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SLUG

MARCH 1993 • ISSUE #51



STIMBOY • CONCERTS • LETTERS
INTERVIEW: CANDY SKINS
CALENDARS • MOVIES • COMICS
LOOK AT WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON IN TOWN

SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS

SLUG

MARCH 93
ISSUE #51

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**PLEASE WRITE US
SLUG MAGAZINE**

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LETTERS

Dear Dickheads,

Holy sextant, my Cap'n Crunch Punk-O-Meter's confused. Anyway, every time I hear Doghouse, the meter churns like a gyroscope — it sure as hell likes the band even if it doesn't quite know how to rate them. Maybe it is too old and its petrochemical polymers are coming unraveled. Or maybe it doesn't like being cooped up in my pocket at shows (that's where I carry it). Then again, maybe it is just having a fuckin' great menage-a-trois with my keys and Swiss Army knife.

Listen neophytes (no, that's not some Mormon term), there is more to non-mainstream music than the usual "hard" genres. In fact, what makes Doghouse truly alternative (besides playing great music) is they defy categorization — chaos theory in action, and it works. You ought to open up your minds, ears, and piggy banks and go see them at their next show.

*Yours truly,
G. La Tuque*

HELLO!

I have taken your address from the "BOOK YOUR OWN FUCKIN' LIFE" magazine.

I would be very interested to hear punk & H.C. bands from Salt Lake City, so please tell me how much these 2 S.L.C. - band compilation S-tapes cost (+ airmail-postage).

Last summer, while traveling in the U.S.A., I spent 2 days in Salt Lake City. It was very interesting for me, but I never was in a place where it was so hot before. I didn't find out, but how hot does it get in your town during summer?

Sadly enough, I couldn't learn anything about the punk/hard core scene on your town during my 2 days stay.

Well, that's all for now. I enclose my I.R.C. for postage.

I hope to hear from you soon,

*All the best
Harald, Austria Europe*

SLUG,

I have come to the realization that everywhere is boring. Now I know the question that immediately pops into your mind at this point is, "who the fuck are you, and what are you talking about?" Well, who I am doesn't matter (I'm not trying to be modest or mysterious, it's just another realization I came to a while back that, as an individual, the only

people I matter to are the people who know me. You don't know me, so it doesn't matter), but what I'm talking about does matter, or should matter, to a lot of people who are living under the misconception that once they get out of boring old Utah, they are going to have the time of their lives.

I've met a lot of these people, they all fit the same general profile (oops, stereotyping! How politically incorrect of me), I mean, they mostly fit the same general profile. These are the anti-religion, sort-of-straightedge, "Seattle grunge scene" looking, coffee house going to, motorcycle riding, parental defying, cigarette smoking, goatee having, vegetarian, "I'm gonna move to L.A." thinking, pseudo-rebels that you see dotting the college campuses. And my message goes out to them.

When you think of excitement, Utah isn't the first place that comes to mind (unless you happen to be heavily into skiing), so I'll give them that. So take a moment now, and try to think of exciting places. Now what probably comes to mind is L.A., New York, maybe even some place exotic and foreign like Paris, big city type places in a more normal state. Well, sorry to rain on your parade (sorry I'm even sorrier for using a cliché like "rain on your parade"), but you're wrong, these places are no better.

I've been to New York, the place is a shithole. It has an atmosphere like the bottom of Utah lake, the people are assholes, and the culture that New York is so proud of is nothing more than a bunch of snobs who majored in Humanities and who sit around talking about how privileged they are to live in such a cultural "mecca". They don't realize that they are the only so called culture and that they are the talking about absolutely fucking nothing!

Paris is no better. Sure you can go sightseeing, but who's idea of fun, besides your parents', is sightseeing? Besides, everyone speaks French and the people are bigger assholes than in New York.

And as for L.A., well, up until last August, I lived in L.A. for thirteen years, and I can tell you, any dreams of "the exciting life in L.A." that have been implanted in your minds by the movies and T.V. and what-not are total bullshit. L.A. is not fun! Sure, it has its moments, such as going to shows, but after one show it's just limbo time until the next one with nothing to do except twiddle your

thumbs or twiddle yourself, There's too much smog, too many people, and way too many egos.

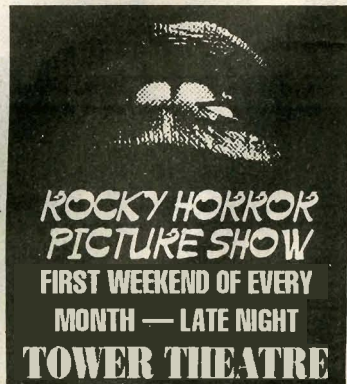
Now I know a lot of people think that if you're bored in California, you can always go the beach. Well, that's true, I guess, but the beach sucks, too. Sunbathing on the shores of a toxic sewer, surrounded by so many tourists that you can't even move enough to shift your ass to discreetly pass gas is not my idea of fun. And don't think of Disneyland, either, because the rides are all for two year olds, and there's more people than at the beach.

Well, that's really all I have to say, but since I've probably managed to crush someone's hopes (although, with the mood I'm in now, knowing I crushed someone's hopes certainly makes me feel happy), so here it is: Don't go believing that another place holds all the fun for you, make the most of where you're at and try to be more open minded in your experiences, to quote Suicidal Tendencies, "you say your life sucks? Well, 99% is what you make of it, so if your life sucks, you suck".

Now, why I wrote this to you, and what any of this has to do with Salt Lake Underground Music, I don't know. But it's 3:00 in the morning and I'm bored and your magazine and the few good shows I've been to, up here are the only sources of entertainment I've had since I moved here, so I guess you should be sort of flattered.

*Your ever-faithful sex slave,
Bill*

P.S. I have a question for the Stim Boy and his comments in the February issue—if you're so set on not having anything to do with major labels or bands that have anything to do with major labels or anything that has any relation to anything having to do with major labels, then why are you writing for SLUG? SLUG takes sponsorship from places like Raunch, which sells such records, and is distributed in places like Club Starrz, which features such bands. So there.



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

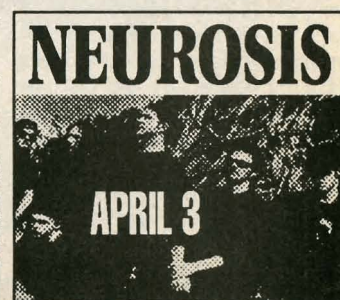
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RECORDS



SHONEN KNIFE

Let's Knife

Polygram Records

Where do you start when talking about Shonen Knife? The lore surrounding them is already pretty thick: three Japanese girls form a guitar/bass/drums band in 1982, influenced by 3-chord punk and Beatles/girl-group harmonies and sci-fi/TV theme songs. They write catchy songs about bison, public baths and various foods, played ineptly and sung in broken English and Japanese, all without a touch of pretense. The Ramones meet the Cowsills meets Josie and the Pussycats.

Several indie albums follow, a world-wide cult following appears, and the rest is history: Nirvana picks them as opening act on their European tour, Sonic Youth and Redd Kross pee themselves like overstimulated puppies in their Knifemania, and over 20 indie-label bands contribute Shonen Knife cover songs for a tribute album.

"Let's Knife" is Shonen Knife's major-label debut, a 17-song compilation of new songs and old ones from their four indie-label releases. If you haven't heard the band, "Let's Knife" is a good place to start. Sure, the old songs have been redone, and some may find them shockingly overproduced. "Bear Up Bison" in particular suffers from the new "improved" sound. But others such as "Riding On The Rocket" and espe-

cially the feedback-laden Black Sabbath-meets-speedcore "Antonio Baka" improve with the new bone-crushing sound. New songs like "Get the Wow" and the instrumental "Milky Way" sound like great lost Beatles and Duane Eddy B-sides.

The point is, Shonen Knife have been writing monster songs since their 1986 debut and have been criminally underappreciated.

It's as if three impossibly cute Japanese girl geniuses had a slumber party, snuck over to Uncle Sam's house in the dead of night, and, while the old geezer snored, cracked the safe containing America's emergency reserve of unpublished pop music.

Everything Shonen Knife has ever released is worth owning. Get the new one, and, for God's sake, search out the old ones. They prove (in the best possible way) that mediocre artists imitate, great ones steal. Shonen Knife has dove headfirst into the pool of great Western pop music and come up spitting out shoulda-been (and maybe-will-be) hit songs.

John Lundeen

CANNIBAL CORPSE

Tomb of the Mutilated

Metal Blade 3984-14003-2

Cannibal Corpse is death metal. There are two versions of this CD. The cover of the one Metal Blade sent me depicts a skeleton performing oral sex on a mutilated corpse. All song titles are included on the back cover. There is another version, sold in chain record stores, with a censored front cover and some of the song titles are deleted from the rear

Why are there two versions? Because the last recording Cannibal Corpse released, "Butchered At Birth," was deemed the sickest record ever. It was banned from most stores.

The CD booklet prints all the lyrics in graphic detail. "Hammer Smashed Face," for example, describes a murder with a sledge hammer. "With every swing of my mallet, I smash your fucking head in,

until brains seep in..." Sex with the dead, cannibalism, mutilation of female genitalia and bloody orgasms are other song topics. The majority of songs deal with violent, perverted, sexual deviance. There is a good reason all the lyrics are printed. I can't understand one single word lead vocalist, Chris Barnes sings.

Barnes has the most guttural vocal style I think I've ever heard. Yes, even worse than En Esch or Ogre. The vocals are a combination of a wild boar's grunts and the demon from the Exorcist. The vocal style adds to the music, Barnes voice becomes another instrument.

Cannibal Corpse include all the speed metal clichés; heavy metal bass, speed runs on the guitar and thrash drumming. If that's all there was to it I wouldn't write about it. The appeal of the CD is the total freedom of the music.

Death metal has progressed to the point where I have a problem even classifying it as metal. Tomb of the Mutilated sounds more like total avant-garde or free jazz than it does heavy metal. The songs begin as speed metal and within seconds degenerate into near total chaos. Barnes grunts out his vocals, the two guitars become a swarm of bees, the bass pulsates and the drummer, Paul Mazurkiewicz goes completely insane on his tom toms.

This CD finds its way into my player repeatedly just so I can listen to the fastest, freest music I've heard in years. Cannibal Corpse is a band exploring creative, improvisational and experimental areas with their instruments that I find fascinating despite the repulsiveness of their lyrics.

Since the words are incomprehensible Cannibal Corpse included a couple of interesting soundbites to get the messages across. Just before "Addicted To Vaginal Skin" is a soundbite from a lunatic describing how he cut out a woman's vagina and ate it. A soundbite of children at play precedes "Necropedophile."

The lyric sheet is one of the sickest, most twisted things I've seen. Barnes writes fiction; horror novels describing acts just as sick are freely available. A book on the life and acts of a serial killer is sure to reach the best seller list. The lyrics aren't the point, although they are all that will receive any publicity. The music is raw, it's free, it pushes the limits and I can hear my parents telling me that it isn't even music, it's just noise.

Search out the uncensored version of the CD, it is sure to be a collectors item. Cannibal Corpse will play Club Starrz on March 12 with

Epidemic. The show will be far more exciting than the more mainstream acts scheduled to appear in Salt Lake City during March. Don't miss this show!

by Wa

POND

Pond

SUB POP SP184

One of the latest fashions seems to be Seattle and SUB POP bashing. SUB POP finds the talent while the major labels scramble to sign every grunge band in sight.

Pond is from Portland by way of Alaska. This debut release from Pond is hot, I'm sure the majors are already drooling over them. Pond is slowed-down, grunged-out psychedelia with a bottom that never quits. In fact, the bass carries the melody and the

e at times.

he bassist, Chris Brady, explores the lower areas of his instrument and he relies more on chords than popping and picking his bass. If you have a sub woofer the bass will rattle windows. Vocal duties are shared by Charlie Campbell, guitars and Dave Triebwasser, drums. They have that perfect combination of punk and psychedelia in their voices.

At least four songs on this CD deserve hit status. "Young Splendor," the "a" side of the band's first single, has ringing guitars, feedback and Beau Brummels' vocals. "Agatha" gets a hair-flinging groove going with hiccuped vocals. Brady lays down a tremendous deep bass solo and Campbell's guitar solo is truly impressive. "Tree" the "b" side to Pond's first single has the bottom again and the song approaches anthemic status. Dark and psychedelic.

"Wheel" the current single opens with guitar distortion. Bass-driven with a heavy on the distortion pedal guitar solo, it is another hair-flinging anthem. "Filler" is the closing song and it is anything but. It is another grunged-out, bass-driven, psychedelia inspired song. Heavy as hell, punk as hell and a fitting ending.

I've heard that Pond will appear in Salt Lake City sometime in March. Go buy their CD now to be prepared. It is one of the best things I've heard in what is shaping up to be an exciting year in music. If there were any real radio programmers in this town, Pond would be on the radio so much everyone would be as sick of them as all the other Seattle area bands on major labels. Sorry the chain stores don't have the CD, I checked, support the independents in town.

by Wa

Super Seventies

WORD SEARCH

C B A G S C S T Y L F R E P U S K R S A
 N E D X S P L A T L O V A R T N H O J L
 I L I N K R L E R I C R E T S E Y L O P
 T L S K C M E W E P U D O X U A B J U A
 H B C Y H P H C A F Q P I N D R T R U B
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 I T B A C H A R A C H E B K A E F D G O
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 V R A D A R T S E C I R E C L N M D E M

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BURT R

UGLY

TWIGGY

LINK

VILLAGE PEOPLE

FARRAH

SUPERFLY

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CONCERTS

STONEFACE DECOMPOSERS

Spanky's Pool
Saturday, 6 February, 1993

Whether due to lack of publicity, or this being an over 21 venue, or something else, this turned out to be a rather intimate evening between STONEFACE, DECOMPOSERS, and some of their friends. This is the first time either of these bands have played here, and while that didn't seem to affect STONEFACE much who characteristically bludgeoned their way through all their standards, DECOMPOSERS seemed to have a little more difficulty warming up.

STONEFACE opened with that one song that sounded like that other one, but goes down instead of up, you know? And pretty much stayed with that pattern through the next few numbers, reaching a sort of faux climax every now and then. But the heat was up for "12 of November", and the crowd was getting down to the familiar groove and wailing, yet heartfelt vocals of J.J., lead singer, and foremost personality of the band. Easily one of the best tracks on the Salt Flat CD recently released, I predict even now its cyclic rhythms and vocal counter point reverberate on the dim recesses of my mind. "Stay, stay" his cries echo off the tin foil stars and moons festooning the ceiling of Spanky's. Pray to pan that rumors of a breakup are only that. STONEFACE's demise would leave a major hole in the fabric of serious local hardcore. These guys have cut their hair some, but their sound has changed little staying true to the roots of rock and to the hills that spawn them.

I saw DECOMPOSERS in Logan at the JayCees lodge up there back in December with MOUTHBREATH, and though I missed part of the show in the bathroom after my date puked down my new pink spandex top, they didn't sound that great. Aaron's vocals were mixed so down



DECOMPOSERS

photo: Robert DeBerry

that even when veins popped out of his neck you could hardly pick up the vocal over the guitars. This night they got off to a slow start, but ended up squeezing out a pretty good show for a new, (to them) side of the home town. These guys have been around awhile but whether it's an audience of ten or many hundreds they always put out hard. They labored through five songs with spirits visibly lacking before they called a beer break. They came back on in the full costumed regalia, Aaron sporting a floor-length floral patterned housecoat looking not unlike my mother, or zippy the pinhead (take your pick), the rest of the band sporting various hoods, plush viking horns, and other festive head gear. They proceeded to grind out a few more songs Aaron only occasionally facing the audience, before they fell to another break. But when they came back for their third set after a sporting if sarcastic rave up from some caustic employee of Spanky's, they proceeded to kick some fucking ass and show the "intimate," yet much larger than usual Spanky's crowd, how they do it in Utah. So fuck all y'all. Anyway, they finished out their set refreshingly with a few old numbers we hadn't heard in a while. These guys have had a rough year (who hasn't?), but they are still rocking hard, and I'd say these five hellions are going to take it all the way. Bottoms up guys.

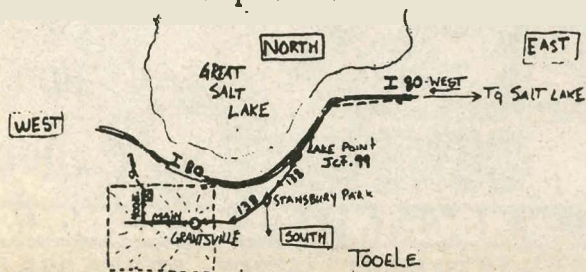
—Ladawn Sorenson

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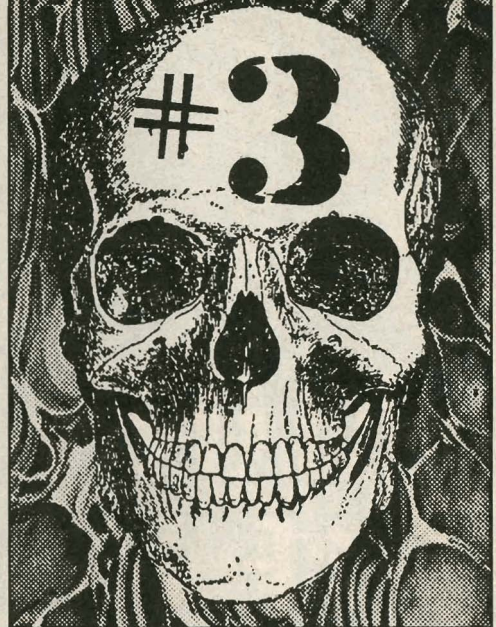
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ART SPACE

BALLET

by AMBER MCKEE

What?! Ballet dancers in cowboy boots? You're kidding.

For those who weren't lucky (or smart) enough to snag tickets to Ballet West's February performances of Billy the Kid, Vespri and Equinoxe, ya missed out.

For instance, you didn't see the stupid bowhead who walked in about five minutes after the performance started, with her cheap jewelry clanking around her arms and neck like so many keys on a chain. (There should be a law against hair that is higher than the six-foot man sitting behind it.)

But whether you viewed her as a plus or minus to the overall show, there was still plenty to enjoy.

The three mini-ballets ran the gamut of interpretive dance, at least in the ballet category.

Vespri, the first of the three, was a more traditional production with the ballerinas (is that PC?) dressed in snappy gold and white tutus that jutted out from their hips at a stiff right angles, designed new this year by Ballet West Costume Designer William Brewer.

The eight male dancers (or is it ballerinos?) wore black tights and jackets. They led their partners through graceful leaps and lifts while whirling around the floor, as if suspended in an old-time jewelry box.

The music was taken from Giuseppe Verdi's opera "The Sicilian Vespers," and was choreographed in 1974 by Andre Prokovski in the style of the old Grand Opera ballets.

How many words can you use to describe ballet? How about stiff, unyielding, brash, murderous, bold? The second performance, Billy the Kid, was all of the above, including cowboy boots. It was everything Vespri was not.

The set for Billy had huge Saguaro cactuses and rolling hills silhouetted against a night sky. The music, written by American composer Aaron Copeland, was as Western and Stars and Stripes as you can get without singing the national anthem.

Pat Garrett was there, danced by the easy to look at and watch Robert Arbogast. He led the procession of settlers, señoritas, cowboys, thieves, and dance hall tarts toward Manifest Destiny.

And Billy, danced by J. Kristopher Payne—wow. In white tights with a black hat, boots and chaps. With no shirt on. Wow. (Now your sorry you missed it. Who's to say you can't enjoy some good old fashioned reverse sexism when writing a review?)

Billy gets killed by Garrett—you knew that—but not before he dances with his dream sweetie, compellingly danced by Jane Wood. It's a beautiful, magical pas de deux, but bittersweet because he never looks at her face. (There is something much deeper here, I just know it.)

But that's not all! Three, you heard it—three performances for the low, low price of one!

After Billy the Kid, Ballet West told the orchestra to go home and flipped on the canned sound—Composer Jean-Michel Jarre's ethereal New Age piece, Equinoxe.

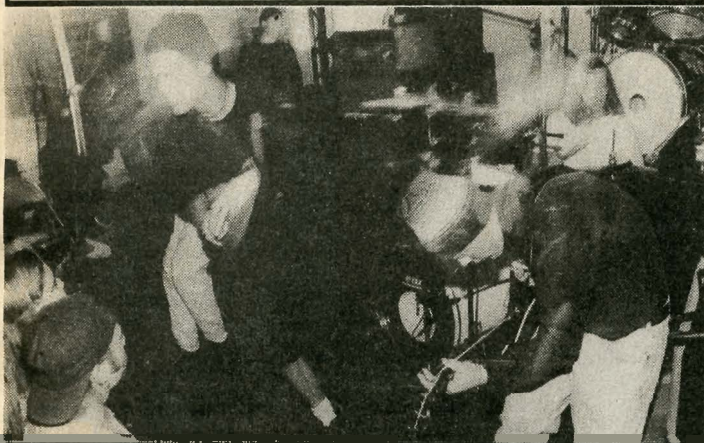
Where do I start? First, their costumes were blue flame things, that were attached in strange places. I hardly saw the first ten minutes of the performance I was so engrossed in trying to decide what was skin and what was flesh-colored leotard. The set was similarly designed with flickering ultrablue lights behind a translucent white screen. (It looked a lot like a gas burner turned on high.)

The music was eerie and moving and LOUD. In fact, it was probably the only time during the performance I was completely caught up in what was going on on stage, and not what was coming out of the mouths of the people around me.

This was my favorite piece. It was flowing and lovely and unabashedly sexual/sensual. In fact those things are true of nearly all of ballet. (Remember the pizza and sex theory—well it goes for ballet too.)

So here's the deal. If you are sorry you missed these three, you have a chance for atonement. Ballet West will be performing Rosalinda, the ballet version of the opera, Die Fledermaus, March 26 through April 3. Tickets are now on sale at ArtTix 355-ARTS (2787).

LOCAL BAND



MAKESHIFT PHOTO: ROBERT DEBERRY

MAKESHIFT

What does Rocket From The Crypt, Velvet Underground, Yes, D.C. Hardcore, Jazz, and Salt Lake have in common? Makeshift, a four piece band who play their music to be felt, not just heard.

I have a lot of respect for these guys, that's why I took the time with Doug Wright (bass), Jeff Johnson (guitar), Ryan Mills (drums), and Jim Kimball (vocals) to find their drive. What started as a project has now gotten serious. With addition of Doug, this four piece found themselves starting completely over. Six months later, all agree that they have not only progressed musically but also personally.

Their two demos released in

the summer of '92 laid the groundwork for Wilted and Bloodshot, which now appear on the Salt Flat compilation. Fast and hard with heavy grooves, an early Helmet perhaps, with a seven inch on Flatline in the making, there is no doubt that you will hear more from these guys.

Expression through music with enjoyment and a release is the driving force behind these four. Social problems ranging from homelessness to the Anti-Renaissance shape the message within their music.

A benefit show on March 26th at Club Starrz is a good chance to come judge for yourself.

NOTICE

DANA LYONS AND LONE WOLF CIRCLES IN A HOWLING PERFORMANCE FOR THE OZONE LAYER

The ozone layer is thinning in the sky above Salt Lake City. Wild Utah Earth First! invites you to join them on April 4th, 1993 (Sunday) for the TURN OF THE WRENCH Album Release Tour, USA '93, an evening of daring entertainment, dance, and important ozone action information with eco-troubadors Dana Lyons, Lone Wolf Circles, and Howling Gonzo Orchestra. The show begins at 7:30 pm at the Indian Walk-in Center located at 120 West 1300 South, Salt Lake City.

Together in one exciting per-

formance, Lyons and Wolf promise an experience that is educational, inspiring, and totally unforgettable. With hard-driving acoustic guitar and conga drums The Howling Gonzos will have you on your feet dancing to primal Animal Rock Music. Their songs and stories are alternately humorous, political, mystical, and always wild!

A powerful minstrel of the environment movement, Northwest songwriter Dana Lyons performs all over the world in celebration of Earth's beauty and to raise awareness about key ecological concerns. His recordings ANIMAL and TURN OF THE WRENCH are hailed as some of the most poignant and moving of all environmental releases. For more information call WUEF at 262-0218

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SUB
POP

WITH LOCALS To Be Announced \$6 8:00PM

MONDAY, MARCH 29TH

CARGO
RECORDS

Three Mile Pilot

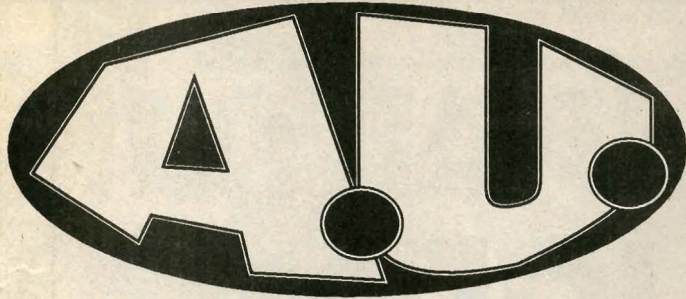
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COMING NEXT MONTH POSTER CHILDREN
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COVER STORY



It's about time... I finally had an interview with a band and got some information that helped me putting together a story about a band. Jon Shuman (singer/guitarist) sat and shot the shit before he did an acoustic show last night. Getting information was not the least bit difficult. One thing about him is he has plenty opinions about music, his band A.U. and the world around us. Nothing about our conversation surprised me, except we got through the whole thing without one argument.

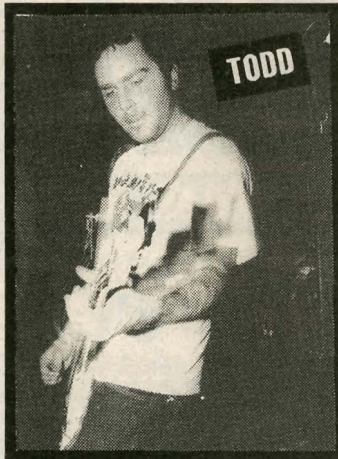
A.U. came together almost a year ago in Jon & Jamie's apartment. Jamie Shuman, the latest addition to the band as vocalist, Fischer Price percussionist and co-lyricist, was actually one of the founding members. Since his arrival to the band he has added spontaneity and a whole lot of stage presence to their live act. John and Jamie have worked together since the early eighties in Massacre guys, again with Boxcar Kids, and now as a duo front team they create a definite feeling when they play.

Todd Hanson (bass) and John Heuttlinger (drums) pull more than their fair share of the weight as one of the most solid rhythm sections in town. You may have seen John's drumming with Subject To Change and Boxcar Kids and his drumming has only improved. John joins Jamie as the more passive half of the band while Jon Shuman and Todd are a little more hot headed. It all seems to balance out to make up one of Salt Lake's more interesting bands.

When I asked Jon what they were trying to do with their music he said that they were

Utah's absolute non-trend band, and he is right. They sing songs criticizing flannel-wearing-Seattle types who have been following any trend that comes along. Their music is just hard and at times even abrasive. But as I thought about it, I find they have the same quality as bands like Sonic Youth or Jesus Lizard. I didn't like their music at first, but as I have listened to it more and more it has really grown on me. I find myself and hear others talking about that one A.U. song that seems to stick in their heads. The music is hard driving but it has definite underlying melodic qualities that make it interesting.

The only preconceived



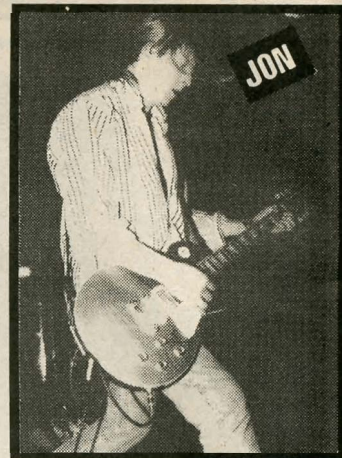
idea the band had about their music was that they weren't going to be another white-funk band. Even though they all have had heavy funk influences with John, Jon and Jamie all played with Boxcar Kids. Jon feels the music they are doing now is more along the lines of Massacre Guys and will probably continue in that same vein. The lyrics aren't as harsh as the music. Jon says their lyrics all

fall in three categories: 1: How fucked up they are, 2: How fucked up everybody else is, and 3: Beer Idiocy and Ineptitude. The band steers away from writing real political music. The music is just about being in a fucked up place at a fucked up time and dealing with it. These guys have all been around for a long time and don't seem to be in any hurry to get out of here. They have all been involved in the Salt Lake music scene for a long time, and A.U. should



become a solid part of what is going on here now.

Jon feels like they have a unique sound mostly because they have tried to avoid being another Nirvanabe flannel-glam grunge galore or wanna-be Bad Yodelers which he feels is plaguing most of the bands in town right now. His only real complaint about Salt Lake's music scene is that Mouthbreather broke up and he seems to think this is a tragedy of sorts. The band plans to be doing mostly 7" records and will be hitting the independent labels hard. He seemed quite optimistic about the recordings they just finished and we should see something from them soon. Immediate plans include performing locally in hopes of getting people to really listen to their music. Then this summer



they will hit the road for a short while and then back to Salt Lake to push the music more here.

If any of you know any of these guys or have seen them play, you will know they are quite serious. They have a laid-back attitude on stage and claim they are from a small town in Florida where they all work for a brewery, but they don't take what they put into their music lightly. It is a great collection of personalities and talent and if they make the right moves they could be a very important part of what happens in this town.

Come out and check them out sometime, don't let the distortion, volume or the screaming put you off. Have a

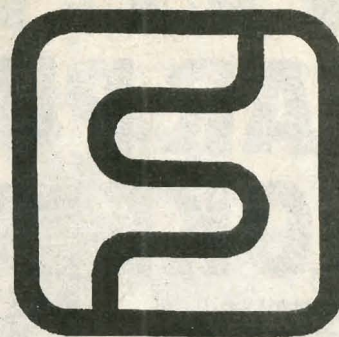


beer, tap your feet and give a listen, because you will either love them or hate them. A sure sign of a good band.

*Story by JR Ruppel
photos by
Robert Deberry*

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This is the most eagerly awaited Japanimation film release of all time. The Macross Universe has spawned several different comicbook and cartoon series, including the Robotech series here in the U.S. In the distant future the Earth is invaded by aliens known as the Zentradi... space ships, cosmic mysticism, and astro-babes. PG-137, 137 minutes. Latenight 4/26-27, March 26 - April 1 at 4:15 & 9:15.



A double bill of two 50 minute features; NEO-TOKYO is an anthology of three state of the art animated stories including a 25 minute segment by Katsuhiro Otomo (AKIRA) about a city under construction by out of control robots. SILENT MOBIUS adapts the Japanese graphic novel by Kia Asamiya, about a special futuristic police force who battle demonic forces which have overtaken their city. PG-137, 100 minutes, April 2 - 4 at 5:15 & 9:00, April 5 - 8 @ 3:20.

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MOVIES

Dragon's Inn

by Clint Wardlow

The latest from Hong Kong action maestro Tsui Hark is a beautiful piece of cinema that melds it's diverse elements into a lightning-paced costume drama as audacious as it is entertaining.

Dragon's Inn is a wild ride; a bizarre action comedy chronicling the joys of cannibalism, political activism, Kung fu fighting and the entrepreneurial spirit in 12th century China.

The action takes place in a boarded Inn run by beautiful but deadly Jade King (Maggie Cheung), a woman so dedicated to the principle of turning a profit that she includes a mystery ingredient into the popular meat pies served at her establishment.

Her life becomes complicated when a group of rebels headed by the equally beautiful and dangerous Brigitte Lin (Peking Opera Blues) takes refuge at her Inn. They are hiding out from a group of elitest eunuchs who also show up, paving the way for several mind-blowing fight scenes in which the warriors fly through the air battling each other with an array of outrageous weapons.

In one incredible sequence Linn and Cheung (The Killer) leap, flip and spin over beds, rafters and through roof skylights while trying to disrobe one another. Unlike American action fare involving battling females, these women invoke an amazing

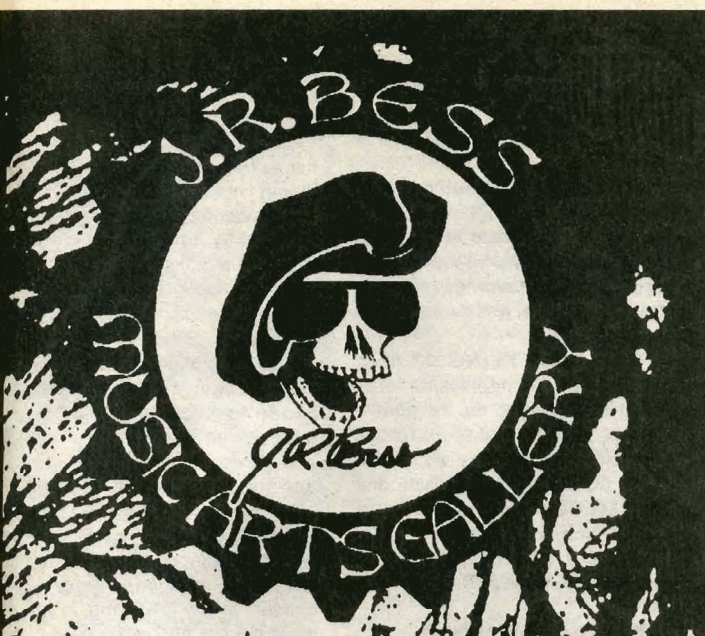
sense of power and yet remain totally feminine.

Dragon's Inn definitely bears the stamp of Tsui Hark's Film Workshop Productions, the studio responsible for superior Hong Kong movies as John Woo's The Killer. Ching Tiu-Sung's A Chinese Ghost Story, and Hark's own Peking Opera Blues and the outstanding Once Upon A Time In China series.

As a producer and director Hark is the filmmaker most responsible for the sudden re-emergence of Hong Kong cinema in the world market place. Dragon's Inn is a prime example of Hark's impeccable skill as a producer (the film is directed by veteran wushu production designer Raymond Lee).

The inn acts as a wonderful set for over-the-edge drama to unfold. The sizzling fight sequence, at once wonderful and ludicrous, transform Dragon's Inn from a mere historical melodrama into a delirious fantasy populated by mythical superwarriors. Utilizing rapid edits and wire effects, the exhilarating kung fu battles push the envelope of action cinema with breathless staging and execution.

Dragon's Inn is a far cry from the shoddy kung fu productions that flooded American drive-ins in the seventies in the wake of Bruce Lee's phenomenal box office success. This is the work of a filmmaker in complete control of the medium. Hell bent on using every bit of his considerable cinematic talent to entertain.



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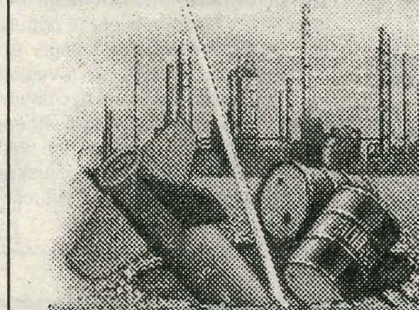


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Comic Reviews

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Comic Connection

Comic books, as a legitimate art form, have been enjoying a renaissance, especially with the development of the so-called "graphic novel".

Graphic novels are usually self-contained stories of unusual lengths (for comic books) and often employ more experimental techniques in art and story than in mainstream comics.

Victor Gollancz Publishing, along with American co-publisher Dark Horse Comics, has published a number of ambitious graphic novels, three of which are reviewed in the following section.

KING KLANG KLATCH

Written by Ian McDonald
Illustrated by David Lyttleton
Published by VG Graphics/
Dark Horse Comics

"KLING KLANG KLATCH" is set in a superficially glittering world that, if not exactly human, reflects humanity's desires, corruption and racism at a fundamental level." So reads the back cover blurb for a wickedly thoughtful and entertaining excursion in comic book form, KLING KLANG KLATCH.

This remarkable tale begins in toyland, a reality in which toys live and breathe in a setting much like that found in Ridley Scott's BLADE RUNNER (and yes, I realize that film

is based on a Philip K. Dick novel. The reference here is to Scott's vision of a steamy, rainy, high-technology Raymond Chandler-esque dystopia.). The affable but grumpy inspector McBear is disturbed by police dispatch and finds himself in seamy Pandatown, investigating the apparent homicide (or, in this case, ursicide) of one Ling-Ling Moe.

But the truth to this case is much more disturbing as McBear finds evidence implicating the mysterious Kling Klang Klatch and suggests that forces within the police themselves may be responsible...

All this is fascinating reading, but there is more below the surface, as the description implies. Author McDonald, best known for work in the sci-fi genre, sets out to weave a morality play that is savage but insightful, without resorting to preachiness. As McBear uncovers details, the reader is exposed to the workings of Toyland and Toyland's passions and foibles prove to be remarkably like many of our own. Service robots threaten strikes. The rich flaunt their impunity. Segments of the population are treated as lesser beings. Addictions to substances are revealed.

McDonald manages to combine these elements with a sharp wit and satirical edge that enables the work to function at several levels. Luckily, McDonald is matched in his virtuosity by illustrator David Lyttleton.

Lyttleton's distinctive look infuses the story with power. Combining equal parts whimsy with grittiness and outrageousness, the pages speak volumes.

Perhaps the only detraction to KLING KLANG KLATCH is a momentary lapse by McDonald in which he and Lyttleton actually appear in several scenes. The cleverness of this is lost on this reviewer and these panels prove annoying.

That said, KLING KLANG KLATCH is a very impressive foray by two newcomers to the sequential art format, and one that should prove entertaining (and maybe enlightening) for comics fans and non-fans alike. Maybe mainstream comics creators should take a tip from McDonald and Lyttleton...? (color,\$11.95) Grade: B+

THE MINOTAUR'S TALE

Written and Illustrated by
Al Davison
Published by UG Graphics/
Dark Horse Comics

The often nasty manner in which humans with so-called "deformities" and "disabilities" are treated by society is the meat for Al Davison's latest creation, THE MINOTAUR'S TALE.

This often moving modern-day fable begins with a re-telling of the Greek myth of the minotaur, seen from the minotaur's vantage point, and then moves on to modern-day London, where an "unfortunate" soul nicknamed Banshee is beaten by punks (and one feels a need to pick on creator Davison for abusing the

punk stereotype for his own convenience).

Banshee awakens in a hospital room where he is astonished to find himself the object of the kindness of young woman, Etty Mae Brown, and the attention of Doctor Sparks, who is troubled by her own "affliction." It is Etty who sends Banshee on the road of self-reflection as she delivers present to him: the diary of the minotaur.

As Banshee discovers the truth behind this myth, the reader is drawn into an emotional world of turmoil and is faced with questions of what makes something so beautiful or ugly. Is it the surface reality or perhaps the inner world in which beauty truly exists? Conundrums such as self-worth and empowering the individual are also considered as Banshee finds himself finally believing in his own inner beauty and worthiness of love.

This description may make the tale seem heavy-handed, but it never stoops to that level. Creator Al Davison knows his material well, having overcome the challenge of spina bifida to contribute his talent to contemporary theatre and comic books. Indeed this seemingly simple story provokes powerful emotional responses as Banshee's inner journey is inter-woven with the Minotaur's life story. Just as the Minotaur discovers that he deserves to be loved, so does Banshee, in a satisfying and touching denouement.

All this is to Davison's credit, but the work is nearly sabotaged at points by the artwork, which moves from classical Greek-type illustration to realism to outright and annoying cartooniness. Banshee's appearance, in particular, is so jarringly exaggerated at points that the panels stand out in an uncomfortable way. Luckily, the power behind the narrative manages to cover up these flaws.

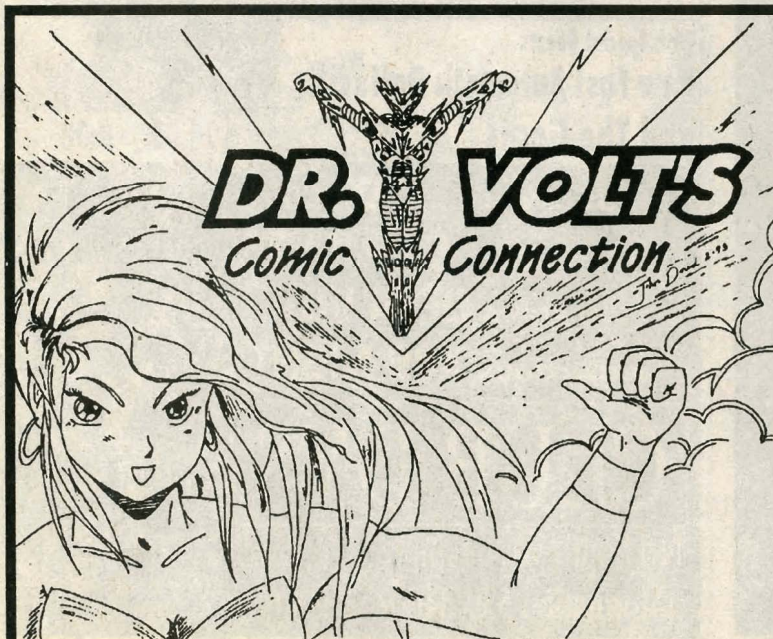
THE MINOTAUR'S TALE is remarkable in its ability to convey a message of importance to today's surface- and exterior-obsessed humans. Al Davison should be commended for creating a work of such beauty which challenges society's faulty notions. Would that all comic books were so noble in their scope. (color \$11.95) Grade: B

SIGNAL TO NOISE

Written by Neil Gaiman
Illustrated by David McKean
Published by UG Graphics/
Dark Horse Comics

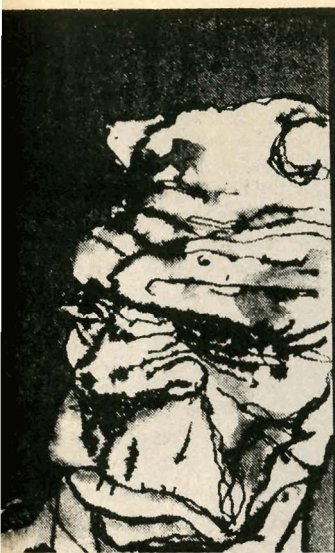
The very creation of art through ideas (the evolution of signal to noise) is the coux of SIGNAL TO NOISE, the latest of talented comic book writer Neil Gaiman and artist Dave McKean.

Well, maybe that's not entirely true. SIGNAL TO NOISE is a story



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- New Comics
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the story of the evolution of a 50 year old London director's last film. Only the filmmaker knows this work will never be finished because he has terminal cancer. So Messrs. Gaiman and McKean take us along on an inner voyage through the director's head, navigating past self-denial to inevitable self-acceptance. As he maps out the vision for the story of a tiny European village waiting for the apocalypse on the last minute of the last hour of the last day of 999 A.D., his life comes into focus for its achievements and single-minded focus.

Is there more to life? One could hardly expect to learn these things from a "mere" comic book. Or might one expect more?

Fortunately, writer Gaiman leaves the dialogue ambiguous, abandoning the reader to his/her own mind to dig below the surface. As usual, Gaiman crafts a powerful narrative with realistic dialogue and wonderfully obscure references.

But artist Dave McKean may surpass Gaiman in his mixed media and imaging techniques. Combining realistic, and wild, hellish visions, McKean convinces the reader of the concrete reality of what is occurring while depicting the inner reality of the director. The resulting combination of text and pictures leads to a vision that is nearly religious in its sweep...

Profound, depressing, witty... SIGNAL TO NOISE is all this and more. Creators Gaiman and McKean should be applauded for daring to punish the limits of graphic storytelling. Maybe when sales for work like SIGNAL TO NOISE exceed those on super-hero fare, the large comics companies will wise up to the potential of the medium... (Artist David McKean is also the genius behind Tundra's 10-part series CAGES, one of the most innovative comics to be found and well-worth searching out.) (color \$11.95) Grade: A-

—Scott Vice



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STIMBOY

Happy St. Patty's Day, my darling readers. I'm sure you know that St Patrick is fondly remembered for 2 accomplishments; bringing the gospel to Ireland, and chasing the snakes into the Atlantic thus ensuring his admission to the Saints Lodge.

While there is little doubt that a missionary named Patrick did exist, I am a wee bit dubious of the snake story. Ireland is cold and drizzly 90% of the year, not an environment conducive to "reptilian survival." I have two theories, either Patrick really did perform a miracle or, like Iceland to the west, Ireland never had any snakes and Patrick took credit where it wasn't due.

It would be nice to be remembered for performing miracles or for giving every one an excuse to drink green beer and pinch each other while listening to the Pogues (although that wouldn't be so bad either.) I would love to live in a miraculous world, to walk down North Temple and see a snake herder driving his flock into the Great Salt Lake. Nothing would delight me more than to see the disembodied head of Jesus floating over the Trolley Square water tower. He might smile benignly and say "You're a-okay in my book, Stimmy!" Imagine seeing a 200 foot tall Virgin Mary chasing the bison around Antelope Island in a pink taffeta prom dress.

Like the saints of old, I bet if you fasted for a few weeks and

wandered around in a hair shirt scourging yourself with glass in your shoes, you might start having visions too. Follow my advice and you too might join the Pantheon of Saints. You can take credit for driving the Zebras out of Olympus Cove.

While there may not be many openings for saints, there certainly is no lack of candidates. Every time I leave the house I am assaulted by gangs of long-suffering politically correct martyrs parroting all manner of nonsense without taking the time to research or substantiate their points of view.

One night a few weeks ago, I was at Spanky's watching a popular local band play when a customer berated the bartender for providing Coors on tap. She then took a swig of her Killians Red and smugly made her way to the dance floor. I realize that Coors is an evil corporation with a long history of discrimination and reprehensible labor practices, but in her self-righteous snit of indignant wrath, that patron was oblivious to the fact that Killians is of course brewed and bottled by Coors. There's nothing Irish about Killians except for the name. They can market it anyway they want but it's still scab beer with a little red dye #5 in a brown bottle.

Another example; I recently attended another concert by the same band at the Bar & Grill when another member of the Mother Jones task force berated me for smoking a cigarette. "You're supporting Jesse Helms," he shrieked, "you may as well vote for Reagan, you should roll your own instead of supporting the tobacco industry!" What a feeble line of reasoning. Who is he to presume that I wouldn't vote for Ronald Reagan, Jesse Helms or Rush Limbaugh given the chance? That's just like assuming that all black people smoke crack or that homosexuals want to join the army to take showers with hetero hayseeds. I realize that Jesse Helms lobbies for the Tobacco industry and won't be satisfied until there's a Camel Joe

big wheel in every driveway, but that's only a small part of what makes him such an insidiously evil piece of shit. Every politician from the Carolinas or the Virginias knows that those states economies are inexorably tied to the tobacco industry. The tobacco industry owns Nabisco for Pat's sake! Think about that next time you're munching down some tofu on a Triscuit. Rolling your own isn't the answer either, do you think Drum just washes up on the shores like kelp? All tobacco products are part of the same big nicotine family that includes Marlboro and Winston as well as Skoal, Bugler and Drum.

The bottom line is, if you want to run your banner up the flagpole, at least do your goddamned homework. If you want to be a vegetarian, fine, more power to you. But, if you think your going to save the world by doing so, I hope you're prepared to dig up roots all winter instead of going to the grocery store. Do you know how many natural resources it takes to produce and distribute fresh produce in the middle of December?

You better throw away your leather jacket and boots while your at it too, but you better check the tags and make sure you're not participating in the rape of the Third World by exploiting sweatshop labor. The natural fabric Guatemalan look is pretty vogue with the neo-hippy-earth-watch kids these days. I know I feel pretty good about wearing clothing that someone got paid 25¢ a day to make.

The fact is, everyone who is alive today shares the guilt of destroying the world. We all eat, shit, drink and piss. Having a liberal arts degree and a mouth full of rhetoric doesn't make you any less culpable or any more virtuous than the most mean-spirited, bile-spitting redneck. Everyone is a pock on the ass of the globe and that goes for me double.

Man, I'm getting all worked up. I better brew some natural herbal tea from a clear cut Indonesian field. I'll have to resume the big label vs. little label debate next issue. Until then, keep the faith...

—Love, Stimmy

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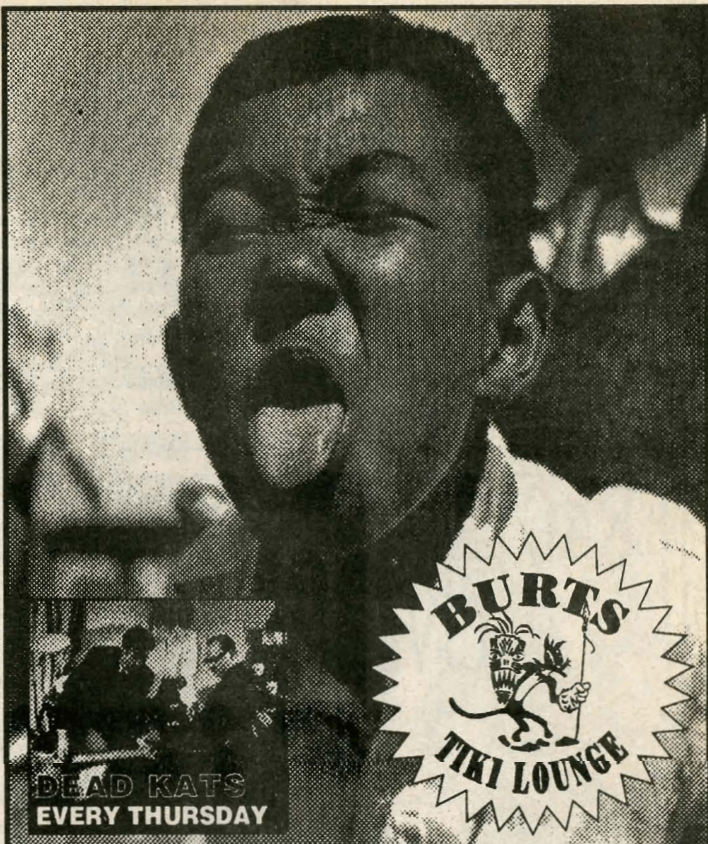
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INTERVIEW

It shows such a marked change, "Evolution," not Fun?, should be the name of the second album by DGC's Candyskins. Fun? shows a band shedding the safety net of its first album for some skin of its own.

Produced by Pat Collier, who most notably produced the first two Wonderstuff albums, the album is a collection of melodic, tightly written and executed pop songs. No heavy-handed production tricks means guitars

come through sounding like guitars, note effects. And the drum sound is a work of art. It's all there.

Since receiving the tape, the Skins have found their way into the boom box during my morning shower more than once. Even disbelievers of the Skins first album have been won over by Fun?

Initially, I was drawn to the second side, especially "Grass"

and the all acoustic, Wonderstuff-like "All Over Now." But, gradually, the whole album grew on me. "House at the Top of the Hill" (side one) has an angst-ridden edge worthy of any obsessive love. The bluesy, deep guitar on "Everybody Loves You" hits a spot you don't want to leave. I could go on about every song on the album; there's hardly a song I don't like, and I hate that! But maybe it's time GOOD pop songs made a comeback.

Recently, I had a chance to interview some Skins by phone — drummer John Halliday, singer Nick Cope and Karl, the bass player. Listening to the tape of our conversation, I realized I couldn't tell one Skin from the next. Sorry. But, hereafter, all band responses will be under a collective Skins umbrella, and me — just one Slug...

SLUG: What's the biggest difference between this album and your debut?

SKINS: As a band I think the songs are much stronger than the first one.

SLUG: Any favorites?

SKINS: *Wemby*, *Everybody Loves You*, *Fun*, and *Land of Love*, most everyone in the band likes *Wemby*.

SLUG: You guys haven't really been darlings of your own British press. Is it better to come up having your music respected more than rabid attention given to your image?

SKINS: I think if you're still around and haven't been seen to fail, I think it's okay. But obviously you have to be in the eyes of the press to make a living out of it. As long as you're not being slagged off everywhere. You can't be over-exposed and then have the music disappoint people.

SLUG: Did you change the way you approach song writing for this album?

SKINS: Maybe there's a bit more of an edge, more of a dynamic, hopefully. Basically, we wrote the songs the same way we had before, messing about with acoustic guitars round each other's houses, coming up with bits and pieces. And we're doing the same thing now for the next album.

SLUG: Where does the Wonderstuff influence come from? Are you big fans?

SKINS: They were a big influence on the first album and that's why we chose Pat Collier (who produced the first two Wonderstuff albums) to produce Fun?.

SLUG: Was that a good experience?

SKINS: Yeah, it was good for us, not so good for him because he



CANDYSKINS

was away from his family. He got this stress-related disorder that comes out as gout, but he managed to limp down to the studio. We recorded on a farm in the middle of nowhere, away from London, and he got homesick. And he's not used to the country air, he's a city man.

SLUG: So the clean air actually hurt him.

SKINS: Yeah, he got a bit distressed. It took him about half an hour to get down to the studio.

SLUG: Are you happy with the result? Did the songs come out the way you envisioned them?

SKINS: A lot more so than the first one.

SLUG: Do you try for radical changes from work to work?

SKINS: We definitely like to change, I think you have to. We just like to keep the songwriting growing and write some really good songs.

SLUG: Who are some of your favorite songwriters?

SKINS: The obvious ones like John Lennon, Bob Dylan. Some early Clash, punk stuff.

SLUG: Well, you don't sound too punk to me.

SKINS: Really?

SLUG: How would you describe your sound? I don't want to say pop with the baggage that comes with that term.

SKINS: But it is pop, but it's with a harder edge. Someone once asked us if we liked being called a "power pop" band. We said no one's called us that before. Well you are, they said. So, okay, fair enough.

SLUG: Who are you listening to these days?

SKINS: I like Sugar, Sonic Youth, Nirvana, bands like that.

SLUG: What do you think about the grunge trend?

SKINS: I think it was good, but now every band is going grunge. So it's run its course, I think. But there's still some great bands there. Like every fad, you know. The originators are really good and then you get about a thousand bands that jump on that

wagon straight away.

SLUG: How long has the band been together and have your expectations changed from when you first began?

SKINS: Five years we've been together. I think when you start you think you're going to make it big straight away and you've got all these ideals. But the reality is you've just got to work hard and if there are breaks that come, they come.

SLUG: Did you get into music thinking you'd become rich and famous, or was it music first, last and always?

SKINS: I can remember being 13 and reading about the Clash, thinking I just want to do that. I want to be on tour. And when it happens it's brilliant. Now you want to do something else like make an album.

SLUG: What does the future hold for the band? More albums or do you all have things you'd like to do past music?

SKINS: This year we just want to gig a lot. Play America, Europe, wherever. We want to work together as a band, to do at least another three, four, or five albums really.

SLUG: Now, the American question. How do you like playing for American audiences?

SKINS: I prefer it because it's just so different from England. I think we're spoiled for choice because it is so small and there are so many bands. The audiences just stand there and say, come on, impress us. So you've really got to work hard. But here we found everybody is more into it, even if they don't know us.

SLUG: Do you prefer playing live to recording?

SKINS: I think playing live is so immediate, you come off stage and you're buzzing. But the studio is equally rewarding. You watch the songs grow as everybody adds their parts. It's a totally different experience from playing live.

—By LARA

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