



# MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL REVIEWS #512

JANUARY 2026

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## **MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL**

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This issue contains 66 reviews, contributed by:

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Jake Joyce	Matt Casteel
Johnny Leach	
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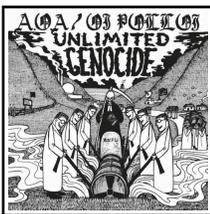
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## AOA / OI POLLOI – Unlimited Genocide split LP reissue



Fuck me, although I feel like we're barely in autumn, it is actually past Christmastime already, and for the consumerist nightmare it always entails, Santa might have been in a punk rock phase last year, because I got assigned a genuine UK anarcho-punk classic for review: the *Unlimited Genocide* split LP between AOA and OI POLLOI from Scotland. Originally released in 1986 on Children of the Revolution, it has remained a largely unsung classic and has finally gotten the proper reissue treatment thanks to Sealed Records, which we all should be thankful for. Although not the biggest name in the hardest-hitting anarcho-punk school of the '80s (being Scottish may sadly not have helped in a very London-centric scene), AOA recorded three crucial—and hard-to-find, obviously—records during their run, and this is the second one. Being a sucker for the genre, I have been a massive fan since I first heard them through a wise punk elder. AOA has often been described as furious, and the attribute is well-deserved. Fast-paced, angry, DISCHARGE-inspired political hardcore punk, just before the rise of UK crust and the metal invasion. I am heavily reminded of cult bands like ANTISECT or ANTI-SYSTEM, but I'd argue that the Scots may have given more than a passing listen to the ICONOCLAST as well. On the other side, we have the much more famous and iconic anarcho band OI POLLOI, who everyone knows at least by name and is able to sing along to "Punx Picnic." I guess you could say that, despite a certain status and popularity, we don't really explore the band's long discography critically, and their side of the split documents them at a time when they still partook in anthemic, if a bit cheesy, rough anarcho Oi! (like on the split with BETRAYED), but also embracing the faster and more abrasive anarcho-punk philosophy in terms of sound (like on the TOXIK EPHEX one)—like any sane punk would have done, really. What's great with OI POLLOI is that you can instantly recognize Deek's very distinctive vocals, so you always know where you stand. The songs here are mostly fast, but the band also slows things down, remaining heavy and threatening. I forgot how great these songs were, very reminiscent of ICONS OF FILTH, CONFLICT, or even ANTISECT, and it's got my favourite of theirs, "The Only Release." A great record that tackled political issues that are sadly as relevant as ever today. Essential stuff.

Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: Sealed

## ABISM – Barbie Terminator EP

Right before the first time I heard ABISM's new 7", I'd just finished jamming a live boot of the VEL-VET UNDERGROUND, and I was amazed by the freedom of the faded guitar pokes and messing around, demonstrating how bravely primitive and self-conscious they were (and which I guess is the essence of rock'n'roll, to be a confident dilettante). This feeling probably stuck with me when "Barbie Terminator" kicked in with its cacophonous guitar scraping and burst of pumping beats that meticulously, or by instinct, are set to a tempo that grabs attention and moves bodies. Then by the second song, the fuzzed guitars started playing notes that are weird, not too technically difficult but remarkable when paired with confidence and taste, because fuck it—some of us do mess around with such ideas at odd hours of the day under odd circumstances and wonder whether it is okay to include them even in radical punk songs. ABISM's new record is a straight "fuck you" to those thoughts, because this sounds great and it fits a hardcore song. Only four rudimentary hardcore tracks reflecting the universal frame of many signature scenes' sound, with a wink to those roots that make the record sound simple and original, and which combined recall dozens of the best bands without referencing any of them. This balance is the challenge of sounding original nowadays after everybody has heard everything and still ever-wanting more of this raw power. Another highly confident "fuck you" is the riff of "Fly Away"...you have a four-song 7", and you dedicate a significant amount of time to summon LENNY KRAVITZ in the subconscious of your listeners? That is bold. But even the realization of this bizarre thing is not able to keep me from loving this record. I love the non-stop pogo beat and tight groove that delivers all the weird and cool guitar sounds, and the best raspy voice (familiar from the amazing GARRAPATA).

Reviewer: Viktor Vargyai  
Label: Toxic State

## ARSON – Burning Future EP

There are few things in life that get my blood pumping as thoroughly as NYC raw punk, and ARSON is a pacemaker set to overdrive. On their latest release *Burning Future*, their six tracks of noise-drenched crusher crust harkens to ANTI-CIMEX greased up with ZYANOSE. If you missed ARSON's 2024 release *Más Noise*, or if your life hasn't felt right since PERDITION broke up, then now would be a great time to check out ARSON.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: General Speech



sive outfit that produced the classic posthumously-released 1977 *X-Spurts* sessions.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Sorcerer

## YELLOW WALLPAPER – Choose Death 12"

YELLOW WALLPAPER out of Lexington, Kentucky released the *Choose Death* EP in the fall of last year. The four-song EP opens with the title track which is very reminiscent of CHRISTIAN DEATH. A more post-punk influence infests the remainder of the disc, with the song "Silly Goose" drawing upon a vague WIRE-like energy. The nearly eight-minute closer "Where the Water Meets the Sky" harnesses a danceable TALKING HEADS bass line to screeching guitar drifts and croony vocals singing lines about where a good place to die may be. Overall, *Choose Death* is worth the listen.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Desperate Spirits

## ZŁODZIEJE ROWEROW – Każdy Inny Wszyscy Równi EP

Melodic yet confrontational punk rock from Poland, rooted in DIY ethics and social awareness. ZŁODZIEJE ROWEROW delivers mid-tempo anthems with heartfelt vocals and strong choruses, balancing aggression and melody with ease. The lyrics emphasize equality and solidarity, making this EP both politically charged and emotionally resonant.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Refuse

## ZYCLONE – Visions of Impending Death EP

Despite some etymological digging the origin of their name, ZYCLONE remains shrouded in mystery to me. A reworking of the name "Zyklon B"? An easy way to end up close to ZYGOME and ZYGOTE on one's record shelf? An inability to spell "cyclone" properly? Who knows. If the linguistics are foggy, the power of the band is not: ZYCLONE absolutely delivers. In fact, this might be one of the strongest käng-inspired EPs of 2025, although probably more by way of Japan (to be understood as aesthetics rather than geography) rather than a direct flight to Stockholm, as the distortion is

higher than your usual Scandicore act but still below the last floor of the fuzz building (a.k.a. Osaka). I love the sound of the drums here, and the overall drumming, in fact. A band like K.O.S. (or even FRAMTID) is definitely not miles away, but ZYCLONE has more ANTI CIMEX in their beefy recipe. The six minutes of music on this EP offer exactly what you expect from a good band of this genre—my one (very) minor criticism would be the use of the binary *tupa-tupa* beat in the song "Visions of Impeding Death," because I don't think it quite fits here. As I said, very minor. The members are apparently spread out in North America, but I'm told they are also involved in bands like PSYCH WAR, ELECTRIKA, and AUTOMATED EXECUTION. This EP was released on General Speech, an always reliable label when it comes to quality raw, noisy hardcore.

Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: General Speech

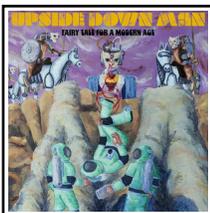


core punk as a tool of conflict rather than escape. One of the most forceful and politically charged releases of the moment.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: La Vida Es Un Mus

## UPSIDE DOWN MAN – Fairy Tale for a Modern Age 12"

UPSIDE DOWN MAN does not back away from melody and tight-as-hell articulated musicianship. It's easy to make comparisons to PROPAGANDHI with their styled and personalized lyrics, but stopping there would also do a disservice to UPSIDE DOWN MAN. These six songs work to amplify a current disconnect we are all feeling with the world happening around us while trying to draw in that helpless feeling by moving toward action through that commonality, or they are about a harsh breakup, as they are all perfectly vague enough to be about whatever you want them to be about. I'm continually brought back to the razor-sharp production where you can hear every single note and drum hit perfectly while still maintaining the momentum of a bullet train. In the '90s and '00s, this would have been an easy fit on Fat Wreck Chords or Epitaph with the their three metrics hitting at one hundred percent: speed, clarity, and another one too, I was going somewhere with that but I got distracted by the song and started bobbing my head. If you like those things mentioned above, then you'll like the link linked below.



Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Sketchy

## V/A – Right on Time Re:imagined LP

I try to refrain from using the phrase "I'm sorry" when writing about music (in real life, I may not apologize enough). But in this case, I can't conceive of any other way to rationalize how I feel about what I'm duty-bound to say. *Right on Time Re:imagined* is easily the worst release I've had to suffer through listening to in a long, long time. Each and every song is bad, some extraordinarily so. What we have here are six versions of the same song, interpreted by different artists in distinct genres spanning the gamut from "Sexy Stoner Rock'n'Roll" to "Emo Pop Punk" and "Heavenly Metal." There's even an "Unplugged Hardcore" rendition that is more egregious than whatever you're imagining. The song that is the basis for such wide and varied explication is a by-the-numbers youth crew ditty called "Right on Time." As a stand-alone track, it's a decent slice of impassioned straightedge hardcore, with a message that offers genuine positivity in the face of adversity. And herein lies the source of my initial plea for forgiveness...this whole project is inspired by a member of the band RIGHT ON TIME'S

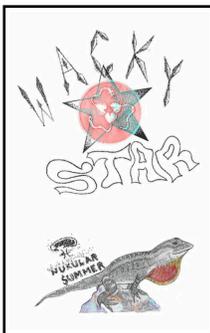


battle against cancer, and is an ode to the support they received from friends in the darkest moments of that experience. Profits from this release support a Dutch foundation, No Guts No Glory, that is dedicated to making the music-related wishes of cancer patients come true. Truly a fantastic cause, and one that I do not wish to denigrate just because I don't like the music involved. If you dig sXe hardcore and have broad enough interests, this may be right up your alley. In any case, there's a worthy cause attached to this that makes my snarky take on the tunes irrelevant. Fuck cancer!

Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Positive and Focused

## WACKY STAR – Nukular Summer demo cassette

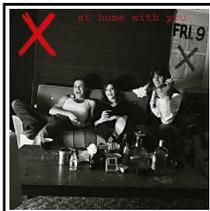
Recorded on a TEAC-1200 dual cassette deck, Miami's WACKY STAR gives us a lo-fi taste of Florida scuzz, brought to mind on "Away From" with the chant "Don't you know that I'm just a piece of shit." This has the feel of a solo project, but no names are credited on the demo, which is limited to twenty copies. While the punk world may be flooded with the sweeping moods of bedroom artists, it's hard to not enjoy this type of homemade thing. I can see ballpoint-penned composition books, a dirt-encrusted keyboard, a corner with too many guitars backed into it, a pile of cassettes, cables like vines covering the floor...this may not be life-altering, but it sure feels good. Favorite track: "The Light"



Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Rip

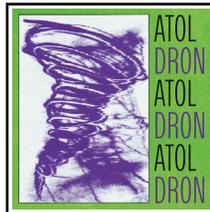
## X – At Home With You LP reissue

Five years after their debut album *Aspirations*, 1985's sophomore full-length *At Home With You* showcased a new depth for the seminal Australian group X. The record mixes commercial sensibilities (the melodious, brass-laden part of "T.V. Glue" is easily imagined as the background for a television advertisement) with unabashed punk ethos that can most readily be detected in frontman Steve Lucas's expressive, sore-throated vocals. The album features ambitious and artful musicianship, and even an atmospheric ballad in the smoky "Don't Cry No Tears," while the band's pub-rockin' roots are still on display in tracks like "Degenerate Boy" (a re-working of one of their earlier songs) and the bouncy "She's Gone." While it positions its maturity up front, spending a bit of time at home with this newly-reissued LP will assure you that you're still tuned into the same delightfully abra-



## ATOL ATOL ATOL – Dron Dron Dron LP

ATOL ATOL ATOL's 2023 LP *Koniec Sosu Tysiąca Wysp* completely threw me for a loop—taut, twin-vocal Polish art-punk with a minor DOG FACED HERMANS fixation? I might as well be Pavlov's dog. Follow-up *Dron Dron Dron* is just as mind-warping, centering the band's anxious electronic textures and snap-tight rhythms like an alternate-timeline Hardcore-era DEVO that wound up on Ron Johnson Records alongside the EX and BIG FLAME. Opener "Neon" is a perfect example of the band's controlled chaos, locking straight into a staccato, mechanical groove with skittering guitar, a bass line bouncing everywhere like an errant rubber Superball, and doubled-up chants from vocalists Łukasz and Agata, all of which could be panic-inducing (or just irritating) in lesser hands, but it's completely hypnotic here. Likewise, the densely knotted skronk of "Blok" might easily tip into prog-punk territory were it not for some wild, collapsing drum breakdowns, but when the frenetic call-and-response in "Plytki Sen" hits against some incessantly buzzing synth and treble-maxed guitar cutting in like the quickest of knife flicks, there's no question that ATOL ATOL ATOL's true objective is putting the damage back in "art-damaged," and they're killing it.



Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth  
Label: Mangel / Red Wig

## BETA VOIDS – Scrape It Off 10"

It would be easy to talk about the saxophone, but listen to BETA VOIDS hard-charge through brilliantly crafted, hardcore-tinged, multi-vocal blasts of punk, and you almost forget that there's this weird woodwind layer lurking in the shadows on every track... so instead of talking about the saxophone, I think it's better to just acknowledge its existence and move on. The songs, though—the songs are straight killers. Timeless, high-energy cuts that owe a debt to early California hardcore while firmly maintaining their own unique and expressive character. And "character" is really the word I've been looking for while I listen to *Scrape It Off* (again)—that's the thing BETA VOIDS have, and it's the quality that you don't realize you're missing in your punk until you hear it. Apparently they do things different in coastal Oregon.



Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Hovercraft

## BLOOD CANNERY – Olympic Blood cassette

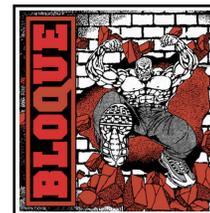
If you're in the mood for something challenging, BLOOD CANNERY's latest concept album about a man facing (possibly supernatural) beasts on the early American frontier might be exactly what you're searching for. "Olympic Blood" sounds like a LIGHTNING BOLT-versus-KYUSS showdown with super-fuzzed, whammy-heavy guitar shreds placed against hyperactive drums and muffled vocals. The lyrical tales of curses, attacking brutes, and violence sometimes evokes aesthetically coherent heavy punk experimentation, and sometimes skews toward "Faaaar out, man!" stoner excess, but it's always enjoyable. Check it out for a conceptual romp through blood, dirt, and heavy riffs.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Knuckles on Stun

## BLOQUE – Fuerte y Firme EP

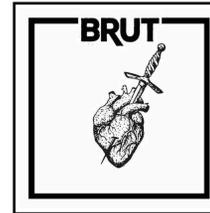
Seven-track debut from straightedge outfit BLOQUE, whose traditional take on the style doesn't lead to too many surprises outside of the occasional dive-bomb guitar. I expected it to be a little more thrashy after the intro, but it's pretty straightforward. Breakdowns and gang vocals abound, with clear influence from GORILLA BISCUITS and JUDGE. Catch them on tour with SHELTER this year.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: BCORE / CEMENTERIO / CONVICTION / REFUSE

## BRUT – MMXXIII – MMXXIV LP

This is very unique and different—a combination of post-punk and Oi! (which becomes even more apparent when you reach the JOY DIVISION and BLITZ covers later on in the slab). This is a collection of several singles and EPs that BRUT released between 2023 and 2024. The guitarist is playing at such high octaves that I thought they were running a mandolin through a chorus pedal at first. Maybe they are, there are no liner notes included. It gives the tracks this real dreamy quality that pairs well with the treble-heavy bass and dark, barking vocals. Extremely catchy and well-constructed tunes here. A very impressive output for a single calendar year.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Street Rats

## CEMENTO – Bad Dream Songs LP

CEMENTO out of Los Angeles has been compiling a library of goth-inspired post-punk epics for the past few years, and many of those tracks appear on their fresh full-length entitled *Bad Dream Songs*. Produced in conjunction with Iron Lung Records, CEMENTO's sound is pushed to a monolithic depth on *Bad Dream Songs*, allowing the band to fully exhibit their artistry. If you were into Sacred Bones' release of the HUNT's *The Hunt Begins* in 2013, or if you're into things like the early works of the CULT and CHRISTIAN DEATH, then you should check out *Bad Dream Songs*.



Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Iron Lung

## CHANCE OPERATION – Chance Operation 12" reissue

No New York might have signaled the beginning of the end of New York no wave in its labelling, defining, and constraining a scene that purposefully took root as a negation of such things, but meanwhile, there was an entire parallel network of Japanese bands forming in the late '70s and early '80s who were directly inspired by the anarchic, brink-of-collapse art-spark that had made New York's downtown sound so thrilling. CHANCE OPERATION was one of the very best to do it, not unlike a James Chance-less CONTORTIONS if you wanted to get simplistic—ultra-treble (and frequently slide-manipulated) chicken-scratch guitar, loping mutant funk bass lines, minimalist, jazz-schooled drumming. This five-song 12" (one of three CHANCE OPERATION records recently reissued as part of Spittle's Made in Japan side venture) was originally released in 1981, sounding for all intents and purposes like it came straight from the floor of the Mudd Club, from "Winecolor Sick" slinking and skronking beneath sparse, perfectly disinterested vocals from bassist Higo Hiroshi and guitarist Yoshiko Komiya, to the fractured disco-not-disco danceability of "Image Dance," to the cyclical bass rumble tussling with pinpoint guitar in "Din." Do I even have to say that it rules? Seek out 1982's *Spare Beauty* EP and 1985's *Place Kick* LP while you're at it, it's easier to do so now than ever before!



Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth  
Label: Spittle

## CHEAP FIX – Re-Animator Blues / French Song 7"

This is CHEAP FIX's debut 7". Garage punkers from your dad's days. They all play in a bunch of different bands (TRAINWRECK, EN-DURO, DECEMBER BOYS) and join together on this 7" for two songs sans bass guitar. This is workin' class, "done with the day job," fuzzy, bluesy shit from the constant maestros in class, Goodbye Boozy. Could be Mark Arm's cousin singing.



Reviewer: Johnny Leach  
Label: Goodbye Boozy

## CONTRAST ATTITUDE – Discharge Your Noise LP

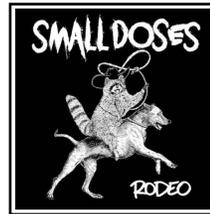
Although they have been around for more than 25 years, *Discharge Your Noise* is only CONTRAST ATTITUDE's second album. Needless to say, I pre-ordered what promised to be an exercise in intensity and ferocity as soon as possible—the limited version of course, out of excitement. It would be far-fetched to claim that these Mie punks have drastically changed their sound (a new drummer, Daigo from DECEIVING SOCIETY or RADIOACTIVE, did join them, though), but I have to confess that I was a little disappointed when I first played the vinyl. Of course, the high-level energy and relentless hardcore aggression, trademarks of the band's sound, are still there, but the guitar is not as distorted, if perhaps heavier, and I suppose on this LP, CONTRAST ATTITUDE cannot really be described as the crust monster they once were. As a result, probably because I was expecting that typical "wall of noise" bollocking like it was still 2009, I was, well, disenchanted for a bit. Listening to the LP again for this review, I realize that it is, in fact, a solid work that, once I accepted change, I was more than able to enjoy thoroughly and play air guitar to when no one is looking. The music is still as fast and punishing, the vocals as anguished and extreme, the unstoppable D-beat noise has not disappeared, but a lot of the arrangements (and generally the songwriting and the production) point to more traditional Japanese hardcore to my ears. The band even experiments with paces a little with the very punky "Feeling of the Freedom" and the heavier and slower "Disclose Naked Myself." I feel *Discharge Your Noise* is in between both styles, and while it won't alienate the traditional CONTRAST ATTITUDE fans, it may actually appeal to other people who don't necessarily wear DISCLOSE pajamas (unlike me). A good record that I still wish was a little crustier.



Reviewer: Romain Bassot  
Label: Desolate / D-Takt & Råpunk

## SMALL DOSES – Rodeo EP

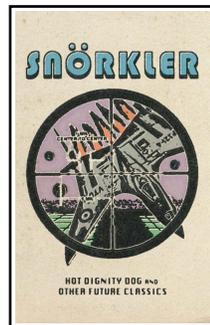
Pretty nifty record here with plenty of nuances, combining pieces of orgcore (melodic vocals paired with power-chord-driven punk songs à la BAD RELIGION and LAGWAGON) with post-hardcore (dissonant chords, slower tempos, and throaty screams that reminds me a lot of POLAR BEAR CLUB if they had embraced more of the Dischord style). I guess you can call this post-orgcore (although I'm not even sure if that term is in vogue anymore). Well-crafted tracks that do a great job telling a narrative—both musically and lyrically—that never once gets boring. Great work here. As far as punk goes, this is as perfect of an EP as you'll get.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Snappy Little Numbers

## SNÖRKLER – Hot Dignity Dog and Other Future Classics cassette

Spastic egg-punk is what y'all might call SNÖRKLER nowadays, but it was called Very Small Records-esqe back before that term was around. It has all the perfect elements of FALSE SACRAMENT, SCHLONG, NON-MEANSNO, or VICTIMS FAMILY, with keyboards for all the sulphur egginess you can handle. Four tunes that clock in under nine minutes, all plopped onto a cassette tape. The coughing on the tune "Vape Man" is perfect. Also, I think I'm hearing a flute layered in here. What the fuck is this gorgeous tidal wave of gross perfection called, you ask? I guess it's called SNÖRKLER.



Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: What's For Breakfast?

## STIFF NIGHTS – Like a Rat / Summer-time 7"

Call 'em "ZZ BOTTOM"—STIFF NIGHTS are some strangely-inspired dudes from Tennessee playing punky, glam-infused, stripped-down Southern rock jams. Rather than go for speed, they let the songs linger, with both sides of the 45 allowing enough time to slam one beer down and crack another. By the time the purple/pink vinyl stops spinning, you've got a decent buzz going and you're headed to the saloon for an evening of debauchery. You might even wake up the next morning "coyote" style, as the old legend goes:



head throbbing, spooning with a mystery monster, and faced with the unfortunate dilemma of having to chew your own arm off to escape undetected.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: WereOpossum

## TV CASUALTIES – Orphanage Fire CD

Self-proclaimed "Canola Hardcore," whatever the hell that means. This sounds like a band that you saw on the Warped Tour when you were thirteen years old whose name you can't remember. The EP is self-produced and self-released which is commendable, but the songs are generic and unmemorable. You could put it on in the background and no one will be offended, but no one's going to ask you who it is, either.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: self-released

## THE EDUCATED FOOLS – Tantric Decapitation: 69 Minutes of Trichotomy and Liquefaction 2xLP

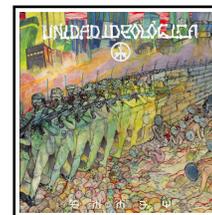
Sixty-nine minutes of boring, country-esque guitar playing. Sixty-nine minutes of the most boring, off-kiiter, pseudo-American bullshit. Sixty-nine minutes that I can never get back. The EDUCATED FOOLS are the RETAIL SIMPS, minus one member. They recorded this entire double LP live, and boy, does it show! It's full of mistakes, background banter, and out-of-tune vocals. If that's your thing, you might be into this, but you'd also have to dig subpar songwriting. Nothing about these songs is memorable except for how bad they are. Tantric decapitation sounds more fun than having to listen to this record again. Totally not punk.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Total Punk

## UNIDAD IDEOLOGICA – Choque Asimétrico LP

A crushing statement of militant hardcore punk rooted in confrontation and discipline. UNIDAD IDEOLÓGICA delivers rigid, marching riffs and commanding vocals that sound built for the street and the barricade. Lyrically and sonically uncompromising, the record channels organized anger rather than chaos, drawing power from clarity and ideological focus. *Choque Asimétrico* feels like a call to resist, positioning hard-



phere, while Krystal Maynard's vocals are charged and velvety. Occasionally I'm reminded of things like the EPOXIES or CRASH COURSE IN SCIENCE, but SCREENSAVER is definitely carving out a sound that is uniquely their own.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Poison City

### SCÜMBARI – Scümbari LP

From Boston with hate—they don't bother polishing the edges, they chisel them into shards instead. At first listen, SCÜMBARI sounds like the CIRCLE JERKS playing DISCHARGE covers, but as the songs keep rolling, they deliver versatile songwriting encompassing various styles within a hardcore punk framework. The lyrics rage on about broken lives, city blight, unsteady nights, and the broken dreams of those locked in a system that never cared. What you get is scruffy honesty, hostility wrapped in distortion, and punk that remembers it came from the streets, not a studio.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: self-released

### SERIAL PEST – Living in Fear cassette

Pure knuckle-dragging Aussie hardcore, with zero mercy. *Living in Fear* rips with frantic drums, guitar tone straight out of a damp squat, and vocals that sound like someone screaming through a wall of cigarette smoke. Everything here is fast, mean, and gloriously ugly. SERIAL PEST doesn't bother with anything resembling restraint, just wild, swinging chaos and fist-in-the-air rage. Feels less like a recording and more like stumbling into the wrong backyard show and getting shoved straight into the pit. If you want thrashy hardcore that bites, spits, and leaves the room smelling worse than when it started, this is it.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Noise Merchant

### SHOP TALK – Museum of Sex / Gaslight 7"

Solid two-song slab from this Brooklyn trio. Power pop with a little bit of a street punk edge, kind of like a beefier EXPLODING HEARTS/BUZZCOCKS concoction. Laden with earworm vocals and catchy guitar work, this pair of tracks goes by way too quickly. I want more, dammit! Really lovely work here. Add this to your winter playlist to combat your S.A.D.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: One Track Mind

### SIKPHUXZ – Punk is Shit EP

Formed in Victoria, BC in 1979, SIKPHUXZ was the first effort from Murray "The Cretin" Acton, who would later go on to assemble the legendary DAYGLO ABORTIONS. Though there were no official releases from these early Canadian punks, they did record a handful of tracks that have been unearthed and remastered on this archival EP that comes with extensive liner notes and photos. The roots of Murray's trademark irreverence are on display here in songs like the title track and "I'm So Dumb," alongside more straightforward punk tunes like "Let's Run Away" and "P.O.W.," offering an interesting glimpse of history. It's a cool little package, and the DAYGLO guys are still going strong today, with members having been arrested on drug charges as recently as fall of last year.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Supreme Echo

### SLIT – Demo 2025 cassette

Primitive, noisy hardcore punk operating on pure chaos. SLIT tears through these tracks with reckless speed and total disregard for clarity or comfort. Feedback-soaked riffs and feral vocals dominate, capturing a band at its most raw and unhinged.  
Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: self-released



### CORPSE ON DELIVERY – ...And Another War+ LP

Stripped-down and in your face Ohio peace punk from the mind of MARBLES drummer Mark Slak. ZERO BOYS vibes with tinges of CIRCLE ONE and other early West Coast acts with a modern interpretation that owes more to fellow Midwesterners CRACKS or California transplants NAKED AGGRESSION. ...*And Another War* was released digitally early last year, but the "+" here is the rest of their discography dating back to the *Roots of War* EP in 2023. Twenty-three tracks in all—a soundtrack to an upfront anti-imperialist, anti-Trump, pro-liberation agenda.

Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Sick House

### DSM-5 / VAROITUS – Östergötland Jawbreaker split LP

A crushing split LP pairing two distinct but equally bleak visions of modern hardcore. DSM-5 delivers suffocating, noise-laced hardcore punk that feels mentally claustrophobic, with repetitive riffs and desperate vocals mirroring psychological collapse. VAROITUS counters with cold Finnish D-beat, sharp and militant, channeling classic Scandinavian hardcore with a contemporary sense of urgency. A relentless record that leaves no room for comfort.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Phobia

### DARK THOUGHTS – Highway to the End LP

Six years after their last record, Philadelphia's DARK THOUGHTS have reemerged as dialed-in as ever on this brand new slab. The tunes are tight and concise, never overstaying their welcome and always getting the point across within their brief duration. Applying the poppy and speedy formula of classic SCREECHING WEASEL and RAMONES to maximum effect, the songs hit hard with relatability, realism, and hope. They're what I wished every band sounded like when I was sixteen. "Please Don't Be Lonesome" is the perfect reassuring follow-up to the previous album's heartbreaking "With You," with which I positively tortured myself at the time of its release. Or is "Sweet Success" the real happy ending? Either way, I'm glad the story isn't over.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Drunken Sailor / Stupid Bag

### DEEP X CUT – How to Be Normal cassette

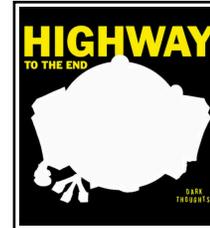
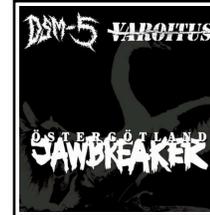
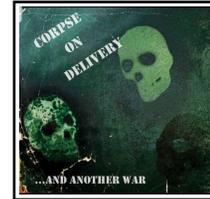
Damn, that's a fast recording. Six minutes, barely a cig break. The big "X" stuck between the two words making out the name of the band gives a relevant indication as to what this Greek band is all about: (very) fast, abrasive hardcore. We're not far from classic powerviolence country here with those heavy moshable breaks and a couple of blastbeats. I don't listen to this style much, to be honest, but I can always enjoy it when it is done proper, and that's definitely the case here. The female vocals sound really angry and the production is just right, not too heavy but still hitting hard the punk way. The lyrics are in Greek—that's a strong plus—but the tape's title is in English for some reason. *How to Be Normal* is apparently DEEP X CUT's third EP, and the band is connected to a collective based in a squat in Ioannina, so you know where they stand politically. This would undoubtedly appeal a lot to fans of the genre.

Reviewer: Romain Bassot  
Label: Distro K94 / Nothing to Harvest / Studio From the Down

### DER MODERNE MAN – Unmodern LP reissue

Originally released in 1982 as DER MODERNE MAN's second studio album, Tapete has reissued this along with the band's first LP, *80 Tage Auf See*, as well as some previously unreleased singles, EPs, and demos (on the *Jugend Forscht* 2xLP). Based in Hanover, Germany, DER MODERNE MAN found themselves at the forefront of the punk and new wave scenes coming out of the area, freely mixing genres and styles. The opener "Anakonda" starts with a moody feel, featuring a slinky bass line and some spooky vocals, only to move on to dub influences on songs like "Nur Die," featuring some classic reggae synths, guitars, and saxophones. I also hear psych rock guitars on "Nicht Warten," followed by a danceable, poppy electronic beat on "Gurus und Geheimagenten." All to say, this album is full of texture, surprises, and is certainly worth your time.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Tapete



## DOM SENSITIVE – Leather Trim cassette

DOM SENSITIVE, a new studio project from Adelaide musician Dom Trim-boli of WIREHEADS, is a late-night, psych-heavy pastiche of synth swells, boom-bap drum machine patterns, and *vibes*. “Digital Random Hat” opens the tape with a loping beat, accordion-aping synth, and laconic vocals that sound like KING KRULE reciting cough syrup poetry. This leads to a surprisingly earnest bar-room piano bridge complete with synthesized trumpet backing, like a bizarre BILLY JOEL D-side. Slow-moving, but oddly propulsive, the sound follows its own odd logic and tricked me into thinking, “Yeah, music sounds like this sometimes,” when it doesn’t. “The Second Day of Spring” is an eleven-minute journey of hip hop piano production with funky synth sax solo breaks that details an autobiographical tale of seeing a man about a horse. Or something. Picture the nerve of sending MRR an eleven-minute dad-psych jam! In this economy of short attention spans?! It’s actually quite listenable, and I can picture this record spinning on turntables in hip parties that I probably wouldn’t be invited to. “Weather Maps” takes a folky guitar trip reminiscent of BECK’s early K records days, and as a whole, the carefree and laid-back feel of the album is recommended to fans of slightly off-center indie like MAC DEMARCO.

Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Chrúsimüsi

## EMMETT O.C. – 9 From the Warped Mind LP

First solo project from Emmett O’Connor (ARCHIE AND THE BUNKERS, MK ULTRAS) out of Cleveland. Inside this warped mind, we find bedroom synth punk complete with drum machine, warbling lead lines, and earnest, droning vocals, like on “Pieces of My Life” where O’Connor croons “Like a shining light from up above / She came down and she gave me her love.” “Burger King From My Dreams” gets a little sillier, and brings to mind the Technics organ tone of WESLEY WILLIS, with shades of “Rock n Roll McDonalds” to boot. On “The Air Conditioning is Making Me Sick” he gets a little heavier, channeling some BABY TYLER or maybe ALIEN NOSEJOB with a mock seriousness. “Curtain Call” plays that wobbly organ again, with some doo wop in place of the drum machine, which maybe leads us to his ‘50s rocker/James Dean influence displayed on the album cover? Layer all these things together, and I find myself thrown for a complete loop. Yet here I am, enjoying *9 From the Warped Mind* quite a darn bit.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Sweet Time



## EXPUNGE / PANIC DEFENSE – Tools to Kill Humans split cassette

One man’s anger is another man’s weapon. EXPUNGE and PANIC DEFENSE share members and even jam on each others’ songs. This collective decided to immortalize their love for the void with *Tools to Kill Humans*. It pounds on your eardrums with serrated riffs and punk ferocity coated with an oily layer of feedback. Each track is a wrecking ball of chaos that emulates the bleakness of a dystopian age. It’s primitive, it’s aggressive, it’s messy, and it’s grinding violence. For those who’ve already given up on fixing the system.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Hey Fuck You

## FIN – Dystopia cassette

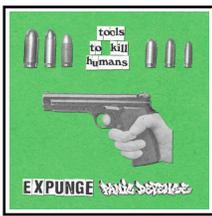
Six-song debut cassette from Middle Tennessee. At first I thought FIN sounded like an alt-rock-leaning indie band, but after further observation, I now believe they sound like an indie-leaning alt-rock band. Might sound like a nominal distinction, but I stand by it, with the difference-maker being production quality. This debut cassette is self-recorded by the band and has a bit of grit to it. The obvious cue to me came with the last song, “Talk Too Much,” a repetitive grunge number which truly sounded to me like it could have been a reworked NIRVANA song. Any way you cut it, FIN seems to dabble in a lot of ‘90s throw-back genres, so if the ‘90s are your thing, snag your self one of the 25 copies of this tape before you miss out.

Reviewer: Biff Bifaro  
Label: Tennessee Cold Cuts

## FLORES Y FUEGO – Wabi-Sabi cassette

Raw and emotional punk that embraces imperfection as a weapon. FLORES Y FUEGO balance melody and abrasion, letting cracked vocals and rough edges carry the emotional weight. The songs feel intimate but still aggressive, with a DIY urgency that comes through loud and clear. The cassette format only sharpens that immediacy.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Decline Humano



## POOL – Pool cassette

There was a time in my twenties when it seemed like all I ever wanted to listen to was Amphetamine Reptile releases, and I’m so glad I’m not the only one. Hailing from Little Rock, Arkansas, POOL is keeping the sludgy noise rock dream alive and well, with high-register, snarling vocals up in the mix and riffs pouring out thatarken back to when MELVINS still lifted from heavy metal or when NIRVANA still lifted from MELVINS. This is a confident-as-hell debut that is recorded damn near-perfectly. There’s a lot of room in the mix that everything rings clear even if there’s some mud on the band’s boots. Heavy, mean, timeless. When a band starts out this good, I can’t help but wait on pins for where they go from here.

Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: Hey Fuck You

## SAINTS OF LORAIN – Before We Were Saints cassette

Gonna do my best to break this somewhat confusing one down and hope that I’ve got my facts straight. SAINTS OF LORAIN are from Cleveland, OH and put out a digital demo in 2023. This is the second release by the band, a “collection” of songs which were written by the members’ former band AL & THE COHOLICS (the collection featuring a grand total of six songs). AL & THE COHOLICS formed in 1999, and when the drummer died in 2014, his brother apparently promised to keep the music alive. Fast forward to the present and the brother is the drummer of this band, and the songs that would have been lost to time are now documented. What an absolutely lovely sentiment. Never would I ever have thought that the actions of members of a long-running drunk punk/street punk/pirate-punk band would hit on sentimentality as strong as this. Musically, this is complicated, uptempo slap bass street punk. If you like songs about being drunk, being addicted to drugs, sex, sex, sex, sex, sex, or sex, or you were around for the heyday of AL & THE COHOLICS, then I’m sure you’re gonna have a great time with this tape.

Reviewer: Biff Bifaro  
Label: self-released



## SCHENECTAVOIDZ – Void Beyond the Pines LP

Hardcore punk bong attack! SCHENECTAVOIDZ have crashed back into the world with a release that feels like the spiritual (and extremely stoned) offspring of their old band DEVOID OF FAITH, but weirder and way more THC-soaked. *Void Beyond the Pines* sounds like what happens when punks take the same rage they had in the ‘90s, lace it with paranoia, and hotbox it until their minds start to melt away. The dual-vocal assault hits you like a fistfight in a dirty basement stairwell, the guitars grind and wobble like someone recorded them inside a smoke-clouded garage, and the drums keep everything lurching forward, even when the whole thing feels like it might wander off to stare at tree branches for a minute. It’s still punk as hell, but with a baked edge that gives the whole release a disoriented charm. A perfect soundtrack for getting high and getting pissed-off at the same time.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Shock to the System

## SCRAPE – Flood cassette

Strong debut collection of down-tuned doom metal that is more about subterranean, ultra-distorted chugging and monumental chord changes than it is about riffs. Slow-moving and powerful, the band operates in a similar spirit as KOWLOON WALLED CITY or WINDHAND and captures an intense atmosphere of hopelessness and misanthropy with lyrics rife with corporeal imagery of poisons, bloody hands, drowning, etc. The opening crunch of tracks like “Stuck” and “The Taking” hits hard, and I can imagine seeing them performed live would be like a musical punch to the chest. Crushing and bleak.

Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Broken Sound

## SCREENSAVER – Three Lens Approach LP

SCREENSAVER out of Melbourne has been pumping out material for the past six years, and on their latest full-length *Three Lens Approach*, they invite us to a gothic synth punk dub party that has us dancing to the unexpected shifts between DEVO-ish rhythms to more melancholic “Death Disco” inspirations. Multiple synthesizers fire off as hard-hitting bass lines and fierce guitar licks create an immersive atmos-



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Big Neck

### NIGHT COURT – Nervous Birds! LP

Vancouver's NIGHT COURT is back with a re-mastered reissue of their first two releases, (*Nervous Birds! One* and *Nervous Birds! Too*) on one LP. NIGHT COURT plays lo-fi garage pop that leans more toward the dirt pop spectrum than garage punk. It's straightforward, sometimes jangly, and there's a pop element throughout. The lyrics are audible and intelligent, full of pop culture references, wasted nights, and sarcasm, and often delivered via dual vocalists. "Surfin' Iona" is a standout for me, with drummer Emilor taking the lead and sounding like a bizarro version of Kate Pierson of the B-52's. There's a line from the song "Yr Ride" that stuck with me after a few listens: "Death is a hard ride / Heaven's a joyride / Until you get caught with your pants down." If there's a heaven, I certainly want to arrive bare-assed! For someone with zero attention span, 26 songs is a lot to digest at once. I get why these were originally separate releases, but existing fans will love having these in all one place and on vinyl for the first time. It's a cool showcase of the band's early output, and fans of bands like MARKED MEN or even early SHINS will find something to love.

Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Debt Offensive / Drunk Dial / Shield / Snappy Little Numbers

### NO IDOLS – The Fall EP

Excellent hardcore punk from Baltimore's NO IDOLS, a band composed of members of ANGEL DU\$t, BIB and TRUTH CULT. Muscular and tough as hell, NO IDOLS draw from *Feel the Darkness*-era POISON IDEA, with catchy leads and heavy riffs galore. You can hear the pedigree behind these songs; they feel a little more complete and pulled together than your usual hardcore fare. One of 2025's best 7"s.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Iron Lung



### PHANTOM PIKE – Phantom Pike demo cassette

Nothing warms my cold Midwestern heart more than hearing good new punk music from Illinois, and *Central/Illinois* no less. PHANTOM PIKE is a fresh outfit based in Springfield who take UK82/Oil, add black metal vocals and some dramatic instrumentals, and dress it all up in chainmail. They call it

Rock," and you know what? It does fucking rock. Check this one out.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Mister Face

### PILL MILL – Trimming the Fat EP

British Columbia's PILL MILL deliver the goods on their debut EP, a speedy hardcore punk attack bursting at the seams with the same frantic energy that the X-Claim! roster excelled at. Turbo-charged riffs, manically paced drum fills, and distorted, sneering vocals ensure every box is checked, putting this in league with Neon Taste labelmates CHAIN WHIP and SSIK (with whom the band shares members). Highly recommended.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Neon Taste

### PLASTIKA – Sijamski Blizanac LP

PLASTIKA is from Croatia and plays raw, hardcore punk, and *Sijamski Blizanac* is their ten-track full-length that delivers a noisy pummeling. Think KRIMEWATCH but faster, and oh yeah, the lyrics aren't in English, but not knowing the words in their native language really doesn't matter with how tight tracks like "Nervoza" and "Kaj Sad" are. PLASTIKA has a rare authenticity in their energy which makes their delivery of primitive hardcore that much more enjoyable of a listening experience.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Onesnaževanje Uma



"Skull



### FLUX – Peace is a Lie LP

Ten pogo-inducing corkers from Belgium's latest and greatest FLUX, a band that has done their homework and sounds as authentic as anything from the UK in 1982. Speed, anger, and just the right amount of snot make this a thoroughly enjoyable listen; by the halfway point of "Punk Retaliation," you'll be pumping your fist and spilling your beer along to the proceedings. For fans of SAVAGEHEADS, VAXINE, and the MASSACRED.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Mendeku Diskak



### FOSGENE – Ancora Tumulti Ancora Tempesta cassette

With the release of their second tape, Bassano del Grappa's FOSGENE re-emerges as a dense and direct force of nuanced D-beat power. Although you can hear the menace of Italian champions like WRETCHED and IMPACT in their twisting riffs and charging hardcore, it's black around the edges and tempered by crusty dystopian dirges, taking the sound to places the aforementioned bands only hinted at. With intelligent tackling of heavy political and social subjects in the lyrics, there's a stream of anarchy energy to the carefully composed tracks as well, furthering their alluring complexity. It's strong stuff, a dark stew that leaves you ready to explore these savage expanses further.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Sistema Mortal

### FUNCTION CREEP – Function Creep demo cassette

According to the liner notes, these guys recorded this directly with no overdubs, and if that's true, then they absolutely fucking nailed it. This is raw in the best way possible, extremely tight and polished for a demo that was done live in a living room. The music is a fun mixture of early '90s noise rock like JESUS LIZARD/RED SWAN/DINOSAUR JR. and sinister-sounding West Coast hardcore akin to early DEAD KENNEDYS and T.S.O.L. The energy is palpable, and you can tell these folks are having a great



time. I wish more modern punk sounded this way. No corny studio frills, just pure rock'n'roll. You gotta check this one out.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Out of Many, One

### GAPE – Reduced to Nothing EP

Minimal and direct. Los Angeles-based GAPE opens with a blast of do-or-die hardcore energy. Eight tracks, just over ten minutes in total, and absolutely no filler. From the opening notes of "West Co." to the closing "Seasons," the band delivers the kind of short, sharp, unforgiving intensity that hardcore was built for: fast tempos, fast riffs, and riot-inducing shouting. The record never lets up, exactly what you want from a 7" when you feel like you need to rip the world a new one.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: self-released



### GINO AND THE GOONS – Gino and the Goons LP

It's been long enough since I last thought about this band that the word "goon" has taken on a cool new meaning. Just one more thing I gotta wrestle with as I give these dudes another go! Anyway, I've always liked the idea of GINO AND THE GOONS—a handful of Floridians approaching middle-age (probably full-blown at this point!), who seemingly didn't have a history playing music, saying "fuck it" and forming a budget rock band at a time when most punks wanted nothing to do with that sound. Real laudable shit! Unfortunately, that admiration did little in the way of helping me enjoy their music. I never hated it or anything, but their songs just never did it for me. So, I went into this release, their sixth(!) LP, with pretty low expectations. Now, I'm not sure if it's because my expectations were so low, because I've mellowed a little in the ten-ish years since I last listened to them, or because they've grown as songwriters—probably some combination of all three—but I kinda dug this. The nine tracks that make up the record mix RAMONES-y dum-dum punk, glam, and druggy garage punk (think fellow Sunshine Staters JACUZZI BOYS). Am I ready to erect a GOON cave for some prolonged GOON seshes? I am not. But this record was OK enough to get the job done.

Reviewer: Alex Howell  
Label: Slovenly



## GUMM – Beneath the Wheel LP

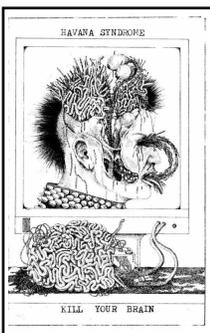
Ten new tracks of melodic hardcore from Chattanooga rockers GUMM. Convulse's writeup for GUMM's debut mentions inspiration from Revolution Summer material; that influence can be heard here as well. Equally as frustrated as it is hopeful, the words match the music, which are both at times catchy and upbeat as well as discordant and downtrodden. A nicely produced and thoughtful record that isn't my usual thing, but one I enjoyed nevertheless.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Convulse

## HAVANA SYNDROME – Kill Your Brain cassette

Demented synth punkers HAVANA SYNDROME are back with a quickness after dropping a demo tape in July. Look at the cover art: a brain mainlined into a computer monitor displaying a punk whose face is being eaten by his own brain! Cool. This should give you an idea of what you're in for. It's aggressive, it's fast, and the synths give the songs life through a vein of electro insanity. On songs like "Wrapped Boots" and "Mind Control," the vocalist yelps and hollers like a wounded animal around pulsing guitar and synth lines. It would be easy to compare them to bands like RESEARCH REACTOR CORPORATION, but it kicks way more ass. Think LUMPY & THE DUMPERS imprinting onto members of the LOCUST. Pick this up and kill your brain.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Swimming Faith

## HYPERSPACE – Distant Signals LP

HYPERSPACE's *Distant Signals* LP is clean and well-produced pop punk. Bands that come to mind are early GREEN DAY, EGGHEAD, SICKO, the CONNIE DUNGS, and the like. There are plenty of songs on here about having crushes, pining away caused by an unrequited crush, a song or two about the motion picture *Star Wars*, a song about the motion picture franchise *Terminator*, being judged about not being punk enough, and plenty more topics where those came from. There are clever songs about Russian space history, goth inspiration for DC Comics, Area 51 lore, and so



on. *Distant Signals* is a fun spin that was created for anyone that enjoys anything I've mentioned here.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: self-released

## LAMICTAL – Lamictal cassette

OC punk slop from the future. This is a solo project from Alex Coletogents, who is associated with seizure-core spazzers GNARLES MANSON and X-ACTO. Coming out of this eight-song tape, there is some vertigo and nausea that will take a moment to wear off. Once it does, I can say that there is slight intrigue, egg-punk on 78, dysphonia, a cacophony of eight tracks all barely clocking in at six retching minutes. Is he alone in this chaos? In the end, "Can't Stand My Dreams" is worthy of note.



Reviewer: Johnny Leach  
Label: Pop Affliction

## LETI Y LOS UTENSILIOS – Fuego EP

Debut EP from LETI Y LOS UTENSILIOS from Madrid, Spain. Four songs of dark, brooding punk with driving bass that grounds a razorblade guitar, cymbal-crashing drums, and a female vocalist with plenty of bite. "Fuego" and "Subir Bajar" on the A-side hit pretty hard and chug right along, while the B-side's "Haloperidol" and "Botox" fall into a bit more of a garage groove, with some guitar solos and riffing. Overall, this is a great debut, and I'll be excited to see where they go from here.



Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Delia

## LOST LEGION / SYMPOS – split EP

This LOST LEGION / SYMPOS split keeps things simple, with each band tossing in two tracks and sticking firmly to what they do best. SYMPOS play straight-up, working-class street punk from Waterford, Ireland, pulling hard from UK '77 without sounding like a tribute act. Their opener, "Welcome to Ballybricken," is the high point on the record for me, ripping through two minutes of upbeat urgency that feels scrappy, direct, and genuinely fun. Chicago's LOST LEGION, featuring Ian Wise of FUERZA BRUTA and Foreign Legion Records, counters with their brand of Oi! that leans heavier and more reflective. For me, "Stuck in One Place" lands hardest, a surprisingly catchy and (dare I say) danceable song with lyrics that wrestle with the



feeling of being locked into a violent identity. No filler, no grand statements, just four solid tracks that balance energy, hooks, and hard-earned perspective.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Mister Face / Tough Ain't Enough

## MARAUDEUR – Flaschentäger LP

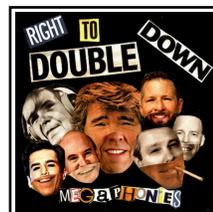
MARAUDEUR's *Flaschentäger* is an absolutely mesmerizing collection of ten short and straight-to-the-point post-punk jams. Though the term post-punk is very ambiguous and rarely gives any idea to what to expect, I'm happy to say that this album turned out to be the kind that perfectly fits into my personal idea of what the term implies: an immense and somewhat liminal vibe created by the perfect alignment of tastefully minimalist elements. With its catchy hooks, beautifully layered guitars and bass, and lovely sparkles of synth lines, *Flaschentäger* is one of those albums that invoke "in-between" emotions and mental states that I haven't found the right words for yet. Sure, you can dance to it. But it's also good for laying in bed and watching the ceiling for a while. Can't recommend this one enough.



Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Feel It / Kakakids / Red Wig

## MEGAPHONIES – Right to Double Down CD

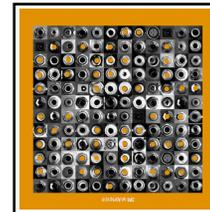
Melodic and fuzzy power pop from Sacramento. Heavy, deep riffage that brings to mind DEATH FROM ABOVE 1979 and a slew of classic rock bands; kind of like a modern, punked-up version of FOGHAT. This is a pretty bluesy-sounding album, lyrically and musically, which is shockingly refreshing. Production sounds great and the band comes off huge for being just a trio. I won't lie, this was an unexpected hit for me. I wasn't sure what a band called MEGAPHONIES was going to sound like, and they completely blew me out of the water. You're gonna wanna spin this one a couple times.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: self-released

## MELKUS – Discografia Due LP

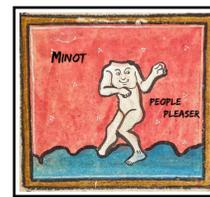
Leipzig's MELKUS has a distinct sound of their own that really enchanted me. Fast and furious sequences that smoothly transition into melodic passages, dark and mysterious garage sounds that get better and better with each layer, and catchy hooks peeking around every corner...it's one of those albums where every part flows perfectly into the next. While guitar and bass with gloriously filthy tones lock into each other to form amazing riffs, punchy drums not only accompany them but also add another layer of that explosive energy. Charismatic vocals are definitely the cherry on top of this beautiful rock'n'roll cake, along with the momentary bursts of ear-candy from miscellaneous instruments like saxophone, organ, and synths. The dark and gritty production style of this LP complements the band's sound flawlessly, too. I really like this one, and I'm already looking forward to their next release.



Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: It's Eleven

## MINOT – Walls / People Pleaser 7"

Lo-fi, pop-tinged garage punk from Missoula, Montana. The A-side "People Pleaser" sounds like Toody Cole fronting the VELVET UNDERGROUND or BEAT HAPPENING; sparse instrumentation with chilling vocals and a cool organ line throughout it. The B-side "Walls" was not as interesting. The vocals annoyed me so badly that I couldn't finish the song, and I tried twice.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: self-released

## N.E. VAINS – Running Down Pylons LP

N.E. VAINS make music that sounds like it should be playing on the car stereo of your dad's old Buick as you drive around with your friends, drinking beers, and being degenerate little shitheads. At the core, it reminds me of '90s budget rock bands like NEW BOMB TURKS, but with an undeniable HEARTBREAKERS influence to the guitar riffs and a dash of snotty punk energy thrown in for good measure. The record clocks in at seventeen minutes, and even with a couple of lulls, songs like "The Grounds," "Running Down Pylons," and "Pinched Nerve" make it worth picking up. Put it on the stereo next time you want to drive around lighting bags of shit on fire and smashing mailboxes!

