

ISSUE 4

JANUARY 2020

NAPTOWN PUNK

ALL THE PUNK NONE OF THE BULLSHIT

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INSIDE: The “Best of” for Indianapolis Punk in 2019, plus ...
Anti-Feds lay siege to the live scene, and
Boston native Bryan McPherson talks new album

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THIS BAND KICKS LIKE A MULE WITH ITS BALLS WRAPPED IN DUCT TAPE



Greg Brenner still has what it takes to rule the stage wherever he plays, and of all the bands I'd still had on my list heading into 2019 that I hadn't been lucky enough to see live, **Vodka DeMilo** was my favorite to knock off the list this year.

There's a reason this man has earned his reputation for raw, charismatic performances -- when the Punk Rock Night founder is on stage you can't take your eyes off him.

If you're starting a new punk band, regardless of your chosen style, catch a Vodka DeMilo set and watch how Brenner leads the audience wherever he wants them. There's a reason the best bands in the city come out to watch this particular band play whenever they hit the Mel.



FT WAYNE DEGENERATES POP OFF IN A BIG WAY

Flamengo Nosebleed continues to lead the punk-pop pack in central Indiana, and their 2019 album *Degenerate Pop*, a blistering assault of hooks and fury, is one of those local albums you need to hear on vinyl if you can score a copy at a show before it sells out. Their live show is worth a special trip even if you have to leave Indianapolis to catch them. Both times I've seen Flamengo Nosebleed at the Mel they've stolen the show. It's no wonder they're PRN Award Winners!

MR CLIT BITES AGAIN



Indianapolis' most interesting punk innovator has to be Mr. Clit and the Pink Cigarettes, a trio of avant-garde punks with songs that hit you hard and fast yet have the power to stick around and make you repeat-play even as you're saying "what the FUCK was THAT?"

It is a testament to their sound's durability that "I Bite," the infectious first single from long-awaited full-length *Pipsqueaks from Planet Fur*, has become one of the most popular Indianapolis punk tracks on Spotify this year. Truth in advertising -- it does bite, and as it sinks in its teeth, the venom takes hold.

If you haven't seen Davey, Abby and Ayesha let loose at a show over the last five-plus years, make it your 2020 resolution to get some Clit in your life. It's way better than a gym membership, especially when they play fifteen songs in twenty minutes!

STATE STREET PUB

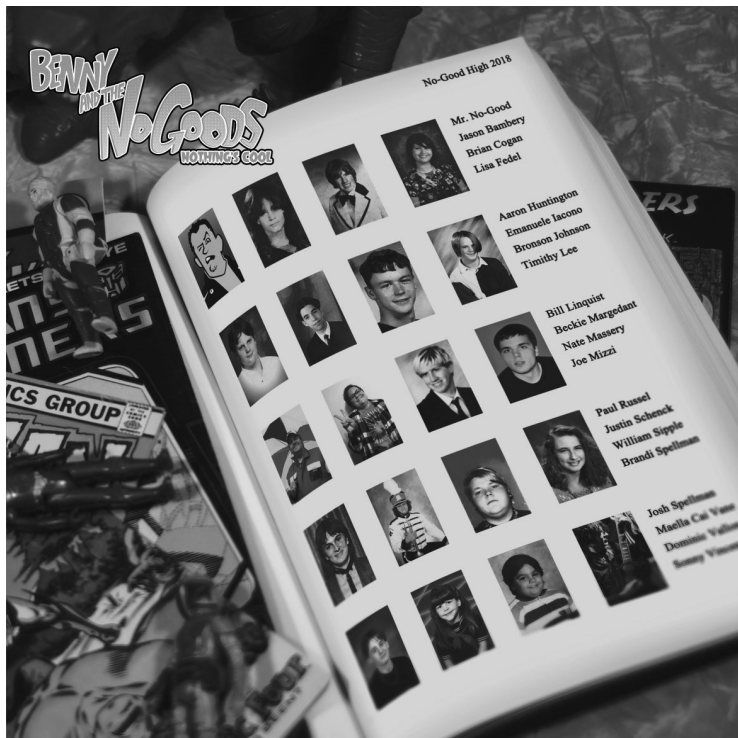
"SSP is chill af" "word..."

wed jan 8 - schmett / charlie ballantine
thur jan 9 - drooler / milquetoast / the crawlies
fri jan 10 - shift w/ evan l & d strange
sat jan 11 - petey boy / tatakae / charm type / txtbook
sun jan 12 - bruised / the serfs / kleaner / crazy bastard
wed jan 15 - misunderstood / the fishy hippy / barney muggers street band / the 13th way / the run up / baby frankenstein
thur jan 16 - the deals / killgulls / duncan kissinger
fri jan 17 - black market vinyl / antenna man / phyllis / the rhythm methodists
sat jan 18 - hyper tensions / moon goons / dope sweater
wed jan 22 - pat & the pissers / chuck lofton
thur jan 23 - xeroxx the kid & jordan allen
fri jan 24 - shit show
sat jan 25 - thee open sex / old world / rodeola



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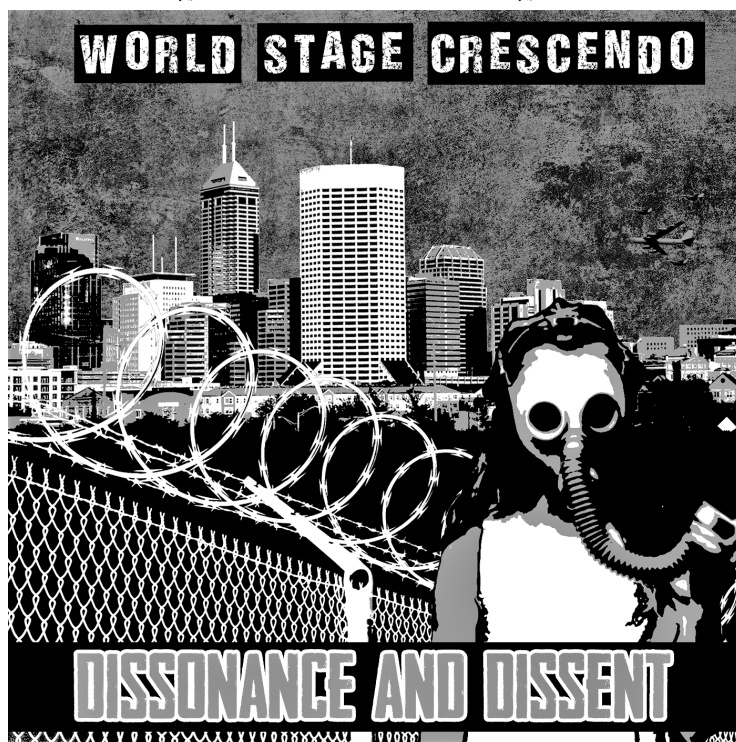


Benny No-Good had hoped his anthem “Donnie” would be irrelevant by the end of the year, when he released it early in 2019. But the Trumpster Fire still burns on, and the single’s infectious pop-punk-by-way-of-the-Coens chorus “Shut the fuck up, Donnie, you’re out of your element!” remains as cogent as ever with the election season still on the horizon.

But there’s plenty more where this songwriter (profiled, by the way, in Issue #1 if you still have it!) is coming from. Nothing’s Cool is the perfect vinyl play, the kind of album you can listen to voraciously from start to finish or just play your favorite side over and over.

And Benny’s crack band of No-Gooders put on one hell of a show too, giving you no excuse to avoid making this your punk record of choice.

THE REVOLUTION COMES WITH HORNS



No album of 2019 was as groundbreaking and surprising as Dissonance and Dissent’s World Stage Crescendo. Much anticipated but not possible to predict until you hear it, the album blitzed the local punk scene, culminating in its huge win at the PRN Awards in October.

It was all deserved. I have played this album straight through dozens of times since I got my copy, and even through my computer speakers or cheap headphones, the songs maintain their aural depth and fiery intensity.

This isn’t an album of singles, though the songs ARE catchy as hell. These are politically raw tracts that maintain their depth and find ways to surprise like few ska or punk albums I’ve heard, here or anywhere.

KAOS RISING



The band I most look forward to profiling here in Naptown Punk has to be Adictos al Kaös, the long-awaited Hugoo Cruz-fronted hardcore Spanish / English hybrid formed from the ashes of local legend Fastidio.

I was lucky enough to be front-row center during their debut performance last November, as they opened for Amuse, Methmatics and the Big Bad. The performance was easily the best “PRN Debut” I’ve seen in the five years I’ve been part of the scene. And I’m not the only one to say so.

One thing Indianapolis has lacked since I moved up here is a truly strong multicultural punk scene on a local level. The Melody Inn gets a lot of international acts to come through here, but without Fastidio raging on a monthly ba-

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sis, something truly seemed like it was missing. With Kaös rising to re-take the mantle, I hope other bands will step up to the challenge as well.

At the very least they’ll be the band to catch this year, especially when people start making end-of-year lists of the best bands they saw, or wished they’d seen.

Your next shot will be on Friday the 13th in March, when they’ll be playing with San Antonio chicano-punk act Fea — they’re gonna blow your mind like they did Joan Jett’s before she signed them to Blackheart Records. You’ve been warned!

NP



NEVER MIND THE BULLOCKS HERE COME THE ANTI FEDS

Unless you've been under a rock, you've heard rumblings of this new band in town tearing shit up and Oi-ing its way into all our grizzled punk hearts. With Think Tank gone, who better to see five or ten times a year than these frantic maniacs? It's a rhetorical question. Go see them. And read this interview, and get to know the Anti-Feds. They're everything Nap-town Punk needs more of in 2020.

Of all the bands I saw in 2013, you're the one everyone told me you *had* to see. What's the story behind you getting together to form Anti-Feds?

Caleb: So me and Jack used to play in City Trash, and then as you know, stuff happens. Eventually Anti-Feds had to be a thing. We started practicing in December of 2018, and we've

all been really good friends our whole lives. We started jamming and writing some songs, and I guess one drunken night we became a band. Rock and roll just kind of happens.

It really stood out, your political stances on health care and other "hot-button" issues of the day.

What's your songwriting process? How do you decide what you want to write about?

Shannon: Whatever we're most mad about. We'll sit down and be like 'oh my God, this is terrible!' And then it's more like 'sweet, now we've got lyrics for this song!' It's what we funnel our anger into. The music, the booze and the drugs. Between the



three we all keep from going insane.

As long as you get to write about what you want to write about.

Shannon: Yeah, exactly.

Brandon: As long as everyone knows their boss is fucking them over then that's all we want. Even one of our bosses the other day was commenting on our music video for "Working, Dying," which is a song about saying fuck you to your boss who sucks, and he was like 'I like that music video! It's fun!' And I was like hey, if that's your response, maybe the next song needs to be a little more direct. [Laughs.]

Have you gotten to play much outside Indianapolis?

Jeff: We just did a short little tour not too long ago, that was fun. We saw Oklahoma.

Shannon: We got to sleep on playgrounds.

Caleb: We got to get kicked out of a playground! If you're in a band and

you need tips, bring a hammock! You find some playgrounds and get set up! [Laughs.]

Shannon: And you've got to have someone to keep watch in the van to make sure the gear doesn't get stolen.

Brandon: And if the cops show up, just tell them you don't have an ID.

So have you gotten to record anything yet?

Shannon: I like to record stuff, so I've been recording all of our songs. We released a little demo in June, I believe, and on the 3rd of January we're going back into the studio and finishing up some more songs.

Caleb: Gotta get the studio time and then we'll be working on some hot hits. Hopefully by spring of 2020 you'll be seeing some new Anti-Feds stuff.

What's your favorite place you've played outside of Indianapolis?

Caleb: Bowling Green for sure, and

Denver, in Colorado ... Seventh Circle is the best. Seventh Circle is probably the coolest venue.

Shannon: Murfreesboro was pretty cool, but I swear to God everybody we talked to were possessed by demons.

Caleb: Yeah, there was this Civil War battle and I don't know if everyone who lives there is cursed. They were really nice, but honestly one of the best house shows I've ever played was in Murfreesboro. It's also the most people I've ever talked to about demons on the same night. [Laughs.]

Anything else you guys want to talk about?

Caleb: Dope Sweater is the best band in Indiana.

Shannon: How 'bout this. This is a call to action. Everybody quit your jobs. Set your workplace on fire. And if at any time people hate you – unless you're being just a piece of shit, if people hate you, *good*. **NP**



YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

Folk-Punk singer-songwriter Bryan McPherson, who hails from Boston, has built his national touring reputation on tight songcraft with incisive lyrics that tell the truth, no matter how bluntly that truth hits you. On his latest album *King's Corner*, he jumps back two decades to songs he wrote before he cleaned up from drug and alcohol addiction, rewriting these songs framed against a return to his hometown. The result is the strongest batch of songs he has written to date. He sat down in December with us to talk about the album and where the songs themselves have come over the last twenty years.

How long were you working on *King's Corner*?

It's funny because theoretically I've been working on that record for 20 years, because nine of the ten songs on that album were written lyrically in the early 2000s. At that time I was a young punk running the streets of Boston, strung out on dope and just being a maniac with all my buddies, and I had written these songs as I was trying to get out of that lifestyle.

I knew I had songs I wanted to write and perform, so I started doing open mic nights on the other side of town. And when you're doing heroin it's really hard to do anything. That shit is just awful. So I spun out of control and I went into another rehab, finally. I wound up getting sober and once I got sober I wrote a bunch of new songs and made *14 Stories*, so these songs got left behind.

So last summer I was in my hometown and I have a couple friends who request some of those songs at those shows, and I never know how to play 'em! I didn't necessarily think I wanted to

take those skeletons out of the closet, but I started tinkering around with 'em and realized they were actually good. So I decided I would take the same attitude that I had originally (the original title back then was gonna be *Folk and Roll Mo-Fo*) and I recorded it myself in a room, only this time in a much better room than before, and I have much more experience recording than I did back then. It was a trippy record to make because old me and young me were collaborating, akin to producing myself from another era.

That's kind of nice though, because had things gone right this would have been your "freshman" album but now you've got all those records under your belt and you can come at this without having to worry about a "sophomore slump."

That's exactly how I looked at it. I was reaching back in time and giving myself a helping hand.

Which songs would you say changed the most?

"Every Day," I didn't even have a recording of that one. I had to rebuild that song from memo-

ry, and I couldn't remember the third verse so I rewrote it. "Mass Ave Story" and "Jumper 9/11" are the two biggest re-writes. Those songs were both incomplete back in the day... [Mass Ave Story] was about being strung out at the time, and the new version, in Boston there's a neighborhood called Methadone Mile and it's full of people just strung out on dope. So basically "Mass Ave Story" is me seeing myself in those folks.

What it would be like if you were still stuck in that place with no way out?

Yeah, like me singing to someone down there, seeing myself had things gone a different way.

And "Jumper 9/11" was about 9/11 and I never really got what I was going for at the time I first wrote it. This time I really stripped that down and I ended up re-writing it and it's about someone who had to jump from the Twin Towers on 9/11, or fell, whatever. Just being in that horrifying situation.

I've seen this movie called the Falling Man, and they're trying to identify who somebody was who had fallen, and that's such an early memory for me, seeing the people who had to jump. And seeing this documentary, people are judging those folks and I always asked how you could judge someone for doing that? It's the last fucking decision that you get to make – are you gonna burn to death and die of inhalation or are you gonna just fucking jump, get a blast of fresh air and then see you later, you know?

And they were doing it out of desperation, not like 1929 "I lost all my money in the stock market" kind of thing.

Exactly! And it's like fuck you people for even trying to judge someone for doing that. And that was very challenging as a songwriter, because that's sacred ground, people lost their lives and here I am trying to write about this from someone else's viewpoint.

"Ghost of My Hometown" really stood out to me. What was the basis for that one? Obviously your hometown, but what brought you to add something new like that to this collection?

That was a song I wrote while I was recording all these songs. And it's what I was experiencing at the time, feeling like a ghost in my own hometown.

The first verse is me just walking around and I'm the ghost. The second verse I am running around and I'm looking at the skyline in my neighborhood – in Dorchester you could always see the Boston skyline. That tune's just about getting older and trying to go back to where it started and realizing how much different things are, all the people you grew up with are gone, and I don't feel as connected as I once did.

And it finishes where I'm looking at other people and seeing all the other ghosts in my hometown. I shot a video for it and I shot a bunch of old friends and stuff, just living their lives in the neighborhood. I decided to include that song because it was the most fresh to me, it gave me the most inspiration out of all these songs because of its currency. I thought it really tied it all in. **NP**



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