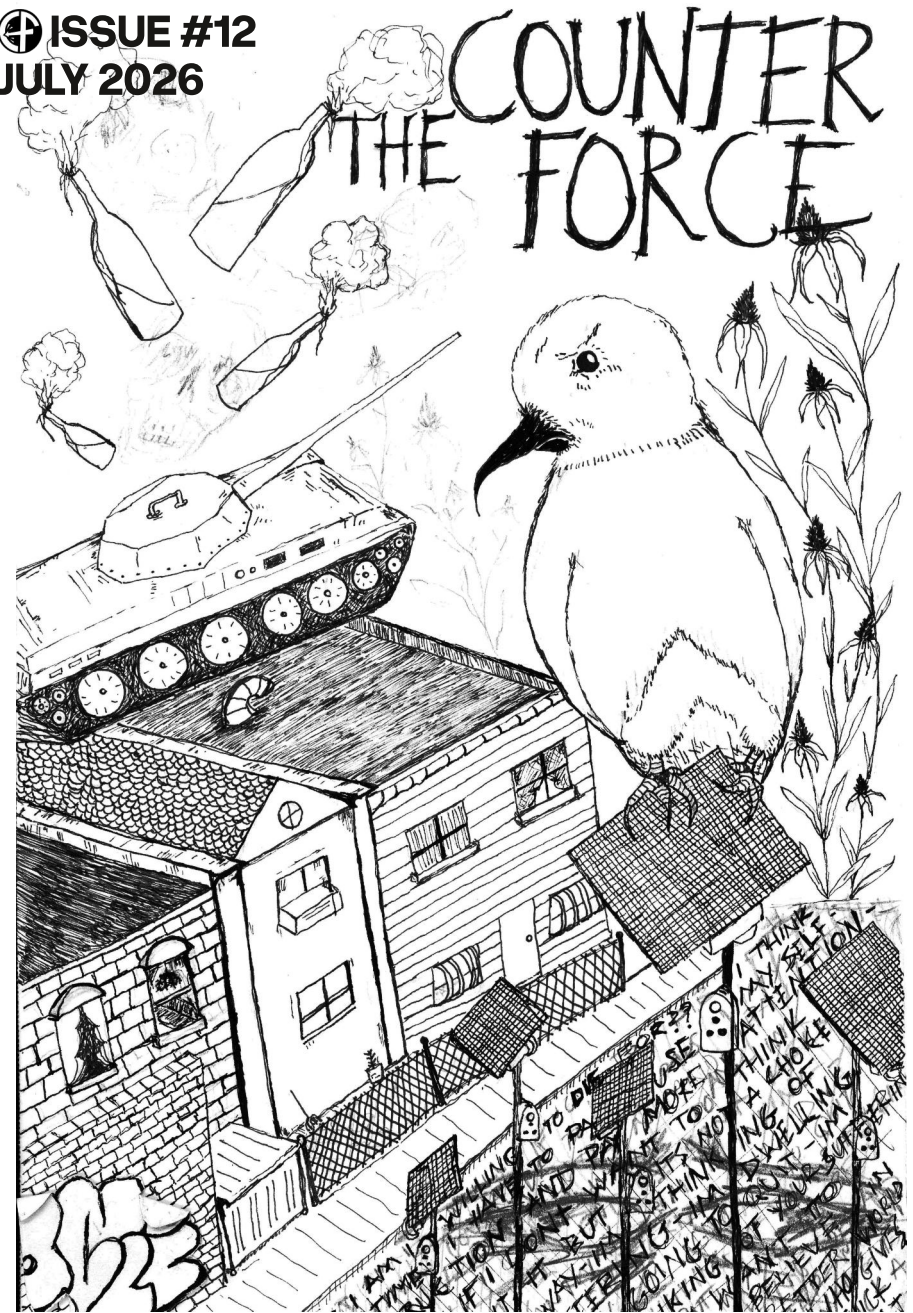




ISSUE #12
JULY 2026



**NOISE NOT BORDERS • LAWNYA VAWNYA
NO KNOCK TOUR DIARY • BIG BILL INTERVIEW
HOW TO RELEASE A FUCKING CASSETTE
NYC PHOTOS • COLUMNS • REVIEWS • MORE**

What is this? *The Counterforce* is an initiative to push back against the corporate capture of hardcore punk. Social media apps and streaming platforms dominate how we interact online, including how we share and distribute our music and ideas. The corporations that run these platforms extract massive profits from us, which they use to fund and facilitate exploitation, war, and genocide. Meanwhile, our independent and underground alternatives have eroded.

The goal of *The Counterforce* is to strengthen and grow the hardcore punk underground that still exists outside of this corporate capture. Rather than funnel punk into profit-driven walled gardens, we want to foment and encourage a culture that is autonomous and independent. This is not just a nostalgic, backward-facing project—we want to explore new alternatives for spreading hardcore punk online and offline.

You are reading issue #12 of the print version of *The Counterforce*.

Find the files to print and distribute this zine (and others like it) yourself online at <https://the-counterforce.org>

There, you will also find the other arms of *The Counterforce*:

A Web Zine

This site publishes reviews, letters, scene reports, profiles/interviews, rants, and how-to guides, all with an emphasis on projects that try to exist outside of corporate platforms.

In part, we hope this will encourage human-driven curation, recommendation, and discovery. Find out about new bands that aren't on the streaming sites. Submit a review of your own band. Compile a scene report or show review and send it in. We also publish articles and DIY how-to guides to help empower other punks to build and participate in a scene that's less centered around evil apps.

All this is published online, but also compiled into regular print zine editions to bring paper back to the punk show (like the version you are reading now).

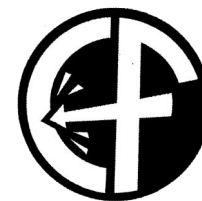
A directory of similarly aligned projects

The Internet is breaking down. Websites outside of a handful of apps have slowly disappeared, and the ones that are still out there are harder and harder to find.

The Counterforce provides a directory of these websites: blogs, archives, distros, zines, radio shows and podcasts... anywhere hardcore punk can be found online (and maybe offline too!).

A place to experiment with and learn about alternatives

It's easy to shit on the corporate social media and streaming platforms, but what other options are there? There are alternatives and we try them out—public online show calendars, open-source social media, self-hosted music sharing—and encourage other punks to join us.



THE COUNTERFORCE IS A DISTRIBUTED AND COMMUNITY PROJECT

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if sending us something other than a letter (like a record/tape for review) from outside Canada you must indicate it has a declared value under \$20. Otherwise, Canada will apply duties and taxes which we cannot afford to pay!

PRINT THIS ZINE

This zine is available on our website as a PDF you can print out and distribute yourself.

trees. Be patient, step away and read something else for a while when you need to — *The Savage Detectives* rewards slow reading.

WHEN IT'S OVER

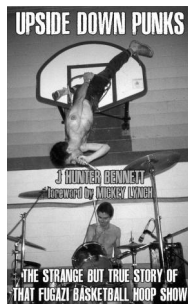
"...that moment of silence after you hear something truly beautiful, the kind of moment that can last a second or two or your whole life, because there's something for everyone on this cruel earth..."

Towards the end of the novel's middle chunk, Bolaño writes that there is no poetry in details. But as I read on through these vignettes and different perspectives, and I started to see myself and the people I know in the world he writes, the more poetry I found in small details. Quiet moments — spare descriptions of the sun rising on an exhausted poet who had been up all night reading, or of two people at one time intensely devoted to each other and their art slowly beginning to misunderstand each other — made me want to cry.

I don't know if I am trying to use punk to understand the world or if I am trying to understand punk — to somehow justify to others or myself the time I've spent on it. I know I've been playing in bands and been part of this community for more than ten years now. I guess that's gotta count for something more than just a list of faces and places and demo titles. There has to be some kind of poetry in those details.

Time will tell how often I will think about *The Savage Detectives*. But at least for the duration of my reading, it made the ordinary a little more extraordinary, details a little brighter and sharper around the edges. If you are like me and are wondering what this thing of ours means for you when you're alone, or the only one awake in your apartment, and have removed yourself from the damaging noise for a little while, maybe give this one a try, eh?

—Felix L.G.



Upside Down Punks by J. Hunter Bennett

This cover of this zine features the classic FUGAZI picture and the subtitle "The strange but true story of that Fugazi Basketball Hoop Show".

You know the one. I picked it up on the counter at a record store in Hamburg while my bandmates were blowing up my phone talking about a soundcheck I was late for. In the split second that it took me to notice the zine I got so excited that I didn't bother to look at the price tag or who put it out. I was just glad I found some cool reading material about a subject I love: FUGAZI lore. And that's exactly what this zine is packed with, recollecting the events that happened on what I understand was their first Philadelphia show ever; a rather underattended and underwhelming show it seems, if it wasn't for that spontaneous stunt performed by a shirtless Guy Picciotto contorting his body into a basketball hoops while singing. A moment that became such a classic depiction of the band, a legendary photo and a legendary clip on video. The zine retrace the path of the promoter leading to booking his first and last show ever; you can read his correspondence with Ian McKay through the years leading up to him booking that show, the flyer, photos of the venue, of the bands playing, and comments from several of the people involved that night. A cool comprehensive view of a moment that became truly iconic.

(Microcosm Publishing)

—Nab

A digital zine distro

Major punk fanzines of the past fell victim to the rising costs of printing and shipping. We publish printable PDFs of our zines online for anyone to print and distribute themselves, and encourage other zinesters to submit their own.

What if instead of shipping zines around the world, any punk anywhere could log on, download some PDFs and scam some copies to have a fully stocked, PWYC zine distro at the next show? **Print-It-Yourself!**

A hard line against contributing to further corporate capture of our subculture:

- No links to Instagram, Spotify, Linktree, Discord, or other corporate platforms.
- No coverage of releases that are on major labels, or only available digitally on corporate streaming platforms.
- Always independent and not-for-profit.

For expanding the hardcore punk mutual aid autonomous zone.

For facilitating human curation and recommendation.

For hardcore punk with context and politics.

Against celebrity, ladder climbers, clout chasers and influencers.

Against the algorithmic flattening of our subculture.

Against the capitalist death machine and the corporate capture of hardcore punk.

Contributors to this issue: AK Rot, Alex Wilson, Ben Trogon, Christeen, Felix LG, Hampton/Earth Girl Tapes, Martin Force, Nab, Ralph Rivera, Slim, & Taylor Joy. Cover by Alex Wilson. Layout by Taylor Joy.

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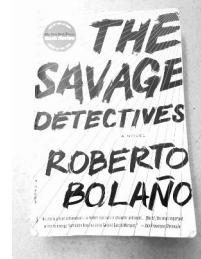
Baltimore's PEARL (above) and Pittsburgh's DE RODILLAS (opposite) at NNB 2025. Photos by Shayl Rose Bottie

Solidarity, Inclusion and Community: an interview with Noise Not Borders fest

Noise Not Borders is an annual fest that takes place in Montreal, Canada. It's also the name of the crew that puts on the fest and works year round to book shows and events around the city. Thanks to Boris, Jose and Piu for taking the time in the busy lead up to the fifth edition of the fest to answer my questions about the history and motivations of Noise Not Borders fest. *Interview by Taylor Joy*

It's hard to believe but 2026 will mark the fifth edition of Noise Not Borders fest! What was the original idea behind organizing this fest, and what events or previous experiences motivated its creation?

Jose: Mostly was me moving to Toronto and finding myself being one of the (at the time) few BIPOC in the punk scene in Toronto. I thought the only way of finding POC punks was to organize a festival where punks could come and play and meet and then create some sort of community. In my years of going to punk shows and festivals I noticed how many friends I had made going to innumerable shows at Varning Fest or Not Dead Yet in Toronto and how quickly was to create these friendships and connections in those scenarios, so it was obvious what I had to do... with inspiration from Latino Punk Fest in NY and the help from all my friends and many many people involved in the punk scene at the time and both Latinx punk scenes from Montreal and Toronto I decided to create "Our Latin Thing," the first (so called) Latinx Punk festival in Canada, featuring international and local bands. Turned out, when putting together there was way many more POC and friends involved in the scene that what I had realized, and also many other non POC friends interested and supportive of my project who were also down to help me putting it together. In that one single first edition I had already created innumerable connections and friendships for myself and many more in within the bands and people involved. At the same time I realized much more how important and necessary was to have this kind



The Savage Detectives by Roberto Bolaño

I first came to appreciate Roberto Bolaño reading 2666 a couple years ago. The way he could build a sense of dread had me

reading as attentively as I would with some of my favourite authors — Cormac McCarthy, Flannery O'Connor, Anne Hebert, to name a few who bring me to that same emotional place.

This novel was a different experience. The epigraph of 2666 is a Baudelaire quote, "An oasis of horror in a desert of boredom". This novel felt far more in the territory of the desert of boredom, leaning heavily into nearly plotless mystery, with less of that central tension that I had come to expect. But as I read I found myself really identifying with the characters, and seeing in them the traits of many of my rock and roll friends (and adversaries).

Part of my selfish motivation to write this review is just to encourage people in this thing of ours (punk rock, baby) who have read this book to come chat me up about it. If you've yet to read any Bolaño, then maybe this will encourage you to do so. If you have read this book already, then maybe this will inspire you to take another look at the text with our lifestyle in mind.

NEVER MIND THE VISCERAL REALISTS

"What I managed to get out of him was that the director had said that Neruda was shit and that Nicanor Parra was the greatest poet of the Spanish language. Something like that. Of course I could hardly believe that two people would fight about something so unimportant."

The Savage Detectives follows a gang of Mexico City youths at the cutting edge of a fictional literary movement dubbed "Visceral Realism". The Visceral Realists get into fist fights over Pablo Neruda, orchestrate sabre duels over bad book reviews, and risk their lives to seek the wisdom of unpublished authors. The novel's cult of writers (based on a

younger Bolaño's own literary movement, the Infrarealists) take themselves deadly seriously, even if other poets don't. Even if most people don't even read poetry, or haven't in a long time, or mix up one poet with another. Even the diehard Visceral Realists themselves drop in and out of their poetic pursuits as real life gets in the way, as they get full time jobs or have kids or realize that their movement is just sort of aimless.

Everything that is fundamental to the Visceral Realists feels very punk to me. Their intense devotion to an art form that is so small in scope, the intense feelings you have when you're young and your passion becomes your whole identity, finding like-minded people and the subsequent discord and fragmentation of "scenes" that come with time.

Punks or poets, it takes a certain kind of person to dedicate themselves to something so specific. If you are wholeheartedly dedicated to, for example, an obscure Northern European country's interpretation of a rock subgenre, from a specific year, and attempt to track down and listen to every band of that very tiny category, you will probably identify with the Visceral Realists.

HOW MUCH LIT CAN YOU TAKE?

"...messengers with no message or an untranslatable message..."

At times *The Savage Detectives* can feel like a slog. I took monthlong breaks from it at times. Most editions are around six hundred pages, divided into three sections. The second section, about two thirds of the novel, consists of loosely connected interviews of individuals with some connection to the novel's protagonists — shameless stand-in for the author, Arturo Belano, and the stand-in for Bolaño's best friend, Ulises Lima. The first and third parts feel more like novellas which frame that impressive midsection.

If there's one tip I have to enhance your reading experience, it would be to treat that second section which makes up the majority of the novel more like reading a collection of short stories. As the common threads show up between the accounts of these poets and ex-poets, you'll start to see the forest for the

shoegaze, indie-rock, psych-rock, with maybe SHOOK ONES being the only outlier with their tense and catchy Hardcore-Punk offering. I highly recommend this record to anyone interested in this kind of sound, you might very well find your new favourite Seattle band!

Released by KR Records

—Nab



Various Artists – Inherited Wasteland: Benefit Compilation for the Prairieland Defendants

A brand new compilation tape to

benefit the Prairieland Defendants, anti-ICE demonstrators in Texas witchhunted and cumulatively sentenced to centuries in prison for participating in a noise demo at an ICE detention facility in Alvarado, Texas on the fourth of July last year.

The tape was assembled in Philadelphia and solidly represents the city's subgenres and scene generations, alongside new and established bands from across northern North America. In the vein of the impressive international Gaza solidarity comps released out of Philly last year. My educated guess (flyers for the comp at a squat, the beautiful art) is that SEDIMENT may be responsible for getting this one together. Allegedly "crust and anarcho punk" but there's something here for everyone – 21 tracks spanning d-beat, "e-beat", freestyle, post-punk, and even a WIPERS cover. The cohesion is in care for the cause and it obviously holds.

Prairieland is the first case of its kind in our new post-NSPM-7 reality, in the wake of D. Trump's executive order designating antifascism as terrorism in September 2025. Yes the USA has always been a fascist project and yet we are decidedly in a new phase. Witness the case of Des Revol, who was handed a 30-year sentence for having anarchist zines in his car without even attending the demonstration – zines like this one, often found in a punk house bathroom,

free to download on the internet. Des, and all of the defendants, could be any of us.

People say punk gets better the worse politics get – I can't say I care for this take, but I'm relieved to see the "aesthetic of our anger" focused into expressions of love and solidarity with present-day political prisoners. It's hard to say how these days will be remembered by the punks of the future (what future?), regardless, this tape, complete with the sampled sounds of protests, noise demos and riot reporting, marks the historical moment – raising legal funds and hopefully the frequencies of awareness and concern throughout the borderless network we call punk

—AK Rot

Zines and Books



Fence Post #1

This issue of this new German zine is dated from June 2025. Fabian and Justus from ECHO CHAMBER

decided to do a zine to document their scene and talk to the cool stuff going on in Hardcore. 2025 was a stacked year for Hardcore, literally all the records and bands they talk about are highlights for me as well. I really like everything these guys do, so I guess our shared love for niche hardcore is no surprise. This first issue has a cool interview with Hannover Straight Edge band FORCE OF DENIAL (RIP) as well as many record reviews and a little feature on their friends' favourite songs about betrayal. Add to that a killer layout and awesome pictures and I'm sold. (I'd never seen that BREAKDOWN live pic and I'm obsessed with it now). A perfect Hardcore zine, if there's such a thing.

fencepostfanzine@gmail.com

—Nab

of spaces for ourselves and decided to continue with the project. COVID hit and those same friendships brought me to Montréal. I then decided to change the name because I realized how fucked up is to call one self latino and decided to change the name to something broader.

Boris: I traveled to DJ at "Our Latin Thing" and meet my hometown friends from MURO who were playing, along with some other Montreal friends (ESTORBO played as well). I had the impression that Latinx Punx over there was more organized for putting up this fest and thought it was really cool. Jose then moved to Montreal a couple years after and continued with the fest idea and the name was changed to Noise Not Borders. I started collaborating with NNB at first by contacts and connections with other Punks from the latinx diaspora and eventually joined the collective.

The NNB fest lineup typically features mostly Latino punk bands and bands with BIPOC members, but bands have performed who don't fit that criteria. I'm curious about what your collective conversations and curation process are like when deciding on the fest lineup?

Boris: The spirit of the fest is to create a space for BIPOC performers—this comes from a place of need that has us underrepresented in hegemonic culture, and this somewhat of course bleeds into our subculture. We want to create a space around this mandate, but we have a space for allies, collaborators and people who are interested in making part of the fest. Of course this changes every time and under specific circumstances. There have been out of town bands coming and looking for a space to play a show and we have accommodated it in our fest. But the main idea of the fest is to create a space and promote bands with racialized people, or with a message that aligns with the politics or mandate of the fest.



Piu: One of the things that interests me most is thinking about what we actually mean when we talk about "borders," and everything that comes with that politically. For me, it would be contradictory to think about identities as something fixed. It's easy to say that we're a festival for Latino or migrant bands, but those identities are much more complex than they seem. For example, saying that someone is Latino doesn't tell you much about their life. Latin America is incredibly diverse. People's experiences are shaped by race, class, gender, sexuality, language, where they come from, and many other factors. The same is true for migration. Two people can both be migrants and have completely different experiences depending on their legal status, economic situation, race, or the reasons why they migrated. That's why I don't think representation should be reduced to checking whether someone belongs

to a particular category. Those categories matter, but they shouldn't be the end of the conversation. Otherwise, we risk treating identities as if they were all the same and overlooking the inequalities that also exist within our own communities.

For me, what's exciting about being part of this collective is that we're able to have these conversations together. I don't think we have all the answers, and I actually like that. I'd rather be part of a collective that keeps asking difficult questions about solidarity, inclusion, and community than one that assumes those questions have already been solved.

Outsiders might not realize that Montreal has an incredible trilingual (english, french and spanish) scene, with latino punks playing and singing in some of our sickest local bands (TOTAL NADA, EXTRAÑA HUMANA, A.T.E.R., TENAZ, SISTEMA DE MUERTE, to name just a few!). Other than collective members playing in some of these bands, how does a fest like this contribute to the vitality of the spanish-speaking part of the scene? Do you see a tension or connection between putting a lot of energy into having a fest once a year where we see underrepresented people play in bands versus make sure the scene is ever more racially, culturally and gender-diverse all year round?

Boris: Montreal is a city with a really vibrant and eclectic music scene and the punk scene is just like that. You can count into many cliques, and sub scenes in the city, but it still feels like Noise Not Borders is emerging in the city, raising new concerns about the entwining of our punk scene, and that it's important to keep politics relevant within it. I personally hope people are not just seeing it as another vehicle for entertainment in the roster of the commodification of our subculture, something that very specifically has been happening in the era of social media, influencers, etc.—in order to be able to thrive, we need the support of our allies, the punks, show goers, people in our community.

Piu: The festival is definitely the biggest thing we organize, but it's only one part of what we do. The collective is active throughout the year. We organize benefit shows to help fund the festival, we put on concerts for touring bands—especially Latin American bands coming through Montreal—and we regularly host DJ nights featuring salsa, cumbia, and other Latin American music. All of those events create opportunities for people to meet, collaborate, and strengthen the connections within the scene. Because of that, I don't really see a tension between organizing a yearly festival and working toward a stronger, more diverse, and more connected scene throughout the year. For me, they're part of the same process. The festival creates a moment where all those connections become more visible, but the work of building community continues long before and long after that weekend. We're also still growing as a collective, and I think that's exciting. We're interested in creating more opportunities for community-building—not only through concerts, but also through discussions, cultural activities, and spaces where people can exchange ideas and experiences. Those projects are still taking shape, but they're part of how we imagine the future of Noise Not Borders.

What are your most memorable sets or favourite stories or moments from past editions of the fest?

Boris: I thought it was really cool when the Pinoy punk bands came from the US, NAMATA SA INGAY, MATERIAL SUPPORT, DOG BREATH—and just the opportunity to build friendships and communities beyond borders. It was really cool to see a pan-

release; digging on the internet revealed that the SECOND YOUTH seems to be from Italy with members originally from the UK (one of them used to be in THE LEGACY, a great melodic Hardcore band whose EP was on constant rotation back then)

—Nab



THE DISILLUSIONED - 3 Song Demo CS

Fourth tape of the year from NC's HARDCORE HEADACHE label. You'd be forgiven

for thinking they're running for Unlawful Assembly, but this quick ripper is the best thing either label's done so far.

Lots of palm muting and little metal deedle-dees, strained vocals, in and out in four minutes, the art is ugly and illegible in the best of ways, big news for all you "Eye For An Eye" fans.

—Ralph Rivera



THE MANY - Rat's Ass demo CS

This Toronto-based project thanks THE MOB and NY HOODS as inspirations in their liner notes. I like when bands wear

their influences on their sleeves (literally), especially since that's not exactly where my mind would have gone to as far as comparisons. Granted I'm not that well-versed in those two particular bands but upon first listen early WARZONE came to mind, which is not too far-off. So we're talking 80's NYHC. Somehow it prompted me to dig out my copy of the URBAN WASTE EP to see if there was any similarity there; but THE MANY are much less frantic and more rooted in the more danceable and groovier Hardcore of the era (while still remaining fast enough). Their demo opens with a cool intro, I gotta say I'm usually not that into fast-parts in intros but it really works here. When the low,

throaty vocals kicked in I immediately thought of Marco from THE ICEMEN (as opposed to Carl's JJ-esque growl) and that's a cool style that not a lot of bands have (willingly or not). Expect a slightly more modern recording sound than their 80's influences, it sounds just punchy enough with the vocals sitting nicely in the mix. There's a dub track in there that's really cool ("It's too late/never too late"), which gives it even more of an UNDERDOG vibe (previously established in the self-titled song that precedes it). This is probably my favourite demo that came out this year. I got lucky enough to catch their first show and it was already super promising!

—Nab



Various Artists - From Far It All Seems Small: A Compilation From Seattle's Underground LP

For some reason I always had an affinity for the

Seattle scene, but never for what it was famous for in the 90's, frankly my Nevermind is probably Are These Our Lives?. I'm happy to see that some of the people who made Northwest Hardcore so exciting for me are still at it (even though they branched off musically), and are delivering this awesome collection of songs showcasing the wonderful current alternative-rock landscape of the Emerald City. 14 bands offer one song each on this LP, among them SHOOK ONES, SUPERCRUSH, TV STAR, PRIM, VERSING, SUN SPOTS and more. I was familiar with about half of them, and to my surprise there's not a single song I don't think is awesome. It is quite a feat, and speaks highly of the state of the Seattle music scene in 2025. My favourite tracks come from KENNERO, SHINE, SUPERCRUSH and SUN SPOTS (what an opener!). I would place this comp somewhere between the Sarah Records compilations and Deep Elm's Ermo Diaries, except that these compilations focused on documentation rather than quality. Thankfully we got both here, and musically it all lives under the wide umbrella of alternative rock. We have some power-pop, some

home, and I wish I hadn't dragged my feet so much because the sound of this release is like a blown out, distorted balm for my soul. A whiplash-inducing number of drum changes rip you through six tracks in roughly as many minutes, basically necessitating an immediate replay the moment it ends (wish I could say "flip the tape right back over" but regrettably I'm reviewing digitally — planning to track down a copy of this physical tape ASAP for the full experience). One of my favourite things is when the drums on a recording sound like the drummer is going apeshit trying to fight their way out of a cardboard box, and we've got that here, along with piercing feedback, perfectly nasty guitar and bass tones and tortured vocals. They've clearly put a lot of work into nailing the classic crusher sound, but it feels fresh and not too LARP-y. If you are the type of freak whose jaw instantly relaxes when you hear CONFUSE you will probably wanna check this out.

Available from Roachleg records in North America and Ingen Framtid in Europe

—Taylor Joy



LAMICTAL — Collection

This tape has no actual title but we're gonna call it "Collection". At the time of release this had all music previously released

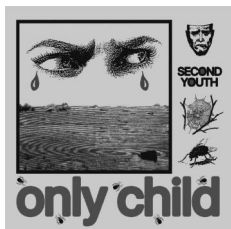
by LAMICTAL plus a few bonus versions. Orange County California. True freaked out, whacked out punk. Solo project of Alex from the OC's almighty X-ACTO.

20 tracks of that frantic nervous hardcore punk you crave. If the sour patch kids candy started a band, it would sound like this. File this under "Music to drink a lot of soda and rearrange my furniture to". The longest song is under 90 seconds, most under a minute. Within the first ten seconds of track one "Aura" you will either be tossing this tape in the trash or diving head first into this looney tunes ass hardcore. Wacky guitar leads, instruments switching off, freaked out vocals.

What driving through LA traffic does to a fool.

I think all the previously released tracks are all recorded with a drum machine. The last seven songs that don't appear elsewhere are all real drums, I think. If I'm wrong just pretend I'm right and let's forget about this. No lyrics insert. Shame. I can assume all the songs are about feeling ~wEiRd~ but come on, lemme read 'em!

—Hampton / Earth Girl Tapes



SECOND YOUTH — Only Child 12" EP

Ben from KATER MENU came to the show when my band played Berlin earlier this year, and he generously

brought us vegan treats, as well as shirts from his vegan catering business, and this record. I didn't get a chance to ask what it was, but I put it on when I got home and really dug it!

The first thing that struck me was how cool the record looked. Picture a rather simple and evocative bold artwork with a nice color scheme, but it's the vinyl that got me excited: beautiful solid blue that matches the cover art/insert, with a large drawing of a stork carrying a baby in a basket silkscreened on the B side. I still didn't know what to expect and when I put it on the first song immediately made me think of Fat Wreck-era AGAINST ME!, especially in the vocals; but quickly the transition to the next track showcased more of a melodic punk edge not unlike BROADWAY CALLS or later-era LIFETIME. This band would have been all the rage at the turn of the 2000s, but they also have more modern elements. The last song for instance has a more of a ballad vibe and evokes something more along the lines of BALANCE AND COMPOSURE, whose style of rock melodies you can actually hear throughout the record on the more mid-paced parts. The lyrics seem to revolve around family, growing up, and loneliness. You can tell by how well put together this EP is that this is probably not their first band or

NOISE NOT BORDERS **AUGUST 1-2, 2025**

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NOISE NOT BORDERS PRESENTS

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8:30P

Arab band like KHAASSARAT form up and debut in the city and in the fest. ABISM played their first out of town show in NNB, which was super cool. SALVAJE PUNK was ripping. Seeing MUJERES PODRIDAS and becoming friends with them is invaluable. Playing on several occasions with TOTAL NADA is extremely meaningful. I loved CADENAXO. Being able to bring Latinx punk bands from all over so called Canada is also incredible: DESPERTÁ, MALDITA, DESGRACIADOS, VESTIGIO. We've made a lot of incredible friends and shared amazing memories through music, dance, food, laughs, hehe.

Piu: Since I haven't been part of the festival from the beginning, my memories are more personal than historical. The most memorable edition for me was 2023, when I came to Montreal from Mexico to play with my bands, AGRAVIO and DESTRUIDO. I met people who became some of my closest friends, and those connections ended up changing my life in ways I never could have imagined. That weekend I also met my partner, who was playing with A.T.E.R. at the festival. At the time, neither of us could have imagined that a year later I'd be living in Montreal, or that I'd eventually become part of the Noise Not Borders collective. Looking back, it's incredible how much one weekend can change your life. That's probably what I remember most about the festival. Of course, there are amazing bands and great shows, but for me the most meaningful part has always been the relationships that grow out of it. Those connections don't end when the festival is over—they continue throughout the year, and sometimes they end up shaping your life in unexpected ways.

In this moment where violence against migrants and the technological control of borders has surpassed dystopian levels – and, simultaneously where punk and hardcore can sometimes feel totally toothless and commodified – what big and small things do you do to keep the fest political and make sure it stays true to its name?

Piu: Speaking only from my own perspective, I think one of the biggest challenges is making sure that “political” doesn’t become just another aesthetic or label. It’s easy to say that a festival is political. The harder question is what that actually means in practice. For me, it starts with the way we organize. We’re a collective, so decisions are made through discussion, disagreement, and collaboration. It also means thinking carefully about who has access to these spaces, who feels welcome, and what kinds of relationships we’re building—not only during the festival, but throughout the year. I also think it’s important to stay critical, even of ourselves. The realities of migration, borders, race, and class are constantly changing, and I don’t think there’s a single formula for addressing them. We have to keep asking questions, listening to each other, and being willing to rethink our own assumptions. Punk has always been about creating alternatives, not waiting for institutions to do it for us. For me, Noise Not Borders is political because it creates spaces where people can meet, organize, and support one another. Sometimes that happens through a concert, sometimes through a benefit show, a DJ night, or simply by helping a touring band find a place to sleep. Those gestures might seem small on their own, but together they build the kind of community that gives the festival its meaning.

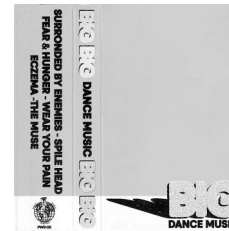
What can Noise Not Borders attendees expect at the fest this year?

Piu: Now that the lineup is public, We can finally talk about it! This year's edition feels especially exciting because we're celebrating the festival's fifth anniversary. We have bands coming from Brazil, Mexico, the UK, Spain, different parts of Canada: LASSO from Salvador, Brazil; SOGA and CREMALLERAS from Mexico; LAME from the UK/Spain; JUG from Winnipeg; KRASH from Saskatchewan; ZEAL from Ottawa; and of course a strong

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BIG – Dance Music

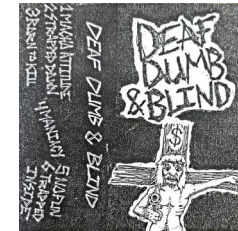
Big yellow cover art, BIG all caps band name. Dance Music? This is already speaking to me. Hardcore punk, leaning more

hardcore (non-derogatory). Four piece band outta Oakland. Put this band in a medium sized room. Small stage just big enough to launch off of and don't mic up anything. Throw in some pool noodles to hit each other with, turn the lights on, and now we got some Dance Music.

Track 3 features some real East Bay Ray style riffing in the intro before hitting you with a mid-tempo mosher. Vocals screaming at you demanding you to get loose. A hint, a taste, dare I say an influence of screamo vibes here. If those words scare you don't fret. This is still at its core hardcore for people who like to have a good fucking time. Listen to exactly five second long bass and floor tom part in the song "The Muse" and tell me this isn't some Dance Music.

The band proudly claims to have no social media presence. +1. You can text a number for band updates. +1. No lyric insert with the tape. -1. Do the math yourself, the answers the same. This is some good hardcore. From the bandcamp description itself "BUST-A MOVE MUSIC FROM THE BAY AREA'S BEST KEPT SECRET"

—Hampton / Earth Girl Tapes



DEAF DUMB & BLIND – Demo CS

Sometime in 2011, somewhere in and around Buffalo, NY, the MALLWAKERS were performing "Ten More Years (of 80s Hardcore)" and it

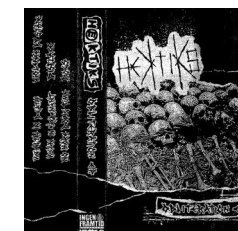
seems it was more like ten and a half or twenty.

Perfectly cromulent, nohing ventured, but nothing beyond the cool little guitar freak out in "Maniacy" that would make me think about DEAF DUMB & BLIND again.

And that should have been the end of the review, but somehow DD&B pulled the tape's closer, "Trapped Inside" out of their fuckin' asses. Scrap the rest of the set and write more like that one.

1.5/6, but goddamn does that 1.5 put in the work.

—Ralph Rivera



HEKTIKS – Obliteration EP

My friend (who is probably the best drummer I know) introduced me to the drummer of HEKTIKS as "one of the best drummers

I've ever met" in passing at K-Town Hardcore Fest this year, after their bands had shared the stage in HEKTIKS' hometown of Vienna, Austria a few weeks earlier. High praise, so obviously I made a note to check them out when I got

with the spine. Crudely drawn art of someone getting their neck snapped by a blurry pic of Michael Jordan. Perfect.

The first 5 tracks come from the demo tape and simply kinda fucking rock. Fun and furious hardcore, no mosh part pandering or overly distorted instruments. Cool ass riffs and upfront clean vocals. The type of demo you can perfectly place yourself in the middle of the practice space this was recorded in with minimal mics, minimal mixing, and zero re-dos. "Self-Made" is the standout here, starts with playful guitar riff mid tempo riff into a classic guitar and bass switch off to fast part. Come on, I'm simply pumping my fist in ultimate satisfaction.

The second half of this tape comes from a crudely recorded 2024 Tour tape. The drums sound like nonsense. Take that as a compliment or diss, you decide. The Tascam 4-track was putting in work on this batch of tunes. "Super Toys Last All Summer Long" is an all timer. That guitar riff has been stuck in my head ever since I first heard it. Fast punk bands don't play riffs like this and I wish they did, this shit rules. Vocal mix in your face. Props to any hardcore punk bands willing to put vocals forward in a mix and not hide behind reverb and delay like some cowards.

Smoke on the street is there's an LP coming soon from this band. Combine the intensity of the second half of songs, with a slightly better recording quality of the first batch then we got a real deal award winning combo. Refreshing hardcore punk outta California with this one, just what I needed. No lyrics sheet and my tape was snapped and poorly dubbed. -1 points for that. I did some DIY tape surgery and dubbed my own tape from the bandcamp files.

—Hampton / Earth Girl Tapes



BARREN CANYON – A Virulent Steam

BARREN CANYON began in 2014 as a self-described "spa metal" project, taking atmospheric black metal and

attempting to place it in literally atmospheric context: the hot steam, vapors, and scented smoke of the nordic spa. Twelve years later and our world itself is increasingly resembling the environment of the spa, but with a sinister toxicity and no chance for relief. Whereas the spa could once provide a exhilarating moment of extreme heat in the sauna, or brief and cleansing blanketing of dense steam, we now find ourselves inescapably suffocated by these atmospheric conditions in our daily lives. Healing inclusions like eucalyptus and cedar are replaced with industrial exhaust and forest fire smog. And so, BARREN CANYON has followed this dense atmosphere out of the spa and into the wider world where rather than respite and relaxation, it brings us death and sickness. A Virulent Steam the context and origins of these oppressive atmospheres that our polluting industries and consequent climate change have wrought.

Musically, A Virulent Steam is much more synth-driven than the 2018 release World of Wounds which sounds much closer to a guitar-driven black metal project you'd expect from one of the founders of ENSORCELOR, CIRCLE OF SALT and SPECTRAL WOUND (before he quit and the rest of the band kept playing his songs against his wishes). On A Virulent Steam you can barely hear the guitars (or perhaps you just think you can hear them), instead a synth-heavy influence is draw from contemporary darksynth/synthwave (think of some of the vibier tracks from early PERTURBATOR).

Most atmospheric black metal is best enjoyed cold, being associated with long and dark winters, cold rain, blizzards, the bottom of the ocean, or the vacuum of space. By contrast, A Virulent Steam is meant for the 40 °C humidex heatwave I've been suffering this past week in Montreal, and which it seems we all deign to suffer more year-by-year.

Released by Avant Garde.

—Martin Force

NOISE NOT BORDERS

JULY 31 - AUG 1

TIOTIÄ:KE (MONTREAL)

LAME(UK/SP) LASSO(BR) SOGA(MEX) CREMALLERAS(MEX) JUG(WPG)

INHUMANE(HAM) TOWER OF ONE(CT,US) KRASH(SASK) ZEAL(OTT)

SLACKER(HAM) EXTRAÑA HUMANA UZU TRAUMATIC STATE AREA9

DJINN MIGRACIÓN ANIMAL BASTÓN HURTA APÁTRIDAS

MAIN SHOWS VENUE: LA SALA ROSSA, 4848 BLVD. ST-LAURENT, DOORS 7:30 PM. BANDS 8PM.
PRESALES: PASS: 70 CAD. INDIVIDUAL DAY: 40 CAD DOOR PRICE: 45 CAD PER NIGHT.

MATINEE, SATURDAY AUG 1. 1PM. @ QUAI DES BRUMES :4481 R.SAINT-DENIS 20 CAD AT THE DOOR

lineup of Montreal bands — TRAUMATIC STATE, BASTON, EXTRAÑA HUMANA, ÁREA 9, MIGRACIÓN ANIMAL, HURTA and APÁTRIDAS. On a personal level, I'm especially happy that this is the first time the festival is bringing a band from Brazil—and not just from Brazil, but from Salvador, my hometown. It means a lot to me to see a piece of the city where I grew up become part of Noise Not Borders. 🇧🇷

NO KNOCK

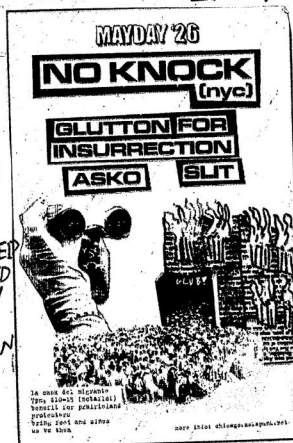
4-29 CLEVELAND, OH
4-30 INDIANAPOLIS, IN
5-1 CHICAGO, IL
5-3 MINNEAPOLIS, MN

5-4 MILWAUKEE, WI
5-5 HAMMOND, IN
5-6 PITTSBURGH, PA
5-7 BALTIMORE, MD



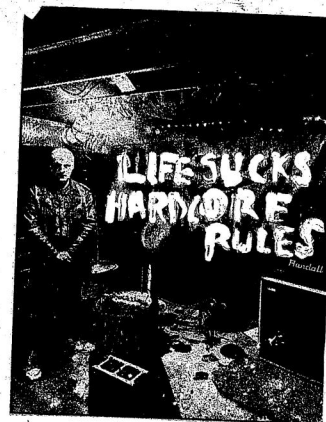
STAYED UP TOO LATE
FINISHING THE BANNER-
BIG APPRECIATION TO FEKNI
FOR LAYOUT HELP + YAYA
FOR HELP PAINTING

PLAYED WITH INFAMOUS
YAMBAG - STAYED WITH LEAH
+ RICHARD



BANGER SHOW
AT GOOD VIBE
WENVE-LA
CASA DEL
MIGRANTE 3

POSITIVE COMMUNITY
FEELING THIS IS WHY WE DO IT
THANK CHICAGO



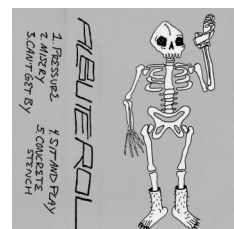
WE ♥
INDIANAPOLIS
-BIRTH
REJECTS
FKIN KILLED
WE PLAYED
AGAIN W/
THEM IN
HAMMOND, IN
A TREAT!
AKRON
+ CML
NOTABLE
SHREDDERS

(FLOCK CAMERAS
CONTAIN APPROX-
300\$ WORTH OF
GOLD + COPPER)

FIGHT FLOCK
FIGHT AI
BIG TECH
IS NOT YOUR FRIEND



REVIEWS



ALBUTEROL - Demo

Are there any bands named off of medications that don't rock? Please send examples to Counterforce HQ. What we got here is

five (5) tracks from the newest medicated hardcore punk outfit outta Atlanta. This is what we in the biz call no-frills hardcore punk. We're not reinventing the wheel here but I will happily sit my ass down and enjoy the bizzaro ride. Emphasis and just playing fast and fun. Yeah we hit an occasional "mosh riff" but who cares, that's not why we're here.

The vocals here are unlike your regular styling. A kinda dream like vibe over the fast riffin. Definitely the key element setting this apart in a sea of contenders. Track 3, "Can't Get By" feels like a clear homage to Atlanta's best kept now defunct secret - WARM RED. Intentional or not? Doesn't matter when the riffs are this good.

The first recording outing by this newer project, off to the fucking races with this one. Oh yeah, there's a lyric sheet that looks like a doctors prescription note. Finally, some good fucking news.

-Hampton / Earth Girl Tapes

after the show, we drove around and tried to dumpster donuts until we got the address for the apartment complex swimming pool, where I assumed either Clay, Grace, or Zoe lived. About 15 minutes into everyone else passing around the bag wine, the exact same cops came and kicked us out of the swimming pool. Nevada stayed with Clay some time last year and a picture of the night was hanging on their fridge. This is one of my most cherished memories.

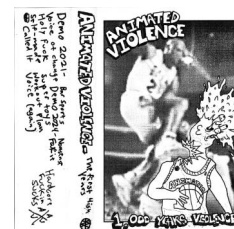
10. We were 16 or 17 and we came to the show for GET BENT!, WEEKEND NACHOS, and STUBBORN ATTITUDE (a great band fronted by that fucking pederast from duress (don't capitalize this one, fuck them to this day)), me and AC got thrown into some PVC and it almost impaled me and the basement flooded and I left that show with two 7" s from the touring band that set the standard for how I think punk should present itself: MERKIT's self titled 7" and their split with DEMIAN.

Their songs were great and their thoughts were incredible. Every other band on the bill wrote about hating poseurs and girls they used to date and these were four Floridians writing about Chiapas. I had never heard of fucking Chiapas.

Everything was screen printed, beautiful, and intentional, light years from what we were doing but still attainable. MERKIT is one of the best bands of the aughts. If you check out just one thing from them, know that I rank their LP with HOMBRINUS DUDES alongside the FAITH/ VOID split.

What are some of those moments for you? What makes you THINK!? Write to me direct at anyonecanbethethebug@riseup.net.

-Ralph Rivera



ANIMATED VIOLENCE - The First 4ish Years

Compilation tape of two previous releases from Orange County's ANIMATED VIOLENCE. Looney

Tunes hardcore punk. The front cover says "1,000 YEARS OF VIOLENCE", the spine says "The first 4ish years", so who knows actually what this release is called. When in doubt go

affect the turnout (so you raise less money at the door anyways) and there is less money give to touring bands because you have more locals to pay.

Fests can be a special elevated punk experience for sure, but we already have too many fests here in Montreal, so stop trying to make every single show a fest!!

—Martin Force

THINK!

column 4

Creatively Bankrupt

Our continued exploration, both thoughtful and thought-provoking of "the Limits" will have to wait. Blame procrastination or blame capitalism's inexorable obliteration of our waking lives. We'll get back to it, but in the meantime, enjoy this creatively bankrupt interstitial: a listicle of ten hardcore punk moments, in no particular order, that made me THINK!

1. Who knows where I first heard it at this point, maybe Dave Freeborn and Chris Nelson on Ridge Road during one of their frightening coke benders. I was 14 and a square and afraid of my mother (and still am 24 years later) but they burned me CDs with the names scribbled in ball point pen on pieces of masking tape, and while I know now that RICHARD HELL did not in fact sing "White Punks On Hope," I'm still goddamn sure that the opening riff of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS' "Suspect Device" still quakes the fucking firmament. One of the few bands besides DIE KREUZEN who could make the LP retreat even fucking better than the original, a first wave punk band so good even CRASS never wrote a word hating them.

2. The first time I saw OOZE in a dank Hammond basement, there were maybe 15 people and I threw a fan. Not my proudest moment, but I'd double down and do it again in 2026.

3, and also, 4. There are only two bands in my close to a quarter century of in person live music experience that have played a half hour and I thought "Hey, they should play one more even!" These are them:

LOOK BACK AND LAUGH at ABC No Rio, age 18, first tour, no one would book us a show but they let us in for free and even from the back of the room the men felt like giants and Tobia's hair and limbs formed eldritch shapes as she hit close to 1000 jumps. This was the first time I ever used the term "warmachine" to describe a band and if you've ever seen them you know I'm not wrong.

CAREER SUICIDE at NDY, in the half pipe after NEON PISS covered Adolescents and Steven Koontz picked me up in one of his giant arms. I felt very safe. Or maybe CAREER SUICIDE, the first time, at Rob Ruz's birthday party, when Allison and I made zero friends with our pre-song mosh antics. Whatever, don't just fucking stand there.

5. Not Not circa February of this year. First DIY show in close to a year since knee met knife. SEX GUN opened, members of SHARP PINS and TV BUDDHA, great CHUCK BERRY cover, and STARCHARM and ARTIFICIAL GO followed. Everything was beautiful, anarchists tabled zines and the chili was vegan, and I caught up with nice people until PARKING exploded inside. Big, loud, driving, monstrous. I hope to see this band again in a week and a half at NITRO-A-GO-GO.

6. TENEMENT was a pop punk band that sounded like JAWBREAKER they told us, because the songs were catchy and that was the only reference point anyone had for that in 2010 and '11. And then I saw Amos use a cinder block and a chain as a guitar pick in the same Miami mist and muck that Nick Baran got slurs hurled at him, so you tell me what that all means?

7, and also, 8. Olympia Hardcore Fest was a pale imitation of its predecessor, NEW DIRECTIONS FEST, people stood outside during NERV, the greatest midwest punk band of their epoch, because people were in full loon mode, still gooning blanks over the corpse of HOAX, but day two did give us one of the greatest back to backs I've ever seen: BIG ZIT and VEXX. Disgusting.

9. THE BUG played ten minutes (okay, fifteen) in Little Rock, AK, in the back field of a trailer park. The cops came and shut it down, honestly fair, but fuck them. Tyler had just broken edge and let me drive the Suburban





DEAR EVANGELINE at The Garage

LAWNYA VAWNYA / ST. JOHN'S REPORT BACK

Contributed by Christeen

I got into St. John's on an uncharacteristically sunny day, so after dropping my stuff off, I took a walk up Signal hill, passing some Stunk and Cansada stickers on the way. Later, after taking in the sights, I headed to the Rock House to catch my first show of the trip featuring ULTRA FAR, CHUMPP, BREAD CLIP and BUCKY.

I moved back to Montreal from St John's a year ago, but came back to play Lawnya Vawnya (a local independent music festival that takes place in St John's every June). Returning to play the fest gave me the chance to hang with friends and catch some great bands in a scene I love. Lawnya Vawnya is a mixed bag musically, which I love — I get to experience a lot of different music in one week — but there's always elements of punk and punk-adjacent music represented, so I'll mostly focus on those.

But back to a pre-fest show on the day I arrived in town... I was eager to see some new local bands and the show delivered some good ones. CHUMPP was my fave that night, with a distinctive 90s alternative, grunge/twee mix (if that's possible) with BREEDERS influence and a little CARDIGANS wistful 90s, what's that called? I have no idea. Members of SNITFIT, SICK PUPPY, OWEN FINN BAND and BUCKY. BUCKY was kinda giving CAP'N JAZZ/GET UP KIDS with a twist. BREAD CLIP felt like melodic power pop à la SUPERCRUSH with a tad of early STEREO LAB, sometimes sing-y and sometimes low-fi blown out vocals. They were just on tour on the mainland. ULTRA FAR from St John's/Montreal was cool, a newer project of Sarah Harris that grew out of the band PROPERTY. Kinda rock, electronic, singer-songwriter with autotune. I don't know how to describe it either, so give it a listen if you're curious.



I Will Do My Worst #5

Having trouble finding bands to play your upcoming show this summer? Here are some tips (yes, I used to book shows):

1. Book outside your bubble

You gotta broaden your search for openers outside of the shortlist of bands your friends are in. Try booking a band from an adjacent scene or friend group, even if they aren't your cup of tea. Just because you don't know them doesn't mean they don't have a following of friends. People get sick of seeing essentially the same 2-3 locals on every show you book, it can actually be a liability for a show even if on paper it's a "solid lineup". And squash stupid beefs preventing you from booking certain bands. Just stay away from the streaming-corporate-wannabes.

2. Book outside the genre

Every show does not need to be 5 bands playing d-beat/crust or grindcore/powerviolence. Get creative. If you look back at legendary show fliers, they were all mixed bills. GREEN DAY playing with NEUROSIS and shit. When I booked shows more often I would usually ask a solo noise act to open the show, or even a zinester or local writer to do a reading. It works super well and it challenges people's expectations about what happens at a show. Plus it's only one person with minimal gear requirements to deal with.

3. Check your punk calendar for inspiration

In Montreal we have a local show calendar: <https://montreal.askapunk.net>. You can scroll back through past shows to get inspiration for local bands you may have forgotten. A good strategy is to look for someone who hasn't played in awhile (or get ideas for bands outside your bubble, as per #1). This is one of the many advantages of having a local calendar like this that doubles as an archive.

4. Book new bands who suck

Greg aka Not Dead Yet in Toronto used to have this policy where for every show he'd book, he'd get a new band of younger kids to open. Even if they sucked. Even if they had no gear and had to borrow everything. Especially if it was their first show. It can be extra work on your part to help a new/young kids band get to a show on time, borrow gear, etc. But people are always excited to see new blood and it helps new/young bands get better. They play a show opening for a world-class DIY punk touring band and get inspired. You're not just filling out your lineup, but you are investing in the process to create the good local openers of the future.

5. Three bands is enough

The optimal punk show is three bands. A big part of the TBA problem is half the shows this month have 5-6 bands, and so the locals are all booked up and can't play other shows. Everyone thinks they need 5 bands at a regular show to get a decent turnout. Newsflash: you don't. There is false a delusion that each band on a lineup has it's own completely separate draw and they will all add up to a sold out room (this is especially false when all the locals are from the same friend group/scene).

In fact, a tight 3 band lineup can often have a better turnout. I've been to way more 5+ band shows with a terrible turnout (when you account for how many of the people there were in bands) compared to poorly attended 3 band shows.

Why? Many people look at a 5+ band show and have an internal debate about whether or not they want to spend another summer night stuck in/around a stinky hot venue for 4+ hours trying to catch the one band they care about. I often look at a 6 band lineup and I see 3 bands I want to see and 3 bands I don't want to see. By comparison at a 3 band show there is going to be at most only 2 bands I don't want to see. Adding bands can actually dilute a good lineup and discourage people from coming!

It also makes the show more expensive (or feel like it should be more expensive, when it's PWYC/NOTAFLOF), which can negatively



Another method comes courtesy of EARTH GIRL TAPES impresario, Hampton Martin:

"I currently run 10 tape decks daisy chained together (the output of one deck goes into the input of the next deck, and so on) with the first deck taking an input from a digital master on my computer. I run a cable from an audio interface into the first tape deck of the chain. Occasionally use an old phone or other dedicated music playing device to play the digital master recording. Dubbed in real time for superior listening quality. I clean the decks in between dubbing jobs, and once a year I take them apart and re-calibrate them (fixing speed and bias issues)."

Left: Hampton Martin's tape duplication set up.



Below: Backside of Hampton Martin's tape duplication set up, showcasing how his daisy chain method works.

STEP 6 – "Stuff It"

This part is fun and mostly brain dead. If you've sized and cut everything down as instructed in previous steps, you can coast through the workload after the first couple. A lot of this

Step is just figuring stuff out hands-on, but my biggest tip is to no waste time or energy scoring the spine of the J-card. This took me a while to figure out for some reason (see: stupidity), but your absolute best bet is to line up the top side of your finished tape with the outer edge of your J-card, then to crease the portion of the J-card that hangs over around the bottom of the cassette, and stuff it in from there, using the norelco to make the final crease. Give it a little smooch in there. Works every time.

Alright, you freaks, I hope you found this helpful and informative. For my part, I hope I never have to look at a low-effort, insert-less cassette tape or a J-card cut at 81 degree angles (I'm looking at you, ROACHLEG) ever again. Now, go make your own tape!

Direct all additional inquiries and hate mail to: anyonecanbethebug@riseup.net ☎

Wednesday

Wednesday, the festival opener, was an all ages show featuring SICK PUPPY, SHUNK and FAIRWEATHER. SICK PUPPY is one of my favourite local bands – they recently added a second guitarist and veered into that 90s grunge zone from more of a straight punk sound, which honestly is really working. I love Iso's vocals and their riffs and after seeing them cover HOLE last year, the shift towards grunge makes sense. SHUNK from Montreal were not really my thing, but I appreciated the freakiness of it and the operatic interludes on vocals were wild. FAIRWEATHER are also local and sound to me like mid/late 2000's pop punk with a touch of screamo (D.B.S. anyone?) that embodies the house show vibe I associate with that time.

Thursday

On Thursday, CABLE TV opened for GAMKSIMOOM, MEESHA and THE SPANKS. CABLE TV is a local TELEVISION-worship band with a cheeky name and DYLAN-esque vocals. They played a great set to open the night. Calgary two-piece MIESHA & THE SPANKS were great, high energy and raw, which kind of reminded me of early YEAH YEAH YEAHS/THE RAPTURE and SHELLSHAG shows from my time in New York. GAMKSIMOOM (meaning "waterspout" or "sea tornado") came on when I was already tired and ready for bed which was unfortunate but they did definitely rock. I'd say stoner rock SABBATH worship (in the best way) with lyrics sung entirely in the Sm'algux language, the reclaimed language of the singer from Gitgaat First Nation on BC's Northwest Coast. The lyrics, which dig deep into Ts'msyen worldview & culture, are very much the opposite of what you would expect from the genre, and refreshingly so. I just wish I'd had the foresight to take an edible before to truly appreciate it to the fullest by melting into it.

Friday

Friday was DESPERTÁ, DEAR EVANGELINE, UZU, and NARCY. I play in DESPERTÁ so I'm biased but I do think we played a pretty good set with our new songs. It was also our tape release. DEAR EVANGELINE was loud and heavy AF. A rad crew of women/gender diverse youth outta Brampton. They're very tight punk/hardcore/metal with some parts



that border on nu metal, but it works. They dedicated a song to “the lesbians” which I loved. I found out that weekend that in Brampton the kids are most definitely alright. UZU played next — they are probably my fave Montreal band right now, and they ripped with haunting vocals. It’s new wave-y goth-y post punk you can bop to, and the crowd did. It was cool to see NARC Y, a deeply political, pro-Palestine old-school rapper, but to be honest, it felt a little low energy after the first three bands, which was maybe just a question of not the best mixed bill. Although I do appreciate a good mixed bill and maybe also I was just tired after playing a set.

Saturday

Saturday was Lawnya Vawnya’s infamous garage show, or what I like to call the “punk matinee” after memories of ABC No Rio’s long run of Saturday punk matinees. This bill was MANTRACKER, DEAR EVANGELINE, LICE and INVISIBLE HAND. MANTRACKER hopped on the post-fest generator show last year with CELL DETH, UNCLE and DUREX and I liked it then, but a year later they’re sounding way tighter. They remind me of the kind of punk hardcore I would see at ABC No Rio circa 2008, kinda mid-tempo, raw, and sick. No bands come to mind but my memory is pretty bad these days. If you’re in Montreal you can see for yourself this summer.

DEAR EVANGELINE played another sick set — the sound was not as heavy in The Garage, but was definitely more raw and with more connection to the crowd than the previous night. I tried (and failed) to capture on video all the women/gender diverse youth at the front moshing and singing along. This is one thing I love and think is so unique to St. John’s — the youth get the music, learn all the lines, wear your T-shirt to the show, and sing along to all the songs.



LICE at The Garage

Last thing I’ll say here is that if you end up adding plastic wrap to a DIY project, I’m fucking giving you a swirlie. What the fuck is wrong with you? Our planet’s dying and you’re going mersh?

STEP 5 – “The Dub”

If you’ve got your final recordings, as well as your tapes, in hand, you’re finally ready for the Dub. When I first got started, I’d get a master tape made up somehow and make copies 1:1, which is time consuming and sucks all around, but definitely gets the job done! You can always default to that in a pinch, but here’s some other, better ways.



My former label partner suggested we get a high speed tape duplicator after watching me use that method for so long and, after some quick research, she snatched up a couple used Telex models off the internet. I upgraded to the Telex ACC-4000 (pictured below) after realizing the ones we’d been using were mono, which was causing some problems with certain recordings, but you can still find either relatively easily, as churches would use them to dub sermons for elderly parishioners and have started offloading them over the last couple decades.

In short, my method for the last decade plus has consisted simply of running an aux cord from my computer to the input of my tape deck to make a “master” tape (be sure to turn off any notification alarms and close any browsers that, god forbid, might play an ELECTRIC CHAIR EP), using digital masters divided into Side A and Side B (or using the same files if “program repeats” and all that), then placing that master into the “ORIG” slot of the Telex, and finally plopping three blanks into the other three slots.

The nitty gritty between the lines is that I check the levels throughout the process, getting as close to a consistent 0dB as possible with some light, tasteful flickering into the red while making the master on the tape deck. I’ll then place that into the duplicator and run it without any blanks and adjust the channel knobs until I get that same aforementioned consistency, before finally starting to dub everything. I always make sure the machine is set to “AB,” which enables dubbing on both sides simultaneously, and “Auto,” which automatically rewinds all tapes before beginning and again when duplication has concluded, and remove and refill the “COPY” slots until completion. Every once in a while, the “Short Tape” lights will pop on, but this has never had a noticeable impact on any of the thousands of tapes I’ve duplicated.

One Telex machine can dub 3, 90min tapes in just three minutes, and can command additional units with a specialized cable as our original mono models did, so just do some quick calculations to figure how long a 5 min one takes.

Before each run, I take a handheld demagnetizer to any metal components and tape heads, then I’ll quickly clean those same components with isopropyl alcohol wipes.

STEP 4 – "Get Physical"

I'll be honest, this could easily have been Step Double Zero. Once you've got your recordings back from whoever, there's nothing really stopping you from ordering yer tapes and dubbing ahead of time, but the ulterior motive was establishing a baseline of preparedness lest we allow a stack of tapes and cases to languish in cat piss and cider bottles for a few months or years or decades.

You've got a few options to choose from at this point, so we'll hop into an ascending sub-list, from most to least hated, and you can CYOA, dig?

a) The perennially awful first choice one may hazard is to *visit a thrift store or record store's theoretical dollar bin* and buy old tapes to recycle. Yes, it's probably the most economical, netting you both tape and case in one fell swoop, and it's arguably more "earth-conscious," but it also looks and sounds like shit.

You gotta figure these tapes have already seen some wear and tear, which will significantly reduce its second lifespan. Some duplication methods won't record entirely over the tapes' original contents and you'll get Korean sermons from 2004 or 80s cock rock mixtapes leaking through (though, admittedly, if one were to work that into the presentation itself, that could be pretty cool). It's also safe to assume that no one who goes down this route will repeat the program enough times to fill up the entire runtime, which makes interacting with the tape more about how much one is willing to rewind it.

Unless you're charging \$0–1 for the finished product, or you've run out mid-tour, please don't subject anyone to this.

b) Option 2 (or b, whatever) is a close relative, yet orders of magnitude better: *ask your friends' bands or labels if they have blank tapes lying around*. Dashed DIY label dreams and pre-tour call-outs are abundant, it's entirely possible this ends up being even cheaper than the previous method, just so they don't have to look at this shit anymore. While it has some of the same disadvantages as above, such as using a tape that wasn't lengthed with its contents in mind, it also retains most of the advantages of the best and most consistent option, which goes something like this:

c) This is the priciest option, as everything, including shipping, just keeps getting more and more unattainable, but it's still cheaper than pressing a 7 inches' worth of music to an LP: *order new tapes*.

There are many places from which you can do this. I've used National Audio and duplication.ca for years. They have so many different color cassette shells to choose from, often have a good variety of cases, and offer lengths starting from 3mins, allowing you to get as close to full utilization of each side as possible. Just make sure you choose tab-in cassettes, or be prepared to physically apply adhesive tape over the corners of every single cassette before Step 5 may commence.

Notably, many of these places will dub the tapes (and will cut the tapes down to most precise length if you do) and print art directly to the shells using technology most of us do not and will not ever have direct access to, though this isn't necessary in my eyes and falls slightly outside the walls of the environs this guide is meant to navigate.

There's a whole bunch of ways you can make the tape itself look cool. Paint markers and sharpies are evergreen. There's all different sizes of tape labels you can put to good use and all the advice for laying out J-cards and inserts is applicable here. One of my favorite methods is using a soldering iron to etch directly into the shells. Just remember to label yer A and B sides, and you're golden.

LICE closed out the show with maybe the longest hardcore set I've ever seen, but you know what? I wasn't even mad. The vocals really hit me in that gutteral, low, scratchy style I love and associate with mostly crust bands. INVISIBLE HAND played third – another standout from last year's generator show I was happy to catch again. Nice to see Walt, local punk ripper and drummer from TUNNEL VISION (one of my other favourite local HC bands) playing guitar, along with local legend Liam Ryan, also in a million bands (including SWIMMING) and Mitch, local cutey and drummer in multiple bands. This is another charming aspect of the scene here, as I imagine is also the case in a lot of small towns – everyone plays in multiple bands, often across different genres.

That evening I popped into the CHUMPP, KIWI JR, FANCLUBWALLET show. CHUMPP was good, again. FANCLUBWALLET I liked and could kinda melt into the twee, indie, sparkly vibes. Really enjoyed the set. KIWI JR was very hyped but I honestly didn't care for it, in that way that sometimes a bunch of talented dudes playing music can kinda just fall flat to me. Fight me if you want, I don't care.

After, I went to see the FEMINOTICA/HRT/SLASH NEED show, which felt like the most hardcore dance-y dark electronic show I've ever been to, and it felt good.

FEMINOTICA is a gothic dance pop one-piece and they whipped out a killer accordion version of BAD ROMANCE that has been stuck in my head ever since. It sounds weird in writing but if I showed you the video you would understand. It was nice to see the set after helping them screenprint their merch the week before. I caught up with them after – they said they were still new to performing, but felt comfortable on stage that night, which was great to hear since it was a packed show. One thing I love about Lawnya Vawnya (full disclosure I am on the board and def biased) is that they really support locals, find people who are starting out and get them on stage. They also have MCs for most of the shows, the majority of which are local drag queens which honestly really brings the vibe. For the first set of the night FEMINOTICA def had the crowd moving.

Next were Montreal's HRT, who are hard-core heavy driving dark catharsis – or in their words "euphoric hardcore you can writhe to." I agree. I felt the bass in my chest and I liked it. I also really love the jungle & drum and bass snippets Ana snuck in there. Kirby's stern commanding stage presence and vocals were killing it and taking over my soul. The lighting for HRT was actually perfect too, which is not always the case at the Rock House – it definitely helped the vibe. SLASH NEED were next with a slightly lighter techno-y set that I found myself dancing to, half trancelike, after I finally managed to wiggle my way back onto the packed dancefloor. The Rock House is a weird layout with things to climb on and I appreciate how the vocalist and bassist/dancer covered absolutely all of the possible places to climb on in the sexiest, gothiest, rockiest possible way. In their bio they describe their set as a communal performance piece which feels about right.

Then I trucked over to the electronic aftershow just in time to catch ÈBONY (Montreal/Toronto) and dance my little heart out with local legend Renee Sharpe, and the whole Brampton crew from DEAR EVANGELINE and LICE. The set was so good that despite being overtired, sober, and turning 45 I didn't leave the dance floor till 3 AM when the lights came on. I don't know shit about electronic music, but I loved this. It was at times mellow dancey, then driving more towards the techno side, incorporating samples and mixing in classics towards the end of the set. I ran into them on the street a few days later and told them I danced my ass off and that seemed to make them happy.

Honestly the music scene in St John's and the NL hardcore/punk scene in particular are ruling it right now. Everyone should take note, or better yet, go there and check it out for yourself. 📍

NYC 2026 (so far) PHOTO SCENE REPORT

contributed by Ben Trogdon

Clockwise from top left: WATCHLIST, REEK MINDS, TOTAL CON, BRAINWASH VICTIMS,
PSYCHO TERRORIST DESPAIR SYSTEM, TAQBIR



STEP 3 – "Printing"

Setting stuff up for print is one of the hardest parts to get right and leads to a whole lot of frustration, but once you get it once, it's like riding a bike.

You can easily fit four standard sized J-Cards to a page for minimal waste. A hard border like DISHEADS included is prudent so you always know where to cut, or at least make sure that whatever black/color is present in your art sufficiently contrasts with the paper you use. If there's a lot of white space at the borders, I'd recommend throwing a bit of black around the finished product in a digital editing program, or adding it by gluing the finished J-card to black construction or scrap paper. In this instance, just remember to cut inside the color (or "bleed").

Where this step gets a little hairy is printing on the back of literally anything. It's driven me to tears and I've had frantic phone calls trying to iron it out, so here's a few best practices.

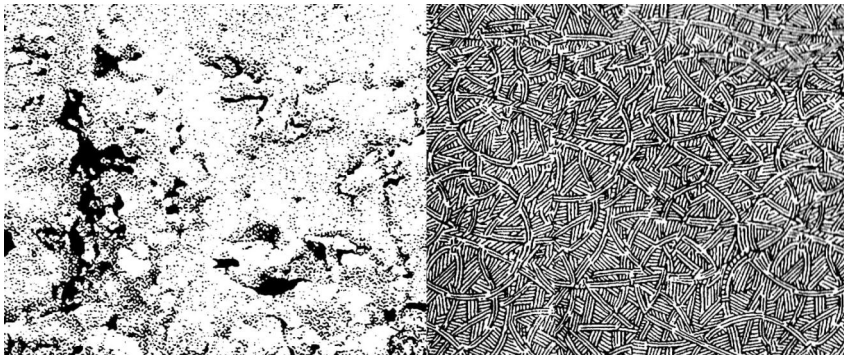
- Don't worry about lining it up perfectly, worry about not cutting off anything important.
- Finesse the sizes, keeping the most important side, like the front of the j-card, at 100% with the reverse to about 95%, and cut to the former.
- Add a color bleed to the reverse side as needed, so you don't have any unintentional white space.
- To line everything up by hand, get a transparency and some scotch tape. Print up four copies front and back each, stick the fronts on first, and go from there. It might make it a little harder to cut them out efficiently because they won't be machine calibrated, but no one said punk was supposed to be easy.
- If you're setting it up digitally, but still self printing, it's pretty much the same thing. You should still follow the first three bullet points, laying out the designated "important" side first, then use the transparency settings in your program of choice to position the back images as close to the center of each front as possible.
- Even when your insert is a single double sided piece of paper, there's some printing quirks that will drive you mad. If you're printing horizontally, you'll wanna flip on the short edge, vertically on the long edge, so the tops of your insert are the way you want 'em.
- When cutting stuff down to size, I'll cut down to the top side of each individual piece before moving onto each other side, and then repeat until completion. This builds in little goals and stopping points, and makes you feel like you're making progress, instead of just looking at a never diminishing stack next to one or two finished J-cards or inserts.

At the end of the day, trial and error will overcome every obstacle, but these first three + one half steps should get you through the art and printing portion of our proceedings. Now that you've got your shit all spread out, following the remaining steps will hopefully get it all in one fuggin' sock. We're close to the end and yer eyes are glazing over, but stick it out and we'll get there together.

STEP 2.5 – "What Works"

Before we move on, here's a couple quick tips that I find pertinent to the previous two steps.

- If you don't feel confident in your handwriting, the two best options available to you are the fonts Microgramma Bold Extended and Trixie Plain. You have seen the former on everything from industrial construction equipment to 70s horror movie title cards, and the latter is the best digital typewriter facsimile in existence. If you have a working typewriter handy, even better. If you fuck up while using one, and you will, just backspace and throw some "x's" over whatever mistake you made. It'll look cool.
- Source patterns for dead space and backgrounds. The best place to start for that is composition notebooks and the inside of security envelopes. I've coasted on a blown out xerox of the lady on the COMES – "No Side LP" for years. Here's a couple scraps that might help if you're short on resources. The left is from a blue cheese salad dressing advertisement circa 1960s and the right is one of them aforementioned envelopes.



- Tips for the xerox itself: background low, ink density high, sharpness and contrast high, do all these first. Some of the terminology might vary from machine to machine, but check for something similar. If you can't get it to look the way you want it, shrink it, then blow it up. 75% down and back up to 150% is fool proof.
- Look for rub-off/transfer letters from the 80s/90s. Even if they've dried up, you can use the xerox method described above and cut and paste from there.
- Art wise, I'm not here to make any objective claims regarding what does and doesn't work for a punk cassette 30 people will hold onto for 3ish years before binnin' it, but if I can impart anything before we move on it's this: I think you'll probably be tempted, if you're a first studded bracelet at 22, 80s hardcore type, to hit up Keith Caves, or if you're somehow back on the basement dwelling edgelord mysterioid tip to ask Colorado-native Mark McCoy to do your cover art, but I'm gonna say that you should not. Do it yourself with pens and markers and old magazines and a xerox machine, or do it together with someone close to home that shares and understands the vision. Don't contribute to the homogenization of hardcore punk aesthetics just for the sake of expediency, build a true regional look and sound that people will appreciate, even if it sucks at first, because that level of authenticity is way more important than anything else.





INTERVIEW WITH BAD BILL FROM GAZM

After years of being involved in graffiti and seeing / playin in hardcore bands I ask myself "how'd I get here?"

As much as I have a multitude of experiences, friends and inspiration, among them there are more defining eras, points or moments. For my two biggest passions I can track the drive to explore them seriously back to my friend Bad Bill.

In fall 2017 I saw GAZM for the first time and most music I had known was pretty lame to me after that. After a year we were hangin, shortly after that we were spraying.

He sent me on the right track. Showing me all kinds cool stuff I didn't get till years later.

Interview by Slim

Slim: Who are some of your stylistic influences that've brought you to where you are now?

Bad Bill: I have it boiled down to my favorite 3 of all time: Brite BKF THR, Causr, and Jade THR BTM.

They ooze style and they never labor over anything they do. They could all do a hollow and it's not perfect but there's so much confidence and originality, it's the connecting fibre.

I think that comes from them all being really talented drawers outside of graffiti and you're also a very talented drawer as well.

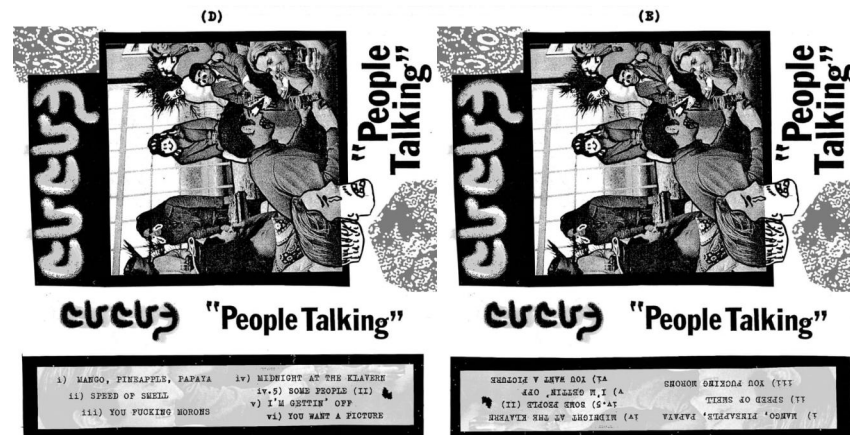
I like them all for different reasons. For tags, it's Brite and Jade, and it's really Causr's piecing.

What's your favorite Causr era?

Dude the one we're in! The last five years everything I've seen him do I really like. There's some of it that's a little hit or miss, but I like that he doesn't care. I like that he just does it and I don't know if he's happy with it, like anyone else who cares about their craft. It's fearless which is something I really like.

All those guys have this rough and ready thing you can tell they've practiced. Some guys you can tell can only do one tag and their alphabets are bad. But these guys could do anyone's name and it'll be stylish.

You can tell when someone has spent a lot of time thinking about tagging.



STEP 2 - "The Insert"

This is clearly an afterthought for many bands, but if one of the worst people I've ever met in my entire life made any sort of positive impact on it, it was this little truism: "You can play absolutely any type of music and not put your lyrics out there, but that's not what punk is." Stopped clocks being what they are, he was right, and I've carried it with me ever since.

Yes, I'll admit it: it is scary. Putting your thoughts and opinions on paper exposes you to critique, it's a vulnerable position to be in no matter what you're saying, but, more importantly, it can and will result in you and the people reading them feel far less alone. To me, skipping this step is a non-starter, and I will mention it in the reviews section every time I catch it.

Pictured above is naught but DISHEADS lead singer Randy Riot's hungover scribbblings. It looks good and does what it needs to. They don't have or know what email is, but you could include that here, as well as anything else you'd like to communicate. Just remember, the more info you include on the insert, the bigger the insert gets, and the craftier you must be makin' sure it all fits. I try to keep it to the cardstock J-card and a single 8.5 x 11 sheet of letter paper, max, and I've never been let down.

While we can't expect much from DISHEADS, this is a perfectly acceptable insert and these glue sniffers did better than 90% of their peers.



The dimensions for something this simple are 4 inches wide by whatever, but try to stick to a length that's divisible by 2.5 to keep it clean.

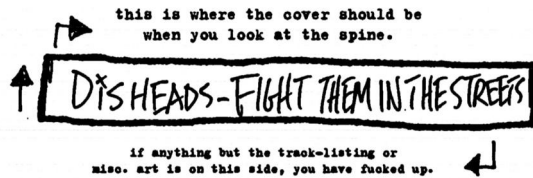
store is run by an absolute fucking psychopath (many such cases), (A), as on a shelf, or (B), as in a distro box, will always be the first thing anyone sees of your physical release, so it's important that you get this right.



(A) might seem like where you're most likely to cock it all up, but you'd honestly have to try really hard. Easy peasiest layout is BAND NAME > PICTURE > TITLE OF RELEASE. I'll get a bit more granular here in a sec, but this works for literally every sub sub subgenre, it's not just limited to d-beat shit, I promise. If you're a youth crew band, just look for a collegiate font to use for your band name, slap that live shot from your second show smack dab in the middle, and toss "We Stand Together" or something at the bottom. Try it out!

Where many have failed and where everyone who refuses to read this will continue to fail is step 1.B. This is the first portion of the process where there is objectively a right and wrong way of doing things and if you fuck it up, you should feel bad.

When you are holding a tape in your hand horizontally and looking at its spine (B), the cover (A) should always be facing up and the "back flap" (C) should always be facing towards the ground. This is a non-starter. It will look stupid and everyone will laugh at you and you won't get to play the punk festival tour circuit, so just don't do it.



Otherwise, just keep this space simple and easy to read, you truly don't need more than the name of your band and the title of the release.

There's some recent debate on how (C) should be oriented, Hampton has certainly swayed my way of thinking, but I think this space generally ends up being the freest of the three. Using my own band's cassette (and thus, the most recent cassette I've personally laid out) as an example, I believe either exhibit (D) or (E) is perfectly acceptable. (D) is how I initially laid it out and is how I've always done it, but Big Dawg Aitch made a compelling argument that (E) should be the standard, reasoning that the finished product ends up in a clear norelco, its orientation would be congruent to the cassette's, and I eventually complied after flipping a tape over and over in my hands about 50 times.

I've always taken a vibes based approach to this area. I've oriented the information both vertically and horizontally, I've included Side A/B info (probably a best practice, but a great example of a time I myself have fucked up, AND recently!), I've seen no information but art in that space, and ultimately, I've never been offended by how someone went about it, so do what looks and feels right to you after you've got (A) and (B) locked in.

I see a parallel to punk and hardcore. You need to learn all the different aspects. Like certain breakdowns and drum beats. The more informed you become the better choices you can make stylistically.

For example with graff some of my favorite stuff is early subway stuff. But I'm not going to do a tag that looks like it's from 1970. It's more about taking the energy from that stuff and the more you take in the more you can inform your own thing.

Instead of mimicking the 70s.

It's LARP-y and it makes it seem like cool stuff isn't happening now, like nothing that's going on now is worth your time

The way I think about graff or any creative pursuit is how I think about life. I like country music but I hate when I see a guy dressed like a cowboy from the 70s. I saw a guy like that the other day and there was no soul in it. What bothers me about that line of thinking is you look up to these guys and they didn't think like that. Some country guy in the 70s wasn't trying to dress like a guy from 1930. They were doing their own thing and that's what made that era special. Every era has that thing that makes it cool.

That's why I don't think all trends are bad. Trends are how an era gets marked.

I remember coming up in 2019, the cool thing was to conform to the popular style and it's only been in the most recent generation that it's returned to the best or most revered writers being those who have personal style.

It got really tight in the years you got active, the getnlooseofficial thing happened, it had an impact on me too I'm not exempt from it either but it became the standard.

People get reactionary and the laymen could go from tight to loose and reject the whole 5-10 year generation before them. It's been bothering me. The pendulum swings right back the other way. The stuff that came before had good parts and bad parts. We had the dum dum 80s hardcore worship and the pendulum swung and now everyone has a beat down band, like that sucks dude.



I don't wanna make out like I'm on my own shit or I'm some kind of a savant, it's very hard to live your truth, in general and especially in these subcultures.

All these subcultures I love are in the pursuit of freedom and you're tryna get out from under the thumb of the man and then someone else becomes the man on a micro level.

The GAZM logo. Do you have any feelings or insight about GAZM's rise in punk and hardcore and also the cultural rise of graffiti and hardcore in the main stream. When I moved to Montreal there was hella people wearing the GAZM throw up.

I moved to Montreal to do two things. Be in a good band and write graffiti.

The graffiti slowly became less and less important as the time went on. It was amazing to see a city completely crushed in graffiti. I moved there in the fall of 2014. All the TOTR guys went nuts in 2015. I ended up meeting them in school that year. Hardcore and graffiti were the two biggest things on my mind.

So of course I'm gonna write songs about graffiti and make my band look like it's graffiti related. And there's a history of it but at the time it was a little less popular as it is now. Every other band has a graffiti style logo now. Something was happening in the hive mind.

I had the luxury of having Tumblr and Flickr in high school and all the people who have graffiti logos for their bands are around my age or a little younger. I didn't even think about it that much, I did graffiti so I figured I'd do the letters.

And that logo is just your regular style, you didn't put on a style for the logo.

It was straight up how I was doing my straight letter throw at the time, I thought I'd add some spider webs to make it more punk.

Like you said all the graffiti stuff blew up not long later. Graffiti got enormous while we were a band probably because of Instagram and hardcore got humongous right as GAZM was fizzling out.



HOW TO: RELEASE A FUCKING CASSETTE TAPE

by Ralph Rivera

Something that's stuck with me for over twenty years now is how the FORMALDEHYDE JUNKIES, a band with a single decent comp appearance, one great 7" which has maintained 33% relevancy since its release (I've never seen the masses clamor for a "Repressed" cover), and a mediocre sophomore effort to their name, let the words on their epitaph read "Now don't go start your own band." It bothered me then, and it bothered me now.

I think you should absolutely start your own band and I think you should absolutely reconcile yourself with the fact that it will probably suck and the first batch of songs you write will probably suck, that's how it goes, but at least you did it, which is more than most schmucks can muster. I can't really help you over those two humps, but the day will come when you suck less and it'll follow that the songs you keep writing, as well as how you play them, will suck less, and then you'll fix yer brain on releasing something, and that is where I can give you a tip or two. If you've read any of my reviews, god knows, we both know a good amount of you need it. If you're wondering where the hell I get off, *behold!*, the credentials enumerated: I ran a label for 13 years and have laid out countless j-cards and inserts for my own bands, as well as picking up the numerous dropped balls of bands too lazy to do it themselves. I was also bad at it, but then, through constructive criticism and consistent practice and experimentation, I think I got better, and, hopefully, I continue to get better at this until the day I die.

The long and short? There's not a 100% correct way to release a fucking tape, but there are certainly 100% wrong ways. I sucked at releasing tapes, many of us do, but there's things we can do to make it easier (and better to look at), so let's get to the process.

STEP 0

It's already been stated, but before anything else, you'll need a band and you'll need songs and then you'll need to record them. I'm trying to coerce ol' Bug 3 himself Kale Mouser into writing a series of columns on DIY sound engineering for us and ours, but my harassment is, to date, unsuccessful. I'm not the expert there, so the only thing I'd suggest during this preliminary stage is that, unless you really have a setlist hammered out ahead of time, I think you should write more songs than you'll need, record all of them, and then pick the best of the bunch for your first release.

STEP 1: "The J-Card"

Okay, so you've got your band, DISHEADS, let's say, and you've recorded your six song demo, titled "Fight Them In The Streets" or whatever, congrats! You're ready for Step 1.

Despite what you may assume based on my art punk tendencies, I would suggest against reinventing the wheel if you're first learning or relearning how to do this.

As you can see below, a standard J-card is 4 inches wide by 4 inches tall. The cover (A) is 2.5 inches wide by 4 inches tall and the spine (B) is .5 inches wide by, you guessed it, 4 inches tall. And if you're doing the math or just, you know, looking, you'll know that this leaves just 1 inch of real estate to (C), which I call "the back flap." Unless a distro or record

Punk graff really got repopularized then too.

It really was taking off again.

I don't know what happened to Dead Head but I saw a bunch of his stuff too. SF Zoo too! Orfn had passed away and I saw the tribute wall in SF.

New Orleans seeing Beach TCK RIP. TCK was huge for me right as I moved to Montreal. That stuff blew my mind. Some of the single most important things I learned about from graffiti.

You told me you met Roscoe at a show because you shouted out graffiti on stage.

Yeh I met him in Philly, at that show I remember mid set I said "Philly you have one of the best scenes in the whole world!!" It's still one of my favourite scenes of all time, a place strictly devoted to tagging, how cool! That scene can just spot it if you're not the real thing.

Philly is sick cause the dominant culture is to know your history.

I wanna shout out a tag that stuck with me forever, you and me have talked about it many times. I don't know who he is and I've never really seen it. In San Francisco in a bathroom this guy who wrote Skae one had tagged the bathroom and I took pictures of every tag.

For me it's all about style, I am blind to boring graffiti. It falls into the landscape.

This Skae guy I could see one of those tags and it'd be lightning to the brain.

The only spot that counts is your memory!

People get it twisted they come up with the most half-assed throw and they think if they do it 10 million times they'll be respected but it's not the case for me.

What are the best/most crushed bathrooms or green rooms you've seen?

Massive shoutout to my favourite bar I've ever been to in the entire world it's called Gooski's in the Polish village in Pittsburg. It was a total dive, you could smoke inside, buy cheap beer and you could get pierogies, it was absolutely crushed in tags and not in some kinda put on way. I saw so many tags, I remember there were Nekst tags in there! That bar is closed now which is quite a shame.

924 Gilman in Berkeley. I saw Orfn tags for the first time, it was crushed there too.

What was the city you were most surprised had an active scene?

St. John's Newfoundland man. I wasn't even there on tour. I was there on vacation and I was like this is the best city that has existed any where. I couldn't believe how up people were. 🍷

Which is a crazy shame.

We talk about it as a band jokingly, damn bro if we had just held on for a few more years.

You probably coulda had some house down payments.

Yeh but I also don't want that. I've always believed hardcore and punk is not the genre to make a living off of, you know what I mean?

I do, because you trained me.

Laughs

There are other genres to sell out in. But what people do — and I get this because I've experienced this — is you invest so much time in this thing that you feel owed and you have no fall back plan and you think you'll get something from this thing you've invested so much into.

You can only push these things for yourself.

I've never done anything I've done creatively for the money, even tattooing I do it because I love it. I just like making them and I'm trying to get back to that and keep it as a precious thing because I don't want to hate it because I depend on money.

Like man what's your exit strategy bro, like maybe TURNSTILE will be able to retire off their money, maaayyyybe. You wanna know why MADBALL still tours all the time, cause they don't have money. It's not BLINK 182 money bro. You'll make a bag for a couple years and you'll be in the same spot you were and you'll be standing there stuck in a record contract and you'll have to make the worst record ever because you don't have an exit strategy.

It's the same with graff, they are so similar. Some OG selling canvases with his throw on it because he has nothing because he put all his time into graff.

I come from a place of privilege to some degree and I have the space in my life to ask myself is this what I want. I realized the MADBALL guys are working class guys and that's their job, like being a plumber, that's what they do.

I'm lucky to have that space in my life.

I've had that conversation with myself, like at what point will I be satisfied, how long does it go on.

I'm a beer league writer, I look at pros and I'm not sure I need that.

I'm not tryna have my self worth wrapped up in that. Don't get me wrong, I'm still out here doing it, I just can't have who I am totally wrapped in one thing.

Life is like painting a spot, you want an exit strategy. I'm tryna always have one in my back pocket.

Some people come from money and get caught constantly and that's cheating.

What would you say we're your worst moments in graff and what we're your best moments.

Worst moment. Anytime I have to deal with an officer of the law, I hate it every time I don't want to do it.



It was probably recently, I'll spill the beans on this. I was found in the liquor store parking lot with spray paint in my bag. To the police it smelled like paint had just been sprayed and they got all aggressive with us, they said " we just caught you doing graffiti" and I said "no you didn't!"

To anyone reading this don't say anything but me I just have to run my mouth.

I told em they didn't see anything, they called in reinforcement and detained us in the parking lot. I was like bro I am a 30 year old man maybe getting arrest for allegedly doing graffiti on a dumpster in a liquor store parking lot.

This isn't worth it for the city I live in now. Anyone out here knows me and I'm not worried about clout. That was the worst not because the worst stuff happened but I realized it wasn't cute for me anymore. In a bigger city maybe it'd be worth it but not where I'm at.

The best moment I have ever had writing graffiti was when me, you, Sam and Lloyd were in Clark yard and we were doodling on trains, it was a beautiful sunny day and we were laughing and joking, I was like this has NO right being illegal. What was happening there in that moment, it was such pure fun.

The other best time was when you, me and Evan stayed up all night after Another Cool Move [Fest] high on mushrooms and watched the sunrise, just endless graffiti for a whole night, we went ape shit that night.

It was so pure, friendship and mischief.

Cause you know what, that's what it is too this stuff, it's about mischief to me. It's not about being a gangster and I think that's where people get it twisted.

I'm not talking about fools growing up LA or Tomber in infamy growing up in a place you can get shot. I'm mean the average white graffiti writer in Canada. There's a lot of posturing and I'm not with that. It's like the fountain of youth for me, every time I do a tag I feel like I'm 14 and it's the first time again.

2019 GAZM toured the US and although we were already looking at graffiti online, I felt when you came back you brought back us back a new knowledge of the American landscape and its writers.

Tour is such a funny thing, you only see every city for 24 hours or less, usually less. Normally you get in, eat, play the show, go to where you're staying, wake up and maybe get a little time in the morning to see the city. It's a hard way to see a city. But it's a good way to get a snapshot of a country.

I remember Savie was the most up writer in America. I saw more Savie on my trip than anyone else, he had heaven spots all along the highway, you'd see tags too!

Was that the era where Wombat was first putting in work in NYC ?

She was up but she wasn't where she's at now. The only fill I ever did in New York was with her! Now she does crazy G street spots!

I saw a lot of Mind Detergent RIP on the tour too.

Being in Oakland in 2019 was unreal, seeing everything I'd see online for real. Seeing Zig Zag and Dirt Nap. Legends like BKF and THR. Seeing spree painting Jerry.