



# MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL REVIEWS #514

MARCH 2026

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## MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

This is an **unofficial** zine digest of MRR 514, first published March 2026. You can read it online at: <https://www.maximumrocknroll.com/review/issues/mrr-514/>

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This issue contains 114 reviews, contributed by:

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Sir Bobos	D. Gregory
Seth McBurney	Tim Janchar
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Erika Elizabeth	Romain Basset
Jake Joyce	Emma Miller
Nick Odorizzi	Mama Goblin
João Seixas	Alex Howell
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Jeff Cost	
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## THE COUNTERFORCE

This zine digest was compiled and laid out by The Counterforce.

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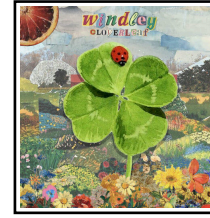
Visit <https://the-counterforce.org/zines> to get printable PDFs of this zine, and other zines.

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## WINDLEY – Cloverleaf CD

WINDLEY opens up with a quiet and pensive look back at moving on and into the next phases in life. However—dang, dunder! WINDLEY likes the DESCENDENTS and ALL and gobs more Bill Stevenson-esque bands. Look, of this specific kind of powerhouse pop punk, WINDLEY does it very well and prolly kills it live. The lyrics are a bit more introspective than usually tend to drive tunes of this ilk. Ten songs is the perfect amount for an album, and they nail it with nine out of ten, only because I’m not a fan of tunes about hangovers, and one of the ten songs is thirteen minutes long and sounds like maybe four different songs, so maybe eight out of ten or fourteen out of ten for someone else (ಠ\_ಠ)\_. I’ve spun through this three times trying to find ways to beef it up or be more descriptive, and I think I’ve nailed all you need to know for you to jump in. Oh, the only other band I knew from Myrtle Beach, SC was BAZOOKA JOE, and now I know of WINDLEY too, so there’s that.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: self-released



## XSMASHCASTERS – Tokyo Rose CD

Virginia punks the SMASHCASTERS broke up in 2013. Three years later, three of the group’s four members decided to reinvent the band, christening their updated configuration with the logical moniker XSMASHCASTERS. And now they’ve put out this CD. Though the tunes take cues from classic English street punk, they present an earnest rock’n’roll style akin to the HUMBERS. I’m reminded at times of the ANGELIC UPSTARTS, the BUSINESS side project PROLE, and also poppy ’90s punk like early BOUNCING SOULS. It’s smooth, upbeat, and punchy stuff that probably rocks harder live.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Howitzer



## YOUTH AVOIDERS – Defiance LP

We are fucking blessed to get a new album from this top-tier French band in 2026 when we so badly need it. The band has carved a lane all its own on their prior records, and they have never been more comfortable in their own skin than on this album. One of my favorite things about the band has been their guitar sound; they refuse to lean on distortion to give their compositions weight, relying more on carefully putting together melodic hardcore tunes where urgency and



release create all the heft you could possibly need. This record reminds me of the golden era of De-ranged Records and sounds as if the WIPERS and STRIKE ANYWHERE had one weird-ass baby that FUCKED UP raised. This might be my favorite of their LPs and it sounds absolutely fucking essential in 2026.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Destructure

## ÖPNV – +4917635713990 LP

ÖPNV’s +4917635713990 falls into that subcategory of post-punk that is centered around mid-tempo drum machine beats and groovy bass lines, but the use of creeping synths, megaphone vocals, decorative samples, and clever sound design tricks makes it stand out for sure. It has this slight industrial coldness that creates an in-between vibe that is not “dark” per se, but playfully tense and tensely playful. I absolutely love it, and I think everyone should give it a spin before Nokia sues the hell out of ÖPNV.

Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Phantom



## V/A – Stop Genocide Now! Volume 1: In Solidarity With Lebanon & Palestine War / Genocide Victims cassette

The *Stop Genocide Now!* series has put together an impressively diverse roster across four volumes to raise funding for Lebanese and Palestinian victims directly affected by the ongoing genocide. This tape (the first volume to be put out as a physical release) features twenty bands from across the globe, spanning Brazil to Canada to Mexico to the Philippines and beyond. I recognized a couple of names here like *INDIKATOR B* and *TÄRREGA 91'*, but I was mostly introduced to these bands through this comp. There's a lot to dig into, but standouts include raw punks *MAU AGÔURO* from Brazil, Dis-beaters *DISANXIAN* (地三鮮) from China, and '80s USHC-inspired *STILETTO* from Singapore. I could go on, but this collection is best explored by the listener. Pick up a copy, discover some new bands, and support a good cause.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Yanzhaomen

## WATERMELON – No Laughing / No Crying LP

Chicago three-piece *WATERMELON* traffics in *RAMONES*-brained, wall-of-guitar pop punk, and the bones are solid enough. The instruments hit the way they should on this release that was recorded and mixed by Erik Nervous (the *SPITS*), and I liked most of the songs until the singing kicked in. But the vocals sit deep in the reverb and low enough in the mix that whatever personality they could bring gets swallowed whole, and the songs end up blurring together. They'd probably be worth catching live if they're opening for someone you're already seeing, but *No Laughing / No Crying* is more shrug than fist-pump.

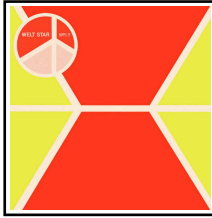


Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: What's For Breakfast?

## WELT STAR – Doppel LP

Second release from *WELT STAR*. Neither their Bandcamp page nor Under the Gun's site have any description of the group whatsoever, but a previous *MRR* review of their 2022 *Ich Hasse Blumen* cassette describes them as "an international collaboration featuring the brains behind *DIODE*, *BOBBY WOULD*, and *VAGUE-NESS*" so at least there's that. Sung in German, I hear a monotone vocal that hangs heavy over an otherwise fun and jumpy soundscape of drums, synths, and melodic guitar riffs. Rhythms are often syncopated and mechanical-sounding, like an engine roaring with a rough idle. Something vaguely post-punk, with a modern German influence and the zaniness like you might find on Berlin's Phantom label. The first eight tracks are new recordings, while the last seven comprise *Ich Hasse Blumen* in its entirety, giving us a full dose of the *WELT STAR* experience on one vinyl release. This one has my vote—awesome record.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Under the Gun



## WHITE CROSS – Fascist EP reissue

As a record collector who has opted out of seeking out first pressings (too stressful, but respect to the true collectors out there), I love a well-put-together reissue. Richmond's *Beach Impediment* knocked it out of the park with their 2024 version of fellow Virginians *RED CROSS*'s 1981–1982 *No Message*, and have continued that here with guitarist Mikey Rodriguez's post-*RED CROSS* project *WHITE CROSS*. In his review of the band's first 7", *MRR*'s Jeff Bale gave it high marks and, inadvertently, the now widely known moniker (*Fascist EP*). The release subsequently went on to be a highly influential and highly sought-after piece of hardcore history, seeing no re-presses after a second run in 1983. Fast forward to 2025, and *Beach Impediment* has done a stellar job on this reissue, faithfully restoring the original sleeve, inner label, and including some extra photos and ephemera; it even comes with a badass sticker. This is 100% essential and absolutely recommended if you, like myself, weren't around to pick up a copy of this when it was originally released.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Beach Impediment



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- **CKDU**, 88.1FM in Halifax, NS, Canada Sundays at 3:00 am
- **Free Radio Santa Cruz**, 101.3 FM in Santa Cruz, CA Mondays at 1:30 pm and Fridays 10:00 am – noon
- **Freies Sender Kombinat (FSK)**, 93.0 FM / 101.4 Cable in Hamburg, Germany and streamed online Monday nights (Tuesday morning) at 12:00 am
- **KBGA-FM**, 89.9 FM in Missoula, MT Fridays at 11:00 pm
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- **Radio Almaina**, 107.1 FM in Granada, Spain Mondays at 11:00 pm and Thursdays at 3:00 am
- **Radio Blau**, 99.2 FM in Leipzig, Germany and streamed online Friday at 11:00 pm (CET)
- **Radio Mutation** Garage Punk Pirate Radio Podcast Network
- **Radio Valencia** Sunday nights (Monday morning) at 2:00 am
- **Resonance Extra** via DAB+ in the UK to Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, London and Norwich, and worldwide online Wednesdays at 1:00 am BST/GMT
- **Space FM**, 101.1 in Seattle, WA Friday nights at 10:00pm
- **UMFM (CJUM)**, 101.5 FM in Winnipeg, MB, Canada Fridays at 6:30 am (Good morning, Winnipeg!)

## 80HD – Orc Party LP

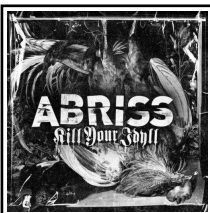
Toxic State NYHC by way of being thrown in a blender with grind-core rhythms and ignorant breakdowns. This second LP pushes the excellent drumming to the forefront for me, holding together a solid mix of metal/punk/HC ideas that could very easily sound unfocused and undercooked. Love the production on this, hits like a fucking sledgehammer. The record is a perfect fit for Iron Lung with their curation of basically the entire spectrum of heavy music; this is such a brilliant mix that it's deceiving in how coherent and natural it sounds. This delivers on the potential of the first LP in spades.



Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Iron Lung

## ABRISS – Kill Your Idyll 12"

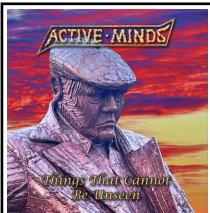
The first word that comes to mind here is "tough," and Germany's ABRISS does absolutely nothing to make me think otherwise. Short, honest, and brutal hardcore manifestations that remind me of touring Germany more than two decades ago, when the fastcore explosion was giving way (albeit stubbornly) to heavier and more Scandi-influenced sounds...but they were still playing fast as fuck, and they still knew how important a good breakdown was. Fifteen tracks on this one-sided slab, most barely kiss the one-minute mark, and you don't even have to flip it over to do it all over. Think STACK and TEAR IT UP collaborating and you'll be in the ballpark. Me? I think I'll listen again.



Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Spastic Fantastic

## ACTIVE MINDS – Things That Cannot Be Unseen LP

Look, the world needs ACTIVE MINDS. For 40 years, they have been delivering blunt-force, uncompromising activist hardcore/punk to generation after generation of punks, and I swear they feel more relevant today than ever before. The way they present such basic topics makes them feel...well, as important as they actually are. ACTIVE MINDS challenges acceptance on tracks like "The Price of Sporting Excellence" and "We Need to Talk About Saudi Arabia," and ACTIVE MINDS challenges convention with the five-minute-plus anthem "The Man Who Fell to Earth" and the dirty Motörpunk speed-picking of "Fear of a Secular Planet." Their commitment to The Plan is what makes ACTIVE MINDS so important—much like DROPDEAD



continues to bludgeon everyone in earshot with the unfiltered truth, this UK duo continues to spit fire and deliver uncompromising (and uncompromised) sounds rooted in early UK anarcho. Fortunately for us, those roots have taken hold, and the result is more powerful than ever.

Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Death Trap / Loony Tunes / SPHC

## ALL BEAT UP – Mercy Thirst LP

ALL BEAT UP's *Mercy Thirst* is what happens when breakdown-driven hardcore stops posturing and actually commits to the bit: ugly, claustrophobic violence with zero interest in crossover palatability. The guitars sound like they're being dragged through rusted sheet metal, while the rhythm section locks into a stomping, almost punitive cadence that feels more like crowd control than groove. Vocals are spat in short, venomous bursts, rejecting anything resembling melody in favor of pure bile. There's a distinctly modern blunt-force production job here, but it never slips into the plasticky sterility that plagues so much moshcore revivalism. Instead, *Mercy Thirst* lands as an exercise in sustained hostility—music for dead-eyed pile-ons and rooms with no exits.



Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Human Future / No Time

## ANTI-REGIMEN – Demos 86/87 2xLP

This double LP compiles the first two self-released cassette demos from these Spanish punks who are still going strong today. These demos go back to '86 and '87 and are pressed on individual LPs with the original artwork and a sixteen-page zine for the real heads. While the recordings have been mastered for vinyl, they still have the lo-fi charm that you would expect to hear on a tape. On the first track "Ya No Puedes Ir Donde Tu Quieras," you can even hear the tape warble from the original recording. It's cool that the British influence is so prevalent here compared to their later thrasher stuff. If I have any complaints, it's that a few songs sound like the CLASH, and I fucking hate the CLASH. Otherwise, it's a solid release, and a no-brainer if you're a fan of Basque or Spanish punk.



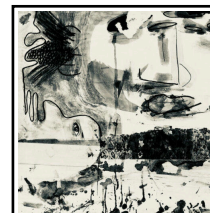
Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Discos Enfermos

mentalities, etc. As per tradition, it is unapologetically positive, to the point of almost being saccharine, so your mileage may vary there. I am in the tank for this stuff, so I can recommend it if you need some newer bands doing the style. My only nitpicks would probably be that the guitar tone isn't sharp enough for my liking and the vocals could be mixed in a wee bit better, but it's a cool enough genre exercise for those who already partake in music for sneaker and haircut high-top appreciation.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Positive and Focused

## USELESS EATERS – Ego Shell / Rub 7"

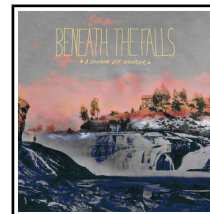
Rejoice! USELESS EATERS are back, and they sound even more fresh and kick-ass than before! While the dark and explosive energy of their earlier releases is still intact, it seems to have been upgraded to a more modern and sonically immersive sound. Crunchy drums, rumbling fuzzy bass, metallic guitars, grimy synths, and charismatic vocals...they just sound better in this three-dimensional style of production, in my opinion. It really adds a lot to the music itself. I can't wait to hear what comes next from the legendary USELESS EATERS.



Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Goodbye Boozy

## V/A – Beneath the Falls: A Spokane DIY Sampler LP

The last Spokane comp I listened to came out in 1994 on Very Small Records, so the first thing I did was check to see if there were any repeat bands here from that first one. Well, a lot must have happened in the last 32 years because this is a brand new set of underground bands out of Spokane, so let's dig in! LOOMER, HAYNES NOBLE, HELL MOTEL, and BAD TRIP MOTEL all have the melody and hooks of Salinas, Tiny Engines, and Lauren Records in that they take a pleasant melody, chop it up a little, and tend to darken it lyrically but brighten it aurally. At first, I thought the JANGLED NERVES tune was going to be their version of AC/DC's "You Shook Me All Night Long," but it wasn't. Both the JANGLED NERVES and DAIRYBABY fit pleasantly into the flow of this comp and are a bit more '70s power pop while mixing in SO COW and RADIATOR HOSPITAL influences. DAIRYBABY has great blended distortion and a melodic quality that works very well with this style. BELT OF VAPOR is as hardcore as it gets on this LP. BEN JENNINGS and JUMBOTRON, although they sound completely different, both glow of '90s Sub Pop in all the best ways. Closing this comp, BLUNT SKULLS deliver a terrific synthwave song that could have been on a Factory Records comp in the '80s. *Beneath the Falls* is a rad



snapshot that is seemingly of a bunch of friends that happen to be in bands and wanted to show the world that Spokane is much more than just lilacs and BING CROSBY.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Two Two One Press

## V/A – Florida Underground Fest, Volume One LP

DCxPC Live's *Florida Underground Fest, Volume One* collects twelve live cuts from twelve bands recorded at the Florida Underground Fest 5 in 2024, and it does exactly what it should: it captures a scene at a specific moment in time and makes you wish you'd been there. The bands lean heavily into ska, ska-punk, pop punk, NOFX-style punk, and emo-inflected melodic punk, with contributions from 69 FINGERS, NEVER-LESS, NEVERENDER, SUCK BRICK KID, CONTROL THIS!, the LONGEST HALL, DIAL DRIVE, JOHNNY 2 CHORDS, IN-TRANSIT, FLAG ON FIRE, the KUTOFFS, and YOU VANDAL. The recording quality is surprisingly decent for a live comp, and the performances are pretty solid throughout. Fair warning: there's a lot of annoying-younger-brother energy packed into these grooves, and if you've aged out of this particular corner of punk, it may not be your daily driver. But as a snapshot of what's happening in Florida's underground scene right now, it's a worthwhile spin. DCxPC released a second volume from the same fest focused on heavier and more experimental music, if that's more your speed.



Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: DCxPC

## V/A – Metro Subterranean 2 LP

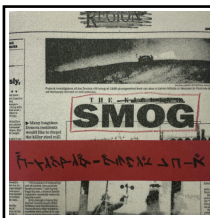
Dark Entries' *Metro Subterranean 2* brings together four widely different acts: DONZII, KLYPI, ICBM, and PERIOD BOMB, none of whom I'm really familiar with. First act DONZII's funky and modern post-punk sound really captivated me and got me dancing around the house. But to me, as a casual listener of electropop, KLYPI's part felt a bit outdated, and out of place with the rest of the LP—and MRR's scope. The next act, ICBM, was incredibly fun with their fluid, weirdo experimental punk sound, and I'll definitely return for more. The closing act of the LP, PERIOD BOMB, is the only band I had prior knowledge of, and after hearing more of them on this album, their minimalist yet chaotic no wave sound really clicked with me. Overall, *Metro Subterranean 2* is a really enjoyable experience for the most part, apart from some moments that weren't exactly my cup of tea.



Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Dark Entries

## THE SMOG – Speed of Life / New Game 7”

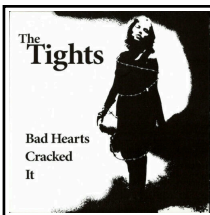
Two killer new cuts from Japan's the SMOG. This is what I consider perfect punk. What does it take to qualify for perfect punk, you ask? I don't really have specifics, but I do know when I hear it. There's a strong BUZZCOCKS influence to the songwriting, and it's played with the ferocity of Japanese punks SS. Play it loud, you deserve perfection!



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Going Underground

## THE TIGHTS – Bad Hearts EP reissue

Didn't the TIGHTS have a single called "Howard Hughes"? They did, way back in the late '70s. This is also from that era (1978) and originally came out on the Cherry Red label. This is classic early UK punk rock/power pop, back when the two weren't necessarily distinguished. This is a must-have. In addition to the punk and the power pop, this one's got a dusting of new wave you can throw into the mix, just for fun.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: HoZac

## THEE HEADCOATEES – Man-Trap LP

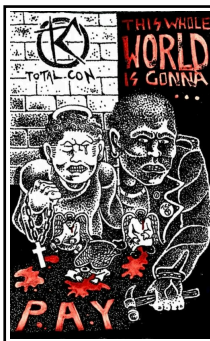
"Dude, did you see THEE HEADCOATEES have a new record out?" I asked my bandmate. "I'll check the press release, I doubt it was recorded recently," he responded, followed by "Welp, I guess I'm immediately eating my words." Eat 'em and smile, my friend! This is their first new release in 26 years, and features a few BILLY CHILDISH-penned originals along with a bunch of covers. If you're an existing fan, you take comfort in knowing that the band still sounds great after all these years, and CHILDISH'S songwriting has improved the same. If you're new to their music, sit back and hear where the COATHANGERS learned it all. I would have loved to hear more originals, but you can't slight the band for having fun and letting the tape roll again after all these years. This one is a no-brainer for all the garage heads out there.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Damaged Goods

## TOTAL CON – This Whole World is Gonna Pay cassette

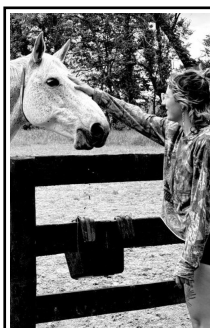
Relentless hardcore punk attack from this one-man band. What if WHITE CROSS was from the Midwest, and the only tape they listened to before making a record was BGK? Well, this might be the answer. Proper fucking punk here, against the establishment in all its forms, pissed-off, and empowering. I tend to have a bias against one-man bands, but holy shit, this ripped my face clean the fuck off—UKHC is just full of every kind of awesome shit.



Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Brainrotter

## ULTRA BLEACH – Ultra Bleach cassette

Eight songs of quirky, bubbly, unhinged, repetitive art-punk from Richmond, VA. Musically, ULTRA BLEACH stays within driving, mid-tempo punk range. Cool little drum fills, tight-sounding band. I am not entirely sure if it is how loud the vocals are in the mix or the eccentric yelp styling of the vocalist itself that makes the repeated lines in each song feel less like hooks and more like someone aggressively lecturing you from a soapbox. There are moments where I hear a little bit of early MEAT PUPPETS, which only added to my overall feeling that this has much more of a grunge-type feel to it than anything near the band's self-proclamation of egg-punk.



Reviewer: Biff Bifaro  
Label: self-released

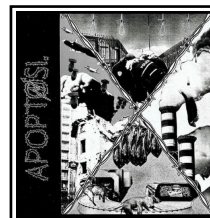
## URGENT KILL – It's OK to Be Kind LP

Straightedge youth crew hardcore for the true believers. This is Tony from Positive and Focused Records' band, a dedicated scene vet from Holland, and from what I understand, this band is him and a couple teenagers mining the tried and tested ore of youth crew HC. This mines more of the youth crew revival sound than the first wave—I hear some FASTBREAK, maybe some UP FRONT, but it's done well enough. Lyrically on the right side of things, dealing with Tony's recent bout with cancer, religion being exclusive and dangerous, the importance of non-racist



## APOPTOSI – Per Tutto Il Male Che Avete Fatto LP

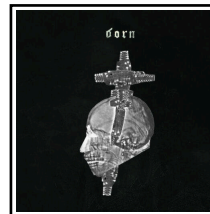
APOPTOSI out of Bergamo, Italy plays hardcore punk in the Italian tradition, which means ample amounts of high-speed thrash ground into the mix. Their ten-song *Per Tutto Il Male Che Avete Fatto* full-length is packed with intricate instrumentation hidden just below a layer of seething lyrical delivery. Gritty and lean production keeps the whole album feeling very old school, as if this masterpiece could have come out between 1988 and 1992. If you like NEGAZIONE or RAW POWER, then you should absolutely give APOPTOSI a listen.



Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Agipunk

## B.O.R.N. – B.O.R.N. 12”

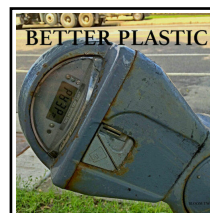
Birmingham, Alabama crusher punks B.O.R.N. just released a fresh slab of distortion-laden, crust-driven noise that is fucking brilliant. Piling on at the nexus of harsh noise and punk, this 12” is eight tracks that will have you slamming and two-stepping your way through this shit life in no time.



Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: self-released

## BETTER PLASTIC – EP2 cassette

Brooklyn's BETTER PLASTIC follow up their self-titled debut with the aptly-titled *EP 2*. Featuring two original tracks of power-violence-infused post-hardcore and one LEFT FOR DEAD cover, anyone interested in mid-tempo, slightly off-kilter songs with blastbeats will find much to enjoy here. Overall, I do think the vocals are cool, but this doesn't really do anything for me.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: self-released

## BIKINI MUTANTS – Let's Mutate LP

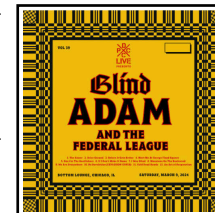
Rescued from the depths early '80s UK DIY cassette obscurity, *Let's Mutate* collects twelve tracks from two demos recorded in 1982 by Yeovil's short-lived BIKINI MUTANTS, who planted stakes right at the junction of anarcho-punk and indie pop. While their associations with some of the heaviest hitters in both of those worlds might be used as the marketing hook here (they played often with the MOB, and bassist Deb Goode would later join MY BLOODY VALENTINE), it's almost a disservice to the strength of the songs that they left behind. The stark anarcho influence sticks like wheatpaste to the roiling, tom-heavy beats and endlessly cycling bass line in "Arcadia," with the splintered guitar and sharp but still slightly shambolic rhythms of "Prey" and "Paper Plane" taking an early MEKONS/EX-like turn, and the dub-singed slowburners "Fool's Paradise" and "Question" echoing the A-side of that classic FATAL MICROBES single. Criss Cole's airy, crystalline vocals float through it all, pure sweetness and light but cloaked in shadows—think GIRLS AT OUR BEST! or TWELVE CUBIC FEET, wrapped in a Crass Records foldout. If I believed in heaven, I'd be there right now.



Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth  
Label: Sealed

## BLIND ADAM AND THE FEDERAL LEAGUE – DCxPC Live Presents, Vol. 39 LP

If you've read my past reviews, then you'll know I often go to bat for these DCxPC live albums—pure rock'n'roll archiving that will be long remembered for documenting the history of the genre in the 2020s. They are always worth at least a couple spins. BLIND ADAM brings more of the same energy you've seen in the past on these slabs, with high octane punk spliced with a hint of country/western and BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN. For the sake of simplicity, I'm going to refer to BLIND ADAM as skate punk (which I think is fair, as they sound like a cross between SWINGIN' UTTERS and early RISE AGAINST), as the term "pop punk" doesn't really do them justice. In an era where political punk is more commonly found in folk punk and power-violence, it's refreshing to have a skate punk act return the genre to its roots. These are the types of anthems you can build a revolution around. Their songs are so polished that if you told me this was a studio recording, I'd believe you. The lead guitarist is easily one of the best I've heard in a very long time; nothing but face-melting licks that tear their guitar to absolute shreds. A truly brilliant player and master of their craft. You already know what I'm gonna say: go give this record a twirl.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: DCxPC

## BOBO – Bootleg cassette

I can admit when I'm wrong, because I fully judged Denton's BOBO by their name and tape cover. I was steady-ing myself for something goofy, a tape made up of laugh tracks and bicycle horns, and I was way off. I am just not into clowns or facepaint or anything tagged "clowncore," with BIG CLOWN being the one exception. BOBO gets a pass as well, because this tape fucking rules. Vocalist Polly has some serious pipes, recalling Tina Halladay of SHEER MAG and the angriest side of Corin Tucker's vocals in HEAVENS TO BETSY. There are fast punk moments (especially on scorches like "Diet Pepsi" and "The Bulrushes"), but much of the melodic bass lines and guitar interplay pulls from heavy '70s riff rock and post-hardcore. Imagine THIN LIZZY putting out a record on Dischord; detuned and flanged guitar lines and jazz-funk bass patterns click into stuttering syncopated beats then chop out head-nodding riffs. This was such a nice surprise that I checked out the "clowncore" tag to see if maybe I was wrong about the genre (reflection is important). Nope, that shit is still completely stupid. Only BIG CLOWN and BOBO. Everyone else, please stop.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: XTRO

## BRIX! – That'll Do Ya! CD

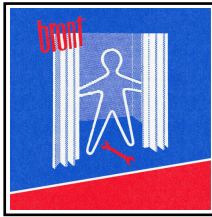
Pleasantly rough around the edges, like the punk possum on the cover giving us the middle finger. On *That'll Do Ya!*, BRIX! crank out seven quick shots of no-nonsense punk. These songs rarely hang around longer than they need to, and that's the whole point. There's also a loose, rehearsal space quality to the whole thing; energy over polish. Nothing fancy here, only direct blasts of punk to kick up some dust. A fun, quick rip for fans of raw, straightforward punk.



Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: self-released

## BRONT – 9 EP

Six years since their last release, Antwerp, Belgium's BRONT is out with their #9 EP. Band leader Brent Pauwels may have been the only credited musician on 2019's *Nipples*, but this latest effort features Simon de Geus (MELTHEADS, MOAR) on drums, Samuel D'Hoore (DEATHSTAR, MCGYVER, SAVING NICO) on synth, and Caspar de Geus (BRORLAB, VLERK, MOAR) on guitar and backing vocals. On this four-track EP, we find clean, sharp guitars jangling around simple, driving drum beats, bobbling bass, and angular vocals that are sung/spoken in a calm manner. Poppy garage tunes that stay on the fun, light, and odd side of the dial. The closer, "Hard and Sad," catches my ears and is quite the anthem, with a really driving pulse-beat and ascending melody. Great 7" out on Belly Button, who are celebrating their tenth anniversary!



Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Belly Button

## BRUX – Sota La Influència 10"

Five tracks from Barcelona's BRUX, paying homage to the songs and bands that influenced them the most. It's heavy on the Oi! and post-punk, and honestly, it took me a bit to realize these were covers, as each song would fit nicely into their existing catalog. As I was listening, I started thinking about how music exists without borders and how fucking cool that is. Where would we be today without the influence of first-wave British Oi! and punk? I think it's cool that a band spent time and money paying tribute to their influences, while putting their own spin on the songs, too. Most of the songs have lyrics converted to their native tongue (Catalan), which is super sick. I'd recommend picking it up, but as of the time of this writing, it's sold out!



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Mendeku Diskak

## BULLDOG – Φύλλο Αγώνος EP

An EP from these Hellenic hardnuts, which I am reliably informed is aimed at football fans, and against modern football. I suspect, however, that largely due to the prominent image of a bunch of bloody rozzers on the charge on the cover, it's more to do with football violence rather than, let's say, the popularisation of inverted wing-backs or the roll-out of semi-automated goal line technology. That being said, regardless of what they are on about, this was a surprisingly fun bit of Oi!



## THE III – Dig Your Own Grave cassette

I am not the first in line for a grunge or alternative rock renaissance, and this mixed bag from Philly rockers the III didn't change my mind. Opening track "Full Speed Ahead" starts with a crashing open chord and dissonant guitar figure that takes you right to SLINT city. The first minute is so good, and then someone had to be a guitar hero and show off their chromatic scale runs which totally kills the vibe. And so it goes for the rest of the tape: some great moments followed by headscratchers. I mean, the WIPERS, a huge sonic influence for the III, were incredible. Shit like ALICE IN CHAINS was not. Title track "Dig Your Own Grave" has a propulsive heaviness to it, not unlike SCREAMING TREES, complemented by the Lanegan-esque timbre of the vocals. It's the III at their best. Instrumental closer "Get It Where You Can" ends the tape with a question mark. Guitar hooks and melancholic minor chord progressions evoke the sweeter side of the REPLACEMENTS, but then feel uplifting to the point of a schmaltzy '90s-era teen movie.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Roachleg

## THE KNIGHT SHADES – Why (Baby Why!) / Make You Mine 7"

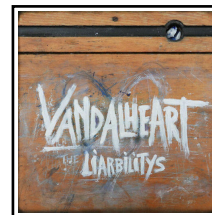
Only two songs? Bummer! This is, without a doubt, the best garage rock/punk I've heard this year. It's got loads of energy and swagger, and somehow manages to breathe some life into a genre that often feels tired and repetitive. It's polished and raw at the same time, and I love the JAMES BROWN-esque yelps delivered several times a song. I bet these songs would rip live, and I imagine it would be the kind of show where you're soaked in beer and exhausted from dancing your lil' ass off. Gimme more.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Rogue

## THE LIARBILITYS – Vandalheart LP

Here's a reminder to never judge an album by its first track. *Vandalheart* kicks off as your standard skate punk affair: basic power chords, call-to-arms lyrics, and NOFX-esque drumming. I prematurely wrote the rest of the record off, assuming it would all sound similar. It was dead wrong. This slab completely opens up fol-



lowing the second track, "Sickbed," and is a masterclass of modern punk rock songwriting. While the guitar work itself is as catchy as it gets, the vocals and the lyrics are what drives this home. The storytelling here is reminiscent of the CLASH; very personal yet undoubtedly relatable and sentimental for all who listen. The vocalist themselves is on another level—pure unadulterated talent here. I mentioned the guitars being catchy, but goddamn, this singer has hooks for days. It all reminds me of an English ARMCHAIR MARTIAN and Chad Price-era ALL. Very solid album, well worth hundreds and hundreds of spins.

Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: self-released

## THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION – Wait for Me 12"

THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION's *Wait for Me* is a one-sided, four-track 12" from this Finnish band, who've been putting out records since the early 2000s. The touchstones floating around them are HÜSKER DÜ and LEATHERFACE, but don't go in expecting much of the abrasion that made those bands great—this is the smoother, more radio-friendly cousin. The singer delivers a gliding, upper-register performance that feels perpetually on the verge of giving out, riding high over tight, ringing guitars in a way that's appealing enough but never quite matches the urgency of the drummer. The second song, "Intro," an instrumental, reminded my buddy Jason of SUPERCHUNK or the bands on Merge Records in the '90s, and when I told him they were Finnish, he said "That tracks." This is going to sound crazy, but some of the music brought to mind the BIG BOYS' song "Which Way to Go," which might be a more interesting comparison than the band probably deserves. It's fine, but unlikely to fight its way into regular rotation.



Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Combat Rock / Stonehenge / Waterslide

## THE SMARTHEARTS – Not Forgotten 12"

These guys are from Philly. Outside of their sports fans, I love Philly (my brother used to say that the toughest guys in the world come from Philly). This is straightforward punk rock/power pop. They just come out of the gates and get to it. No nonsense. Melodic and mid-tempo, this really is catchy. I like the balance between the punk grittiness and the pop smoothness. All that, and they still manage to bring a sense of urgency to the table. Excellent.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: Stupid Bag

Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Blood Factor Negative

## SUBTERRANEAN KIDS – Subterranean Hardcore LP reissue

Originally a demo released in 1985, *Subterranean Hardcore* has been unearthed via BCORE Disc and Little Jan's Hammer. This is raw '80s hardcore fury from Barcelona, distilled into a blistering nineteen-track attack. SUBTERRANEAN KIDS tore through these pissed-off anthems in barely half an hour, pairing turbocharged tempos with incisive riffs and angry vocals. From snappy tunes like "Nunca Más" and "Calles Vacías" to more ragged ones like "¿Puños o Cabeza?", this is hardcore punk that sounds like a Spanish MINOR THREAT, and they even treated us to a cover of the iconic, movement-creating "Straight Edge" and a BLACK FLAG cover for good measure. It's a real snapshot of a band living and breathing the urgency of their time and place.



Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: BCORE / Little Jan's Hammer

## TV MOMS – Celebrity Dust CD

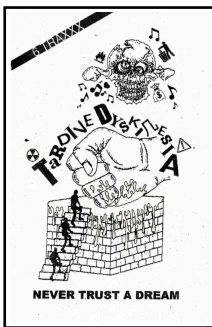
Heavy, rocking punk that makes you wanna swing your hair and bounce around. I loved the explosive chorus in "Clouds Burn," and the subtle shift to a slower and sludgier sound in "Get Sunk"—I definitely felt like I was scraping along the bottom of a lake. They were able to keep an intensity and raw power, even without screaming vocals (don't worry, they were still in-your-face and deep). Definitely give these guys a shot.



Reviewer: Emma Miller  
Label: self-released

## TARDIVE DYSKINESIA – Never Trust a Dream cassette

Raw, noisy, and chaotic, Fresno's TARDIVE DYSKINESIA delivers six tracks of feverish punk perfection on *Never Trust a Dream*. Pulling inspiration from bands like CHAOS UK, DISORDER, and GAI (all of whom they covered last year on a previous tape), the vocals are harsh, the bass rumbles right up front in the mix, the guitar hits a phaser effect here and there, and the drums bash away keeping everything on track. If you're into what Unlawful Assembly and General Speech have going on, this tape is for you.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Roachleg

## TECHNOPOLICE – Chien De La Casse LP

Ah yes, more egg-punk. This would have sounded fresh five years ago, but by this point, it's just paint-by-numbers. Your typical synth-heavy, twangy, chorus-laden guitar affair. Don't get me wrong, there's some decent songwriting and arrangements here. If you're devoted to the genre, then you'll love this. I must not be as devoted as I previously thought.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Howlin' Banana

## TEE VEE REPAIRMANN – Only a Memory / Bad News 7"

Looks like another two-piece from Australia (who remembers the GOOCH PALMS?). This is bare-bones garage punk/pop. Two songs, five minutes. Fuck it, the kids are demanding more. We want more! It's basic, but it's catchy as hell. More than that, it's compelling. This will have you engrossed, bobbing your head and tapping your toes. It's that good.



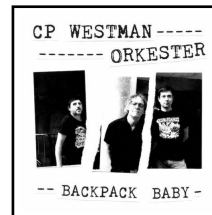
Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: Blushing Grinning / Goner / Wartmann Inc.

Some decent knockabout stuff that carries a tune without slipping into fancy dress nonsense

Reviewer: Ben Marshall  
Label: Tough Ain't Enough

## CP WESTMAN ORKESTER – Backpack Baby EP

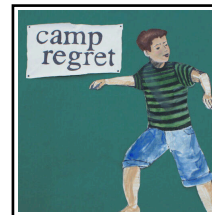
Combining members from JERRY SPIDER GANG, BART AND THE BRATS, and other notable rock'n'roll outfits, CP WESTMAN ORKESTER serves up some rough and minimal Euro-punk for that ass. This is garage punk for all intents and purposes, but to these weathered ears, the songs sit squarely in the lineage of the VI BRATORS and UK SUBS. You get a black-and-white sleeve containing '77-inspired style, released on a most-respected Italian label—a rather agreeable situation.



Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Goodbye Boozy

## CAMP REGRET – Camp Regret LP

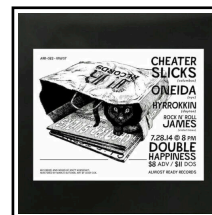
High-energy punk with snaky elements of post-punk guitar work and staccato vocals. Catchy garage riffs and the overall buzzing enthusiasm make this record a fun listen along the lines of HOT SNAKES mixed with BLACK EYES. There are straight-up rockers like "Smoke Screen" and "Summer Venues," but more interesting are the skittering drums and jerky bass rhythms on tracks like "Go Getter" and "New Zack City," the latter with a smooth synth accompaniment.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Two Two One Press

## CHEATER SLICKS – Live at Double Happiness LP

CHEATER SLICKS get another live document courtesy of Almost Ready Records, who've already put out several LPs of their shows plus a four-cassette box set. Recorded at a record store appearance in July 2014, *Live at Double Happiness* captures the band in their natural state: loud, loose, and completely unconcerned with your approval. Some of it serves a VELVET UNDERGROUND AND NICO vibe, all the instruments doing their own thing simultaneously, and those were the moments that hooked me most. The whole record plays like outsider art rendered in thick, rough lines, presented with a confidence that makes

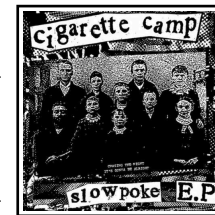


it clear they're doing exactly what they want to do. If you don't get it or don't want to get it, that's on you. They're just going to keep on going. Limited to 180 copies on vinyl for the faithful.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Almost Ready / Morbid Web

## CIGARETTE CAMP – Slowpoke EP

Two songs in, this EP had me thinking of one of the unsung heroes of early 2010s melodic hardcore/pop punk hybrids: UNFUN. Bands like them and CANADIAN RIFLE hit that sweet spot between those two labels, gruffing up one side and melodically infusing the other. If that sounds like a modern LEATHERFACE description, you're not far off. CIGARETTE CAMP may feel less worn or mature, but they deliver on the things Frankie Stubbs always does: personal-feeling vocals/lyrics, guitars for days, and anthemic moments that hit like a bucket of water if you happen to be on fire. What I'm going the long way around to say is that this is so, so, so very satisfying. Punk with head and heart put into it is what we will always need, and it is delivered here in spades.



Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Saccharine Tryst / Stupid Bag

## CIGARETTE CAMP – Steps LP

CIGARETTE CAMP easily falls in with OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, RVIVR, DILLINGER FOUR, early JAWBREAKER, and all-over-the-place gruff melody and hooks galore. This record has summer and friends dribbling and popping through every note. I think that it is important to understand that although they are covering well-worn ground, this record also comes off authentically and not as merely wanting to mirror or rehash any other bands. There are nineteen songs, which might seem long, but they average fifty seconds each and are perfectly sequenced to flow together, and before you know it, it's over and you have to flip it and start all over again. I think *Steps* is going to make gobs of folks happy, and perhaps make it easier to get through the cold and wet spring.

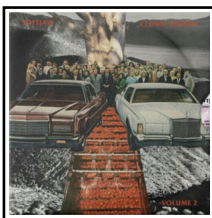


Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Dead Broke

## CLOWN SOUNDS / SOFTJAW – Volume 2 split 7"

What a fantastic little throwback record this is. One song on each side, one flavor of sweet power pop on each side. The A-side belongs to SOFTJAW, who channel early power pop and some '60s vibes (in the good BEACH BOYS way, not the bad hippie-dippy kind of way) on the undeniable earworm "Don't Go Walking Out." The key here is the layering of the vocal harmonies on one end and the different guitar sounds on the other. A little jangle here, a little reverb there, some clean sounds...it all comes together almost mathematically on the song. Like the ARCHIES, but with the craft on it taken up to eleven. Sadly, one of the members of the band passed away after this recording, but per a note with the record, some of his remaining recordings will be coming out in 2026 under the name UNCLE GRIMM on the same label. If it is anything like this, I will 100% be snagging that record. The B-side belongs to CLOWN SOUNDS and sounds like a lost PAUL WESTERBERG tune circa the *Eventually* album. Of course, that means there's a small dose of ELVIS COSTELLO to this, but man, is it well-executed. I know those two reference points stand tall and may generate expectations, but this 7" blew me the fuck away—I was not familiar with either act and I consider myself a fan of both now.

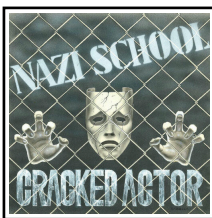
Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Funny Goofy



## CRACKED ACTOR – Nazi School LP

If you've encountered CRACKED ACTOR before, it is most likely from their appearance on the fifth installment of *Killed By Death*, where the title track of this LP appeared in all its revved-up, trashy glory. Sourced from a 1981 EP of the same name, "Nazi School" emerged from the same degenerate ectoplasm as fellow East Coast goons the DICTATORS and NERVOUS EATERS. Sleaze-forward raunch'n'roll, with killer tone loaded with swagger. Naturally, the big question to be answered is how the rest of the material stacks up. For me, it's a bit of a mixed bag. There are some unsurprising throwaways—the cover of "Judy in Disguise," the five-minute-plus "All Day Sucker"—and a gross-out, ultra-criinge track called "Jailbait Judy," scraping at the very bottom of the barrel. But the best of the rest packs a mean hook. "Epileptic Fit" could easily make the KBD cut, and "Slow Down" sounds like it was snipped from a DMZ rehearsal tape. Twelve cuts in total, mostly good, just keep the barf bag handy.

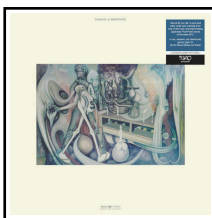
Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Almost Ready / Last Laugh



## DAISUCK & PROSTITUTE – 死ぬまで踊りつづけて LP reissue

Yet another singular Japanese no wave salvo being given a second life through Spittle's Made in Japan reissue imprint, *死ぬまで踊りつづけて* (or *Dance Till You Die*, a fitting title if there ever was one) was the 1981 debut LP from DAISUCK & PROSTITUTE, a group formed by vocalist/guitarist Daisaku Yoshino under the joint sway of GANG OF FOUR, free jazz, and FRANK ZAPPA. Scratchy, skronky, and sax-spiked, there's some obvious CONTORTIONS parallels here (the furious rhythmic pummel and shrill squawk of "闇の中のドッベル・ゲングル" basically pours gasoline on a fire first kindled by the *No New York* heater "Dish It Out"), while just as often bringing to mind the POP GROUP stripped of any dub leanings—check the decaying, noise-splintered desperation of the opening track "Ai O Itamu Uta" shifting right into a killer break-neck funk-punk outro. I'd be remiss to not mention that cavernous, Möbius loop bass line propelling the hi-hat-rattling mutant disco beats in "M.U.R.A.," which is right up there with anything bearing a Rough Trade logo circa '78-81, and even more of a mind-fuck knowing that bassist Yokai Takahashi would leave the band a few years later to join LES RALLIZES DÉNUDÉS(!). So supremely sick.

Reviewer: Erika Elizabeth  
Label: Spittle



## DASHED – Dashed LP

DASHED's self-titled debut LP offers eleven tracks of surf-inflected rock from this Minneapolis four-piece, built on jangly tones and rawly emotive vocals. The musicianship is solid throughout, and it all sounds fine in the most literal sense of the word. I wanted it to grab me, but every so often I found myself drifting, waiting for a moment that never quite arrived. Closing track "The Elephant" finally lets things get noisier and more raucous, hinting at a wilder band lurking underneath. I'd love it if this became the starting point for album number two. Recommended for people who like their surf sounds with a mild hint of HOT WATER MUSIC. The vinyl is pressed on Coke bottle clear wax.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: self-released



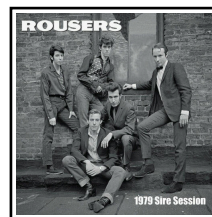
other moments of slower reflection, but it all drives along powerfully, keeping you hooked throughout the six tracks. Check out "Kriegslust" for a good taste. Definitely recommend this one.

Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Mangel

## ROUSERS – 1979 Sire Session LP

The Sire label was a big deal back in 1979—think of bands like the RAMONES and the DEAD BOYS. ROUSERS were another of those New York bands, though not one I was ever familiar with. I find this one interesting in an historical kind of way. I'm not sure it's my thing now or if it would have been my thing back in 1979. It's got a little too much of that rock'n'roll/rockabilly thing going on for me. I can hear it in the vocals and in the guitar. It's good for me, but it's not great.

Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: Jimboco / Left for Dead



## SACROSANTA DECADENCIA OCCIDENTAL – Danzas No Solpor Do Mundo LP

Hailing from the oppressed northwest of Spain, SACROSANTA DECADENCIA OCCIDENTAL channels their rage with society into epic, blackened stenchcore. If you like things like NUX VOMICA or AGE OF COL-LAPSE, then prepare to get on board with *Danzas No Solpor Do Mundo*. This sixteen-song album is absolutely brutal in its delivery of punk fury, with Edu's metallic riffs whipping by at double and triple speed and María's vocals coming from deep within and shredding vocal cords upon delivery. BOLT THROWER rhythms get chopped and sped up, creating a battle metal vibe that highlights the lyrics about death, war, and the violence of life. Dispersed throughout the album are moments of ambient or classical instrumentation backing spoken word or melodic singing, with the closer "Tebras" offering a beautifully crafted return to nature.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Crust as Fuck / Deviance / Global Help / Hecatombe / Ruido Y Pasión / Svab



## SERIAL EXPERIMENTS – Freshly Baked Ritual cassette

Tokyo's SERIAL EXPERIMENTS offer some of the most deranged and psychotic powerviolence I've heard in a while. *Freshly Baked Ritual* sounds absolutely hostile. Two bass guitars dialed to the most sledgehammer-y tone imaginable along with abrasive guitar riffs and blistering drums create a wall of sound that is impossible to penetrate. And yet, two vocalists rip off their vocal cords trying to do just that. The result is a noisy, almost avant-garde kind of fastcore that would be impossible to replicate. It's totally, uniquely disgusting. Therefore, I love it.

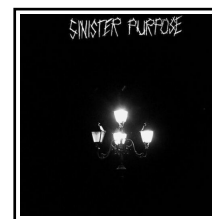
Reviewer: Mama Goblin  
Label: Brainwasher



## SINISTER PURPOSE – Sinister Purpose cassette

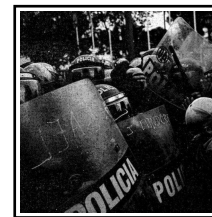
Finland's SINISTER PURPOSE released a self-titled cassette with seven tracks of blues-inflected '70s heavy rock with fuzzed-out guitars and a whiff of LED ZEPPELIN in the riffs. This sounds like the band that someone's older brother was always rehearsing with in the basement, and here's the thing—they weren't terrible. The guitar solos have a loose, unhurried charm, even if the muddy recording doesn't do them any favors. The singer is making the best of what they've got, which is respectable, but there's a lot of room for improvement. If they asked me for advice, I'd say lean harder into the sound you're chasing, turn everything up to eleven, and call a friend who can handle the vox. For now, they're probably a \$3 cover charge and a pitcher of cheap beer away from winning over a bar crowd. There are worse places to start.

Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: self-released



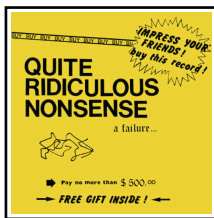
## SOPLÓN – Soplón 10"

SOPLÓN's self-titled 10" is a claustrophobic and grim breed of powerviolence that slightly leans towards sludge with its groovy moments. I mean, two-thirds of the band play super-distorted basses, so it shouldn't surprise anyone. If you were wondering, yes, the remaining third (drums) is also pretty distorted. And the vocals? You guessed it, distorted. It shows that they mean business. All in all, I think it was pretty enjoyable.



**QUITE RIDICULOUS NONSENSE – A Failure... EP reissue**

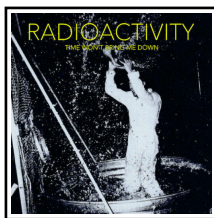
Long-lost DIY EP from 1984 whereupon a young man named Dan Foley made audio experiments with a drum machine, a bass guitar, and kitchen appliances in his Montreal bedroom. Why go all the way to New York City when you can get SUICIDE at home? The ingenuity shines in all four tracks, like the blender solo in "General Attitude," and the warped conga beat in "Appropriate Blocks." Teenage ennui leaks out of the gurgling "Boredom" in the form of a looped "Dull / Boring / Dull / Boring" lyric. Kind of like a junior league THROB-BING GRISTLE in that there is more creative spark than musical aptitude in these short song kernels, this is a curious document of DIY industrial-leaning punk, and a testament to the joy of fucking around with what's at hand.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Celluloid Lunch / Sweet Rot

**RADIOACTIVITY – Time Won't Bring Me Down CD**

RADIOACTIVITY's *Time Won't Bring Me Down* arrives ten years after *Silent Kill*, and, damn, the wait just might have been worth it. If you're not familiar with this crew, Jeff Burke, Mark Ryan, Gregory Rutherford, and Daniel Fried intersect across so many bands (including MARKED MEN, MIND SPIDERS, BAD SPORTS, HIGH TENSION WIRES, etc.) that their family trees must look like a spirograph. Here we have eleven songs in just over thirty minutes, each written with clear purpose and played with the kind of tightness you'd expect from people who've spent their lives doing this. At times, for me, this brought to mind *Meltdown*-era MIND SPIDERS, but I think fans of any band in this extended universe will feel right at home. The faster songs are always going to be my happy place, but one standout track for me was the more nuanced "Shell," where the rhythm section locks in below a soaring guitar line that opens up an unexpected sense of space while maintaining that forward momentum. Ten years between full-lengths, and they've evolved without losing the best parts of their sound. This would have made my top ten list last year if I had heard it in time. Strongly recommended.



Reviewer: Jeff Cost  
Label: Dirtnap / Wild Honey

**RAVI SHAVI – Erase America LP**

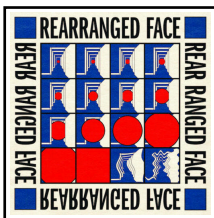
Frontman Rafay Rashid presents his confessional and confrontational lyrics on *Erase America*, the fifth LP from the Providence-based band RAVI SHAVI. There's elements of psychedelic, noise, groove, garage, industrial (particularly in the drums), and indie, examining political and personal themes throughout with songs like "Erase America," "Nuclear Summer," and "New Brown Neighbors." This may be a little psych and groove-y for my taste, but I think the poignancy within *Erase America* keeps me hanging on every lyric, feeling malaise on the more dissonant tracks, anger on the anxious ones, and makes me wonder what, if anything, can get us past this political instability.



Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: Almost Ready

**REARRANGED FACE – Rear Ranged Face EP**

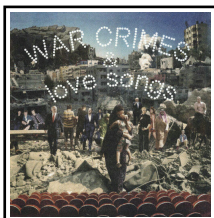
Any time a synthed-up punk band can remind me of either side of the 1979 gem "Trust in Technology" by ADAPTORS is a great time. REARRANGED FACE manages to recall both on their first offering for their hometown label, Los Angeles's always fantastic Under The Gun Records. Their previous releases on Tomothy perhaps had a touch more post-punk to them, which makes these new freakouts perfect for Under The Gun. The egg-punk moniker would feel lazy here, as the sounds on this EP reach beyond that umbrella term. Oftentimes, anything labeled "egg" feels almost intentionally ephemeral, whereas REARRANGED FACE is crafting sounds that may harken ears back to the late '70s but feel like they could be referenced in fifty years the other direction.



Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Under the Gun

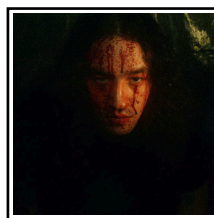
**REHASH NEU KLANG – War Crimes & Love Songs 12"**

Mangel, hosting the likes of ONYON, KLAPPER, and an early EP from LIEK, surely has its finger on the pulse, and REHASH NEU KLANG is no exception. Formerly known simply as REHASH, these young punks from Antwerp bring us their second EP, *War Crimes & Love Songs*. I hear late '70s rock'n'roll-steeped punk, something on the upbeat side like the SAINTS or MAGAZINE, with more of a post-punk guitar sound like you might hear from WIRE. There's moments of uptempo jitteriness,



**DEATH PARTY – Haunted 10"**

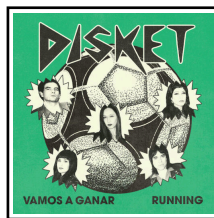
This one's got a little bit of a SOCIAL DISTORTION feel to it, both in the vocals and the instrumental work. Definitely not a copy or even trying to sound like them, but it's there. The vocals are also a little distorted, almost like SONIC AVENUES—maybe they're just leveled up super high. Catchy and melodic, there's a lot to like about this one. It attacks the whole time and it's got a garage-y eeriness to it. At the same time, it maintains that catchy, poppy side. Good stuff.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: Alien Snatch

**DISKET – Running / Vamos A Ganar 7"**

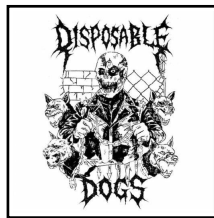
Faster-paced, female-fronted power pop—this will definitely hit the spot when you need that fix. It's catchy. It's straightforward. It's quick.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: General Speech

**DISPOSABLE DOGS – Disposable Dogs LP**

Always a big swing if you are including references to COCK SPARRER and the CRACK in the LP blurb, and this transatlantic outfit may not reach these dizzying heights, but the comparison to VANILLA MUFFINS probably stands up to most scrutiny. Midtempo toe-tappers with vocals which invoke EVIL CONDUCT, too. One thing I would say is that it could do with a bit less of the sheen and a bit more spit'n'sawdust, but it's a lot better than I expected, and I will look out for future releases for sure.



Reviewer: Ben Marshall  
Label: Take the City

**DISTHROAT / NECROPOLÍTICA – La Doble Moral de la Estupidez Humana split LP**

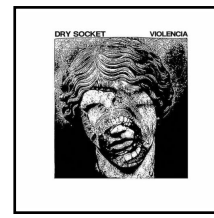
With a name like DISTHROAT, you shouldn't be too surprised to learn that this band from Zaragoza believes in the time-honoured tradition of direct, grinding crust-core. DISTHROAT apparently has Avellano on vocals (among other old-timers, I suspect), a punk known for his subtle performances in such acts as MOBCHARGE and PROYECTO TERROR whom I personally rate highly. Their side of the LP is enjoyable and in fact rather similar to the latter of the aforementioned bands: fast Eurocrust with some blasting moments and dual (male and female) vocals. Lovers of EXTREME NOISE TERROR-style crust will know. A classic '90s recipe that I always enjoy, although I think the recording would have benefited from a rawer, crunchier production. The songwriting is fine for the genre, but the sound lacks that brutality factor a bit. I also think that the combination of gruff, bearlike and half-spoken, half-shouted vocals doesn't always work together. My old school crusty heart still likes this. Honest punk for honest punks. On the other side is NECROPOLÍTICA from Burgos, Spain, a band that has been going since the late 2010s and has members of SINERGIA and ULTIMO GOBIERNO, among others. The band also plays for the crust team, but their take is more articulate and not as straightforward as DISTHROAT's cavernous style. NECROPOLÍTICA reminds me of '90s and '00s Scandicrust acts like COP ON FIRE, STATE OF FEAR, or BOMBRAID, and the result is fairly solid. You can tell that there are some experienced fellas involved who know how to achieve that kind of sound, and there are some genuinely good riffs here. Again, the production is lacking a bit in terms of impact and heaviness, but there is a primitive, dark vibe to the music that I like. I have to admit I had never really paid attention to these Spanish crust survivors, and this is a good record that highlights both bands' qualities. Definitely the kind of album I would get.



Reviewer: Romain Bassot  
Label: Demons Punk / DIY Koto / Hecatombe / Mal Presagio / Romantic Songs / Victim / Zaragoza Desorden

**DRY SOCKET / VIOLENCIA – split EP**

This DRY SOCKET/VIOLENCIA split plays like a transnational stress fracture: two approaches to contemporary hardcore that converge on total abrasion. DRY SOCKET leans into a frantic, blown-out attack built on D-beat propulsion and breakdowns that hit like a missed step in the dark. There's a tangible desperation in the vocal delivery that cuts through the distortion fog. VIOLENCIA answers with a more stomping, metallic strain, weaponizing mid-tempo churn and



gang-shouted contempt into something that feels less like songs and more like blunt instruments. Neither side wastes time with ornamentation; both operate under a strict economy of rage. The result is a split that doesn't complement so much as escalate, with each band pushing the other deeper into the red.

Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: To Live A Lie

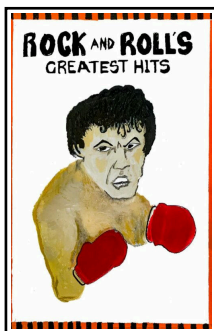
### DÖGMËN – All Men Must Die cassette

Belgium's DÖGMËN cover quite a bit of ground on their second release, *All Men Must Die*. The band toggles from straightforward punk instrumentals to powerviolence blast-beats to LONG KNIFE/POISON IDEA-style hardcore to an acoustic intermission that leads back into a thrashy punk burst (and that's only the first three tracks). There are a lot of ideas swirling around here, and DÖGMËN are adept enough to make it all make sense, putting together a strong collection of songs that keep the listener on their toes. Additionally, as a dog person myself, I'm awarding some bonus points for the band's name and this tape's excellent artwork. Highly recommended.

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Dirty Slap / Emergence / Yoyodyne

### ELECTRIC PRAWNS 2 – Rock and Roll's Greatest Hits cassette

Nineteen tracks make up this monster of a cassette. Having lived through the musical bloat of the '90s, I am always a bit skeptical when a tracklist length could legally drive (or legally drink, given that ELECTRIC PRAWNS 2 are Australian, after all). With that personal hangup documented, this cassette does a nice job of keeping you off your guard and on your toes. The first two tracks are sub-minute intros? Strange! The first actual song comes in subtly enough, and then the dogs start barking on "Big Man" and you forget everything you've heard thus far; the PRAWNS have arrived. This is where you lock in, because this is where they lock in. Great synth lines, plenty of attitude, lots of fuzzy sounds, and the desire to stick around. Clearly, this is not meant to be a passive listen. ELECTRIC PRAWNS 2 demand your attention, for better or for worse. I do personally find them at their best when they crank the intensity and throw everything they've got right in your face. There is a ton of music here, and what's perhaps the most in-



teresting is that if you randomly choose a track, you'll probably really dig what you hear. I'm not sure if sitting down from the first intro to the end is the goal here as this is intentionally ADHD music, but I will say whatever track you may hear, it'll make a solid impression.

Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: XTRO

### FAILURE TO COMPLY – Failure to Comply cassette

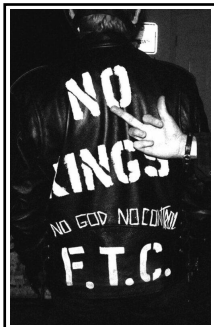
Ripping punk from Portland—FAILURE TO COMPLY sounds great on their self-titled debut. Across six noisy tracks, the band channels early hardcore like NECROS and ZERO BOYS to great effect, throwing in some interesting breakdowns and the occasional stab of feedback-laden guitar to keep things from feeling stale. Highly recommended; check out "Moral Failure."

Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: self-released

### FERAL – Feral LP

You wanna get weird? FERAL is weird. Fueling classic punk irreverence with electronic power, this Amsterdam duo plows through a synth-driven succession of sinister-sounding originals and covers ranging from the STOOGES to country legend ROGER ALAN WADE. Despite its eccentricity, nothing here seems out of place, including the appearance of convicted sex offender Joe Camel on the album cover. It's another intriguing entry in the confoundingly diverse Wap Shoo Wap label's fast-expanding catalog.

Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Wap Shoo Wap



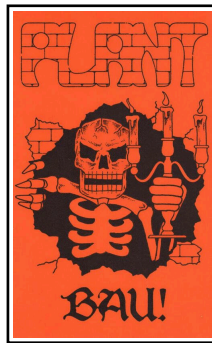
goes for almost five minutes of bone-crushing doom and gloom akin to the longer songs of the SECRET or TRAP THEM. The title says it all, aggression turned inward and outward at the same time, a critique wrapped in a beatdown. Short. Hostile. Necessary.

Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: To Live A Lie

### PLANT – Bau! cassette

Talk about a good switch-up—these guys range from a mid-tempo post-punk feel to classic punk in just one song. I loved how I was caught off guard with guitars streaming in and out all of the time, and just when you think the songs over, they bring in something new. Overall, these guys do a great job of bringing something fresh for every single song.

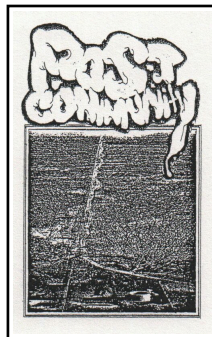
Reviewer: Emma Miller  
Label: XTRO



### POST COMMUNITY – Post Community cassette

POST COMMUNITY is a collective, a collaboration, an open group founded by members of a slew of East Coast punk bands, and presently operating out of Baltimore—message the band if you're keen to participate in basement activities. POST COMMUNITY recently released a cassette with Urticaria Records (my favorite imprint), and it is a voyage. Experimental, intricate, one of those rare recordings that keeps you seated at the front of your chair awaiting the next moment's surprise, as each song seems to be composed of many and they transition rapidly. Post-punk becomes punk, becomes noise, becomes hardcore, but before you know it, the journey reaches its end and the remaining energy feels similar to post-gig afterglow.

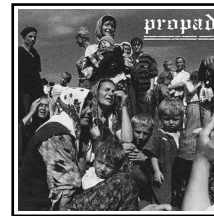
Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Urticaria



### PROPAD – Vsak Dan EP

There is a strong foundation of '00s thrashy hardcore here (stuff like TEAR IT UP, or underrated favorites of mine BOILING OVER), with hearty servings of INFEST-style powerviolence to kick things up. My favorite element of this release is the band's ability to insert and hold breakdowns and buildups. It's not entirely novel; there is a lot of PV/grind out there that dips into sludge for the sake of variety, but here it is grafted onto the songs to build and release momentum in an awesome way that made me think about picking up my chair and throwing it out the window (in a good way). It's not some slow songs, it's moments that have groove and power and I fucking love that. This one got many repeat listens as I familiarized myself with the songs and looked forward to the really dynamic parts, and that's about as good a response as this kind of record can produce.

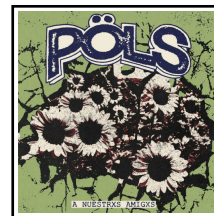
Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Brexit / Rope or Guillotine



### PÖLS – A Nuestrxs Amigxs LP

Dang, duder! Wowzers. Driving, powerful sing-along verses and choruses bring this PÖLS LP fully to life. Clara's vocals are similar to DISCOUNT and the LIPPIES while bringing in her own tone and melody. Her lyrics range from purely exposed and personal to broader themes (the neighborhood disappearing to chain stores, war-torn streets, refugee displacement, the positive and profound impact of friends and community). One thing that puts this a cut above is the occasionally graveled vocals of bassist Alex, punching in to level-up the earnest message PÖLS are bringing on *A Nuestrxs Amigxs*. This record is not a typical melodic pop punk placeholder that sits in the stratosphere waiting for you to listen to it. This record will find its way to you, move you, and make you feel something. I totally lucked out in getting this to review. My wholehearted thanks to the assignment desk for this one.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: A-Z / El Lokal / Exabrupto / Frontal Distribución / Hombre Montaña / Distribuidora Soroll

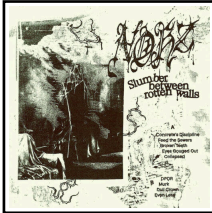


of groups like LEATHERFACE and OFF WITH THEIR HEADS. There is a wistful heartachingness to these tunes, but it always gallops forward. I also appreciate the lyrical abstraction, evocative and poetic even as the music sounds like anthems. A smart, spry full-length that's recorded beautifully.

Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: self-released

### NOHZ – Slumber Between Rotten Walls 12"

Sinister black metal punk from France, guaranteed to instill a strong sense of dread. NOHZ's sound has two elements that stood out to me right away: a distinctly gnarly guitar tone and the heavily echoed vocal effect. The end result is a heavy blend of styles, not unlike Atlanta's NURSE or Philly's ZORN. But while ZORN leans into soaring guitar theatrics, NOHZ omits anything approaching levity, creating an unsettling and dreary sound perfect for late-night strolls through the cemetery. I love it.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Croux / Kick Rock / World Gone Mad

### OPEN VEINS – Dead Inside LP

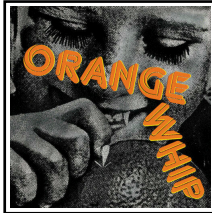
On *Dead Inside*, OPEN VEINS channels a distinctly metallic strain of hardcore that favors suffocation over flow. The riffs land in full-speed, collapsing patterns—less about momentum and more about pressure—while the low-end churn gives everything a nauseating density. The band does accelerate in almost each track, but it's in short, panicked sprints that only heightens the sense of entrapment before dropping back into breakdowns that feel engineered for maximum structural damage (excepting their LP intro "Scorched Earth"). The vocal performance is all serrated edges, riding the mix like a threat rather than a guide. There's a calculated bleakness running through the entire LP that resists easy release. *Dead Inside* doesn't posture despair; it manufactures it in real time.



Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Chain Reaction

### ORANGE WHIP – Horse Phase EP

This Boston four-piece reminds me of a specific band that I can't quite put my finger on—definitely something from the second half of the 2010s. Maybe PATSY or RED RED KROVVY? But not quite. You could similarly describe ORANGE WHIP's brand of punk as



bly" or "garage-y," but they're not nearly as frenetic or stylish as either of those acts. Maybe the trouble I'm having stems from the fact that these folks play things pretty straight, never really sounding like anybody because they kinda sound like everybody. Which isn't necessarily a criticism! I actually think the four songs on this record are pretty solid, and I'm pretty sure whatever act they remind me of is something I dig. So, yeah, give this a listen if you're a fan of whatever band I'm thinking of that isn't PATSY or RED RED KROVVY but kind of reminds me of them, or just give it a listen to help me figure out who the hell I'm thinking of. Really handsome packaging, btw!

Reviewer: Alex Howell  
Label: 100% Breakfast

### PEN16 – Magic Touch cassette

Philly quartet playing sloppy, magnificently earnest punk in the an-themic manner that the ARRIVALS could pull off, especially around the *Goodbye New World* time. The vocals are reminiscent of any of Paddy Costello's numerous side projects. You can feel the scrappiness of how their live shows probably are as you're left wanting more after the four quick tracks are over.



Reviewer: Tim Janchar  
Label: Dead Broke

### PERSECUTOR – Lateral Violence EP

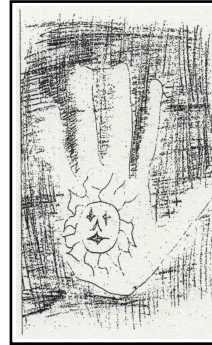
Australian metallic powerviolence unit PERSECUTOR doesn't ease into *Lateral Violence*. Five tracks with no breathing room, just a direct barrage of aggression. They follow a more modern approach to their craft, emphasizing the fat, buzzsaw guitar tone more along the lines



of a band like NAILS, which I wouldn't necessarily call "powerviolence," but they certainly have one foot in the dynamics used in that genre. The tracks clock in a bit longer than your average powerviolence song (most around the one-minute mark), so there is room for the twists and turns that this style brings. Every song is over before you can get comfortable, leaving nothing but a bad ringing in your ears. The last song, "Solitary Confinement," breaks all the rules and

### FLOWER POWER – Raw Power cassette

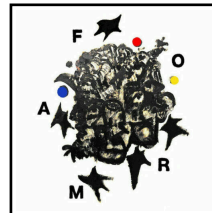
Imagine the nerve of calling your tape *Raw Power!* STOOGES aside, it's not too far off the mark for this ultra-lo-fi Dublin DIY hardcore band that treads in unfrilled, massively pissed punk. These six brief tracks recall the shredded vocal violence of bands like NO KNOCK with the scabby instrumental weirdness of MYSTIC INANE. Real-time detuning guitars choke out surf rhythms against sprinting drum pounding. It sounds like shit, and it's awesome.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: Urticaria

### FORMA – Forma cassette

Debut release from Bilbao, Spain's FORMA, a mixed female/male-fronted group singing mostly in Italian, with one song ("Itzalen Artean," I believe) sung in Basque. Songs are heartfelt, angry at times ("Non c'è Spazio"), and run in the post-punk realm, at least in the phaser/effect pedal bass, crunchy rhythms, and clean lead lines way up front in the mix, while the vocals take a little more from a hardcore/melodic hardcore sound. Dynamic sound all around, great mix—music for the good and bad times.



Reviewer: Willis Schenk  
Label: After Post / DDT / Dispear / Polze De La Mort

### G-3 PUNX – Make a Fool Of... EP

Three cool, snotty punk tracks out of Japan from members of a previous noise project called DUST NOISE that was apparently pretty dang unapproachable, so this is clearly a different lane. The A-side feels like the SEX PISTOLS added some sleazy rock licks, which ends up being a pretty fun combination. The B-side brings more of a '77 punk energy with the call-and-response of "Virtual Reality" and a catchy bass line, while the closing track "Hungrry Life" brings a bit of a DEAD KENNEDYS vocal styling to the already established formula of the preceding tracks. A well-worn path, but you won't catch me complaining.



Reviewer: D. Gregory  
Label: Private Scandal

### GARE DU NORD – Appels de Phares EP

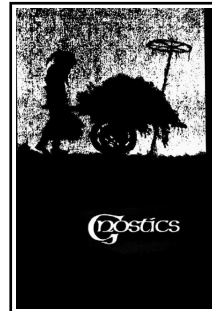
Absolutely delightful Oil that takes cues from the earliest wave of '80s French bands who arguably produced the genre's best output. GARE DU NORD utilizes many of the hallmarks you'd come to expect from the style: gruff gang vocals, stomping rhythms, and crunchy guitars with warbly reverb effect. What sets them apart though is their exceptional songwriting; each of these four tracks are so catchy and well-put-together that you could give any of them A-side status. "Vrille" in particular sounds like a classic you've been listening to since your teenage years. If you're a fan of the oldies but goodies like KOMINTERN SECT and your gold-standard of modern Oil! is RIXE, this is essential.



Reviewer: Eric Anderson  
Label: Mendeku Diskak

### GNOSTICS – Revelation cassette

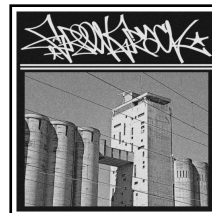
GNOSTICS' *Revelation* tape is steeped in the kind of nihilistic hardcore with sludge metal cadences and textures that treats clarity as a liability. Everything is blown-out just enough to feel unstable—guitars smear into a sheet of noise while the drums snap like live wires threatening to arc. The songwriting pivots between frantic bursts and slower, tension-loaded crawls, but the mood never lifts from its suffocating baseline. Vocals arrive shredded and distant, as if barked through a collapsing PA system at the back of a condemned hall. There's a rawness here that reads less as nostalgia and more as refusal: refusal of polish, of accessibility, of any catharsis beyond the immediate physical purge. *Revelation* is short, ugly, and spiritually corrosive in all the right ways.



Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Roachleg

### GREEN CRACK – Kreten flexi EP

Regardless of what sides of the "what is/isn't" or even "is it even a thing that exists" powerviolence arguments you may land on, it would be hard to deny that we are eating well at the trough of new PV bands the last couple of years. Enter GREEN CRACK, a band that sounds like it was born of meticulous study of the PV big names like INFEST and CROSSED OUT, but manages to modernize the sound and insert some East-

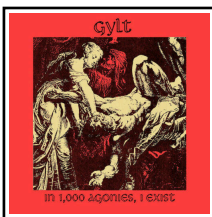


ern European moments to make it feel distinct. It falls a little flat for me in not sounding harsh or powerful enough, possibly due to the vocals which, while being in the PV style you'd expect, maybe bounce a bit too much in early thrash metal style and are a bit reverb'd and clean to make them stand out too much. The snare sound here also just doesn't click for me to give the tunes the accent they need. I can't speak for the lyrics, but they do throw in a couple samples in English that don't really add much to my ear. Fairly inessential, but to be applauded for their conviction.

Reviewer: Daniel Z.  
Label: Rope or Guillotine

### GYLT – In 1000 Agonies, I Exist EP

The title had me thinking this was going to be some black metal garbage, but this is a nasty lil' record and nothing I say should convince you otherwise. If you like your hardcore metallic and crusty, this is for you. If you like your riffs nasty and your vocals disgusting, this one's for you! There's no filler here; every riff, drum fill, and scream is delivered with intention. They never rest on a riff too long before rocketing full-blast into the next one. "Intimidated" moves between two or three tempos in just over 60 seconds, and does it without giving you time to catch a breath. It ends with gut-wrenching vocals going head-to-head with a ripping guitar solo before you're thrown headfirst into "Pen-timent," with the opening vocal line "I hate youuuuu" sounding like it's delivered from the bowels of hell. The vocals really make this one for me. It's one thing to have a ripping band, but to have a vocalist match the energy and pedigree displayed by the band is something else. The vocals hold their own among the brutality of the music; visceral and guttural but delivered with clarity and authenticity. I hear a lot of bands trying to pull this kind of thing off while failing miserably, but that's not the case here. Good shit.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Get Better

### HEKTIKS – Obliteration cassette

Discordant, chaotic, noisy, and rage-filled is the short description of the *Obliteration* tape by Vienna, Austrian punks HEKTIKS. The six songs on the cassette are over and done with far too quickly, which means multiple replays are mandatory. Lyrics cover a range of topics including the horrors committed in the name of capitalism, sexism in our current times, and state oppression/repression, while sonically raw punk, feedback, and dirty distortion abound. This cassette is currently available

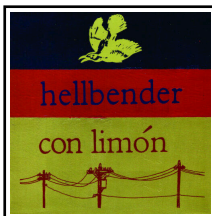


through Roachleg or can be had digitally for a donation through the HEKTIKS Bandcamp page.

Reviewer: Seth McBurney  
Label: Roachleg

### HELLBENDER – Con Limón LP reissue

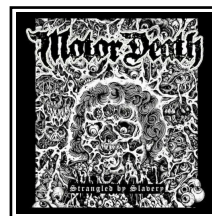
In 1997, when Andrew at Reservoir Records (DOC HOPPER, BLACK ARMY JACKET, SILENT MAJORITY, SPAZZ, C.R., STICKS AND STONES, etc.) sent HELLBENDER to Alap Momin's (ASS-FACTOR 4, RYE COALITION, TRANS MEGETTI, YAH MOS, DÄLEK, etc.) basement in Parsipianny, NJ to record their third LP, *Con Limón*, no one knew that it was to be their final release as a band. Nearly thirty years later, Dead Broke put in the work to make this available again. I think what attracted Dead Broke to this release was, in part, the highly unique and melodic post-hardcore song structures, starting with the sometimes odd, jazzy chords of guitarist Wells Tower, moving to the bass-driven songs of Al Burian that reflect driving down a road without headlights, and culminating in Harrison Haynes' drumming, articulated perfectly at the level of Bill Stevenson (maybe even better). However, the truly irrevocable parts of this record are layered in the lyrical content, as the imagery is far too blunt to be fiction. The overall specific life points are cadenced out fast and with terrifying clarity, as if standing on a glass bridge above a jagged gorge—like, you know you'll be OK, but fuck is it scary and uncertain right now. When HELLBENDER was writing *Con Limón*, they were all clearly going through a transitional period individually, and I don't think they knew that they were done as a band until they heard their record played back to them. It was then realized that they had weathered an oceans' weight of change together, made it through, and this was their goodbye to each other. It's funny how everyone in this band went on to do things that became much better known, but for me, this was when they were perfect. Now remastered, *Con Limón* pushes forward buried, nuanced elements in the songs, like bringing small gems to the surface. There are now hundreds of bands that have stylistic elements that mirror *Con Limón*, but zero of those modern bands have reached the high marks of this record. Also, those hundreds of modern bands have probs never heard of this record, and now, perhaps, they will. I really dig it and I think you should, too.



Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Dead Broke

### MOTOR DEATH – Strangled by Slavery 12"

Greek bangers MOTOR DEATH come out swinging with *Strangled By Slavery*, a kick to the neck worth of D-beat filth and death metal grime, mixed in the most gruesome way possible. Riffs grind, drums blast, bass hammers, and the vocals gurgle. This is basement-show-level brutality done right. It's death metal without the cliches, metallic without wankery, and crusty without pretentiousness. Imagine if TERRORIZER learned how to play MOTÖRHEAD songs while on tour with ANTI CIMEX. Play it loud! Louder! Louder than that!



Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Death Trap / EveryDayHealth / GCFL / Gore Kitty / Grindfather / Hecatombe / Insane Society / Nothing to Harvest / Septic Aroma of Reeking Stench / Up the Punx

### MUJERES PODRIDAS – Sangre y Sol LP

As excited as I was to see this LP in my review queue, I still wasn't prepared. MUJERES PODRIDAS have been a sporadic force in the Austin, Texas scene for a decade or so (four years between the demo and the first 12", then another four until this full-length), which means that you appreciate them even more when they grace our world with more sound. On *Sangre y Sol*, you hear a band fully realized—it's too easy to use a word like "mature," even though that's the best description here. That maturity gives them the confidence to reach into the(ir) past and harness a youthful energy that comes from being excited to make sounds reminiscent of the sounds that inspired the younger you. It's why you hear early '00s melodic punk in these songs (KNUGEN FALLER, SOVIETTES, GORILLA ANGREB, MARKED MEN) even while you feel the power and bombast of a fiercely Texan band raised on dirty, bombastic South Valley hardcore ("Mi Terra" at volume, if there was ever any doubt). This record swings, and it swings with complete confidence. This record is passionate and honest...this record feels real. And that shit is rare. Already looking forward to what happens four years from now.



Reviewer: Robert Collins  
Label: Beach Impediment

### NAMATAY SA INGAY – Terrorista 10"

*Terrorista* by NAMATAY SA INGAY is pure sensory overload—an explosive fusion of hardcore punk velocity and noise-laced chaos that refuses containment. The drumming is relentless, pushing everything to the brink, while the guitars dissolve into sheets of distortion that feel more like environmental collapse than structured sound. There's a violent urgency to the delivery that makes each track hit like an immediate threat rather than a composed piece. Vocals are shredded and confrontational, barely tethered to the instrumentation. It's messy, volatile, and completely uncompromising. *Terrorista* doesn't aim for control; it thrives in total breakdown.



Reviewer: Gonza Perez  
Label: Ethospine Noise

### NEGATIVE RAXXX / RBNX – DCxPC Live Presents, Vol. 43 split LP

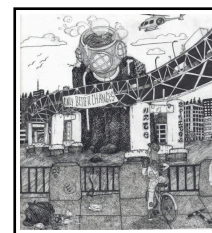
I've glazed these DCxPC releases quite a bit in the past, and each time I'm assigned a new one, I think "Surely they can't keep hitting home runs, can they?" Well folks, they can! In fact, this might be my favorite addition to the series yet. NEGATIVE RAXXX plays what can best be described as disorienting weirdo thrash-sludge, and it is absolutely phenomenal. Heavy as hell, with incoherent vocals run through a delay effect. This might be my dream band come to life. RBNX rounds out the album in the opposite direction, playing melodic hardcore akin to KID DYNAMITE with a little bit of ska thrown into the mix. The singer kicks off the set with my favorite line from the entire record: "Thanks for coming out on a Tuesday night!" This is why I love these slabs. While they all sound great, it's the familiarity that keeps me coming back for more. Who among us punk musicians have never grinded through a Tuesday night set? Great stuff, per the usual.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: DCxPC

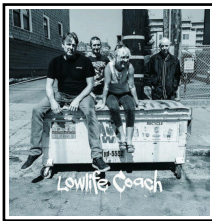
### NITE SPRITES – Only Better Changes LP

This sits in that sweet spot of soaring pop punk with gritty hollering and chunky diamond bass lines. The shout-along melodies are triumphant in a triumphless world, weary but fighting 'til the end. While the band can air it out, too, with tracks like "Teaching Boys" and its chiming arpeggios, they're muscular in sound in the evergreen tradition



## LOWLIFE COACH – Lowlife Coach CD

Mid-tempo and catchy, I find the guitar sort of jangly and relaxed. Not the tightest band in the world, and I mean that in only the most positive way. Just kind of laid-back. The female vocals are snarly and pretty at the same time. They can get quicker and tighter, but I much prefer the mid-tempo relaxed cuts. From Oakland, which I always love.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: self-released

## MANDY – Die Herrin Ist Mein Hirte LP

Germany's MANDY belts out twelve tracks of no-frills powerviolence in around ten minutes. Throat-shredding vocals, tempo changes aplenty, blastbeats...they're ticking all the right boxes. The down-tempo parts stand out for not being overtly metallic or floorpunch-y, and the production is exceptionally balanced with just the right amount of grain. The between-song feedback and samples add enough flesh to the skeleton for it to clock as a full-length LP, though I wonder if it would actually feel more complete as a 7" EP. That's really splitting hairs, but I suppose that's what I'm here to do. All told, a solid release with heft and force that leaves me searching for something corpuscular that would push it into brilliance.



Reviewer: Matt Casteel  
Label: Spastic Fantastic

## MERCY MERCY – Collector / Secrets 7"

Florida has produced some of the oddest bands in the history of odd bands. This isn't one of them. This is just straight-up, mid-tempo, catchy punk rock. And I really shouldn't say "just," because this is pretty outstanding. Super fucking catchy. It's got a bit of a garage-y street feel to it, with vocals that are both engaging and snotty.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: self-released

## MINDERASED – 四種雑多 EP

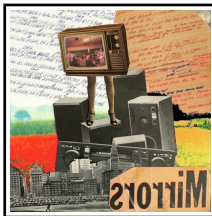
Four tracks of furious, jazz-inflected math-core from this long-running Japanese band. The vocals are earnest and shouted, with guitar riffs that range from the emoviolence of SWING KIDS or ORCHID to the extreme technicality of DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN. There are occasional layers of whooshing synth noise added with some welcome chopped glitch-string samples in the first and last tracks that add dimension to the chaos. The drumming, frenetic and mechanical, lost me a few times and sounded digital and monotonous, especially on the relentless blastbeats of the second track ("集合の理") and the clicking double-bass kick of the fourth track, "五里夢中杖を失くし歩く." If MINDERASED's drummer is indeed human, then they are insanely precise, albeit cold. Strong mix of technical proficiency and rage.



Reviewer: Nick Odorizzi  
Label: self-released

## MIRRORS – High All the Time LP

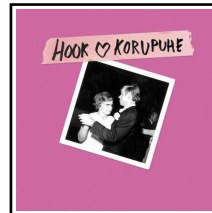
This record caught my attention immediately and is bound to turn some heads. MIRRORS are Cleveland proto-punk legends who were active from '73-'75, and whose members went on to spawn bands like the ELECTRIC EELS and ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS. This is the "final" recording from the band, as frontman Jamie Klimek passed away in late 2024. The music sounds like a Midwesternized amalgamation of the SAINTS meets the FLAMING GROOVIES—there's lots of swagger and attitude, but it stays clear of any real aggression. It's kind of psychedelic, kind of power pop, and there's some great guitar playing going down. The vocals remind me of WEEN or the DWARVES; funny, serious, and undoubtedly offensive. Klimek delivers some lascivious lyrics that are sure to piss off half the people who listen to what he's saying. I heard no less than three uses of the "R" slur before I had made it through four songs! I'm a believer that rock'n'roll should be confrontational and should piss people off, but I'm not sure I want to hear a 73-year-old man getting horned up about teenage sex or waxing philosophical about his boner. Aside from some cool guitar parts and the haunting but dreadfully long "A Kiss Before Dying," there isn't anything to keep me coming back to this one.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Something Pushed

## HOOK / KORUPEHE – split EP

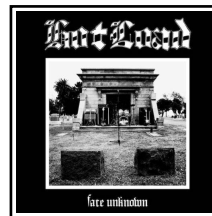
Here we have two bands from Finland churning out two different styles of punk, and each of them nails their target dead fucking center. HOOK's songs are chock-full of simple, catchy guitar solos and fast-to-slow parts, and they fit the usual pop punk themes, from breakups and downtrodden boys being bummed out about unrequited love to a catchy song about the devastation of war in the streets. This is one hundred percent the stuff I was loving in my twenties. KORUPEHE blasts in with two hardcore numbers that are annihilating and relentless. They check all the boxes of great hardcore with multiple singers, group choruses, stop-on-a-dime musicianship, and a perfect breakdown in the middle of the song. I am gonna take a break from this and go find out what other stuff these bands have available. If you like either pop punk or hardcore (or both), then this is the split EP for you.



Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Agnostic About Violence / Bird Loop / Creative Class War / Electric Alaska / Foxhole Productions / Hold On / Shield

## HOT LOAD – Fate Unknown LP

Some things just work together. Oysters and stout. Cheese and Branston pickle. Lee Trundle and a swift kick up the arse. And on this HOT LOAD release, we see just how thrilling it can be when metal and punk have a kiss and a cuddle. Obviously indebted to acts like ENGLISH DOGS, DISCHARGE, and JUDAS PRIEST, it's never-gets-tiresome NWHOBM swagger and the speed of D-beat in one delightful little package, wrapped up in a bullet belt. Is it the most intellectual exercise of all time? No, clearly not. But maybe the nerds over in the egg-punk corner can sit this one out and let the real rockers have a laugh.



Reviewer: Ben Marshall  
Label: Going Underground

## HUGGY BEAR – Basic Strategies for Going Out 10"

With their self-described ethics of "left-field feminism, queer politics, and situationism," HUGGY BEAR pushed the limits of the British music scene during their brief existence from '91-'94. Based out of Brighton/London, they were friends and co-conspirators with BIKINI KILL—touring the US with them, releasing a split album together on Kill Rock Stars, and essentially



bringing the riot grrrl scene to the UK—but they were their own entity, circulating in their own orbit with a uniquely oppositional sound and style. While the historical influence of the SLITS and RAIN-COATS is here, their sound was unregretfully and intentionally scabrous, while maintaining a playful and experimental style that defined their resistance against the British indie scene that was curated by the mainstream, male-dominated media. In addition to the BIKINI KILL split and a handful of 7" singles, HUGGY BEAR only released one full-length album and doesn't have a streaming presence in these digital days, which appropriately fits with their historical avoidance of mainstream avenues. Fortunately, due to John Peel being able to bypass BBC regulations by recording his own versions of a band's material, HUGGY BEAR's two Peel Sessions from 1992 and 1993 are now streaming and available on vinyl with two previously unreleased songs. These eight tracks, remastered by Fred Thomas of SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD TO ME, give an insight to the energy and ethos of the band. The opener "Nu Song" oscillates between angular guitar riffs and spoken/screaming vocals, which sets the tempo for Side A of the album. The third track is the song "Her Jazz," which they performed for their infamously controversial appearance on the British television program *The Word*. The B-side, recorded a year later in 1993, has its own unique sound, with sonic nods to the Olympia scene and the halcyon days of K Records. These recordings are both an excellent introduction to and an essential preservation of this unneglectable band.

Reviewer: Tim Janchar  
Label: Jabs

## I.D.K. – Nark5 CD

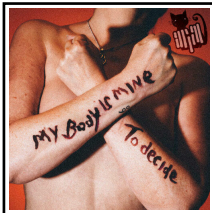
For a pop punk act, these guys have shockingly long songs. This slab teeters on the edge of prog-punk. Your typical Fat Wreck-esque affair, sounding like a mixture of NOFX and PROPAGANDHI. I.D.K. also has that RAMONES-core edge, and would be at home with bands like DIGGER and EGGHEAD. The last track is seasoned with a bit of BLACK SABBATH and JUDAS PRIEST, and gives us a nice break in the action. Production sounds great. Songs are fun, melodies are catchy, and the riffs are heavy. Nothing groundbreaking, but if you like your punk sweetened, then you'll dig this.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Scorpion

## ILL JILL – My Body is Mine to Decide EP

Power-chord-driven queercore from Sweden with noodly bass lines and shrieking, banshee-like vocals—I wrote that last part down in my notes before I realized they have a song called “Banshee Cry” (ILL JILL is very self-aware). High-energy, oozing with the classic punk attitude. Their track “Puke” is easily the standout song on the EP and sounds a bit like a modern-age DEAD MILK MEN. The rest of the slab is a little more serious and sounds more goth punk. Quality songwriting in general; lovely vocal harmonies and great song structures with dynamic peaks and valleys that really lend themselves to the theatrical styling of the vocalist. Well worth a couple spins.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Massproduktion

## ITCHES – House Animal Included LP

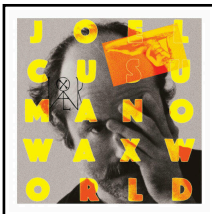
Very garage-y. The first track intro sounds a lot like MTX’s “Paula Pierce,” a garage rocker from their first record if I remember correctly. These guys definitely lean towards the garage sound. And not just any old garage sound, but the ‘60s garage sound. I can’t tell if that’s a tambourine or just a ton of hi-hat, but you get the idea. Catchy and very easy to like.



Reviewer: Kenny Kaos  
Label: Belly Button / Wap Shoo Wap

## JOEL CUSUMANO – Waxworld LP

A longtime contributor to the Bay Area music scene, CUSUMANO enjoys a resurgence of sorts with this latest full-length, his debut solo venture. This is towering power pop that is still utterly human. While there is architecture of song here, built up high with airy backing vocals and keyboard atmosphere thick like incense in the verse/chorus cathedral, CUSUMANO’s voice is disarmingly earnest. It’s a singular voice, in a sort of warbling baritone that is commanding and fragile at once. The melodies are perfect, and a track like “No Hello” is like one of those puzzle cubes that could only have been put together the way it was. His understanding of what makes a good song sounds second nature. The guitars soar, the delay washes over you, there’s echoes of something like FELT fronted by David Berman, which may have well been written just for me. Beautiful and sticks in deep.



Reviewer: Luke Henley  
Label: Dandy Boy

## KILLER KIN – Killer Kin LP reissue

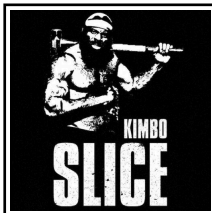
What an album. First and foremost, I would be remiss if I didn’t talk about the album cover. I don’t think there’s another image that could better represent what you find on this here slab. Pure rock’n’roll madness straight from the sewers of Connecticut. Very similar to MC5 and the RIFFS. This is the kind of band GG ALLIN wished he had backing him up in the ‘80s. Apparently this is a re-release of their original 2023 LP pressing, which went out of print almost immediately. If you’re dying for this on wax, you better pony up for the shipping charge, because I don’t think this opportunity is coming back around any time soon.



Reviewer: Jake Joyce  
Label: Adrenalin Fix / Beast / Wap Shoo Wap

## KIMBO SLICE – Kimbo Slice cassette

Kimbo Slice was an early viral internet street fighting legend turned UFC fighter who took the title of most vicious fighter alive, at least for a while. KIMBO SLICE, the band (or should I say sole member GoodyxJames), in the great tradition of naming powerviolence bands after famous badassess, made this oddball ten-minute powerviolence epic. This is true powerviolence in the vein of originators MAN IS THE BASTARD, as it relies heavily on bass, strange musical shifts, and is littered with samples of Kimbo Slice. Visceral, street fight bravado!



Reviewer: João Seixas  
Label: Pretty Good

## KISSED BY AN ANIMAL – Middle Distance LP

This marks the third LP by KISSED BY AN ANIMAL, and it comes complete with their signature of a gatefold cover with bright, exploding psychedelic artwork covering every corner. One of my favorite things about this band is that with each record, they get incrementally better, but not to say so much better that their original sound is lost (as it is with some). Interestingly, *Middle Distance* does have a slightly more aggressive quality to it, and some of the past playfulness has been abandoned, but I imagine that is reflective in a bunch of stuff for a lot of us these days. They are distilling power pop, pop punk, and indie styles and still honing their own path with the unique vocals of Dima Drjuchin. The songs themselves continue to flop between everyday beauty and occurrences of larger chunks of despair, all put



to humble and memorable little licks. It should be noted that Handstand Records never ceases to surprise me with not only the quality of what they put out, but also the variation of their roster. You might not like everything that they put out, but be damn sure what they touch has quality behind it. A chef’s kiss to KISSED BY AN ANIMAL’s new LP.

Reviewer: Tony Party  
Label: Handstand

## KNIFE’S EDGE – Let the Hard Times Roll 12”

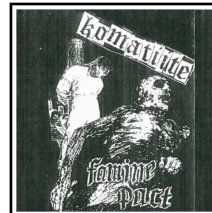
Yes mate, this is good stuff. Sometimes you need some proper meat-and-two-veg, no-pissing-about Oi! Nothing smartarse about this, and entirely to its credit. The equivalent of a Neil Warnock team in 2026, nothing fashionable about it, but it’ll do a job for you. A cheeky little BLITZ cover nestled in between the other tunes was a lovely little surprise, too. Top work.



Reviewer: Ben Marshall  
Label: Under the Gun

## KOMATIITE – Famine Pact cassette

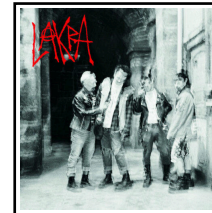
This is a short one: five songs in less than five minutes. Not even enough for a cig break. This tape EP is KOMATIITE’s second recording, after their demo in 2023. I would be a shameless liar if I said I’d heard of these chaps before, but I understand all the members previously played in the rather good BAKKARA, an evil metallic discolor affair. KOMATIITE is a different animal, belonging to the US hardcore species with a distinct dark touch and something of a modern D-beat influence. The band does manage to vary the pace on the tape, offering a beefy, stomping number and a dynamic classic mid-paced hardcore one. There are a lot of things happening here, and what they did include is done well, but because of the length of the tape, I have trouble identifying what they really aim to do. I guess an additional ten minutes would have helped. Still, a pleasant slice of raw, dark hardcore.



Reviewer: Romain Basset  
Label: self-released

## LAKRA – Lakra 12”

LARKA is from the current generation of young punks stoking the fires of the underground in Mallorca. It’s angry and fast and delivered by kids who see no hope in a world that’s getting harder to live in by the day. It’s raw hardcore punk that’s delivered with intent. There’s much more of a Finnish punk sound than I expected, but with more modern production without overdoing it. Kinda sick! If you’re into bands like KAOSS or APPEN-DIX, you’ll dig this.



Reviewer: Sir Bobos  
Label: Abismo Sonoro / Little Jan’s Hammer / Metadona

## LIKA – Dregs cassette

Two words: hell yeah. I loved how emotive and powerful these guys are. A growling, guttural force to be reckoned with, even on their (somewhat) slower-tempo tracks. They don’t mess around, you can feel the strength in every note played and sung (screamed). I had a blast listening to every track.



Reviewer: Emma Miller  
Label: Lika Records

## LOS INQUIETOS – Me Caes Bien Mal EP

On LOS INQUIETOS’ debut EP, these Costa Rican party animals bash their way through a trio of strong and simple rippers with classic 1960s garage style. You can find these leather-clad delinquents raising hell in a shadowy San Jose alleyway, but for a sufficient splash of their “*loco ritmo*,” it’s probably much easier to just cop this 7”.



Reviewer: Jason Harding  
Label: Slovenly