News'. You make good use of humour on 'Crumbs'. Do you try to take up the role of jester in order to spread your message?

Humour is really important to me and it's something that I've been unable to squeeze into previous Sieben work. On the whole, it didn't fit with the style of works such as 'Ogham Inside The Night' or many of the earlier albums. 'Sex & Wildflowers' and 'Desire Rites' had some sneaky humour in them, I suppose. With 'Crumbs' I'm laughing and making a joke, otherwise I would scream and wail. It is 'gallows' humour.

'Crumbs' is of course an angry and 'Dark Enough' CD but you seem to end it with a positive note. Such songs as 'Liberal Snowflake', 'Forge A Better World' and 'We Will Be Alright' are very optimistic. In short, you believe we will be able to confront all the wrongs you mention on the CD. Where does your hope come from? Crumbs can roughly be divided into three types of songs, all with a bit of tongue in cheek: Angry. So outraged that I can only take the piss. Positive. My hope is decent people speak up and act decently against a tide of fear-and-hate-mongering.

You are obviously angry about Brexit but I have the feeling that opponents of Brexit tend to idealise the European Union. The Union gives much power to the unelected European Commission and allows only restricted power to the Parliament. People have the feeling that they are ruled by technocrats who – at the end of the day – are closer to big business than to the people. What would you tell them?

I would agree, to some extent. I don't see the European Parliament as by any means perfect. Big business is still allowed to run unchecked; contracts may well be secured by dubious means etc, as with all governments.

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SIEBEN

(Continuation p. 22)

But they are better than what we had, from either side, here in the UK. Better spreading of wealth to poorer areas, better environmental laws, better labour laws and so on, in many other ways. Second, that Europe's combined voice has been and is more sensible and rational than current US, Russian, Korean, Arab voices, on the world stage of politics. Third, that leaving the Union is economic suicide in so many ways. Europe is our neighbour, our main point of trade (both ways), and the 'union' makes economic sense on so many levels. Overall, the world for sure needs to overhaul 'big business', the notions of 'shareholders' and 'economic growth'. I would agree. And that 20 people own half the world's wealth (to quote myself) "is a sickness". They are kinder overlords than the ones we may well inherit, out on our own, pretending we are not part of the world.

You have visited different countries in Europe and they have influenced your music. I think about the Norse, Lietuva and Briton EP-series, later merged into the 'The Old Magic' CD, in particular. Coming from a background in the neofolk-scene - you have worked extensively with Sol Invictus and Tony Wakeford - in which the idea of a 'European culture' is very important, what would you say unites this diversity of countries? Is there an European culture?

There are many cultures and many ways in a global world. We must recognise this. I think we perhaps have more in common with each other than we do with those further afield, but there is not A European culture. Nor should there be. We are beautifully disparate but with a union we are stronger and we are less likely to pick fights with each other, too.

You played at the Rebellion festival this year, the biggest punk festival in the world. I think it's great that you were invited but our reporter at the festival wrote that you were an outsider at the festival and that many of the attendees didn't know you. How did your participation at the festival occur and how do you look back at it?

I love playing at Rebellion. And I love the challenge of an audience that is new to me and I'm new to them. This year I played 2 shows at Rebellion and once a couple of years before. It's sometimes a little difficult to get people to your shows as so much is going on at the same time and also because such events tend to be nostalgia-based for many people attending - so they'll obviously go to the stuff they know. Not the best place to have your music 'discovered' perhaps but a fabulous



Photo © Mal Whichelow

event that I always enjoy - been 4 times, played 2 of those - and always relish playing at. And a nice new audience for me, with Crumbs more accessible to them than previous albums.

Like many other independent artists, you chose to distribute your music via bandcamp, which means that everyone everywhere can listen to your music for free and only a few will buy the download or the physical record. What do you think the benefits and the disadvantages of bandcamp are?

I find bandcamp quite empowering. For starters, you can set the number of times people can listen for free until they need to buy. I've set mine to 3, so you can hear the entire album 3 times before deciding if you'll purchase it. I release on Bandcamp in tandem with digital release through a distributor - in my case AWAL - who add the release to 250 or so sites, for purchase. If someone buys it from Bandcamp I get 85% of the payment. If someone buys it from iTunes - or most of the others - I get around 60%. With such small margins these days it adds to a very meagre income for a 'niche' - not very successful financially, shall we say, politely - artist such as myself.

Complete interview on www.peak-a-boo-magazine.be

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METROLAND - Memorabilia / Memorabilia (Remixes) (Digital)

(Alfa-Matrix)



Those two passengers; 'A' and 'S' of Metroland release two simultaneous singles; 'Memorabilia' and 'Memorabilia Remixes'; the Kraftwerk-inspired, Belgian industrial artists have struck creative gold once more. These releases are taken from, and are actual extensions of the magnificent 'Men In A Frame' album, but they show a darker side to the duo's previous work. On 'Memorabilia' they show minimalistic, synth-driven sounds are still relevant, across hypnotic beats they use a very direct method of fusing sound and effects, without over using electronics to create a wall of sound they simply let the patterns flow. The Remixes give a wholly different idea of the tracks, (...) Very entertaining nonetheless as is both shades of this release ... [KB]

THE COCKY BITCHES - Mercy (LP)

(Slope Records)



Musical evolution is the basic process of being a musician. From one song to another, finding the right progressions, chords, ways of expressing yourself. Sometimes such an evolution from a debut album to a next and better one takes a long time, becoming a long winding path for a band. But sometimes there are exceptions in this system. The Cocky Bitches started their career inflicting a total shock to their listeners. Probably, you won't find a better and more powerful and spiritual record released in 2018. Of course, we can't use the cliché "musical sensation" - the guys are far away from mainstream mass-media hype. And "Mercy" clearly demonstrates this attitude. The Cocky Bitches don't try to make their listener feel comfortable listening to their debut longplay. Metaphorically, it's an S&M journey through the surrealistic images of Frida Kahlo (...) Surrealistic images will follow you, with each song (...) The Cocky Bitches seem to not play instruments, but imagine chords of LSD-taking grunge rocker, creating a mix of styles with a bad trip titled "Mercy". (...) Paul Leary adds his chaotic elements (...) well-known for all fans of Butthole Surfers ... DVJ

DAVID J - Crocodile Tears And The Velvet Cosh (LP)

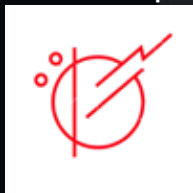
(Glass Modern)



The former Bauhaus bassist David J has re-released an expanded edition of his post Love And Rockets solo work "Crocodile Tears And The Velvet Cosh", an album of folk-jazz that breathes on a completely different astro-plane to his work with the previous aforementioned bands. This is not an album which was overlooked by critics originally in 1985, it simply was too mellow for fans to appreciate on the back of his sonic and doom-laden endeavors with Bauhaus, that said, it is a masterful body of work. The change in pace and style may seem strange at first, to put any section of an electric-driven band such as Bauhaus in the folk category may be similar to putting Bob Dylan into a Goth band, surprisingly though it works very well (...) This album will by no means disappoint fans of his Goth-Rock styling, after all it was his lyrics which detonated within "Bela Lugosi's Dead" ... [KB]

HATCHLING - Alpha (CD)

(Wool-E Discs)



The Hatchling's style of electronic-acrobatics has come to fruition with their latest release the aptly titled 'Alpha', a collection of window-rattling intensity without a guitar power-chord in sight. The Belgium based three-piece are not so much riding the wave of popular synth-punk but more so forging their own unique route bypassing the standard rule book. Over a mere six tracks the band compress all the elements which define them, their message and the direction in which they are fearlessly heading is on display and breathing (...) This is very interesting stuff, a very clever and enjoyable use of synthesizers, the songs are not long but instead, sharp and delivered with a fresh perspective each time. ... [KB]

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PAUL LEARY (THE COCKY BIT)

After the release of "Mercy", there are no doubts that The Cocky Bitches would follow their debut release, by one more. More shocking, more powerful, containing a sort of occult energy, bursting out of the record, like massive blood flow from a spurting artery.

The band started as a project, after future vocalist of The Cocky Bitches - Baroness Formica left a modeling career and started playing with the drummer of cult post-grunge band "Cold" - Sam McCandless. After some time, Paul Leary joined the new collective and the band finally formed. No doubt that trio had chemistry. Rock-n-roll history is full of such cases: when Malcolm McLaren met The Sex Pistols, when Morrissey met Johnny Marr. We can say the same about The Cocky Bitches. The trio could save the dynamics of psycho-grungecore and then, immediately move over to more soft motives. And back again, riding an endless rollercoaster.

Peek-A-Boo got a unique chance to speak with legendary guitarist and one of the members of The Cocky Bitches - Paul Leary. In the interview for the magazine Paul told us about the recording of "Mercy" and his background with Butthole Surfers, about the future plans with The Cocky Bitches and his approach to the work, about today's music and the place of feelings in his creativity.



You made your name with The Cocky Bitches last year, releasing your first single "TV's OK". But can you say how everything started? Was it in a recent jam or something more...?

About a decade ago Sam (McCandless) and Baroness (Formica) approached me to produce a song they had written as a two-piece band called "Damn Baby". I liked the song so much that I asked to play on it, which led to me worming my way into their band. We spent the next few years recording stuff in a space we had rented in Austin. It was a fun time, reminding me of how I liked to "rehearse" with Butthole Surfers back in the day. Eventually we had recorded enough stuff to put an album together.

If we summarise all the years in Butthole Surfers and The Cocky Bitches we could say that you were never afraid of experimentation. But as a composer can you say that you strain to create a kind of contrast in your music...a disbalance?

These kinds of questions always amuse me! I like a lot of different kinds of music, so I am influenced by a lot of different music. But I never try to do something when I create music. Music is an outlet through which to express the essence of your soul. The only thing that I'm ever trying to do with music is to get something off my mind, like going to the bathroom. It is not a product at the moment of conception. It may eventually become a product but it cannot start out as a product. Not in my world, anyway. And here I am in another situation working with musicians that pour forth as I do, so that the essence that pours out is that of a group with a common core that threads us together. We are able to speak as one, and so we do.

But of course there are lots of classifications of things you've been doing. Butthole Surfers is usually classified as psychedelic rock band. As a musician and member of this band, have you ever sensed your creativity as a form of expansion of mind? Or for you this was more an expansion of musical standards?

I don't consider it an expansion of the mind at all. More like cutting a tumor out of my brain. And I have no musical standards. In fact, the concept of music kind of pisses me off. It is in my head always, I cannot turn it off. Sometimes I just wish it would stop. I cannot enjoy listening to music unless I am creating it myself or producing it for others. If I hear a song on the radio that I like, I usually turn it off and continue listen to it in my mind. It's all there, stored in neural analog. My mind has a jukebox that I cannot unplug. I do not make

CHES, BUTTHOLE SURFERS)

music for others to enjoy, I make it for myself to enjoy. If it generates some income for me to live off of, great. But I cannot be successful doing that unless I am not trying to do that. It is all selfish and somehow based on mathematics. The mastery of the mathematics progresses over time, it is only natural.

I can't help but ask you about your gigs. First of all because people who ever attended your shows continue saying that Butthole Surfers are the most powerful and shocking band ever!...even after many years. So fire, naked girls...all this helter skelter...was it a part of one big idea or just one big impulse you felt being on the stage?

There was never an idea. We were just having fun creating the kind of spectacle that we would want to see and hear for ourselves. I remember back in 1996, I was at home asleep in my bed. I woke up at three in the morning with the TV on, and it was showing a concert with mayhem noise and smoke and flames and flashing lights and images and explosions. I immediately perked up and thought: "Ya, now THAT is rock show!" And then I realized that I was watching a Butthole Surfers show that was taped somewhere! So we were just doing what we liked. Music is like a fart - everybody likes their own.

You made a lot of effort to break this stereotype about the band. Probably that's the reason people call Butthole Surfers "the weirdest band ever" but as an artist and performer do you think it's important to break the stereotypes?

No. Butthole Surfers were not trying to break stereotypes. If anything, we were trying to be all of the different kinds of things that we like as fans of music. We were probably trying to achieve too many stereotypes at the same time to successfully fit into any single one. The only thing that is important is being compelling. Every musician likes their own music. It is a blessing when someone else likes it, too. But also, there are a lot of humans on this planet. If I like something, there is likely to be many others out there that also like it. We were pretty un-likable, and yet some people liked us. Sometimes its people that scare me. Sometimes I scare myself!

When you focus on experiments, music always seems to have an ambiguous character. First of all because the main benchmark in the creative process are things you feel. So as an artist, can you say that you try to elicit some concrete emotions in your listeners?

Music is all about emotion. It is the product of emotion. I have an older cousin who is a computer genius and worked for many years at a major tech firm developing artificial intelligence. One day he told me about something his company had developed, which was software that writes music. He asked me how I felt about computers being able to compose music without human input. I told him the project would be pointless unless they could program their computers to feel pain and joy. They can't. But that is what it would take. That is where music comes from. When it is crafted in a good way, it allows others to experience the emotion of the creator. So it isn't that we are trying to elicit some concrete emotions, but rather we are trying to elicit those emotions in ourselves. I cannot allow myself to consider how others will react or not react.

At the beginning of your work, you were majorly influenced by psychedelic rock. While at the period of "Independent Worm Saloon" your sound became more hard. So talking about "Mercy" can you tell us, what is the uniqueness of this record for you?

We have a new cast of characters in this band and because we are a three-piece band, each member has to have something powerful to bring to the table. There were aspects to Butthole Surfers that, over time, became practically unbearable for me. Sometimes the expectations of fans can start to creep into the process, and it can be difficult to ignore. And maybe band members start to wander into areas that other band members find uncomfortable. The Cocky Bitches are starting with a blank slate and that can feel liberating. It does feel liberating. (...)

The internet has become the main information source, changing a lot for the musical industry. Nowadays, musicians put their stress to a PR-company then to touring activity and self-development. But for lots of veterans of music "being a musician" is synonymous to Kerouac's "being on the road". So according to your opinion, is it hard to be in the band today?

I don't know how bands make it today. I doubt the Butthole Surfers would make it today. I don't know how things work, and I probably never did. I hope The Cocky Bitches can carve out a sustainable existence, but I have no formula for success. Yes, it is hard to be in a band today. It has always been hard, and necessarily so. If it wasn't hard, everyone would do it. Someone has to get the work done in this world. I'm just glad it isn't me.

Dan VOLOHOV
(complete interview on www.peek-a-boo-magazine.be)

THE BLADES

The band The Blades are the real-deal, the working class heroes of Dublin's inner city, Ireland's answer to The Clash, a punk band with possibilities who could crossover to a wider appeal, for a time the only Irish band that mattered. From the beginning The Blades were not carving the same conventional route as U2 who, at the start were sticking with the same well-pioneered rock sound of the day, instead The Blades were embracing the sounds of; Mod, Ska, New Wave and combining them with the raw-anst punk sound that was already in place and well honed (...) The following is a brief questions and answer session with Paul Cleary surrounding his experiences of the time, the music and the band.

What was the biggest influence on the music of The Blades?

Definitely the D.I.Y. ethic of the punk explosion gave myself and my brother Lar the belief that there was nothing to stop working-class lads like us forming a band and writing our own songs, even though, to be honest, we really didn't have a clue on how or where to start. In terms of musical influences we loved The Pistols, Jam and Clash, as well as being immersed - via my Dad's record collection - in the music of The Beatles, Buddy Holly, Ella Fitzgerald, Burt Bacharach etc. Lar was also a big fan of Hank Williams, Merle Haggard, and Gram Parsons, I loved Motown and Philly Soul while Pat (our drummer) was a big fan of Slade and other loud pop music of that nature. So looking back now it seems that between the three of us we had soaked up most of what was good out there even before 'punk' ever happened. With those type of influences we were more than ready to go once we decided to get instruments, get serious, and get out there!

What are the best memories you have of the music scene in Dublin in the mid 70s?

There was a great sense of camaraderie and community between the bands, Dublin was - and, in a way still is - a small town, so everyone got to know the other bands and their members very quickly, of course there was 'competition' too, but nothing nasty, everyone knew everyone else's business and if someone needed to borrow an instrument, or even a musician, there was always help when needed. Also the people who came to the gigs, particularly in the early days, were very knowledgeable and I had some great conversations, and learned a lot, from talking to people before and after we played. As well as that there were journalists and enthusiasts such as: Karl Tsigidinos, Tony Clayton-Lea and

(the late) George Byrne who wrote some good reviews, but even more importantly told us face-to-face that we, The Blades were a great band with great potential and should keep pushing no matter what. When you're a shy, insecure 18-year-old songwriter, that type of support and encouragement is invaluable. We had some great gigs in The Magnet Bar in Pearse Street, Dublin, it was just down the road from our homes in Ringsend, so we felt very comfortable in that particular venue. It was very small and very sweaty but we loved it and I'm pretty sure the crowd did too as we very quickly built up a fan base of regulars who came every week without fail. I used to compile cassette tapes of my favourite songs to play after the support band played and before we came on, the idea was to try to create a type of 'club' atmosphere similar to a Northern Soul meet or something of that nature. It was a magic time, we had our hopes and dreams ahead of us.....Those were the days!

How did the band keep their momentum between the release of the first single 'Hot For You' and the album finally five years later in 1985?

It wasn't easy when Pat (Larkin) our original drummer left the band, but myself and Lar were hooked at that stage and so were grimly determined to continue. Pat's leaving triggered a series of changes, firstly Jake came in to replace Pat, we were so lucky to have found Jake who not only was a great drummer but a fan of the band and therefore knew most of the songs before we had our first rehearsal. Then I decided to switch from bass to guitar, so we needed a bass player, again we were so lucky to recruit Brian who had previously played with one of my favourite Irish bands The Vipers. But personally I found it very difficult when my brother Lar left the band around '81/'82, even though we didn't always see eye to eye, I always looked up to him and sought his approval whenever I wrote a new song or had an idea for a photo-shoot, video or basically anything to do with the band. I needed his imprimatur, which he always gave without rancour. I knew it would be impossible to 'replace' Larry with another guitarist so I decided to take a different route and look for a trumpeter and a trombonist - enter Frank Duff and Paul Grimes, two gifted musicians with great professional attitudes and easy to work with, affable personalities - I was also very taken with the sound of Dexy's Midnight Runners and thought we could change direction slightly using the brass to play opening riffs which would also bring me closer to the music of Motown and Stax which I always loved and always wanted, in some way, to try to emulate. With all the above happening over a period



Photo © Conor Ryan

of two or three years, it really was the blink of an eye from taking our first tentative steps into Rampart Studios South London - where 'Quadrophenia' was recorded - to make 'Hot For You' in 1980.....'blink'.....to 1984 Livingston Studios in Wood Green, North London to record our debut album 'The Last Man In Europe'.

Do you think by 1986 that The Blades as a band achieved what they set out to do?

Genuinely not sure if we had any specific goals as such, at the beginning we were just high on the improbability of it all, and were waiting for someone to tap us on the shoulder to say: "Right, you've had your fun, back to reality now, and smarten yourself up". As I said in my previous answer, each year just flew by and we never really sat down to take stock of achievements accomplished or ambitions realised. I do remember queuing to see local band The Vipers playing McGonagles in Dublin and saying to my brother Larry that perhaps one day we'll have a queue of enthusiastic people outside a venue waiting to see The Blades, I think Lar said 'Maybe', but not in a negative way. Cut to months later and the three of us - Lar, Pat and myself - are heading in to The Magnet Bar Pearse Street after the soundcheck in Pat's old 'Gas Company' car to play our regular Friday night slot, our crowds were growing in numbers at that stage and we were getting better and more confident on stage. Anyway, there was a traffic diversion on Ringsend Road/Pearse Street, wasn't there always, and Pat had to drive around the back of the venue and make his approach

via a narrow laneway at the side of The Magnet. Lo and behold, what did we see but a very large queue going right down the side of the laneway as we passed we looked at each other, more in shock than anything else, no one said anything 'cause we were so stunned to see a crowd queuing to see us, but I think it was then that I thought that maybe, just maybe, The Blades had a chance after all

Do you think the failure of bands at the time, not only The Blades, to break the mass market was purely down to the record companies and promotion?

That's a hugely difficult question to answer, I'm really not sure why/how some bands 'break the mass market' and some, like The Blades, don't. The obvious thing to say is that if you're good enough then you'll 'make it', but that's probably too simplistic a statement. Of course it would suit my purposes to blame our lack of success on the vagaries of the perfidious music industry, though the real truth is that I just don't know why some bands succeed where others don't, I don't think anyone does.....even those who are paid to know. There's a well-known quote about the movie business by screenwriter William Goldman which I think is easily applicable to the music business: 'Nobody knows anything'.

www.facebook.com/thebladesofficialpage
www.bandpage.com/TheBladesmusic

Kevin BURKE

WHISPERING SONS - Image (CD/LP/Digital)

(PIAS)



Do they still need an intro? Whispering Sons is a Belgian post-punk band, which evolved in two years from a group of teenagers who enjoyed music in a rehearsal room, to a band without equal (...) Great music, the front woman Fenne, whose deep voice you would not expect when you see her appear on a stage, but who, with a sincere nonchalance and without any difficulty, makes a resounding voice for this genre. In comparison with previous work, her voice seems to sound even deeper than before (...) Whispering Sons seem to have found their way, staying in the intense darkness (...) As far as it was still necessary for Whispering Sons to 'prove' themselves, Image is again a masterpiece. These young snakes have already gathered many audiences and this album will open even more doors... [JB]

TRAGEDY OF MINE - Tenebris (CD)

(Out Of Line)



This is old-school Death Metal taking itself into a new era, Tragedy Of Mine have come out fighting with an impressive display in 'Tenebris', an album which builds on the best points of the genre while keeping a melodic sound running through the ten tracks. The album is the band's first full length effort and is a positive display as it is relentless, executed with precision with shades of more Limp Bizkit than Lamp Of God in-places, but this only makes for a more interesting affair (...) The growling demonic vocal of masked frontman Steffen Bunke is superb and very direct, whereas the rest of the band work as a perfectly calibrated machine, flawless in delivery (...) Steffen Bunkes has a rage which is staggering, this is the sound of the early part of the century given a much updated injection of style (...) this band use or maybe over-use the soaring chorus technique (...) making the tracks more accessible to a wider audience and not just fans of hardcore metal ... [KB]

FROSTTIDE - Decedents - Enshrined (2CD)

(Out Of Line)



Frosttide is a three-piece melodic folk metal band from Finland and was founded in 2009. After a couple of EPs (Dawn Of Frost, Our Journey) and two albums (Awakening 2013, Blood Oath 2015) they are back with their debut release on Out Of Line: Decedents - Enshrined. We all know Finland has already brought us a lot of metal bands in the past. Frosttide is said to be influenced by Insomnium, Moonsorrow, Wintersuen and Amorphis but still manages to maintain its own twist, for example by means of decent song structures. On this 2CD digi-pack release we get a nice collection of songs and in addition to the original tracks, we also get the pure instrumental versions as a gift (...) This album, originally released as an EP, has been remastered and became a very solid, varied piece of work (...) Even if metal is not your thing, the beauty of these Decedents - Enshrined will overwhelm you. [JB]

BROKEN EGO - Getting Higher (CD)

(Echozone)



There is still the tongue-in-cheek element in rock music which makes it both fun and listenable, what is presented here in the latest Broken Ego single 'Getting Higher' is the mixtures of good old 70s Glam-Rock with the heavy synth of the 80s under the spell of 'noughties' Brit-Pop, all good fun in the serious world in which we exist at the same time there is something very familiar here which and at times is what we look for. The four-piece band from Vienna, Austria have shed their dark, gothic image which surrounded them early on in their career and have traded up for a more sparkling image, in frontman Chris Ego they have the perfect vehicle to start hammering at the door of commercial acceptance (...) If this is a taste of their next long-player 'Avenue To Wonderland' then we are in for a very interesting ride ... [KB]

THE NAMES



Photo © Peter Staessens

The Names 40 Years: We're lucky to have everyone still alive and well, unlike many of our friends of Factory records.

40 years of new wave is also 40 years of The Names, the Belgian band that signed with the legendary Factory Records of Joy Division and New Order fame and had hits with 'Calcutta' and 'Nightshift'. The jubilee is celebrated with a grand anniversary concert with numerous surprises on 24 November in Drogenbos. Singer Michel Sordinia already lifted a tip of the veil for us...

'You celebrate your 40th anniversary this year. What feeling do you have when confronted with the fact that The Names are already 40 years old?

It's a very sweet confrontation, since The Names are still making recordings on a regular basis (every two years), and touring around Europe (next destination is Italy -again!- in March 2019). The feeling is: Let's celebrate! Let's share these emotions with our friends and our wonderful audience, who give us so much each time we are on stage somewhere!

To celebrate the jubilee, you will do a special anniversary concert: The Names in Quarantine. You have invited the original members from the line-up that recorded 'Swimming'. How easy was it to convince past members Christophe Den Tandt and Luc Capelle to participate, and how was it to work with them again after all those years?

I got everybody's enthusiastic response in no time. I was very moved by that. Last night (October the 29th), we just started rehearsing with the original line-up (Marc, Christophe, Luc and I). For the first time in 37 years... It was like we never stopped! Great music, great drive, very tight. And a lot of jokes like in those early years...

I heard you will play with the current line-up also. Will these be two separate shows, or will the musicians play together in one show?

There will be two separate sets, with totally different songs (no duplicate, each song played once by one

(Continued p. 34)

THE NAMES

(Continuation p. 33)

of the two line-ups). But with a few (big) surprises awaiting you...

Even more spectacular is the reunion of The Passengers, the punk band that preceded The Names from 1977 to 1978. It must have been difficult not only to reform the band, but also to learn the old songs again, which I presume you haven't played for a long time...

Like with The Names, everybody was immediately enthusiastic. Of course we're lucky to have everyone still alive and well. Sadly, so many died among our friends at Factory records and also here in Belgium (there will be a tribute to them during the concert)... When we started playing together again, it clicked just like in a dream. The songs were like pristine, waiting to be played again. It gave me shivers down my spine. Very emotional moments. With Isabelle singing as if time didn't exist.

With The Passengers, you even recorded some of the old material. Two singles will be released by Les Disques du Crépuscule: 'All Through The Night' and 'Queen Of Weird'. Can you tell us more about these records?

My idea of recording with the band (something that we sadly didn't do back in the 1970s, except for a demo) was welcomed by James Nice, who manages

both Factory Benelux (releasing recordings of The Names) and Les Disques du Crépuscule labels. So the two singles in limited edition and in colored vinyl (one clear, one red) will be released on Crépuscule the day before the concert. The recording happened in June at our regular "lair", Noise Factory studio in Wierde, near Namur. With Thomas Neidhardt at the mixing desk and in a very "analogic" spirit (no effect, no overdub, like if we were recording in 1977/1978). There are four original songs, three old ones ("All Through The Night", "New Life", "Danger Zone") and a brand new one that I wrote in the spirit of those early days: "Queen of Weird". Certainly one of the very best songs I ever wrote.

To complete the jubilee, there will also be an exhibition with work from Philippe Carly, Marcus Portée and Peter Staessens. Why did you decide to include their photos in the event?

Philippe, Marcus and Peter are not only our dear friends, they are very talented artists, who have tons of fantastic pictures of The Names both then and now. I could not imagine the event without them and their pictures!

www.facebook.com/thenamesmusic
www.thenames.be
Xavier KRUTH



Photo © Peter Staessens



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calendar

- 10.01 VELOCROSS (INDIE POST-PROG, F) @ Highway To Hell, Liège [BE] Garcimore / Brotox / Avesta Noise Trio
11.01 0KONTROL (ATOMWAVE) FREE @ L'escobar V 2.0, Tournai [BE]
12.01 LA MUERTE + DOOL + HANGMAN'S CHAIR @ Ancienne Belgique, 1000 Brussels [BE]
19.01 CLUB NEW WAVE #25 - FACE/OFF EDITION @ La Bodega, Brussels [BE] Level I: Underground (new Wave)
Djs: Richard 23 (front 242) | Wildhoney (new Wave Club Class-x) | Hatecraft (addams Family) Level II: 80s
(pop) Djs: Chacha Aka Public Relation (theatro, Vizio, Fifty Five) | Vinavil (cargo 80)
19.01 CURSE OF THE VAMPIRE (GOTH/WAVE) @ L'esc-o-bar, Tournai [BE] Avec Dj Darkalan & Dj Punkhomer
19.01 EVENT @ Popoi, Eindhoven [NL] Zwaremachine(usa), Non-alignment Pact(nl), 32 Ohm(nl)
24.01 ZWAREMACHINE (USA) @ Kir, Hamburg [DE] Minimal Hypnotic Industrial Body Music - Minneapolis Usa
26.01 MIXED VISIONS - THE 16TH ELECTRO & INDUSTRIAL TOP 100 @ Den Aalmozenier, Antwerp [BE]
26.01 DOWNHILL XIII NEW YEARS EDITION @ Poppodium Nieuwe Nor, Heerlen [NL] Henric De La Cour (s) .
Portion Control (u.k.) . Fix8:séd8 (d.e) . Zwaremachine (u.s.) . Katharoi (nl)
02.02 NEW WAVE PARTY VI @ Zaal De Klijpe, Ronse [BE] Dj's : Vanonoise, Xavier, Maxalto, The Master
09.02 BUNKERLEUTE - TOP 100 @ Musicafé, Leuven [BE] Doors: 21h Damage 3.5€ < 23h < 6€ < 02h < 3€
15.02 NEW WAVE - ROCK @ L'esc-o-bar, Tournai [BE] New Wave, Cold Wave, Post-punk, Punk, Gothic Rock ...
16.02 MEANDER + MAD MAGUS @ B52 Music Club, Eernegem [BE] Mixture Of Post-rock, Hardcore, ...
23.02 INTERNATIONAL EBM DAY @ De Casino, St-niklaas [BE] The Swedish Edition with: Wulfband (First Time
In Belgium!), Alvar, No Sleep By The Machine, Severe Illusion + Ebm/wave/industrial Party With DJ BORG.
23.02 THEN COMES SILENCE [S] THE FOREIGN RESORT [DK] TRAITS [CA] @ Spillestedet Stengade,
Copenhagen [DK] + After Party With Djs.
02.03 WINTER STOMP V8 @ Panoptikum, Kassel [DE] With Dive, The Juggernauts, Jäger 90, Severe Illusion,
& Zweite Jugend.
08.03 LARVA (SP) + VUDUVOX (FR-BE) + PARTY NEW WAVE WITH DJ GONDRAND @ Le Garage Créative Liège
09.03 PORTA WOOL-E - 10 YEARS WOOL-E SHOP @ De Klinker, Aarschot [BE] 10 Years Wool-e Shop With:
Hatchling, Der Klinker, A Slice Of life & Dead High Wire ...
09.03 NEW WAVE CLUB CLASS-X @ Stadsfeestzaal, Aarschot [BE] with Dj Wildhoney
16.03 E-TROPOLIS FESTIVAL @ Turbinenhalle, Oberhausen [DE] Die Krupps * Velvet Acid Christ * Apoptygma
Berzerk * Suicide Commando * Solar Fake * Welle:erdball * [sitt:] * [x]-rx * Centhron * Priest * Future Lied
To Us * Synth Attack * Es23 * Rroyce
16.03 DAVE'S CLASSIX SPECIAL @ Kukuun, Hamburg [DE] Double-release-party Mit Age Zero Zweite Jugend
30.03 BLACK PLANET'S TJDLOZE NEW WAVE 100 @ De Kelk, Brugge [BE]
30.03 DARKEST NIGHT 2019 @ Jk2470 Retie, Retie [BE] Ft Zweite Jugend, Pro Patria, The Juggernauts &
Tension Control 04.04 OUT OF LINE WEEKENDER - DAY 1 @ Astra Kulturhaus, Berlin [DE]
05.04 OUT OF LINE WEEKENDER - DAY 1 @ Astra Kulturhaus, Berlin [DE] with Kriam Camera, A Split-Second,
The Juggernauts, Motor!k , Any Second, Priest, Chrom.
05.04 OUT OF LINE WEEKENDER - DAY 2 @ Astra Kulturhaus, Berlin [DE] with Eskimo Callboy, Hocico, Erdling
Blind Channel, Fear of Domination, Rave The Requiem ...
06.04 OUT OF LINE WEEKENDER - DAY 3 @ Astra Kulturhaus, Berlin [DE] with Dark Tranquillity, Die
Apokalyptischen Reiter, Evergrey, Bloodred Hourglass, Frosttide, Xenobligh, ...
12.04 NEON ELECTRONICS + SIMI NAH @ De Kreun, Kortrijk [BE] 10 Years Wool-e Shop With: Neon Electronics
(electro/ebm) (b/e) ***cd-presentation*** Simi Nah (electro/synthpop/nouvelle Vague) (b/f) ***presentation +
20.04 BLACK EASTER FESTIVAL DAY 1 @ TBA, [BE] Daemonia Nympe, The Breath Of Life, Evi Vine + tba
In Memory Of Ward De Prins (r.i.p.) co-founder Of Peek-a-boo Magazine & Black Easter Festival
20.04 HERTALS ROCK CITY @ Het Hof, Herentals [BE] Lizzie and the Banshees Erik Invaders M Amortisseur.
21.04 BLACK EASTER FESTIVAL DAY 2 @ TBA [BE] With Goethes Erben, Hackedepiccio (feat. Alexander
Hacke Of Einsturzende Neubauten), Jo Quail + More tba
18.05 NEW WAVES DAY III @ Turbinenhalle, Oberhausen [DE] Peter Hook & The Light, Gang Of Four,
Chameleonsvox, Pink Turns Blue, And Also The Trees, In2thesound, Then Comes Silence, The Arch.
18.05 BUNKERLEUTE - DARK UNDERGROUND PARTY @ Musicafé, Leuven [BE] Entrance: 22h Sacrifice € 3.5
01.06 LIEGE NEW WAVE TRIBUTE FESTIVAL @ Maison Du Peuple Flémalle, Flémalle 4400 [BE] Curiosity
Play The Cure, Permanent Play Joy Division, Mistress Of Jersey Play The Sisters Of Mercy ...
19.07 CALL THE SHIP TO THE PORT @ Ms Rheinenergie, Köln [DE] Mesh + Solar Fake + Diorama
20.07 AMPHI FESTIVAL XV @ Amphi Eventpark / Tanzbrunnen, Köln [DE] In Extremo + Nitzer Ebb + Lord Of
+ The Lost + Nachtmahr + Unzucht + L'Amé Immortelle Welle: Erdball + Das Ich + Samsas Traum +
21/07 Faderhead + Solitary Experiments + Haujobb + Chrom + The Beauty Of Gemina Janus + Rabia Sorda +
Pink Turns Blue + The Cassandra Complex Ost+front + Spark! + Henric De La Cour + Agent Side Grinder
Massive Ego + Dive + Holygram + Cryo + Jäger 90 Hearts Of Black Science + Seadrake + Fix8:séd8 Logic
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