



# MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL REVIEWS #507

AUGUST 2025

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## MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

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This issue contains 115 reviews, contributed by:

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## THE COUNTERFORCE

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## YES FLAG – Grand Bystander LP

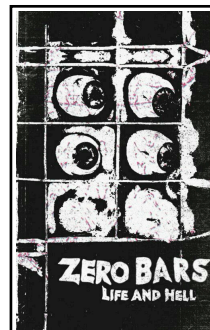
This is well-recorded pop punk, and the songs are exactly what you'd expect—just like DOC HOPPER, the A.G.'S, the ERGS!, TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET, CHIXDIG-GIT, CLEATUS, BOUNCING SOULS, a couple of those ALL records, and such. This is a perfect record if you have a crush, are getting dumped, wanna ask a person if they like you as much as you like them, are bummed about a pal that is dating a person you like, are bummed about the people you let down, are being hurt, are giving up on a crush, are remembering what being kids was like, are paying too much to see a band you like, and so on, all done in a sing-along way. This is a solid record, and hits on all the MXPX and DESCENDENTS points that it should for a first date. Also, there are sixteen tracks on here. So go ahead and listen to the linked song, add fifteen more to that, and there you go.



Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Moms Basement

## ZERO BARS – Life and Hell cassette

Toronto three-piece ZERO BARS cranked out six songs of tight punk rock'n'roll on their *Life and Hell* cassette, with most clocking in under the two-minute mark but landing with plenty of bite. The first few tracks show up like a slightly less feral DEAN DIRG or MARKED MEN, all forward motion and sweaty basement show vibes. Then they flip the script with "Prove It"—taking a jab at the high cost of seeing these legacy punk acts—and "House Arrest," both of which flirt with harmonics and channel a post-punk-adjacent feel. Things wrap up with a legit cover of the CRUCIFUCKS' "Mountain Song" that sticks the landing. The audio sounds great and the playing is rock solid. The tape left me wanting more. Check out "Nervous Wire."



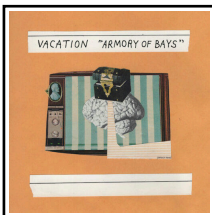
Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: self-released

fact cool to give a shit. Now, fast forward 41 years and here we are in motherfuckin' 2025, once again coming together to raise profits for a cause: the heinous terrorizing and starvation of Palestinians at the hands of completely unchecked world powers and their all too apathetic peers. It's beyond the pale, to put it mildly, as anyone with eyes, ears, and a smartphone could tell you. And while I feel significantly less qualified to give a comprehensive history lesson on the subject, I have no problem saying that ignorance and non-action is not an option. So what can you do? Well, amongst many other things, you can skip the latte and buy a copy of War Bad's *Still No P.E.A.C.E. Still War* comp. With an ethos that follows in the footsteps of the aforementioned '84 P.E.A.C.E. comp, War Bad brings together a who's-who of today's best punk bands to support a cause that takes the brutal Palestinian genocide head on. Each of the 22 bands featured here have reputations that proceed them both sonically and in their clear-eyed messaging, providing a near-perfect snapshot of today's punk scene that could only be made stronger if this thing were double (or even triple) the length. From the ghastly urgency of SPIRITO DI LUPO's opening to the all-out attack of WARTHOG's "Iron Fist" cover, this thing is a beast of a sampler platter that I would gladly serve up to anyone interested in getting into punk music in 2025. Time will tell if it holds the same place in hearts and minds that the '84 P.E.A.C.E. comp did, but regardless, its impact will surely be felt for years to come. Dictor's idea behind the '84 P.E.A.C.E. compilation was to show how prevalent hardcore culture had become across the globe and how its raw music and leftist politics could be harnessed to create something that is much, much more than the sum of its parts. That is in essence what *Still No P.E.A.C.E. Still War* is: a spiritual predecessor that once again shows how the alleged "fringe" of society can come together for a good cause. Because it is in fact cool to give a shit.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: War Bad

## VACATION / WHIPPETS – split 7"

Up first on this split is VACATION from Cincinnati with a fun, rock'n'roll-driven sound on "Armory of Bays." Heavy drum and bass propel a perfectly crunchy rhythm guitar with a tinkling, clean lead over powerful and rich vocals that sound like Paul Weller from *In the City*—era the JAM. I really like this one, and am excited to look back on their fifteen years of making music together. Next, we have WHIPPETS from Wisconsin, who put out their self-titled debut LP just last year. This is a group comprised of members from the HUSSY, TENEMENT, and PONEY, to name a few. Their contribution to this split, "C-Thru," also has a fun rock vibe, with some really great riffing under creepy-crawly vocals singing "Hey you / See through" drawn out through the chorus. The ending picks up quite a bit, with a heavy rhythm, death screams, and fuzzed-out guitars. Great complimentary split from some Midwestern heavy-hitters.



Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Nomad Eel

## WAR//PLAGUE – The Rot Thickens LP

In our day and age when bands often don't last longer than two years, I am always astonished that WAR//PLAGUE has kept it going for so long. I distinctly remember when I got their first EP and have more or less followed them since, sometimes from afar as I must admit I did not get into all their releases, but I am always happy and relieved to see they're still at it (a bit like that old friend you bumped into every five years and are relieved to see that he's still a punk), and it makes sense that fate attributed their new LP *The Rot Thickens* (what a sadly relevant title) to me for review. The WAR//PLAGUE gents are old school punks raised on '90s and '00s DIY anarcho crust-punk, so you know you'll be offered honest punk music, and that is the case here. The band is back to dark, metallic crust bordering on stenchcore on this one, reminiscent of Minneapolis crust anti-heroes MISERY and early HELLSHOCK, but also faster, "blackened" (I dislike the term, but it makes sense here) hardcore crust, not unlike MARTYRDÖD maybe? I find the album pretty solid, classic in terms of songwriting and riffs too, and I believe that's when the band is at its best, as a resilient old school metal crust unit with something to say.

Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: Phobia

## WESLEY & THE BOYS – Rock & Roll Ruined My Life LP

Coming out of Nashville with a natural cool and a penchant for clever titles, WESLEY & THE BOYS lay down some first-wave-tinted garage boogie on their debut foot-long. There's plenty of fun to be had within these eleven energetic tracks, with relatable themes like being an asshole and being in the car. With their sooty rock swing and punky take on classic R&B grooves, I can't help but be reminded of the VIBRATORS all over the place here, which is some divine inspiration. Count WESLEY & co. among the sharpest of the modern-day sunglasses and stripes set.

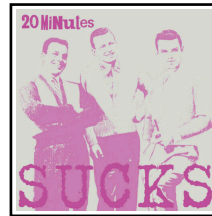
Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Sweet Time



## 20 MINUTES – Sucks LP

A dozen buzzing garage gut-punches here from the picturesque city of Domodossola. 20 MINUTES continues the lineage of stone-cold rock'n'roll that can be traced all the way back to the STOOGES, in the vein of its re-emergence with a fresh coat of paint in the '90s. Injecting a bit of delicious pop into the formula, the band achieves a sharp and barreling sound that falls somewhere between Germany's (excellent) KÜKEN and fellow Italian punks the DICK DASTARDLYS. The resulting record rips, with tunes like "You Die" and "Payment" that would fit perfectly in a mix with the finest of golden-era bangers like TV KILLERS and the SPLASH 4. Ace shit.

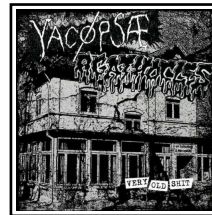
Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Venti3



## AGATHOCLES / YACÖPSAE – Very Old Shit split LP

No false advertising here, this is indeed very old shit from both bands. The YACÖPSAE side is remarkably consistent in recording quality for a collection of 30-plus-year-old tracks, though you are going to get way more of a "mid-'80s German hardcore punk band in the practice room" feeling than you will their insane, speed-obsessed final form. There's a couple songs that set foot into the blastbeat zone and scream of things yet to come, but overall, you get a lot more punky *tupa-tupa* than you see from the lads these days. Being firmly in the YACÖPSAE camp in terms of preference, I enjoyed their side way more. I found it interesting hearing their shit to become what we all know them to be, and that I just found less compelling. Overall, this is for the diehards, kind of inessential truth be told, but maybe something people interested in the history of the bands or with a love of that "we brought a boombox to record our band practice" sound will find value in.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Power It Up



## AGUR – Hil Egingo Zara LP

Not every band can pull off the clean guitar sound without losing something in translation, but AGUR manages the feat. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that it adds a certain bite to the top end that helps the riffs cut through the mix. It's also a smart move because it allows the guitar to recede when needed, like when the bass player is going the fuck off, which isn't a rare occurrence on this album. Throw in some snotty vocals and you've got a solid foundation for some memorable '77-style punk with a garage rock bent. These tunes are frankly infectious, driven by major chord melodies and upbeat tempos. AGUR may venture to implement a piano or saxophone here and there, but even still they keep it lean and stay right in the pocket. I didn't think this would be my cuppa tea, but I keep returning for repeat listening cause it's just a fun and easy album to toss on.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Tough Ain't Enough



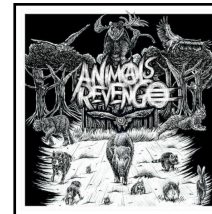
## AMARGAO – Amargao demo cassette

High-energy, high-end ear-splitting garage hardcore from Santiago, Chile. Serious US Midwest energy and focused sonic damage over the course of five songs—vocals damaged to oblivion and showy guitars treated to a wall of effects, while a blown-out rhythm section propels the entire experiment forward with a care-less urgency. A gloriously exhausting listen, highly recommended.  
Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Junko



## ANIMALS REVENGE – Invasión

No bullshit, just D-beat. Controlled chaos on this three-song blast from Tijuana—their dis-attack feels like it's on the edge of collapse at all times, the tension that results is like a drug, and I'm trying to get fucked up listening to this shit. More, please. The closer "Perro Tráfico" is a short and restrained number that closes the release in the most brutal manner; this is the mid-tempo dis-banger that is supposed to (if you're following the formula) come in the middle of the first side of the album before the band really unleashes. But here? It's the end. So I'm not just wanting more at the end, my mind is demanding more at the end. Total fuckn dis-banger of the highest order, highly recommended.





Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Exabrupto

### ANTICITIZEN – Take to the Streets LP

Is it weird to think that this band is mis-marketing themselves? From the spikes and the spiked hair and the pictures of them snarling at the camera with spiked wrist bands, I feel like they want to be a street punk band, but they are more than that, and better than that, methinks.

They are from New Jersey, and I love New Jersey, from the mountains, the Delaware Water Gap, Princeton Record Exchange, Pine Barrens, and the Jersey City and Newark areas, but I'm not sure which part these guys are from. This could be a great hardcore record, like NAUSEA, DEAD SILENCE, CELEBRITY MURDERS, or some of the fast BORN AGAINST songs. But then ANTICITIZEN will self-sabotage with "Drink, Smoke, Fuck, Die!" if only because it doesn't fit in with the more penetrating and thoughtful approach of the prior four songs. Some of the standouts are "Blood Money" and "They Live, We Sleep." I've never been a fan of songs about "punk" or being "punk," the same way I don't care about a country band talking about how they are so totally country because of their "beer, dog, truck, or (insert your best)," and this record does have a few of those songs. However, if you get past the easy stuff and dig into the songs like "100 Seconds" or "Industrialized Sacrifice," then you'll find a pretty great and thoughtful New Jersey/New York hardcore record that maybe should have been seven songs instead of twelve. But dang, those seven songs are rippers for the ages and could go one-on-one against some of the greats.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Wiseass

### APPALOOSA – Of Human Bondage 7"

Fun, one-track lather-cut that brings to mind a combination of TILT, the SMITHS, and SUGAR STEMS. Harkens back to an era when college radio ruled the underground. Sharp production and catchy song construction here. I just wish there was more to chew on.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: self-released



### AQUA TOFANA – Miroirs LP

Punky post-punk band with high-pitched screams sprinkled throughout. I loved how they manipulated different levels of sound from whispering vocals with cascading guitar to more outright screaming or layered vocals talking all at once; I felt thoroughly immersed throughout this whole album.

Reviewer: Emma Miller  
Label: Mascara Rocks

### AXON – Starving Dogs EP

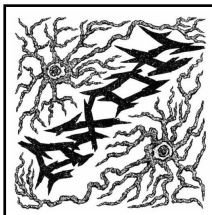
Ooooofff—bombastic and chaotic hardcore taken to another level by Virginia's AXON. Words like "relentless" get thrown around a lot, but the side break here comes as a very welcome respite after less than four minutes. The breakdown in "Industry" is fu\*kkn everything, and the rest of this record is literally everything else. Furious, intense, thunderous, fast, metallic, and relentless hardcore punk. If you have a black vest and you only listen to one new record this month? AXON.

Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Not For The Weak

### BILLIAM – Sylvie S Goes to Hawaii EP

The prolific BILLIAM is back again, this time with a quasi-concept EP. The A-side finds BILLIAM doing his version of an eggy MEAT LOAF, with a five-minute tale in mini movements about a vacation gone wrong. And sure, an "eggy meat loaf" might sound gross on paper, but it sounds great in the ears. While the A-side is one five-minute song, the B-side finds the inverse with five one-minute songs. Frenetic sounds that feel like they overheat and explode at any moment, but BILLIAM has it all under control. Fans of the storied, modern Australian sounds like 1-800-MIKEY and TEE VEE REPAIRMANN will of course feel right at home here.

Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Jarama 45RPM



### THE UNKNOWNNS – East Coast Low LP

One of these days you're going to read a review of an Australian release where things are panned, but that sure as hell isn't going to be today. Bringing to mind other brilliant Australian classics like the RIPTIDES and the EAST-ERN DARK, this album is a case study in how a foundation of good taste can take you far. These tracks are brimming with power pop hooks, pub rock call-and-response shouts, and classic punk energy. While the UNKNOWNNS include members of the CHATS, this is far from anything one might call a "side project," as the UNKNOWNNS have been cranking out hits with regularity for a decade.

Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Drunken Sailor

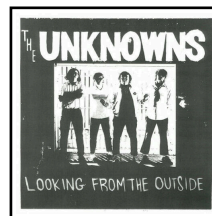
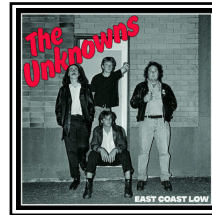
### THE UNKNOWNNS – Looking From the Outside LP

For lived-in, gritty power pop with a rock'n'roll spirit, you never have to look far past Australia. From the chugging downstroke riffs to the saturated full-throated vocals, this band knows what works and weaponizes it. Hooks galore and no shortage of riffs, all while embodying a timeless sort of cool that sells the whole affair. I sincerely hope bands never stop sounding like this, because it still sounds fresh even if it's arguably "retro." A song like "I Know That You Know" sounds like you grew up listening to it, and that's a major compliment. Rather than sound stale, this is a group that's keeping something alive that will always feel vital.

Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: Bargain Bin / Drunken Sailor

### TOTAL NADA – Aqui y Ahora 12"

You aren't even ready. You think you might know what's about to happen because you've heard TOTAL NADA before, but you aren't ready for this. The EPs are good, don't get me wrong (they're great, actually), it's just that TOTAL NADA has done something truly special on *Aqui y Ahora*. Blistering hardcore punk that compresses all of the bouncy energy that makes Spanish punk so unique and just makes it...more. It's faster, it's more intense, and it's more infectious than should be allowed. When they unleash, it's impossible to not hear the influence of the Italians, but TOTAL NADA do all of this without sounding like anything except themselves. They manage to do all of these things in "Punta De Lanza," but it's still impossible to isolate just one track here. Their sound feels realized,



they feel like a machine...now, what are they going to do next?!

Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: 11 PM / Discos Enfermos

### TOXIC RITES – Voice Hunger EP

Recorded back in 2023 and finally emerging into the light thanks to Symphony of Destruction, TOXIC RITES are back with four anthems clipped right out of the classic anarcho-punk hymn book. Shades of ANTHRAX, OMEGA TRIBE, and ZOUNDS color their sound, with surprisingly tuneful vocals. As one would expect, the lyrics are overtly political, but there's an introspection that adds a deeper dimension to the content. Taken with CAN KICKER's cassette from earlier this year, I'm hoping this is the beginning of a peace punk revival.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Symphony of Destruction

### TROPEL NAT – Demo 1989 LP

A remastered Barcelona crossover relic that still packs a bite. TROPEL NAT blended melodic vocals, metallic riffing, and hardcore velocity in a way that must've baffled punks in 1989. This reissue restores the grit while sharpening the edges, throwing in bonus cuts for collectors and nostalgia junkies. A must for Mediterranean punk archivists.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: BCore / El Forat / Little Jan's Hammer

### V/A – Still No P.E.A.C.E. Still War LP

When I first heard of War Bad's *Still No P.E.A.C.E. Still War* compilation, the infamous *International P.E.A.C.E. Benefit Compilation* (commonly referred to as the P.E.A.C.E. comp) immediately sprang to mind. For those unfamiliar, a brief rundown: the P.E.A.C.E. comp was put out in 1984 by MDC's Dave Dictor (in association with this very zine, MRR). It was a profoundly impactful album whose profits went towards various good causes including anti-nuclear groups, Food Not Bombs, and Greenpeace. It also featured a track list that included everyone from G.I.S.M. to WRETCHED to CRASS (and that was just on the A-side). It's endlessly cited as a musical entry point for people the world over, and remains an untouchable piece of punk history for its stellar lineup and its message that it is in

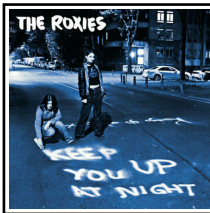




## THE ROXIES – Keep You Up at Night LP

Rock'n'roll outta Berlin that sounds a bit like if members of the REAL KIDS and the BEAT got together and recruited the singer from SUEDEHEAD to add some mod-like touches. There are some great moments to be found on this album, and those moments are usually when the tracks choose the higher end of the energy spectrum. Songs like "Animals" and "Feeling" do a great job of bending your ears and make you want to turn up the volume. The mid-tempo moments drag a bit, but the sequencing of the album lets you get one of those higher-energy pick-me-ups after plodding through the snoozers. An up-and-down affair, but the highs do a nice job of justifying the lows; worth digging through to find the diamonds.

Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Dirt Cult / Flight 13



## THE SLUGS – A Song for Every Feeling LP

I came into this record not familiar with the SLUGS, but from the first track it took me back to a time when I would listen to the MOLLY PEACHES and a bunch of lo-fi indie pop. Mind you, where the PEACHES were a little unhinged and wild, these two British girls are more cheeky and adorable in a very bedroom pop kind of way. One member plays drums, the other guitar/bass, and they both sing line for line with each other on basically every moment of the record. This approach, youthful songwriting mixed with clean, clear production, creates quite a bit of charm (and takes the whole thing out from under the lo-fi banner). The band didn't pull the album title out of their ass either: each song goes for a different feeling, even if sometimes they can be too precious to pinpoint what that feeling is aside from "cute." Still, there are some very catchy moments, interspersed with some clever bits that betray a band with more depth than one would initially assume them to have. The whole endeavor gave me an "I don't wanna grow up" feeling that I can certainly identify with, and though not the most memorable record I've heard, it's not forgettable either. I hate to use the term, and I use it as much as a compliment as it can be, but this record is nice. Just nice as hell. It's not gonna kick your ass/change your life and it may be a little too breezy, but goddamn, it's nice.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Related



## THE STICK FIGURES – Disturbance CD

As soon as the opening track on this collection of previously unreleased tracks from 1980–1982 kicked in, my ears perked right up. "The Other Myth" comes right in with some urgency, and I was so eager to hear where it would go, hoping it would continue to sound like "Ambivalence and Spark Plugs," the only single released by former Chicago new wave outfit IMMUNE SYSTEM. Unfortunately, the urgency that pulled me in gave way to more of a dreamy art pop that just felt too impactless. There is a certain curiosity that is enjoyable to explore here, as it feels a bit like stepping into a time capsule with these tracks being offered up for the first time in over forty years. But a lot of these tracks spend a bit too much time exploring their space, and the end product just doesn't seem to land. Should these tracks have stayed buried? No, no, nothing like that. But perhaps I was set up for failure expecting one thing right at the drop of the needle and only getting something else entirely.

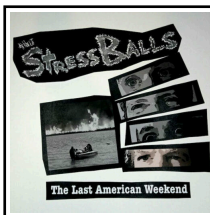
Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: self-released



## THE STRESS BALLS – The Last American Weekend LP

There's something terribly comforting about hearing punk bands that are dead-set on keeping old school spirit alive. These Bostonians are doing a little more than that, teetering into genre experimentation, such as on the garage-inflected "Stay Stupid," and bringing a *nouveau Oi!* flair to what is otherwise pretty straight-ahead, convincingly-played old school punk. The recording is satisfyingly lo-fi and the vocals have a great deal of character and grit to them. There's a surprising amount of breadth of style here, but overall, this is hook-filled punk you'd put on at a party—crowd-pleasing without being cloying or bone-headed. It's refreshing to hear a band having this much fun without feeling self-serving or corny. It's not going to change your life, but it might change your night. At eighteen tracks, it does slightly outstay its welcome, but in a time when most bands feel it fit to call it a day after a four-track EP that takes as many minutes to listen to, it feels counter-intuitive to criticize someone for having too many ideas.

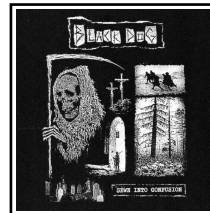
Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: Stuffys



## BLACK DOG – Sewn Into Confusion EP

This new EP from Halifax noizecrust fanatics might be the best five minutes you are going to spend this month. Sure, it might get you sent to Bedlam because doctors are bound to ask what sane person in their right mind would enjoy being subjected to such a D-beat raw noise punk assault? The answer is easy: punks of good taste, that's who. I was fortunate enough to review the band's first EP, and I am happy to announce that BLACK DOG haven't become a revival skacore band in the meantime. In fact, they sound even more ferocious, somewhere between D-CLONE at their most intense, FRIGÖRA, FRAMTID, and contemporary bands like PHYSIQUE, SCUMRAID, and others who wished they had been around at Final Noise Attack gigs in the '90s. *Sewn Into Confusion* is masterfully crafted by this crew of Halifax punks who just know how to be genuinely good at being genuinely noisy. I love how aggressive and direct the vocals sound, closer to Scandicore bands than the more extreme Japanese ones. If you don't like this kind of hardcore, this EP will not reconcile you with it, but if you do like it, it will make you love it even more.

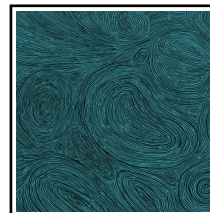
Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: Iron Lung



## BLANK WHEN ZERO – Stagna EP

BLANK WHEN ZERO's *Stagna* EP is a blistering four-song burst from this long-running hardcore trio out of Bingen, Germany. These tracks may be short—most clock in around two minutes—but they pack a sound that's weirdly massive. The singer's voice hits with a theatrical clarity that brings to mind the question "what if Michael Kiske's kid started a punk band?" and it mostly works. Picture the spirit of DRAGONFORCE filtered through a punk lens (with a tiny fraction of the production budget and none of the guitar showboating), rooted firmly in their progressive politics. My favorite track, "Momentaufnahme," is pure cardio for the drummer. This EP really grew on me after repeated listens. Maybe for fans of HELLOWEEN and PROPAGANDHI.

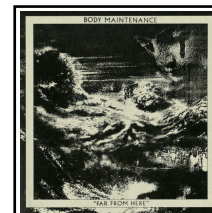
Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Keep It a Secret



## BODY MAINTENANCE – Far From Here LP

If you, like me, are just hearing of this Melbourne-based post-punk band, then listen up: BODY MAINTENANCE may become your latest obsession. This is their second LP, after 2023's *Beside You*—*Far From Here* stands up with '80s UK greats like *First and Last and Always* and *In the Flat Field*, with the vocal authority of *The Black Album*-era Dave Vanian. I hear lots of jangly acoustic guitar, keeping rhythm with the tom-heavy drums, under tragic electric riffs, soaring synths, and gurgling bass. The rhythms have a danceable gait to them, contrasting with the dark and downcast nature of the melodies and lyrics. This will easily make my year-end top ten list. Gripping, heartfelt, melancholic and bold.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Drunken Sailor



## BOMBARDEMENT – À L'ombre des Crassiers: Live LP

BOMBARDEMENT's live LP *À L'ombre des Crassiers*, recorded in Bordeaux as part of the Kick Rock Live Series, captures nine scorching tracks of what they cheekily describe as "adult-oriented D-beat." True to their name, this is an unrelenting assault—drums and bass locked into a pounding rhythm while the two guitarists peel off their own tangled, sometimes metallic freak-outs. The performance may sound chaotic, but it clearly rests on serious musical skill. Orian's vocals cut through the din with power and authority—urgent and commanding. While the bass came in last in the mix, the guitars more than compensate, occasionally threatening to rewire your brain. I've never fully clicked with D-beat as a genre, but whatever BOMBARDEMENT is doing here absolutely rules. The mix and recording quality are surprisingly strong for a live release, but with only 200 copies pressed, good luck getting your hands on one.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Kick Rock



## BRÖZERKER – Stay Rad! LP

Beer-soaked skate-punk thrash from Columbia, SC—fast, reckless, and self-aware enough to be hilarious. High-velocity riffs collide with party chant vocals, weaving in skate references, thrash swagger, and the occasional lyrical face-plant. Like SLAPSHOT crashing a backyard ramp session—rowdy, sweaty, and way past curfew.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Tor Johnson



## BUNNYGRUNT – Action Pants! Thirtieth Anniversary Director's Cut LP

Reissue of St Louis's underrated indie pop/rock stalwarts' debut LP. This record is fucking fantastic. While mostly it stays in the lane of upbeat twee pop endemic of the indie pop scene of the era (yet another record I'm reviewing for MRR with a big ole whiff of GO SAILOR/TIGER TRAP coming off it, and I ain't mad), they do bring in some fuzzier guitar moments and even shoegaze-y ambience to mix things up and grab from indie rock sounds that were the style at the time. This reissue sounds great and features four tracks not on the original release: "Inanimate Objects," which came out on a single shortly after the original release, and three songs fronted by their original bass player Renee, which had been dropped from the original release after her not-so-amicable split from the band. If you're in the market for twee pop with a little bit of a rougher edge, or if you are into indie pop at all, this is a must-own record.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Happy Happy Birthday to Me / Silly Moo



## CAM GIRL – Flesh & Chrome LP

For an album that was self-released, the production here is really off the charts. This would be right at home on my local hard rock radio station. Very reminiscent of that style of pop punk that was big during the early 2000s, like the DONNAS, BILLY TALENT, SUGARCULT, and the hair-metal-infused era of SUM 41; the kind of punk that took more of their influence from DEF LEPPARD and MEAT LOAF than your typical D-beat band. There's also an element of theater here that really adds to the storytelling of the songs and energy. Speaking of energy—this slab is chock-full of charisma and catchy, clever lyrics. I can't lie, readers. I didn't expect much here, but by the end, I was hooked.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: self-released

## CANTELEU – Canteleu cassette

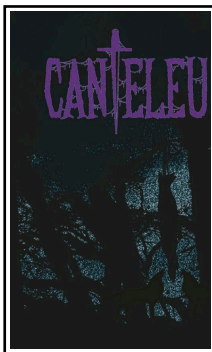
The city of Lille is a working class metropolis in northern France near the Flemish border. Aside from being the location of this year's Tour de France Grand Départ it's also home to goth punks CANTELEU. Late in 2024, CANTELEU released their inaugural self-titled EP and effectively laid down some of the best goth tracks ever to be recorded to tape. This three-piece whipped out five originals and a cover of Q LAZZARUS's "Goodbye Horses," with delightfully heavy synths, pounding beats, and urgent vocals that immediately conjure memories of French compatriots and punk legends EDITH NYLON and METAL URBAIN. However, there is a dark, melancholic bent to CANTELEU that comes out with pop-infused howls and is accurately dubbed "Coal Wave" (as the north of France is its coal region), as CANTELEU brings a wave of chilling, dance-ready energy. If you're struggling to maintain an icy cool demeanor during this hellscape of summer heat, then I'd suggest giving CANTELEU a shot.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Dirty Slap

## CASH BRIBE – Demonomics LP

My biggest quailm with CASH BRIBE's last outing was its lack of cohesion; the songs were solid enough, but a lack of clear direction felt distracting. On their new LP *Demonomics*, I've got to give credit where credit's due, as the band sounds a lot more dialed-in and focused. Across six tracks, CASH BRIBE takes their brand of metallic NYHC and leans into some evil overtones, most notably on the sprawling title track's creepy intro and spoken word outro. Overall, it works, and while this still isn't really my cup of tea, it's great hearing a band's progression.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Futureless



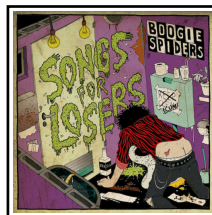
enced tracks to great effect, recalling NECROS or the FIX but with way harsher vocals. A firm step forward from their demo from 2024, which was quite a beast to begin with. Profits from this release are donated to the Philadelphia Community Bail Fund, even more reason to jump on this one.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: self-released

## THE BOOGIE SPIDERS – Songs For Losers LP

Great start to this BOOGIE SPIDERS LP. Herky-jerky, rock'n'roll punk that starts out fun as fuck. Lyrically, this first track feels like you're right in a basement or bar with a sticky floor. This is going to sound wild, but this has a very East Coast and West Coast feel at the same time. Rock'n'roll and surf guitar all at once. This is like if the Dirtnap and Estrus labels made a baby with DIRT BIKE ANNIE and then...ya get the BOOGIE SPIDERS. The cover throws off how good this record is. If you are a fan of Sympathy for the Record Industry and classic/early the JAM wiggling in there too, then this record is for you.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Duff / Joshua



## THE BOREOUTS – Do Your Scam / Tightrope 7"

On their debut 7", the BOREOUTS deliver two tracks of unpretentious and raw '60s-inflected garage punk that sound less like a calculated throwback and more like a group of seasoned Detroit musicians having a blast. With Jason Navarro of the SUICIDE MACHINES on vocals and guitar, Ko Melina from the DIRTBOMBS on vocals and bass, and John Bunkley of GANGSTER FUN on keys, this unexpected supergroup sidesteps nostalgia-pandering in favor of genuine energy and fun. It's raw, it's real, and it's pressed on limited edition red vinyl. Act like you've got taste and grab a copy.

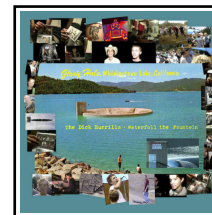
Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Rad Girlfriend



## THE DICK BURRILLS – Waterfall the Fountain cassette

A two-piece recording project that I have to admit is wildly over my head. I recognize that I may be a bit of a simpleton and that the concepts found in a lot of "art" elude me. Well, if those are known truths, then the DICK BURRILLS have got to be the deepest and most profound release I have ever been sent to review. Nowhere on the sleeve or on the internet is there a single track name. There are an unknown number of tracks, broken apart by spoken word slam poetry. Clearly an attempt to make a comprehensive project dipping toes into many different aspects of punk—dare I say, attempt failed. I am just left feeling underwhelmed, very confused, and a little bit dumber than I started. I say art-punk, with a heavy emphasis on art and a minor in punk. The band (I'm sorry, the recording project) and the label self-describe this thing as "refracted-nostalgia." Attempting to understand that fabricated term alone was enough to blow the fragile fuse in my brain.

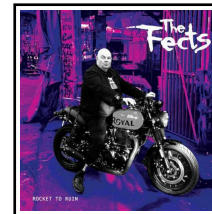
Reviewer: Biff Bifaro  
Label: Lost Lanes



## THE FECTS – Rocket to Ruin LP

What is happening? Am I currently facedown at Gonerfest with a HELLA-COPTERS and HOOKERS bastard love child band playing songs over me, while in between songs, they turn me on my side to make sure I don't aspire on my own puke. The FECTS' *Rocket to Ruin* is a non-stop party record, without calling it a party record. Around track five ("Topic"), about sitting in a room listening to the radio and trying to tape songs, it made me think these folks are as old as me. It was a crazy time when you had to actually physically move to find a sound. I would drive my grandma's car 70 miles to pick up MRR's radio show from a college station. My favorite thing about this record and the THE FECTS is the fact it sounds 100% natural. If you put these folks in a room and told them to make a record that sounds like metal-math-emo-hard-egg-synth-goth-ska-pop, they would come out of the room, looking up at you doe-eyed, and they'd ask, "Is this right?" And it would be this record, because this is what they do and they do it perfectly.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Fucking North Pole

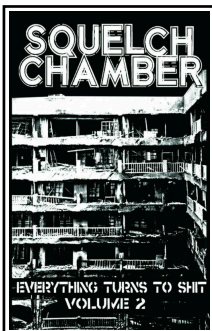




Reviewer: Biff Bifaro  
Label: self-released

## SQUELCH CHAMBER – Everything Turns to Shit, Volume 2 cassette

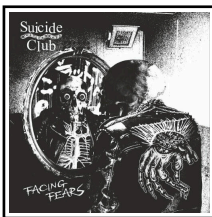
Forty-five minutes of pure sonic filth. Chaotic, abrasive, and beautifully unhinged filth. With a band name like this and a title so bleak, you'd expect total devastation, and that's exactly what you get. Blending harsh noise, industrial textures, and an underlying hardcore sensibility, this release feels like being trapped in a collapsing building. It's suffocating, cathartic, and utterly scary. Not for the faint of heart, but perfect for those who thrive on audio punishment.



Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Dirt Preacher / Tsuguru

## SUICIDE CLUB – Facing Fears EP

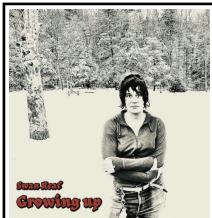
Malaysian punks SUICIDE CLUB channel USHC's finest on *Facing Fears*, an EP that sounds like something Unlawful Assembly would put out. Each track is as straightforward as you can get without any extra bells or whistles, just pissed-off, head-pounding rocker after rocker. Second song "Torn World" stands above the rest with some sinewy guitar leads and drums that really smoke. If you like your punk from the school of POISON IDEA, this one's for you.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Bollocks / SPHC

## SWAN REAL – Growing Up EP

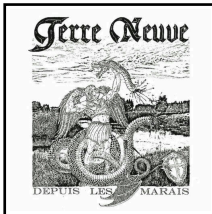
Punk in the way that Devon Williams took OSKER on their final album, and the direction he went in with LAVENDER DIAMOND and his solo projects. Subtle guitars with ethereal lyrics of heartbreak and aspirations delivered in that soft but so piercing and direct Dean Wareham manner. The guts are personal and honest, reminiscent of the more subtle tracks from the ACK-LEYS' canon.



Reviewer: Tim Janchar  
Label: Related

## TERRE NEUVE – Depuis Les Marais EP

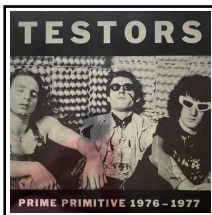
Belgium is an oft-misunderstood country. Frequently (and incorrectly) called boring by shallow-minded dullards, as if any country that's powered by chips, 9% trapist beers, and disappointment at a nearly-ran international football team could be anything other than fertile ground for some good ol' fashioned Oi! TERRE NEUVE is one of the leading lights of the Cobra Jaune scene, a loose group of rascals and ne'er-do-wells coagulating around the titular venue. This particular release has the kind of bite and bile that so much contemporary Euro stuff lacks, putting me in mind of RIXE in their pomp, and that's high praise from yours truly.



Reviewer: Ben Marshall  
Label: Mendeku Diska

## TESTORS – Prime Primitive 1976–1977 LP

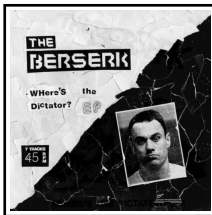
In the conversation that's dominated by references to the RAMONES and the NEW YORK DOLLS, TESTORS deserve a louder mention, and this release helps raise the volume for Sonny Vincent and co.'s pioneering old school efforts. The A-side presents nine of the band's lightning-in-a-bottle studio cuts from 1976–77, newly remastered for this release, while the flip contains a careful curation of live performances showcasing lesser-known songs that add further dimension to the legacy. While revisiting this material, I'm struck by just how fast they played in this era—the B-side opener "Awmmaw" sounds like a STOOGES song cranked up to 78 RPM. Though it was never in doubt, TESTORS' status as top-tier O.G. punk visionaries is triumphantly reconfirmed, in a cool collector's package complete with poster inserts and silver-foil jacket, no less.



Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Green Noise

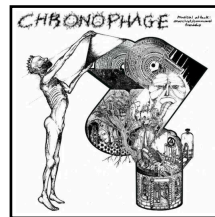
## THE BERSERK – Where's the Dictator? EP

Maniacal raw punk out of Philly that cops from various eras of hardcore without feeling cobbled together or incoherent. This EP is like a sonic endorsement of violence against authority with lyrics to back it up. See lines from the title track, such as "Where's the dictator? / His forehead's in my sniper sight." Brutal. Solid production bolsters the more USHC-influ-



## CHRONOPHAGE – Musical Attack: Anarchist / Communist Friendship EP

A lot of the music reviewed on this site can be understood (if even just at a surface level) fairly quickly—this is not a slight at all, but more of just an expression that one knows what they're dealing with often within one listen, or one track, or one chord. That sentiment is definitely not the case with the latest offering from CHRONOPHAGE. This EP may take a number of listens to cement a reaction, and I suspect these Texans prefer it that way; the tag "spoken word" is the only descriptor on their Bandcamp, despite the fact that they clearly be singin'. My best approximation of what I'm hearing here is if Carey Mercer (FROG EYES) and Dan Bejar (DESTROYER) allowed their collaborative SWAN LAKE project to be a little poppier? Honestly, put these four songs on repeat for a while and see what you land on, because your first impression is going to be that you need a second impression, and that's refreshing if nothing else.



Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Post Present Medium

## CLAIMED CHOICE – Genuinely Crafted Noise LP

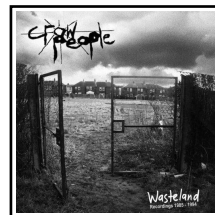
Fast and loose bangers from CLAIMED CHOICE, whose energy has a hopped-up sense of swagger from beginning to end on *Genuinely Crafted Noise*. This is a perfect record to play while getting ready for a night on the town with the crew, sounding at times like everyone from GIUDA to the RIFFS to CHUBBY AND THE GANG's first record. Call it Oi!, call it glam, call it punk, it's all rock'n'roll to me and it rules, OK?



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Longshot / Une Vie Pour Rien Vinyls

## CROW PEOPLE – Wasteland: Recordings 1985–1994 2xLP

Until now, CROW PEOPLE has been a band veiled in obscurity and almost lost to the sands of time. Formed in Doncaster UK in 1979, CROW PEOPLE released several discs during their tenure, but remained a lesser-known act due to geographic isolation and limited pressings. The double disc *Wasteland: Recordings 1985–1994* is a tidy package of almost every song recorded by CROW PEOPLE and filled with historic documentation of the band. This collection provides an extensive experience of the band whose sound

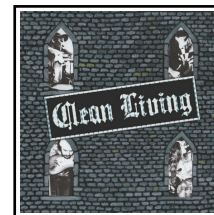


started as jangly, BUZZCOCKS-inspired post-punk but evolved into powerful anarcho-rock that sounds a lot like KILLING JOKE or AXEGRINDER. The first few songs of this collection have hints to the future sound of the band as the distortion pedal launches a crunchy guitar lead through the midpoint of the individual tracks. However, by the fifth song "Ambition," it becomes evident that CROW PEOPLE is headed for a much heavier direction. Most of the songs are longer than your typical punk tune, and this allows for CROW PEOPLE to explore rhythms and riffs with a bit more depth. If you're into ZOUNDS, AMEBIX, and the MOB, then you'll absolutely want to check this out.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Crackle!

## DANA – Clean Living LP

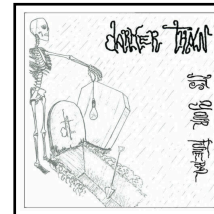
Have you heard of the saying "a chain is only as strong as its weakest link"? Well, there are no weak links on DANA's latest LP, *Clean Living*. Every member, every instrument, and every song is perfectly on-point and solid as they could ever be, so much so that I won't even bother dissecting every single element of their music. Just know that DANA is like a complex organism that works in perfect harmony—and disharmony, when they want to—without breaking a sweat. *Clean Living* radiates this energy of boundless creative power that always enchanted me with no wave acts like JAMES CHANCE AND THE CONTORTIONS, TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS, and BUSH TETRAS. While it's possible to hear influences from these classic bands, DANA is by no means a copycat group. If you don't mind me, I'll just go ahead and call this album a ten out of ten. P.S. Can somebody tell me what the fuck is going on in Ohio and how they always come up with the best, the weirdest, the quirkiest post-punk imaginable? Thanks.



Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: self-released

## DARKER THAN – It's Your Funeral CD

I think there is a motorcycle that starts this off. Ya know that side of the BLATZ/TRIBE 8 split 7" with that amazing BLATZ song? Well, that is what this reminds me of. Lots of thoughtful lyrics that singer Hanna delivers clearly, backed up by one of the dudes in the band (backing vocals not listed). As this goes on, there are driving portions that are reminiscent of ARCTIC FLOWERS and SIGNAL LOST. This is their second EP. What I'm going to say now might be a little controversial, but here goes: DARKER THAN is doing this the right way. Allow me a minute of your reading time. MRR fucked up in the mid-'90s when they stopped reviewing demo tapes. That single move gave birth to a million bands that would have been given a shitty





review and never committed themselves to vinyl, and now, well, look around at all the dollar bin records we don't buy. DARKER THAN has two cassette EPs and a CD, all while taking the time to figure out who they are as a band. The lyrics "I wish my mom was an anarchist" on the seventh track show DARKER THAN's playful quality while trying to take on big topics in two minutes. This is available on cassette, too.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Fall With Your Knife

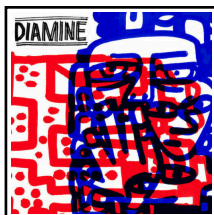
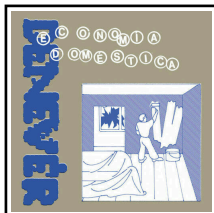
## DENEVÉR – Economía Doméstica LP

DENEVÉR is a duo out of Budapest harnessing the power of electronics to create complex, raw post-punk that occasionally toes the line of dark-wave EDM. After consistently releasing material for the past few years, DENEVÉR decided to release the emotive and layered full-length *Economía Doméstica*. This eleven-song album uses everything from sampled audio, distorted synthesizers, overdriven drum machines, and noisy instrumentation to create an atmosphere that is on one hand reminiscent of '80s-era new wave, and on the other is approaching post-hardcore. Emotionally heavy, *Economía Doméstica* is anguished, urgent, and melancholic while exploring a complex and shifting sonic space. The vocals are often delivered in unison by the duo which provides a sort of power behind the lyrics. Definitely check this out when you're in the mood for something a little different.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Abraxas Audio

## DIAMINE – Ancient Riffs LP

DIAMINE is a Washington, DC three-piece made up of musicians from CAPITOL CITY DUSTERS, SEVERIN, and Florida's DISCOUNT (a band fronted by Alison Mosshart, later of some band called the KILLS). Their debut LP *Ancient Riffs* mostly reads as mid-tempo alternative rock with personal lyrics delivered by a singer who sounds like a worn-down B.A. from SLOPPY SECONDS. Track seven, "Either/Or," was the only one that I thought showed any bite. While some bands use "post-punk" to describe a distinct sonic signature—angsty tones, driving bass lines, sharp edges—others use it to mark what ex-punks did next. *Ancient Riffs* lands in the latter camp, and not necessarily in the best way. Coming of age in DC in the '90s meant navigating wave after wave of projects built around ex-members of great bands—most of whom had lost whatever made those earlier bands compelling. DIAMINE sounds like one of those projects: the kind of group you might accidentally catch while waiting for the headliner. Recommended for friends of people who work at Dischord.



Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: BCore / Dischord / Superbad

## DISTANCE – Le Décor 12"

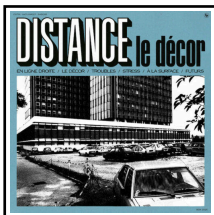
Touting influence from the French and Scandinavian underground as well as power pop and Oil, this Bourdeaux group has a strong and formidable style that builds everything around a melodic core. The vocals are a little too forward in the mix, but that's a quibble when the hooks are this deep. The guitar has a satisfying chorus-laden crunch and the bass is punchy, harmonizing beyond just plunking on the root notes to a deeply satisfying end. At six tracks, the energy stays consistent throughout, and the band doesn't outstay its welcome. Just a really solid affair through and through, and catchy as hell.

Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: Dans Le Vide / Sabotage

## DR. SURE'S UNUSUAL PRACTICE – Blue/Bubble LP

Synthy punk stuff is great and I'm always down to dig into these sounds, but rarely do I think that it has a genuine edge to it. Enter DR. SURE'S UNUSUAL PRACTICE to challenge that very thought. This combo release of, you guessed it, their *Blue* and *Bubble* releases, provides plenty of fun, sure, but also you're treated to a bunch of synth-soaked garage punk tunes that sound actually urgent and truly propulsive. The first two acts that came to mind were SPIRITUAL CRAMP and HANK WOOD & THE HAMMERHEADS. Of course, there is plenty of dynamism to be found across these eleven tracks that prove DR. SURE's practice is indeed unusual. After the first few garage-y offerings, the album explores more whimsical cartoon sounds on "Blue Evening," but then trades the staccato synth hits for sustained sounds and nylon string guitars in "Not the End of the World." The second half of this combined release, the *Bubble* side, explores sounds even more, tending to feel a lot more post-punk, with another highlight in "Outside Looking In." This LP challenges your definition of "egg-punk" and tosses you a whole slew of exciting sounds that coalesce into a fantastic listen.

Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Marthouse / Swish Swash



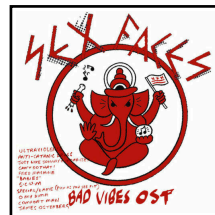
nancial Sector," like a middle finger raised from beneath the gutter. If global collapse had a soundtrack, this might be it.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: self-released

## SEXFACES – Bad Vibes OST LP

DC-based SEXFACES are out with their debut LP, and it is not to be missed. Having formed two short years ago, the bandmates sound perfectly suited for one another, albeit very unhinged. With Neil Cobra (TEEN COBRA) on bass, Jacky Cougar (DES MONAS, THEE LOLITAS) on drums, Sal Go (STOP WORRYING & LOVE THE BOMB, THE NVS) on guitar, and Hana Racecar (TADZIO, COVEN TREE) on electric viola, it makes sense that this cast of well-established musicians has formed a mutant punk spectacle that's garnishing attention. The music has that droning death snarl sound that is really accentuated by Hana Racecar's electric viola, often leading to a VELVET UNDERGROUND comparison, but with noise and rambling scuzz qualities added to the incendiary blend, creating a beautiful dumpster fire. Noted in a *See/Saw* article, Jacky Cougar and Sal Go started the band with the intention of (in Cougar's words) "...an atonal, BIRTHDAY PARTY, PUSSY GALORE noise thing." He then goes on to describe how he got conned into a rock'n'roll band, but the noise elements have clearly stuck with the group—the atonal nature of the viola alone, or the irreverent lyrics on "Babies" where Cougar sings "I don't want a baby that looks like you," and the "fall apart only to find the rhythm again" squawking band ethos makes for a great homage to aforementioned bands while, yes, having some catchy hooks ("O My Dima") and rock-structured songs ("S.C.U.M."). "Special-Lame" deserves a shout-out for its devolution into a parody of CARLY SIMON's "You're So Vain," with Cougar and Go performing the chorus in moaning rounds. Fucking awesome. While I believe it's those two responsible for most of the vocals, nowhere does it credit any one in particular, and we certainly get whole-band shouts throughout. Genre squabbling by the band aside, whatever they have made here is special, funny, dark, and with a well-deserved cackle. I'll be excited to hear any and all directions they go next. Get after this *Bad Times OST*.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Sloverly



## SKEPTIS – Demonstrasi Oleh cassette

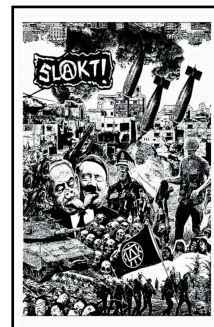
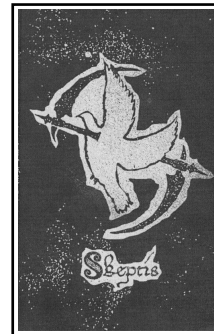
SKEPTIS is from Bandung, Indonesia, and this five-piece plays some gnarly and innovative anarcho hardcore on this four-song cassette. Raw hardcore transitions into intergalactic distortions which eventually emerge as synth work that quickly joins the melee. The nearly six-minute-long closer blends dungeon synth with noisy field recordings to create a fascinating yet anxious atmosphere which provides a glimpse into the world of SKEPTIS. The pogo-punk purists may want to pass on this release, but the rest of us will thoroughly enjoy this sonic experience.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: A World Divided

## SLAKTI! – Damai Hanya Sebuah Harapan? cassette

From the streets of Malaysia, these Scandinavian hardcore aficionados scream an emotionally charged statement about the current world. The title (translating to *Is Peace Just a Hope?*) sets the tone for a band that questions authority, unrest, and the fading dream of harmony in a fractured world. With gritty instrumentals and urgent vocals, SLAKTI! delivers a powerful critique that resonates deeply in today's turbulent climate. A must-listen for fans of politically conscious hardcore punk, or if you are just into bands like SHITLICKERS. With members from INFLUENZIA, CROWNNOISE, and BOMBRÅD.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Secret4300



## SNAILGUN – Reset Power Eject cassette

Debut four-song cassette from a Melbourne, Australia band. SNAILGUN sounds like a mixture of noise rock and alt-rock, with just a pinch of post-punk sprinkled in. A real smattering and hodgepodge of '90s throwback sub-genres blended together. It's not bad by any means, but it's also not particularly memorable.



and this is all in just the first half of the song. Thankfully, the back half of their singular track is just as rewarding as the first.

Reviewer: D. Gregory

Label: Dancing Rabbit / Emergence / Fresh Outbreak / Salto Mortale Music / Shove / Sylvebarbe / Yoyodyne

## PYREX – Slugman EP

After their excellent LP *Body* from earlier this year, I was not expecting a fresh batch of songs from NYC's PYREX so soon, but I guess this is my lucky day. Sounding as raw and evil as ever, *Slugman* sees the band dig their heels further into the nastier elements of their brand of grimy hardcore punk. From the maniacal opener "The Curse" to the menacing closer, the appropriately titled "Menace," this is bad music for bad people in the best way possible. Absolutely recommended.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson

Label: La Vida Es Un Mus

## RETIREMENT – Attention Economy LP

The combination of PDX bands plus Iron Lung equaling some of the best bits and bobs on the market is becoming more and more fact, not opinion. Case in point: this spastic hell-ride from RETIREMENT, which is the second LP the band has put out, following 2023's *Buyers Remorse*. The band makes note that *Attention Economy* is their "cathartic release"—I hear it more as a type of primal scream therapy backed by a repetitive, death toll of a drum beat. The band is on full display in all of the LP's fourteen-song set; there are no skips and the consensus is complete hatred towards the consumerism and materialism our culture is lost in. "You Will Be Forgotten," "Parasites," and the slowed-down "Next Time" should be your start.

Reviewer: Johnny Leach

Label: Iron Lung

## RISPOSTA – Vstříc Zániku Člověka 12"

Dystopian Czech crust, bleak and deliberate. RISPOSTA's cold pacing, stark guitar tone, and scolding vocals sketch a world in collapse—existential dread shouted in a language you don't need to understand to feel. Minimal flourishes, maximum impact; it's the sound of a final warning shouted from the barricades.



Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Papagájův Hlasatel

## SCHEISSE MINNELLI / THE SHINING / VERBAL ABUSE – Speed Kills, But Who's Dying? split LP

Three bands, three labels, and fifteen tracks of fast "fuck you" music. It rules, folks. This slab originally came out in 2011 as a CD, and I can see why they brought it back for the vinyl treatment. O.G. HC athletes VERBAL ABUSE open the proceedings as a tough act to follow, with five blistering tunes that set the tone for the thrashing to come. In addition to having one of the funniest band names I have ever heard, SCHEISSE MINNELLI evokes just a bit of an early SUICIDAL TENDENCIES feel with their agile metal guitars and goofy humor. Finally, the SHINING caps it all off with some menacing crossover out of Amsterdam. It's a bonafide ripper, recommended for fans of CONCRETE SOX, HERESY, and other fastcore champs.

Reviewer: Jason Harding

Label: Drinkin' Beer in Bandana / Here And Now / Just 4 Fun

## SEND ALL – The Great Betrayal CD

Self-released fury from Tampa, blending melodic metalcore riffs with raw hardcore vocals. SEND ALL leans into early 2000s post-hardcore with an aggressive political tone. The guitars shimmer between breakdowns and melodic runs, while the vocals scream betrayal with conviction. A few clean-sung choruses break the tension but never kill the energy. Not strictly punk, but filled with the ethos. Not up my alley, but DIY self-releases are always welcome!

Reviewer: Gonza Perez

Label: self-released

## SEWER URCHIN – Global Urination LP

The cover for this record reminds me of a mutant version of those children's car track rugs. I wouldn't guess this was a crossover album by any means. *Global Urination* is a filthy, spit-in-your-face assault on decency and order. SEWER URCHIN oozes with thrashy riffs, sewer-slick bass lines, and vocals that sound like they were recorded in a rusted drainage pipe. Their sound almost feels like NUCLEAR ASSAULT with the punkier edge of CIRCLE JERKS. It's raw, sarcastic, and politically foul, with song titles like "Godzilla vs. the Fi-



## DRIVEL – Pledge Allegiance to the Bomb EP

DRIVEL's new EP is a feral blast of hardcore that channels the whiplash tempo shifts and noisy sample chaos of early 2000s Bay Area powerviolence while injecting a strain of murky and chaotic lo-fi grunge. Featuring members of PILAU and CHILL PARENTS with a guest appearance by Richard Johnson (ENEMY SOIL, AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED, DRUGS OF FAITH), the record balances relentless aggression with moments that are almost darkly funny. The production is raw but intentional, everything lands exactly where it should. It's the kind of recording that reminds you how creative this genre can be when bands let themselves sound unhinged.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost

Label: To Live A Lie

## DÉCIMA VÍCTIMA – Un Hombre Solo LP reissue

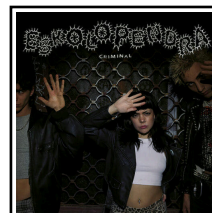
DÉCIMA VÍCTIMA was a Spanish post-punk band from 1981–1984, and *Un Hombre Solo* is one of their last recordings. *Un Hombre Solo* is a ten-song album that merges Spanish guitar style with the flanged repetition of post-punk to form a basis for crooning vocals reminiscent of JOY DIVISION, but with a decidedly Spanish swagger similar to SINIESTRO TOTAL. It's a similar energy to PARALISIS PERMANENTE, and DÉCIMA VÍCTIMA should be considered a basis for Spanish dark punk or the "dark sound." I'm infatuated with the long moments of quasi-psych-rock-inspired instrumentation that seem to pop up sporadically throughout this album and lend a sort of hard-to-describe but very distinct flavor to the proceedings. Munster Records has lovingly preserved *Un Hombre Solo* and presented it with only minor improvements to the album art per the band's request, so the packaging has a fresh but also archival feel.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney

Label: Munster

## ESKOLOPENDRA – Criminal LP

From the Spanish island of Tenerife, ESKOLOPENDRA conjures up passionate and sinister punk with classic deathrock vibes. The tunes on are undeniably catchy, propelled in no small part by the fantastic vocalist, and this young band has assembled a record here that plays like an album and not just a collection of songs



—a solid debut. The name of the Spanish label that released this translates to "Methadone Records," which is crazy, and if you want to put a creepy little jolt in your day, look up image results for the band's name.

Reviewer: Jason Harding

Label: Metadona

## EXTREME DECAY / TOOLS OF THE TRADE – split EP

Two Southeast Asian grind titans split the wax. EXTREME DECAY smothers you in politically charged, atmosphere-heavy grind, each blastbeat a punch in the ribs. TOOLS OF THE TRADE retaliate with crust-tinged grind fury, spitting urgent social commentary through a haze of distortion. Short, savage, and worth flipping over again and again.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez

Label: Bollocks / Husted

## FATIGUE – Blurry But Bright LP

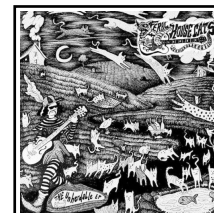
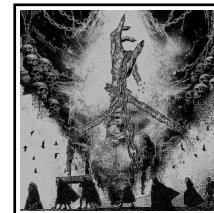
Punky garage rock, mostly mid-tempo distorted guitar with melodic vocals. While the tempo didn't vary a ton between tracks, they kept it fresh with unique sonic twists, like a more post-punk vibe to "Cotton Candy" or a nice sludgy bass in "Takes One to Know One." My favorite track was "Imperfection," as I thought the lyrics of "I am enough / You are enough / We are enough" or "Embrace your imperfection" seemed so inspiring, especially with the heavier, distorted guitar that created just a super fun contrast.

Reviewer: Emma Miller

Label: self-released

## FERAL HOUSECATS – The Unherdable EP

Fun, guitar-heavy rock'n'roll that sounds like Richard Hell if the VOIDOIDS ran their gear through a Boss DS-1 with the distortion turned all the way up. Pretty typical punk affair here—they're not reinventing the wheel, but it's a fun jaunt regardless. They even throw in a live track about halfway through, which shows off how tight these folks are outside the studio. You'll want to give this a spin if you're a junkie for solid garage rock.





Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Hot Boots

### FLASHES RED – Samepain EP

Four songs that are spat out in an aggressive LEATHERFACE/HOT WATER MUSIC sorta way. These folks are barking down from the Mile High City, and their intent seems to be bringing the melding of melody, a “fuck you” approach, and competent musicianship to the masses. I’d be lying if I didn’t hear a little HÜSKER DÜ in there, too. I wish these folks would try to sing a little more. Like, what ever happened to the MEGA CITY FOUR or DOUGHBOYS or the bands that had great songs and not just yelling and spitting. I was only reminded of this by a couple lines in the song “Apathy of Me,” where the singer takes the yelling-ness down for a couple words. NAKED RAYGUN put out a record a year or two back with similar music and crisp (not yelling at me) vocals, and I think more bands should do that more often. These four songs clock in at just under thirteen minutes. The songs are great. Maybe I’m just getting tired of being yelled at by music I like. I think I’m going to call my mom and ask her if she loves me.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Low Life

### FLOR – Mi Cuerpa es Protesta cassette

FLOR spans an interesting gamut across the eight cuts on this release. The backbone of these tunes consists of anger-fueled, straight-ahead punk. It’s a rip-roarin’ time with chaotic elements that makes it feel like the whole thing could fly off the rails at any moment. Polished this is not, but fidelity here is replaced with passion and charm. And while the core sound is free of extraneous complexity, FLOR takes some interesting turns, like on “Preludio Al Dolor,” where they veer into URINALS territory. This tape is a solid reminder that a band doesn’t have to spend a small fortune in a fancy studio or flaunt their technical chops to make a compelling release. They just have to give a shit about what they’re doing and go for it.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Cebollas / Diy Kontraatak / Katastrof / Tvmbal-avalla



### FRIZBEE – Sour Kisses cassette

Indianapolis femme-punks FRIZBEE lived fast and died young, with *Sour Kisses* serving as the tombstone marking the end of the project’s two-year run. It’s nine tracks worth of noisy and raucous art-garage played with a borderline hardcore intensity (and short attention span) not dissimilar to last decade’s brat pack of UK bands like GOOD THROB, FRAU, and WOOLF, as interpreted by four Midwestern women in a post-Lumpy Records context. Vocalist Maude’s conversational but deeply caustic lyrics cut straight to the chase, lining up targets with zero ambiguity—see the repeated demands to “Give me back my own space” in “Evil Eye,” or the rhetorical taunt of “Tell me why I’m burning at both ends” from “Defective”—with seriously blazing guitar and a claustrophobic, pinned-VU bass/drums pummel perfectly mirroring that vitriol. If you’re going out, might as well go scorched earth; FRIZBEE certainly did.

Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth  
Label: Noise Merchant / Painters Tapes

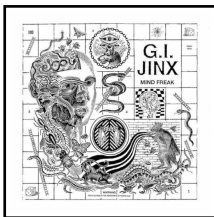
### FUGITIVE BUBBLE – What Will Happen If We Stop? LP

I had never heard of them before today, but it’s hard for me to consider a band falling too short after having the superb name of FUGITIVE BUBBLE. They are a three-piece from Olympia, WA that plays a mathy and urgent punk cutting close to the NEO BOYS/AVENGERS meets MINUTEMEN bone. There is more beyond the typical within *What Will Happen If We Stop?*, as well as moments of thoughtful surprise. One moment you are beating your skull to “Eftio,” and the next are in a moment of introspection with the two-part “Demodex in Situ.” The range is revitalizing to listen along to, and I am eager for part two.

Reviewer: Johnny Leach  
Label: Sorry State

### G.I. JINX – Mind Freak LP

These Montreal noise-mongers serve up a saucer full of space rock. Landing somewhere between SONIC YOUTH and MOON DUO, G.I. JINX blends screechy no wave with repetitive, drone-informed jams. Most songs hinge on a single riff or two, piped through multiple layers of fuzz. I’d be willing to bet the guitarist



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Going Postal

### PLANLOS – Smog & Ruß LP

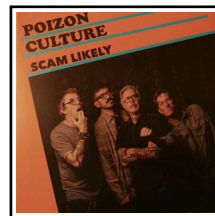
First things first—fans of underground and undiscovered ’80s DIY punk, run to the Aufnahme + Wiedergabe label now. Seriously. A label dedicated to reissues of recordings from GDR’s vibrant and illegal punk scene is going to grab my attention immediately, and I’m ashamed that I am just learning of the label today, but rest assured that I am about to give their releases a considerable dose of my time (and money). But to the release at hand, East Berlin’s PLANLOS is a compelling and mysterious Deutschpunk slog. Slow plodding numbers like “Schlage” conjure EA80 and JOY DIVISION, while driving burners like “Tagging Tagaus” and “Deutschland” are filled with infectious mystery and make you wonder what a band like this could have done without the shadow of state oppression (though perhaps is that very shadow that made them so compelling and unique). This record (and tape) features their seven-song demo from 1982, two tracks recorded live the same year, and re-recordings from 2024 with help from the band L’ATTENTAT—even though the songs are the same, it feels like you’re listening to a split release with two different bands, and I’m very glad that I don’t have to choose between the two. A glorious concept, an important document, and an excellent release.

Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Aufnahme + Wiedergabe / Iron Curtain Radio

### POIZON CULTURE – Scam Likely LP

I know the term “grunge” is a bit of a controversial one, but POIZON CULTURE would be best described as grunge punk. *Scam Likely* sounds like DRIVE LIKE JEHU mixed with MUDHONEY, very early ’90s energy—screeching melodies paired with a creative use of different time signatures, giving each track a sense of a winding momentum which in turn drives the narrative of the lyrics. Phew, that was a mouthful. I can’t lie, I had to make sure I hadn’t reviewed something from POIZON CONTROL in the past. I think it would be a stretch to call POIZON CONTROL unique, but that’s really my only complaint about this album. For a self-released slab, *Scam Likely* is beautifully produced. This is a solid follow-up to their 2020 EP and will be fondly enjoyed by people who worship at the altar of flannel.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: self-released



### PROBLEM – Violence on the Metro EP

PROBLEM is fed up with the rise of attacks and violence toward commuters and operators on the L.A. metro rail...fed up to the point of posing with sneers and clenched fists in front of a stationary rail car on the front of this tiresome EP. Three songs of botched street punk emulation that aren’t worth drawing comparison. To say this record sounds contrived would be subtle, and with the band blasting off with such choice lyrics (“Nobody is safe on the train / You can get robbed or you can get slain”) and song titles like “Fuck the Human Race,” I can’t help but to think they may feel the same way.

Reviewer: Johnny Leach  
Label: Mendeku Diskak / Under the Gun

### PSYCHIC SCREAM – EP1 cassette

Modern shoegaze that sounds a whole hell of a lot like SWERVEDRIVER, but also incorporates parts of FU MANCHU and QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE. Lots of groovy, doomy, desert rock breakdowns that go heavy on the fuzz pedal. There’s a wealth of diversity packed into this four-song EP, with each song sounding a little different from the one preceding it. For example, the slab kicks off with a RADIOHEAD-esque, riff-driven vehicle, and ends on a chaotic garage punk track that falls more in line with the CONEHEADS. This one goes by quickly, and is well worth a listen if you’re a fan of that mid-to-late ’90s alternative rock sound.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Broken Sound

### PUT PURANA / TROMBLON – split LP

There’s got to be a joke that goes “you can tell how good a screamo release is by how many different labels are putting it out.” Seven different labels coming together to release four tracks by two bands? This split is surely transcendent, no? Well, it is pretty great, to be honest. PUT PURANA offers three hectic tracks, with often-discordant guitars and great shifts throughout each song, and at their more melodic moments, vaguely reminiscent of BIRDS IN ROW. TROMBLON offers up a different approach on their side of the wax, with one track clocking in at over eight minutes. Opening with a somber, religious feeling of organ sounds and chant-like vocals, the vocals then shed their effects and pick up intensity as the drums build, the guitars rise, fall, and rise again, and the walls of sound they build start to threaten to topple over—

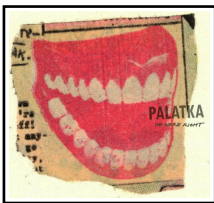




## PALATKA – We Were Right 2xLP

Released in 2024 on Belladonna (the label run by bassist Jason Teisinger), *We Were Right* is a sprawling 62-track discography from Gainesville, Florida's fiercely DIY hardcore/emo-violence band PALATKA, capturing the entirety of their pre-2000 output plus three practice space recordings from 2015. The disc includes their full-length, split contributions, compilation appearances (including tracks from the classic *Possessed to Skate* comp), and eight demo cuts, making it the definitive PALATKA release. Fans of screechy, high-pitched vocal intensity in the vein of ORCHID, REVER-SAL OF MAN, and SAETIA will feel right at home, and while the vocals on the 2015 tracks don't reach the same piercing register, the songs themselves are among my favorites. Covers of songs by GORILLA BISCUITS, GO!, and STRAIGHT YOUTH round out a collection that's raw, relentless, and required listening for fans of chaotic '90s screamo.

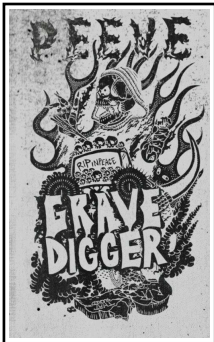
Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Belladonna



## PEEVE – Grave Digger cassette

PEEVE sounds fuckin' pissed! Anger-fueled, noisy punk with a pervasive duhka-duhka beat. Strong, abrasive vocals are the standout here, with some juicy quips like "Live, laugh, lose," from the seething track "Squeet." A nice accompaniment to the COFFEE STAIN EP from earlier this year, albeit a touch less feral and unhinged. Five songs that don't overstay their welcome, with cover art that I think is a nod to the Grave Digger monster truck. A solid addition to the ever-growing Noise Merchant catalog.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Noise Merchant



## PEGASISTER – Burn to Ash LP

Fuzzed-out pop punk with a power metal twist, as if FIDLAR started listening to DIO and MANOWAR and decided it was time to don the knight's armor. I wish their Bandcamp page listed their lyrics, because from what I'm picking up, this sounds like the narrative of a Sega Genesis-era dungeon crawler. Speaking of the lyrics, the vocals are above and beyond the best part of this band. The kind of rock'n'roll screeches that every frontperson dreams of being able to pull off, chock-



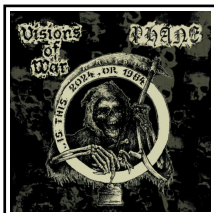
full of charisma and energy that can't be taught. Don't get me wrong, the music is great too, especially the little synth parts that are beautifully laced throughout each song, acting more like a garnish than a lead. It's clear that PEGASISTER really took great care with these songs, because they are masterfully crafted and extremely catchy. Fire up your copy of *Shining in the Darkness* and give this a spin.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Monster Claw

## PHANE / VISIONS OF WAR – ...Is This 2024, or 1984 split EP

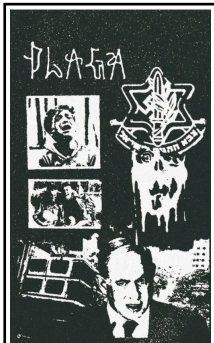
Can you go wrong with a split EP between Vancouver's PHANE and VISIONS OF WAR (who are scattered a bit everywhere these days)? I had the pleasure of seeing the former on their European tour last year, and thoroughly enjoyed their dynamic blend of beefy UK82 à la LAST RITES and the DISTURBED, over-the-top early metalpunk like ENGLISH DOGS, as well as early DOG SOLDIER. They deliver as usual here, with one original scorch and a flamboyant cover of ABRASIVE WHEELS. On the flipside, VISIONS OF WAR, if you will allow a tautology, do what they do. These undying survivors of the '90s Eurocrust wave unleash raw cavemen crust for fans of DOOM and HIA-TUS with a touch of the gruffest käng like SVART PARAD on this recording. Like PHANE, they also grace us with a cover, ONE WAY SYSTEM's anthemic "Give Us a Future," a song I played an awful lot as a teen, and I have to say they fall a bit short here, especially the vocals. The EP does not disappoint if you are into both bands, but it might not be an ideal point of entry if you are unfamiliar with them. I fall into the first category, so I am happy as a pig in mud.

Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: Phobia



## PLAGA – Demo 2024 cassette

Four originals and a cover from Irish solo project PLAGA. Each original is scruffy, high-energy, and produced just right; not too dirty and not too clean. With a little more oomph, this would approach DELETAR levels of greatness. The only downside is the SIEKIERA cover which sounds like a different band altogether, with more traditional singing and a much slower pace. It's awkwardly placed in the middle of the demo and unfortunately derails things a bit. It's not a dealbreaker, but feels like an unnecessary addition to an otherwise solid set of songs.



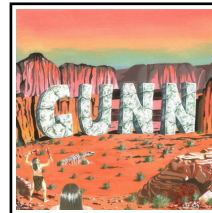
has a mean collection of boutique germanium stomp boxes. The vocals are delivered with a semi-lackadaisical coolness that begs for a Kim Gordon reference. Great art rounds out a record that will surely appeal to your friendly neighborhood acid casualty.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Celluloid Lunch / Psychic Handshake

## G\*U\*N\*N – G\*U\*N\*N LP

The main influence I hear is the FU'S. Even a little bit of STRAW DOGS in a couple tunes, but generally speaking, the approach is incredibly satisfying meat-and-potatoes hardcore. What you can also hear, though, is California. Think stuff like the FACTION, with that focus on skating and partying and just being a Cali punk. I am not familiar with their earlier releases, but this sounds incredibly purposeful—love to hear a band knowing who they are and exactly what they want to do on a record. The record absolutely benefits from repeated listens, it gets more fun the more familiar you are with what's happening, and I appreciate the SPAZZ-ish devotion to throwing in samples to make the whole thing feel even more cohesive. This would be a great second or third release for most bands, but as a debut LP, it's even more remarkable.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Going Underground



## GOD – My Pal 7" reissue

As an uninitiated outsider, it took me a bit of digging to grasp why this two-song 7" is being touted as a classic of Australian rock'n'roll. To my untrained ear, this sounded like a band trying to ride a '90s grunge nostalgia trip that appears to be having a resurgence. Well, it turns out I had that exactly backwards. *My Pal* is genuinely recognized as an iconic single from the pre-grunge era of the late '80s that built on the foundation of Aussie staples like RADIO BIRDMAN and X, and essentially paved the way for a whole slew of groups that would run with things in the coming decade. The topside title cut is the kind of song that you'll feel like you've heard before upon first listen, channeling the same energy and tenor that would rocket NIR-VANA into stratospheric super-stardom. The refrain, a raspy crooned "You're my only friend / You don't even like me," captures the essence of the aroma of disaffected youth in a way that was at the time entirely novel. Not to mention the fact that when this came out in 1987, the band members were bona fide teenagers. The flipside cut, "A Man Without a Woman is Like a Nun Without a Jackhammer," is more straightforwardly punk with a driving rhythm section and an altered vocal approach, landing somewhere between LUBRICATED GOAT and MUDHONEY. For better or worse, it's hard to imagine that a band



such as SILVERCHAIR would have come into being without GOD setting the scene. Props given where props are due. It's stated that this is the final re-issuing of this record, so if any of the above appeals to you, this may be your final chance to procure a piece of Melbourne rock history at an affordable price.

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Sorcerer

## GREEN FINGERS LTD. – Liminal Safe Space cassette

Seven-song debut release by a new band from Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. Each of the seven songs by GREEN FINGERS LTD. is a bit like a roller coaster ride in the dark—there are elements that are fun and entertaining, but ultimately the unknown curveballs thrown at you feel more jarring than they do exciting. Musically, this is mostly some kooky, synth-driven egg-punk. The vocalist is doing real barked, gruffly delivered Muppet style vocals, which works for some realms of hardcore, but sounds wildly out of place in this context. That, plus the wacky decisions to add a *Star Wars* cantina-band-style transition in one of the songs and some real yo-ho-ho pirate chants in another leads to most of this tape coming off as a bit of a novelty project. There are aspects that make your ears perk up in a good way and wonder exactly what's going on, but the piss-take is what really shines through above all.

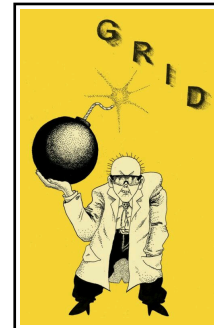
Reviewer: Biff Bifaro  
Label: Brainwasher / Electric Depression / Total Slob



## GRID – The First Demo cassette

A blistering introduction to GRID's crude energy. Clocking in with furious riffs, pounding drums, and throat-tearing vocals, this debut captures the essence of hardcore in its most primal state. There's a refreshing lack of polish here, and that's the point. Every track pulls on that urge to tear everything to pieces. GRID isn't here to play nice, they're here to make you drag your knuckles on the ground. If fast/slow dynamics are your thing, GRID does this very well!

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Delayed Gratification



## HAVANA SYNDROME – Demo 25 cassette

HAVANA SYNDROME's debut *Demo 25* tears through orbit and crash-lands near Buffalo, New York with an earth-shattering, sinister force. This alien breed of synth punk sounds like it was made by an invasive species and transmitted across outer space as a big "fuck you" to all the other life-forms. Although it's driven by melodies seemingly coming out of a toy synth, this thing isn't fooling around or trying to be quirky. Instead, it finds a steady balance between unbridled aggression and a twisted sense of fun. The claustrophobic, lo-fi production makes you feel handcuffed to a steel pipe in a humid boiler room, while the combination of harsh drums, nasty bass, and disgustingly hysterical vocals slam your eardrums like a rusty flail. I know it doesn't—and shouldn't—sound fun to anyone in their right mind, but I can guarantee it absolutely is. And if you are a fan of RESEARCH REACTOR CORPORATION like I am, I know for a fact you yearn for it.

Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Swimming Faith



## HEAVY FOR THE VINTAGE – Resist. Dance. CD

Carrboro, North Carolina's HEAVY FOR THE VINTAGE mesmerize with their minimal and down-tempo synth punk magic on their latest release *Resist. Dance.* This thing has its own unique and immersive sonic universe with crunchy drum machine beats, bittersweet synth melodies, background electronic noise, and beautiful vocals that are the perfect fit for this sound. They definitely make the most out of the minimal set of sounds in their palette. If you expect high production value, look elsewhere—it's dirty and lo-fi, with human feel peeking through one way or another. And that kind of imperfection is exactly why I love and admire this record. It's been a while since I heard something that keeps a steady pulse and vibe from start to finish, yet manages to keep me hooked. Perfect soundtrack for when you get that hollow, sinking feeling for no reason at all.

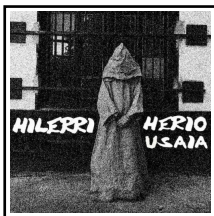
Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: self-released



## HILERRI – Herio Usaia LP

Brutal Spanish guitar-free D-beat. There's a dark and sinister energy that their sound creates, even though (or specifically because) I am constantly yearning for that guitar. My mind is reaching for the empty space, and there's nothing there. Because it's empty. Because there's no guitar. The songs are absolute shredders—erratic, no-bullshit, shit-fi D-beat mania punctuated by mid-tempo slogs like the title track. The songs are killers, the production and presentation are flawless. HILERRI is evil as fuck and they've got me hooked... and still I want those six strings.

Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: DDT Banaketak / Heriotza Ta Suntsiketa / Lagunak / Little Jan's Hammer / Romantic Songs / Vic-tim / Zaragoza Desorden



## IRISH HANDCUFFS – Humbs EP

From their Bandcamp page, I learned that "after thirteen years and close to three hundred shows in around fifteen countries, IRISH HANDCUFFS are calling it a day." To be honest, I'm bummed that I'm just now hearing this band. These four songs are mid-tempo and contain the speckled reflective parts of SAMIAM, JAWBREAKER, and MOVING TARGETS. Tunelessly akin to OFF WITH THEIR HEADS and LEATHERFACE, but without that over-the-top, "gargle with sand" vocal style that many try and few do well. I appreciate that every guitar and bass note, every drum hit, every syllable is clear and mixed well enough to be a DESCENDENTS record, but not overproduced to where the tunes become flaccid song bags. I dig it.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Fond of Life / Shield



## IRON LUNG – Adapting

Seattle's long-running powerviolence duo IRON LUNG have recently returned with their first full-length album since 2013's *White Glove Test*. This *Adapting // Crawling* promo 45 offers one of the album's standouts and the partially hidden title track. Side A delivers a grim three-part sequence—"Purgatory Dust," "Virus," and "Purgatory Dust (Finale)"—channeling the chaos of public health disasters and anti-science backlash, pulled from both the COVID era and the polio vaccine fights of the 1950s. Side B is the full version of "Adapting // Crawling," a broken sound collage that slowly mutates into a crawling dirge. IRON LUNG remains as bleak and gripping as ever, holding a mirror to the



has been forged in snow and ice over time to produce a slew of bands I was unfamiliar with that are total rippers, including standouts NUCLEAR MAN, HUMAN TARGET, and JUG. Another among them (and I think including some shared members of the aforementioned) is NEGATIVE CHARGE, whose debut self-titled LP is a lean and mean masterclass in hardcore. Following in the footsteps of bands like POLYSON IDEA and AGNOSTIC FRONT, everything here is just right; the guitars are muscular, the drums pound and pummel, and the vocals are gruff and tough as nails. The breakdowns are heavy and the guitar leads wail, all surrounded by riffs that sound instantly recognizable. "Shut Me Off" and "Decay" are particularly great, the former boasting some off-the-wall drumming and the latter seeing the vocals reduced to a gnarly snarl. I could go on, but this album speaks for itself. Don't sleep on NEGATIVE CHARGE, and don't sleep on Winnipeg. Highly recommended, and a top ten of 2025, for sure.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Neon Taste

## NO SECTOR – Mercury Poisoning EP

Not to sound hyperbolic, but NO SECTOR's *Mercury Poisoning* is in my estimation a perfect EP—a tight mixture of international hardcore elements that doesn't waste a moment of its nine-minute run time. Hailing from Wellington, Aotearoa, NO SECTOR masterfully blasts through six catchy tracks that smack with UK82-inspired fury and heavy anarcho-punk themes. Sonically, NO SECTOR is relentless, with buzzsaw guitars intertwined with floor-shaking bass and drumming that rattles and rolls with chaotic precision. Lyrically, the band continues on the path set forth by many who have come before them, painting a picture of modern society that is anything but glamorous, delivered with a perfectly deadpan style that occasionally boils over in a rage. Everything from rotten housing to rotten government to rotten food (on standout "80HG") is touched on, with NO SECTOR all but asking the same question CRASS did 47(!) years ago on "Do They Owe Us a Living?" Smart, powerful, and effective, *Mercury Poisoning* is an absolute banger that will easily be in my top ten 7" records of the year.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Razored Raw



## NUCLEAR FEAR – Pantomime of Power EP

If you want to be transported to the era of nuclear paranoia and unhinged Scandinavian hardcore punk, then throw this on and spend just a hair under six minutes with this UK outfit. Featuring members of NWOBHC standouts ARMS RACE and the FLEX, this record bludgeons you with what it wants to do. Buzzsaw guitars push to the forefront while acid leads wail at you from behind pounding drums that owe more than a bit to that MOB 47 manic pace so many of us know and love. It's not just '80s worship though, the spirit NWOBHC can definitely be heard, and more importantly felt here. The production/mixing go a long way to place the band, their sound, and their very righteous anger in the modern era. The gruff vocals feel desperate and hopeless, which fits with the lyrics that swing from deeply personal despair to very pointed political rage (standout track "DTZWM (Destroy the Zionist War Machine)" leaves no doubt where the band stands ideologically). NUCLEAR FEAR sounds like a band with a very clear objective on this, doing everything a hardcore punk EP should do in exactly the time needed to do it. Very solid work that wets the appetite for what the band may be able to put together in a whole LP worth of tunes.

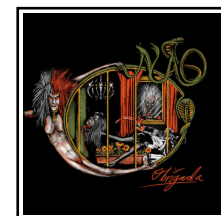
Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: La Vida Es Un Mus



## NÃO – Obrigada LP

International punks NÃO, stationed out of Bremen, released a killer demo two years ago, and returned to the studio to record the full-length *Obrigada*. Eleven songs of noisy, speedy D-beat rocket from this recording with screaming guitars, thick bass, and cyclone drums. With members that include alums from VITAMIN X, ZANJEER, and INFERNO PERSONALE, it's no wonder how NÃO is able to play with such power and precision. Heavy influences of GBH and KURO come through frequently with the guitar work, occasionally reminding me of ENZYME. Needless to say, the *Obrigada* LP by NÃO is absolutely recommended listening.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Symphony of Destruction

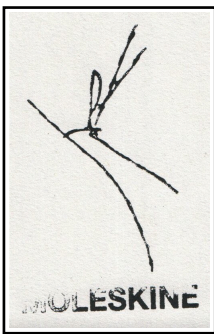




## MOLESKINE – Affective Experience of Urban Space cassette

Economical art-punk from Nantes, France that's constructed like match-stick architecture, simultaneously precarious and precise. Spacious but taut mutant funk rhythms provide the grounding for short, scratchy shocks of guitar, blasé guy/girl spoken word vocal trade-offs, and on tracks like the gyrating, 99 Records-styled "Adjoining Wall," some emphatic punctuation from a skronking saxophone. "Some Trivial Task" echoes the bass-forward, Euro neo-no-wave minimalism of bands like DUDS and HANDLE from the past decade or so, as "Non Sense" hits a slinky, all-night LIZZY MERCIER DESCLOUX-ish beat. "A Leak" and "Neurotic Pressure" lead off the back half of the tape with smoldering, dubbed-out grooves occupying a similar headspace as modern practitioners NON PLUS TEMPS, but any release of tension they might signal is then quickly interrupted by "No More Guests" sounding the FIRE ENGINES' anxiety-disco klaxon call. I'm sold!

Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth  
Label: Chrüsümisi / Urticaria



## MUSTY FLICK – Define Who We Are CD

MUSTY FLICK is fine Midwest emo. They are melower than some Midwest emo bands and can slip into dreamy indie rock, but they can also switch back and be on pace with the other Midwest emo bands. There is a label called Tiny Engines, and I feel like this could be a decent fit on their roster with SOMOS, LAPÊCHE, HOT JOY, ALIEN BOY, PERSONAL SPACE, and others. I tracked down a show of theirs on YouTube and found them to be humble and charming, two things I was not expecting. MUSTY FLICK is from Southeast Iowa, and maybe you won't completely find their sound to your liking, but they are on an island in the Middle West and they are trying to swim against the current. If this review is to keep at all with the origin and intent of MRR, then my hope is that someone from a neighboring town or state will build a bridge and start connecting. It's never too late to start a scene.

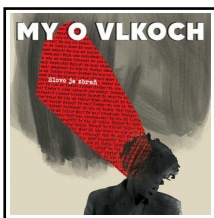
Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Teeter



## MY O VLKCOCH – Slovo Je Zbraň LP

DISSENT, BAZOOKA JOE, LIBIDO BOYZ, HEAVY VEG-ETABLE, SCHLONG(-ish)—all bands that carved their way with quirky hardcore punk. This LP is a relentless barrage of interesting stop/start songs accompanied by lyrics that come from the wisdom of survivors. I love this, and this band would have 100% been on the *Welcome to 1984* comp from MRR if they were around then. They also would have been on the MRR comp *Noise Ordinance* if they would have been around then, too. Go get this, please.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Papagájův Hlasatel



## NASTY PARTY – Nasty Party LP

Sydney- and London-based NASTY PARTY, the conjoined brain child of Nasty Simon and Rhys Nasty, put out this LP with all their previously released material. Songs drive straightforward with a RAMONES-core catchiness, mixed with the British snot of Pete Shelley's vocals. The first listen didn't capture me, thinking it was some party (I guess their name led me there) Oil-adjacent kind of band—but with some more focus, I heard a UK '77 throwback, and really enjoyed it. These songs not only make me want to push around, they've also got something to say, like on "Strum & Drang" where they sing "You got social media influencers, the parasitic elite / I've never seen such a worthless pimple on society's ass cheek." Plenty of social commentary abounds in his thirteen-track LP that is as fun as it is poignant.

Reviewer: Willis Schenck  
Label: Take the City



## NEGATIVE CHARGE – Negative Charge LP

One of the funny byproducts of writing music reviews is learning about parts of the world that I'd maybe overlook otherwise. In reading about NEGATIVE CHARGE, who hail from Winnipeg, I realized I knew next to nothing about the area. In the time between being assigned this review and putting pen to paper, I've become aware of the fact that the beloved children's character Winnie the Pooh was named after Winnipeg, and that the city had a strange affinity for one of my favorite cult classics, *Phantom of the Paradise*, a film that otherwise didn't do so hot at the box office nearly anywhere else. Aside from those gems, I learned about their deep-rooted punk scene that



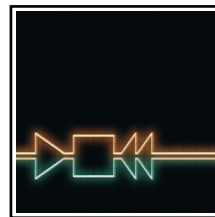
damage we do to ourselves. As they write in the liner notes: "Human nature is insane. I'm surprised we've lived this long." Same.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Iron Lung

## ISOLATIONSGEMEINSCHAFT – Start. Stop. Zurück. LP

Look, I wasn't alive in the '80s and I've never been to Berlin, but I'll take a wild guess: ISOLATIONSGEMEINSCHAFT's latest LP, *Start. Stop. Zurück.*, sounds exactly like it. Freezing cold atmosphere, gothic undertones, a bunch of analog synths, and deep-voice talk-singing in German. At this point, you should be able to perfectly imagine what this record sounds like—and there's nothing wrong with that. I particularly enjoyed the more danceable, EBM-influenced parts of it, but it definitely has more to offer for the fans of this sound.

Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Phantom



## ITALIA 90 – Collection LP

Very raw post-punk/punky band. There was some pretty witty lyricism which I enjoyed, in combination with lots of discordant, droning, strange guitar noises. There wasn't a ton of variation with the vocals—I feel like the instruments made up for that, though some of the songs probably didn't need to be as long. Overall, a solid and unique band worth checking out.

Reviewer: Emma Miller  
Label: Improved Sequence



## KEROSENE 454 – Came By to Kill Me LP reissue

Here we have a reissue of KEROSENE 454's 1996 sophomore LP *Came By to Kill Me*. Hailing from Washington, DC, this release was originally released on Dischord and Slowdime Records—the latter run in part by KEROSENE 454's John Wall (also of CANYON), who formed the band with brother Jim Wall and Erik Denno. If these labels bring to mind classic DC post-hardcore, you're not wrong, though KEROSENE 454 added in a bit of melodic hardcore (a sign of the mid-'90s, I suppose), while still keeping roots in the sounds that formed early Dischord bands. I hear pretty classic post-hardcore on "Injection"—fast lit-



tle guitar riffs, dissonant and squabbling, drums keeping a syncopated beat, vocals spoken, shouted, spat, with a strong backbone of bass. "T Minus 100" offers up some of those melodic qualities, while the closer "Continued" has a slacker sound, and is tamer than the rest—possibly a foreshadowing of Wall's slowcore career to come in CANYON. While I may prefer '80s-era DC bands, I like this record, its lineage in the city's history, and the fact that it's getting a new day in the sun.

Reviewer: Willis Schenck  
Label: BCore / Solid Brass

## KHLORE – Khlore demo cassette

A crasher crust wet dream! KHLORE's debut pulls no punches. Raw, tense, and relentlessly furious, the demo blends hardcore intensity with noise-soaked riffs and a bleak atmosphere that feels suffocating. There's a cold, calculated rage in every track, not just noise for noise's sake, but a focused outburst that hints at deeper unrest. KHLORE may be new, but this demo proves they're not here to be ignored and that they are putting France on the crasher map. Long live Kawakami!

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Dirty Slap



## KRIGSSYSTEM / SMOG – split EP

Two tracks by SMOG, four tracks by KRIGSSYSTEM, all absolutely DISCLOSED. I dig the two tracks by SMOG as they walk the fine line between raw D-beat and full-on noise, while I like the KRIGSSYSTEM tracks as they embrace the noise nearly entirely but still manage to push adrenaline-inducing punk. Limited to a pressing of 300, this record is sure to sell out fast.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Phobia



## KRIME – Demo EP

Solid four-song demo from the just-starting-out band KRIME from the Netherlands—their whereabouts as to what city exactly remains a mystery. The band veers into the kind of palm-muting guitar, double kick, hard-edged pop punk à la MORAL CRUX, RKL, etc., just a little more spastic. It's a bit rough and there are





moments that will feel like James T. Farris could be in a new tribute band. After it's over...there are moments for sure, but I am resigned.

Reviewer: Johnny Leach  
Label: Shield

## LA FLINGUE – Boredom With the La Flingue LP

A huge collection of almost all of LA FLINGUE's output, *Boredom With the La Flingue* brings together all four of their previously tough-to-find 12" releases. On its surface, 24 tracks can seem a bit daunting, especially given the average attention span in 2025, but just like the ocean, if you allow yourself to simply jump in, you'll be glad to have submerged yourself fully. Whether they're singing in their native French, English, or even German on the early standout "Hass Hass Hass," these garage punk hits come fast (only one of the two dozen tracks breaks the three-minute mark) and loaded with snot. While this collection represents over four years of songwriting from LA FLINGUE, there isn't a huge difference in sound between track one and twenty-four, proving that there was a singular mindset with these lads—once you've gotten into the water, sometimes you just want to stay forever.

Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Wanda

## LAME – Lo Que Extrañas Ya No Existe LP

LAME returns with their second full-length, *Lo Que Extrañas Ya No Existe* (*What You Miss No Longer Exists*), which was recorded primarily on the sunny tropics of the island of Mallorca. This is a carpet-bombing of feedback, power chords, and very good drumming that is a constant shift of rolling patterns. The record is tightly-wound angst, with shredded vocals that are in front of the pack and reminiscent of NAKED AGGRESSION's Kirsten Patches's screamed stream of consciousness. Punishing and tight punk.

Reviewer: Johnny Leach  
Label: La Vida Es Un Mus

## LAXISME – Laxisme LP

I'll wait in line for a band like this any day of the week. Infectiously melodic, convincingly pissed-off, with rhythms and riffs that snap like rubber bands. As far as I can gather, this is a Leipzig-based crew that sings in French? But that's all minutiae. Eight tracks (if you don't count the intro, which I don't) in under twenty minutes that bob and weave through toothy garage with hollering vocals. Few bands sound this confident, and it drives home tracks like "Grands Cerveaux," with a bouncing bass line and submarine echoes of guitar that is as gleefully rock'n'roll as it is brainy. Overall, this is just highly energetic melodic punk that isn't flashy, because it doesn't have to be. It impresses on its own terms, and bows out without making a scene. I'm definitely left wanting more. On closer "Victoire," it's clear this is a band that is focused on what they want to be doing. It's not trendy, it's not fussy, it's just cool. You can't fake that.

Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: Phantom

## LES LULLIES – Une Nuit à Leipzig LP

LES LULLIES play a brand of punkish rock'n'roll that proudly wears its French roots on its sleeves. Yes, you're gonna hear influences from the EXPLODING HEARTS, and you can compare their approach to bands like ROUGH KIDS, but there is an underlying tinge of that French garage sound that will not be denied. That dancey/joyful vibe certainly underlies this live LP that resolved the question of "what do they actually sound like live?" for me in quite a satisfying way. I found the first LP to lean a little too hard on production to make it feel like garage rock, while the second saw them commit to a cleaner and much more powerful punk rock sound which made it my favorite of the two. The live setting lets the band come through way more than the production choices of the first LP could, lending energy and a little fun looseness that feels like actual personality, while the amazing recording job (direct soundboard, if I had to guess) gives you a pretty broad sense of their power as a band. The night's proceedings feature a very well-curated selection of originals from throughout their career, plus a DEAD MOON cover that earns its spot but feels the lesser surrounded by so many great original tunes. Like most live records, this is a no-brainer purchase for already established fans, but it also upends the "preaching to the choir" nature of other such efforts working really well as an introduction to the band at its best for the uninitiated. This kicks ass.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: FOLC



## LOS CORROSIVOS – Estudios De Casos LP

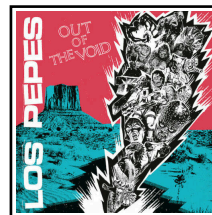
Here we have a vinyl reissue of the 1987 cassette of the same name, plus four bonus tracks, from the legendary yet short-lived LOS CORROSIVOS of Buenos Aires. Recorded live at the Parakultural Center, the sound quality is actually pretty good for a tape that's nearly 40 years old, also considering the raw, loud, noisy nature of the band. Drums are big and cavernous and sound fucking incredible, with a bullish bass existing in a similar realm. The guitar gets a little muddled, but ultimately fits in well with the rest of the band, providing that angular noise element, often on its own, squealing and wailing, somehow finding a riff to come in on. Vocals blanket the band's traumatic shambling, and are both soothing and dissonant. Considering the vocals and general turmoil on display, this reminds me of Jello Biafra with the MELVINS—of course meant as reference only, as this way predates any of their releases. There's a really great write up on the Bandcamp page from Tomás Nochteff about being at the Parakultural show when this was recorded, if you're looking for some context on the post-dictatorship Buenos Aires scene that birthed this incredible record. Remastered for Calar by Jorge Morales with release support from Walter Fellini, both original members of the band. A rare, unearthed piece of history, absolutely not to be missed.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Calar

## LOS PEPES – Out of the Void LP

Delivered from a multicultural London setting, *Out of the Void* is a classic punky power pop record. Infused with beachy guitar and '60s-influenced sounds, LOS PEPES know who they want to be. However, this LP was generally unimpressive and sounds too overproduced. The drums aren't too creative, maintaining their kick and cymbal-heavy rhythms without much deviation. I didn't care too much for the vocals; there isn't that harsh quality to vocalist Ben Perrier's voice, which would make for a more interesting listen. Otherwise, the guitar on "Sweet Appeasement" has a great tone, groovy synth, and it's the best song on the LP. They change pace a bit in "Undercover," getting faster before the record ends. Honestly, LOS PEPES seem like they'd be better live than recorded, which must be true considering their impressive booking schedule. My prescription: Listen to *Out of the Void* live for better results and less studio dampening.

Reviewer: Fiona Rae  
Label: Beluga / Ghost Highway / Spaghetty Town / Wanda



## LUMPEN – Exterminación EP

This is the third record from Barcelona's LUMPEN, a band that has been on my infallible punk radar since their inception and that I have therefore kept a watchful eye upon, not unlike a majestic albeit featherless eagle of good taste. This new EP *Exterminación* aptly reflects the progress they have made since the opening shot of *Desesperación* in 2020. While the intention has always been to build on the beefier side of the classic UK82 sound, I could always hear a raw Latino punk influence at the start, especially the Mexican school (which I rate highly) like MELI or ESPECIMEN. On this new EP, the sound is not as chaotic and noisy (I think the guitar player really found his footing here), but more precisely closer to the original UK influences. They have been, rightly, compared to CRIMINAL JUSTICE, and I am also heavily reminded of the DISTURBED or LAST RITES, but with a darker, anguished edge thanks to the lyrics in Spanish that do make you feel like you are at a dodgy gig in *el DF* in 1989. I really enjoy the mid-paced number "Apatia de la Raza Humana" with its *Horror Epics* tribal beats, and the heavy nod to WRETCHED on the closing number (with lyrics in Italian) obviously speaks to the inner nerd. Synchronically speaking, you could see LUMPEN in the same light as bands like PRIMER REGIMEN, SAVAGEHEADS, or the MASSACRED, but with time, they did manage to find their spot in what has become a busy subgenre. Make no mistakes, these punks are for real. Another solid release from Discos Enfermos.

Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: Discos Enfermos

## MISSVNARIES OV CHARITY – Petroleum Jelly cassette

Petroleum Jelly, the latest release from Copenhagen's MISSVNARIES OV CHARITY, is a bouquet of post-punk jams with a written invitation to the dance-floor tucked inside. Yes, it's a traditional sound, but luckily, it's one that never gets old. Huge drum machine beats, supportive layers of percussion, and tastefully dominant bass lines make up the groovy foundation of the cassette. Guitars add a good amount of spice to it all by going from tense to funky in a matter of seconds, and expressive vocals sit on top nicely with their cool, laidback delivery. If you have a soft spot for BUSH TETRAS and DELTA 5, this might be able to scratch that itch. Go put on your dancing shoes and give it a spin.

Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Utåt Neråt

