

# EQUALIZING X DISTORT

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## Nate Smith: Reflections of Japan

*Nate Smith in the current singer for DUDMAN and one of the original vocalists for EXCLAIM. Though he came to Japan primarily as a student (on a scholarship to study punk no less!), he was to contribute a lot to the Tokyo fastcore scene over the last few years he was in the city I spoke with him in August 2003 as he was preparing to return to academic life in the States. What follows is the conversation we had regarding the Japanese scene and his experiences as a participant in it. Interview by Daragh Hayes.*

**The first thing I wanted to ask you about was how you got involved with punk and hardcore back in California?**

Okay, let's see. The first punk bands I ever listened to were in elementary school but I thought they were metal bands because....

**..for example...?**

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, D.R.I. and

**They were kind of metal bands.**

My mom was a schoolteacher and she would bring home tapes that were confiscated from kids and so I would find in a dresser in the living room SUICIDAL TENDENCIES and PUBLIC ENEMY and D.R.I. and fake grenades and brass knuckles and things like that. When I finally started really listening to punk and knowing that it was punk, it was probably in 9<sup>th</sup> grade or so, things like MINOR THREAT and OPERATION IVY and SCREECHING WEASEL.

**The big formative influences. But I am wondering about the Japan connection. How did your interest in Japan develop while you were back in the States and how aware were you of this scene here and bands here?**

There was some Japanese stuff that you would just kind of come across at record stores in California. For instance, the GAIA 7" – the one that had all four of them on the front and the ROMANTIC GORILLA split with SPAZZ. Then SENSELESS APOCALYPSE came on tour and so they were the first Japanese punk band I saw before I went to Japan. That was before I actually started studying Japanese. So I knew there was stuff going on. Why I got interested in Japan was just a fluke.

**It wasn't because of punk then, specifically?**

No, it was totally unrelated. I wanted to change my major at university and I was thinking about art or language and I had done Spanish since I was a kid and so I wanted to do another ... you had to have two languages and I wanted to add another that wasn't Latin based. At my school all they had was Japanese and Chinese. I didn't really have much interest in Chinese or China



Photo by Daragh Hayes

**Nate, singing in DUDMAN.**

in general and Japan had – I knew of a few bands from there, I liked the video games when I was a kid, it was pretty random, but then everything just fell into place. Within a month of starting to study Japanese I knew that I would be going there for a year the following summer.

**Oh Wow.**

Yeah. It all happened really fast.

**Now when you came here originally it was on a one year study abroad program and then I think you had the intention of doing a film on Japanese hardcore and in the end you wound up staying here for 3 years – 4 years.**

I came for a year and then I went home and graduated. I knew I wanted to come back because I had a great time the first time I was here, and I didn't feel like my Japanese was as good as I wanted it to be, so I wanted to come back to study. I applied for a Japanese Ministry of Education scholarship and I was prepared if I didn't get it to just come back here and work because I just wanted to be here again. I kind of felt like my language skills were in between and I wanted to get it where I could say whatever I wanted to say in Japanese and so that was my motivation.

**In the end you wound up doing a master's pretty much on the fastcore scene in Tokyo.**

**Yeah.**

**Which is pretty unique, can you tell us a bit about that?**

Well, actually ....

**You're still trying to figure it out! (laughter)**

Exactly!

**It's actually a big scam! (more laughter)**

No, that is actually what I wrote for my proposal when I was applying for my Ministry of Education scholarship and I said I wanted to look at the way that American hardcore got translated into Japan and how it changed as it came into Japan and how from Japan it would then go to Korea and China and Hong Kong,

but not just (concentrate on) music but also style and fashion and wearing thrift style clothes and that kind of stuff, but as I was here.

**...you found there was no thrift stores (laughter).**

The first time I went to Korea they had what looked like a Japanese thrift store and of course Japanese thrift stores means stuff that have been picked over from places in the States and then marked up incredibly, but in Korea it was marked up again twice over from Japan, but it was the same kind of stuff that they would have in Japan and all the kids who were shopping there dressed like Japanese kids, but they were all Koreans and I thought it was just a trip because it was American fashion in a sense but it was a Japanese take on American fashion so it has been edited through two different filters before it got there so I ended up wanting to look at that ...

**But in the end it was limited to...**

Just music.

**But also I think a big part of it was talking about the influence of Japanese society in general and how it manifests itself in the workings of the punk scene. I'll talk about this a bit later, but I think when people think of traditional Japanese society they think of something very hierarchical and strictly regimented and those values, those qualities seem to be in contradiction with the idealized version of the punk scene. So how did you find those things manifested themselves or didn't? What is the relationship between society at large and the punk scene do you think?**

You use different levels of politeness when you are talking to people in Japan based on your age or rank or who's been around longer and one of the things that kind of threw me when I first came here and started going to shows was when people would use honorific expressions to me because they thought I was older or because I was in a band, or people within bands using it to each other for people that were older



Photo by Daragh Hayes

**Nate of DUDMAN from a studio show at Nakano MOD Studio in January 2004.**

or the band leader or that kind of thing. And it did strike me as kind of odd but then, I don't know, it kind of seemed like that's the way that clubs work here, the way that school activities work. The first time I was here, I was living in a dorm on campus and there were first year students down through fourth year students, but you had to totally bow to people when you would pass them in the hallways



Photo by Daragh Hayes

DUDMAN with Nate as the second guy on the right.

and stuff like that and if you didn't do it then people thought you were an asshole. But then when I thought about it, even in California when I was in high school, the guys who were 23 or 24, everybody was like "they are the old timers of the scene. I don't know if I can talk to them. Anything they say goes." There is still that same hierarchy it is just not as defined by language, or language doesn't express it as much. I think as far as the way actual things work its pretty similar, there are just more language markers for it here in Japan.

**But here it is also taken a lot more seriously. I can think of an example. A friend of a friend of mine almost gotten beaten up by some band members for not using honorific expressions. He approached them basically on par in a regular sort of fashion and people were like "what are you doing?" He was Japanese?**

**I think so. I think there would have been more leeway given otherwise...**

Right. And I know people that ... the first time I was here when I was 20, I would meet people who were 35 and they ran a club or something and I would talk to them using normal words and then realize that everybody else around me was speaking in total honorific expressions and think "Oh shit, what did I do?", but they didn't seem offended by it at all.

**They cut you some more slack, obviously.**

Yeah, they were kind of letting that go.

**Now, this is not something that I intended on asking, but the question almost becomes then how accessible is it for younger people? One thing that some people are a little bit concerned about I think at certain levels is, for example, the longevity of a scene like burning spirits, where it doesn't always seem so welcoming to younger people and you don't see quite as many younger bands involved in that scene as you might with other parts of the scene. And that's one particular part of the Japanese scene that definitely the honorifics and the sempai sort of junior/senior relationships are the most apparent and you wonder as Japan's society changes if that doesn't filter down to some of the punk scene ...**

Well, it is also like certain people... people that have certain ways of thinking like that,

like about the honorific expressions or thinking like "I am a traditional Japanese guy, I'm probably going to be more likely to get into traditional Japanese hardcore," whereas somebody who is a more "modern" guy who dresses like EXCLAIM you are going to be a skater or whatever ...

**...or at least you will own a skateboard (laughter)**

..and it will have stickers on it.

**With nice shiny rails.**

It may be good for transportation. But I think it is going to attract a different crowd of people.

But even in the "traditional" Japanese hardcore scene there are the scummy kids that are just drunk all the time and they can't be that honorific in their language. I don't know, it depends on the situation but you hear stories like ... what band was it ...it was like somebody didn't address somebody with like honorific expressions at the Gugjiagi show and he tried to fight him or something. I don't remember what band it was but it was some classic Japacore band or whatever.

**Yeah. And it is strange even when it comes down to things like trying to take photos of bands. I think we were at a show last year and a kid got hit by a guitarist because he took ...actually not because he took any photos, but the guitarist saw him with a camera and he thought maybe he had taken some photos and it ended up being an ordeal for this guy who actually came there to take**

# EQUALIZING DISTORT

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EQUALIZING-X-DISTORT MONTHLY is an extension of the weekly radio show heard on CIUT 89.5 FM every Sunday nights from 10:00pm 'til midnight (Participants: Jonah Falco, Martin Farkas, Simon Harvey, Stephe Perry, Mark Rodenhizer, and Scott Stevens).

The show dedicates itself to the underground hardcore punk scene. There is a particular emphasis on international releases in the developing thrash, straight edge, grind, garage, Killed By Death, and crust scenes, which means we play material like Out of Vogue, HandsXDown, Ildad, the Real Kids, the Dead Boys, and Cluster Bomb Unit.

There is a weekly demo feature (paying homage to the cassette format), weekly event listings, and a monthly top 10 retrospective look at new releases.

**Equalizing-X-Distort**

CIUT 89.5 FM

Sundays 10:00 pm - midnight

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## CIUT 89.5 FM - "Equalizing Distort"

### Top 10 Hardcore Releases for January 2004

Band	Title	Format	Label
1. EXTERMINATE	Find Out	ep	MCR
2. ACTIVE SLAUGHTER	'Ave a Butchers	CD	Slaughtered
3. IN THE SHIT	A World of ...	CD	Mass Productions
4. ENDSTAND	Hit and Run	CD ep	Combat Rock
5. DAYMARE	La Doucher de Vivre	ep	Ratbone
6. WAR SQUAD	In My Rage	ep	Punks Before Profit\$
7. FUCK ON THE BEACH / MATKA TERESA split		ep	Regurgitated Semen
8. THE CARNIVAL	II	ep	Krypta
9. HOLD TRUE	Nothing Can Destroy Me	ep	Third Party
10. VARIOUS ARTISTS	The Sisterhood	ep	Emancypunx

Equalizing Distort can be heard every Sunday night on CIUT 89.5 FM at 10:00 pm. The top 10 countdown can be heard in its entirety, complete with previews of the picks and analysis on the previous month in hardcore, on the last Sunday of the month.



pictures of TRAGEDY. So it's strange....

But most people in this scene would be like, "That guy's an asshole. What is going on?" Or they would be like, "You should know better with that band."

**Well, exactly.**

It's kind of like if somebody doesn't know they can get caught off guard by something like that, but people who have been here were like "that band or those couple of bands are sketchy like that. I wouldn't do that with them." You always are very deferential to them. It's like at the burning spirits type of shows people who are standing in the background of the stage, there are some unsavory characters....

**...but very nice when you talk to them on a one on one level.**

N: They look really mean and then you talk to them and they are almost shy sometimes. I am thinking of one guy in particular...I forget what band is he in...

**You are thinking of Hazard.**

He has got the weird moustache thing and he always wears his aviator glasses and stuff. He was just like a nice shy humble guy and he was totally cool but he looks like he would pull out a gun.

**I am not sure if you are aware but the bassist from that band lives just around the corner. the laundromat guy?**

**Yeah... but I started talking to that guy and he was telling me about the upcoming CHAOS UK show and he said that Mower was going to be singing for them. I said, "Oh yeah, I saw them with Mower back in '87 and he was like "You saw them with Mower? Yeah man." The dynamic certainly changes once you have that entry point with them. But okay, getting a bit ahead of things, I wanted to ask you a bit about your preconceptions of the Japanese scene before you came here and how they did or didn't match up with what you actually encountered, so I am not sure if that is something that we covered already or ....**

I don't know. I was prepared for strange juxtapositions and funny lyrics because listening to a ROMANTIC GORILLA record you are like "Oh, funny lyrics." Or like the GAIA record you are like "Oh, acid wash jeans." ASSFORT was kind of like "These guys look 80s." Even just listening to that stuff you get a sense just from listening to records that it is a really different scene for those kind of bands. I wasn't expecting as much moshing and slam dancing at some shows as what happened. And the first couple of shows that I went to there wasn't any really and so when EXCLAIM started playing bigger shows and we started getting better crowd reactions and stuff or when I went to other band's shows that were like



Photo by Daragh Hayes

**GAUZE in January 2004 at the Takadanobaba Area.**

more established and saw the reaction of the kids it was pretty amazing. I think the first show I went to when I came to Tokyo was HELLCHILD and DISASSOCIATE and the crowd was pretty tame. They didn't go all crazy or anything. But the next big show I saw was two months later and it was when GAUZE had played at Area in Takadanobaba and at that there was lots of people dancing and that seemed pretty intense. It seemed like a crowd that you would imagine at a big show in the States would be.

**Well, yeah, I can actually kind of imagine because just seeing old video tapes of shows in California, just the scale of things as well. When I went to that show it was very alienating because it was such a rock show. All the lights and the ...**

The tiered floor...

**I felt like I was watching some video of some big SLAYER thing with DRI and COC at the Paladium back in the 80's, just the scale of it. For me it was kind of strange because I had been to a few smaller shows at that point, but one of my preconceptions was I thought Japan was the "Real Deal" and because of my preconceptions of how the traditional society worked I thought if you were going to be punk in Japan you are going to be really on the ball, not necessarily on the ball politically, but fairly anti-authoritarian and I kind of maybe read a bit too much into that...**

Idealized it.

**Well yeah, (read too much) into the clothing and the pictures I had seen and the association I would have made with people who look a certain way. And so when I came here and saw shows of that nature it seemed a bit shallow. I was a bit crestfallen you could say. But that show was cheap!**

That was the first show that I was impressed by the cost because usually shows here are like 2000 Yen / 3000 Yen ....

**For local bands, which Canadian for those listening is basically like paying \$28 to go see local bands and for club shows that's as cheap as it gets.**

And that is not necessarily really amazing bands. Like you said that is just local bands. But sometimes you will get a really great bill.

**And actually to be fair, some of them are amazing. In a lot of cases it's worth it.**

But other times you are like "Wow" (*sarcastic*). That's just the standard. It is doesn't depend on whether the bands are good or not. But that

GAUZE show was 500 Yen and it was a anti-landmines in Cambodia benefit and that impressed me because up until that point I was just so "Wow, everything is so overpriced and consumerist".

**There is also an argument to be made, I mean certain things that we take for granted as being just things you do or you don't do as far as the punk scene goes and how things operate, they are pretty much North American values and Europe may have some variations and the question then becomes why should it be the same? At least it's punk, but it's in another country and the context is completely different.**

But when you talk to people that are in bands, the live houses are a leech on the scene. They don't need to be charging that much and they are making lots of money. And true, they have rent. And true, they have complaints about punk kids hanging out front and whatever and they spend a lot of money to sound proof it and have amazing sound systems, but they have way bigger sound systems then they need. They could do with a lot less and do a cheaper show. Nishiogikubo Watts is cheaper sometimes. It depends on the live house.

**What is ironic is looking at it that way is a lot of the bands start off with basement shows, you know the DIY scene, play the odd studio show, a lot of bands once they graduate to a certain level never play those shows again. Some bands do - for example, EXCLAIM will still play a studio shows, BREAKFAST, will, and even GAUZE played one or two which is phenomenal.**

And that's also EXCLAIM's influence in a way because it was EXCLAIM that was setting up and showing GAUZE that they could do it, in a way, because GAUZE hadn't done that in a long time and it was a big deal to get them to do it. And they had to limit it so that only a certain amount of people could get in. It was a really big deal.

**Yeah, but I think it is unfortunate at times that a lot of the bands, once they get established past a certain point, I won't say take the path of least resistance, but....**

Once you get rolling and people are calling you onto shows and you don't have to set it up yourself it's a lot nicer to play at a live house. With DUDMAN almost all our shows had been at studios because DUDMAN hadn't really been active for a year and a half before I joined and so we weren't getting asked to play shows, and so we just wanted to go out and do it ourselves and we started booking studio shows. We got used to doing it and the sound is fine. It works okay. It feels good.

**It is good. We should maybe explain, a studio show means basically renting a room at a rehearsal place and filling it up with people for a few hours....**

...with a decent P.A.

**Yeah with a P.A. that sounds just as good as a club.**

We would mic six channels so that we would have the snare, an air mic for the drums, a kick, and then bass and guitar, and then depending on the vocals you could move that around and sometimes take the air mic for the symbols and give it to the bass player or the guitarist. I mean it is totally comparable to a punk club in North America, but we got really used to that and as a band setting that up it's a lot of work and you have to make sure everybody's going to be up on the right time. You have to make sure people pay when they come in. You got to make sure people don't play too long and they clean up their stuff quick enough. All and all the bands have been really cool but it's just a little bit stressful when you can't really watch the other bands.

**Yeah, because there is a lot that a live house will take care of for you.**

Yeah, and so that's the thing. When we finally got to play a live house for the first time in a while it was so great because it was so easy and we got to do a rehearsal. The sound was great. Other people were doing our sound for us instead of us running back and forth and trying different things. It was just so much more relaxing and we could just concentrate on performing and playing our songs. And so I can see how if you have got to that level and people are calling you and asking you to play on shows and you are not having to set it up yourselves then it's really easy to just do that.

**The strange thing is I was talking to one of the guys from TRAGEDY last year about some of the differences and how there is a**



Photo by Daragh Hayes

**EXCLAIM (L - R): Matsu playing bass, and Mobu on guitar.**

**lack of DIY venues in Japan, and they said "Yeah but you know when you come here and you see bands and they are on a stage and you can see what they are all doing and it sounds fucking awesome." So there is definitely a lot to be said for that. It depends on what you are looking for. Now in your time in Japan you sung for two bands. Firstly with EXCLAIM and then with DUDMAN and did you find there was a different dynamic working with Japanese bands as compared with your band experiences back home?**

Not really. A little bit, but mainly because both of the bands were really different. My band (The Finders) that I was in before I came to Japan, we got into problems personally because of me. It was like the band-leader versus the rest of the band and then the drummer wanted to be the band-leader and then we were butting heads. But if you have been the one that has been booking all the shows for a year and then somebody else starts booking shows by themselves and doesn't really quite know how to do it, doesn't know who to talk to when they call a club or whatever ... I don't know. He just really wanted to do stuff and that's great, but it just took so much longer for him to do it and I was happy to just do it, but anyway, so it is like the band leader problem and with EXCLAIM, Matsu the bass player was the very definite band leader.

**We should maybe mention that you chose the name EXCLAIM, right ?**

No, what happened was I put an ad in Doll saying that I was a 20 years old from California looking to join a band and for influences I put MINOR THREAT, CONVERGE, and BORN AGAINST thinking that gave me a pretty broad spread of punk bands. I practised with a couple of bands that were terrible and then EXCLAIM called up, but at that time they were called DSCA - DISCO SCRATCH COKE AVOID because, as Matsu put it to me, he wanted D

and C in an acronym because he liked old DC hardcore, hence DSCA and then he picked dictionary words to fill it in. It was an alright name but I didn't want to be in a band called DISCO SCRATCH COKE AVOID. We first met at a McDonald's, which was weird for me because I hadn't been to a McDonald's for three or four years and they were like "Okay, let's meet at Shinjuku at McDonald's" and at that point my Japanese, I had been there for a month and I couldn't really say "No, you guys, I don't want to go there because I am politically opposed to whatever." I couldn't explain that so I was like "Okay, McDonald's." They were like "Do you want anything ?" and

I was like "No." and I just sat there and they were like "Are you Sure ?" and I was like "Nothing". They gave me a 7" that they had just put out and it was totally good, but I said that I wanted to change the name if I was going to join the band - not just because the name was terrible - although I did say I didn't like it from a native speaker's point of view, but because there was a new member and it's a "new band" we should change the name and have a fresh start and they all liked that because they were kind of getting tired of the DSCA name, too. The band wasn't really going anywhere, they thought. At the time I joined DSCA they had already been playing together for about 3 years. Actually Matsu and Mobu, the guitar player, were both from Kyushu from the same town and went to the same high school. After they graduated from high school they came up to Tokyo together.

**I heard they rode their motorcycles up.**

Yeah they rode 50 c.c. scooters. (laughter) from, Kyushu to Tokyo.

**That's incredible.**

Yeah it was a 50 c.c. Vespa and some kind of Honda scooter. Great story.

**With their guitars on their back and their 7"s strapped to their side.**

Exactly. Then (in 1998), they were both 25 so they had been there for 7 years or so, Devi, the drummer.... Everyone calls him Devi, but it is kind of like a Japanese transliteration of Davey as in Davey from the MONKEES, was also from Kyushu, but he came up in junior high when his family moved up here. Incidentally, his wife was one of the former guitarists in the GAIA and that was a weird thing because I didn't know that she had been in that band and then one day she was like "Oh yeah, I was in the GAIA," and I was like "Really!? That was the first Japanese hardcore record that I ever bought!" But anyway DSCA already had this tight relationship and they had been living together and practicing together in Tokyo for a



long time and so when I came in and with my experience of being the band leader and Matsu is already the established band leader we butted heads and we had a lot of problems. Actually and almost to the point where I had .... He has a missing tooth from doing karate, so there used to always be a gap and he would get me angry to the point that I had my Japanese friends teach me how to say "I am going to knock the rest of your teeth out" in really tough manly Japanese just so that when it got to that level I could offer that as the final threat, but it never got that bad. That first year was really tough and most of it was due to the band dynamics and due to the leadership roles and me

wanting to have more control, more say in the way things went and him not wanting to listen to anything I said. And really my Japanese wasn't as good then as it could have been and he gave me not an inch. Like, if I didn't say something perfectly he would ignore me and pretend like I didn't say it. The drummer would have to re-state it and then he would be like "Oh, well why didn't he just say that?" Like that kind of stuff, whereas with DUDMAN the reason why I was in the band was because they were looking for a singer. Matsu from EXCLAIM had been singing with them for the past year, but he's in three different bands and he runs his own company and he was too busy to devote much time to it and he knew that I wanted to do another band and so he kind of suggested it to them and they came and asked me. They have been playing together for about five years, too. Longer than that for some of them.

**You might be interested in mentioning their ages.**

How old they are? I lowered the average age by ten!

**Because you are....?**

I am 25 and ...

**Who is the next oldest in the band?**

How old is Mikuni? Mikuni has got to be in his mid to late 30s, Shuugo is 36 - the bass player - and the guitar player is 43.

**They are up there for punks.**

Yeah, seriously. And they are incidentally all from Hokkaido.

**And they did a bike trip down.**

Yeah. They sledded down. When I joined DUDMAN though it was really obvious that they were making an effort not to have .... Well it seems like they don't have a band-leader to start with and Mikuni and Shuugo are both really strong personalities. The guitar player, Mokitchi-San, he basically just lets whatever happen. He is really quiet. But there was pretty



**DUDMAN (L - R): Mokitchi-son on guitar, Mikuni hidden behind the drum kit, Shuugo on bass, and Nate opening up for GAUZE at the Takadanobaba Area show this January.**

Photo by Daragh Hayes

really ask me what it meant at that point and I couldn't have really put that into Japanese very well and they didn't really care, I guess. And also our communication was really bad in general so maybe that was a part of it. But with DUDMAN, we have some songs that are about ...there is a song in English are about me being a foreigner and people not wanting to sit next to me on the train. I will have an empty sit next to me for over the course of three different stations and every other seat on the train will be filled, but nobody will come sit next to me.

**Yeah, and there is x-amount of people standing.**

You will see people come in and first their eyes catch this empty seat and think "Great I am going to go sit down", and then you can tell that they glance up at you, and then they just look away. So as I was explaining that from my "foreigner point of view," Mikuni was like "No, that happens to me too." He is kind of a scary tough looking Japanese guy, but he was like "I totally identify with that and that is not just a foreigner thing." Whereas other lyrics talking about like marketing seasons and destroying nature, they were like we can see how that is critical of Japan, but we think that is dumb too. So we were able to talk about the different lyrics and if there was something that somebody in the band wasn't comfortable with then it wouldn't be part of our songs.

**Was there ever the case when something blaringly obvious to you because your perspective was very different coming from North America when you come here and you see something and "It is so obvious, don't you see it?" and they are like "I never really thought about it that way."**

I can't think of anything off hand, but there was kind of a flip side to that where some lyrics that Shuugo wrote for the song "Dash" were just so oblique that nobody knew what he was talking about and I had shown the lyrics to some of my Japanese friends and they were like "Well, he sounds kind of like nebulously angry, but we can't tell at what," We don't know what happened and it just kind of sounded like stream of conscious anger. We had a band meeting about lyrics. Mikuni was like, "You know what, what does this mean?" And Shuugo couldn't really explain it, but we kind of figured out it was about working for a boss and being angry at the boss, but then realizing that you are angry at yourself for being angry at the boss or something like that. But it was all really ephemeral like strange meanderings through his work life. But we ended up keeping it and we

much an even give and take between Shuugo and Mikuni. And then when I joined they totally tried to include me in decisions and ask me what I wanted to do about things. If we have problems with something, we talk about it. We would seriously discuss everything that we did and lyrical content. I said that I wanted to write in English. Originally they wanted to sing all their songs in Japanese. I tried that and it wasn't working that well for me lyric writing wise and they were like "That makes sense for you, writing lyrics in English is closer to what you really think, but since we are a band and those lyrics reflect on us we want to understand all of them." And so when I had English lyrics we went over them line by line and I would translate it and they would be "I kind of like that, I kind of don't like that" for certain things. **That is an interesting issue. I guess the thing with punk lyrics very often you are being critical of the society you are in or you see around you and I am wondering about whether it was ever problematic being a foreigner living in Japan and being in a country that technically isn't your home and trying to comment on what you see in your immediate surroundings and if that's taken differently because .... I think at one point we talked about this and you said "Well, if I were back home it would be natural that I criticize the States, but now I am in Japan." So how did that work?**

See, when I went through the first time with EXCLAIM they didn't care what I said. Matsu would write most of the songs and he would have a general idea of what he wanted the lyrics to be about and then he would say write some lyrics about that. Sometimes the lyrics of the chorus would be decided like "Wild Youth" or something like that and I was okay with that, but part of me was like "What are you talking about guy?" And I did have songs then that were critical of Japanese society but they didn't



EXCLAIM (L - R): Matsu on the ground playing bass, and Mobu on guitar in the background.

Photo by Daragh Hayes

like it now.

**You can lend your own interpretation.**

That's the pitfall with Japanese lyrics.

**Well, it's funny because a lot of people will suggest that criticism manifests itself sort of differently in Japanese lyrics. It is strange for me especially when there are so many things in the political landscape that are so infuriating and something big will happen on a local level and not a word is spoken about it. I mean, sure, does it really make a difference if some kid with a microphone on a stage says "It fuckin' sucks that he said that", or however it should be said, but it is also distressing sometimes that it seems like there is no acknowledgement or awareness of things that are happening very much in their own backyard or that really big time civic or national leaders say ....it just seems so contrary to notions of equality or justice....**

"Everybody is equal in Japan." I don't want to sound like a jaded foreigner. When there are political lyrics they are big topics or they are kind of nebulous topics so it's "war" or "oppression" or something ... you are not taking it and saying "I am against this particular proposition" or whatever or "I am against this particular politician" or ...

**...what about refugees being sent back to Afghanistan, you know, and their families are jailed.**

And there may be bands who have that kind of lyric thing happening but its not really that talked about. And then how much of that is just what you are supposed to do in North America, you know? But definitely politics and music are pretty separate things here.

**Well, what is interesting, is there is the cliché of trying to be as utterly offensive as possible in traditional punk in "God Save the Queen" and whatnot but I am just thinking, is a band ever actually ever going to do a song about the Emperor, for example,**

**in Japan or is that just too taboo? Some things I think are just so fundamental it would almost be too much of a shock to even people in the punk scene and t h e i r sensibilities.**

I don't know if there are Japanese bands chomping at the bit to say stuff like that either. If they were like "I really want to piss people off" because here is

just less agitation and it's less about being an asshole and pissing people off and making a name for yourself than being more of an asshole than the guy before and whether that manifests itself in somebody being punk rock and offensive or whether that manifests itself five years later in somebody being really P.C. and really activist, you know, I think its still kind of like kind of individualist and self-serving and I don't think that really gets as much play here as it does in the States whether you're trying to be nice and political or whether you are trying to be a jerky punk guy or something.

**Yeah, and either way the goal can be social climbing.**

Right.

**In the last few years Japanese hardcore had a definite rise in visibility abroad and it is not uncommon to see reviews in fanzines almost making the equation that if a release is from Japan ergo it is fuckin' awesome, this is great or lines of reviews saying "I Love Japanese hardcore" or "This band is from Japan so you know they are hot shit" or whatever and sometimes I wondered about this unconditional approval for all things Japanese hardcore these days. How much of a trend it is or how much some of these bands are just benefiting as a result of geography at this particular point? What do you think about this whole thing?**

I mean there is a definite trends and stuff and yeah, certain fanzines you will read and every other Japanese review has the same words to describe Japanese bands. But there is a lot of the same words to describe the same bands that sound like that, so that only goes to a certain degree.

**Almost the impression I get sometimes from some of these reviews in fanzines is that people see this as one monolithic category – "Japanese hardcore" – so ....**

It is too dense. There are so many sub genres and all the different sub genres don't really play

with each other. They don't really mix that much. There are a ton of different scenes and the bands that TRAGEDY played with when they were they came don't usually play with the bands that EXCLAIM usually plays with. There is some crossover, a lot of it is thanks to GAUZE, bringing those burning spirits-esque bands together with the more hardcore thrash bands and bridging that gap a little bit.

**Yeah, they are definitely trying to give kudos to some of the younger bands, but....**

Well, they are one of the few bands that can play to both audiences, but you don't see EXCLAIM playing on crust shows, but every once in a while I see a crusty band opening for GAUZE, like FRAMTID.

**Also, there are cases of bands that pretty much have zero recognition here in Japan and I will say "Holy shit! They have a record out on Sound Pollution in the States!" or something like that.**

You are not talking about (mumble, mumble)?

**We don't have to mention any names, but sometimes I am sort of surprised by what it's like. Certain bands here they don't really get on many shows, they don't really have much of a fan base, but sometimes I get the impression that people are fishing for Japanese hardcore bands to sign to their labels – if it's fast and it's Japanese, well, it'll sell or whatever....**

Well, I think if the Arizona scene was really hot people would want to listen to bands from Arizona. I think for the most part if a band is to a point here where they are playing shows they are usually technically very good. They are really good at their instruments and they got their shit together song writing-wise, and whether the music is exactly what I like or whether it's my style or not, most of them are really good musicians. And so that, coupled with (the fact that) they are from Japan, so they get a listen... because Japanese hardcore *is* interesting. I would want to listen to a band that came from Bolivia or that came from Czech Republic just because you wonder what is going on. With Japan, having the kind of recognition that it does, I don't think it is that strange but I think there are some elements of fetishizing the Japanese scene in the U.S., but it kind of seems like the thrash boom has waned.

**Yeah, or will soon. Yeah, well it just seems like some of the people, I guess the leading lights in the scene who are really adamant that Japanese hardcore is the real deal, and when you see the actual workings of the scene, how highly would some of these bands be regarded if you operated in such a fashion back home?**

It's also like the difference between the Japacore scene and the thrash scene, too, because I think what you are talking about with the way bands operate and stuff, a lot of the Japacore bands are complete misogynistic assholes. They are like relics of the ...they would be like an 80s heavy metal band with punk trappings... would they be playing DIY shows? – No. Would





**DUDMAN (L - R): Nate on vocals and Mokitchi-son on guitar at the Nakano MOD Studio, January 2004.**

Photo by Daragh Hayes

**the studios in Shinjuku and the singer was up on top of the monitors singing with a balaclava on. It was just like.... "This is punk. This is hardcore."**

They were really fun. Memorable moments. Almost getting in a fight with EXCLAIM and CHARM when we went on tour in Osaka, at

they be offending peoples political sensibilities at shows? – Yes. And here because there is such a lack of politics and its not really something that is discussed they get away with it. For the States it is more of the music that is bringing them over and that's why people are into them and so it is kind of easy to ...it's like the Japanese skinhead scene.

**Which is a whole other kettle of fish. So in your time here in Japan is there any one band or aspect of the scene that's impressed you the most or are there any sort of personal highlights punk rock wise for you over the past few years ?**

The very first show that EXCLAIM played. I joined the band officially on a Friday, just went to a practice and watched. Then the next Wednesday I practiced with them. I had been practicing the songs and trying to remember all the lyrics. We practiced again on maybe Thursday or Friday of that same week, and then played a show on Saturday and on Sunday. I hadn't even been in the band for a week. That was pretty intense. It took so long from when my first band started in high school to where we were at a place where we could play shows, but it was also a testament to how set they were as a band. As a singer just to hop into that is a lot easier then starting the band from scratch. They were already a band. The very first show there was a New York hardcore band that was pretty terrible....

**...from New York ?**

New York style band from Tokyo. They were awful, but I was really blown away by CHARM. And that was the first time I saw CHARM. I had never heard of them before. They were just kind of starting out too, but at that point they still had an upright wood bass. Ken, the drummer, had been playing in psychobilly bands and so he totally had this psychobilly style and their bassist was also from that side of things, hence the full upright bass. They were just great. I was just like "Wow what are these guys doing ?" It was so out of control. I hadn't seen any bands like that before.

**I remember seeing them. It might have been even at one of the same places, but one of**

three in the morning and in a nasty part of town and almost coming to punches with the drummer of CHARM and the bass player from EXCLAIM egging everything on and then finally making amends and riding home that night and then getting apologized to later.

**But you couldn't drive home until you had made amends?**

Right. We weren't going to get in the car and go until everybody had apologized and accepted each other's apologies, but we were not going to argue about the reason why we were arguing. You couldn't talk about that at all. It was just it was done and what ever happened, happened. Not that anything happened, but we are past it now and it was just really tough for me to deal with. Afterwards, I was told that "We kind of ganged up on you and we're sorry and I was drunk" and stuff like that, but at the time it was just ridiculous and I almost quit EXCLAIM then because I was like "Do I really need to be dealing with this?" and then I was like "Fuck them. I am not going to quit." And after that it got a lot better. That's when stuff really started picking up and by the time I left Japan that fall in September we were getting pretty good crowds and we recorded two records. I wasn't on the first one, which is another interesting story.

**Someone from.....**

Yeah I had only been in the band for two weeks and they kind of didn't want me on the album because I was the new guy. They also apologized for that in the end, too, because it was a weird fucking thing. But we recorded some other stuff and actually EXCLAIM is releasing a big discography of all the recordings and there are 5 or 6 songs that we recorded in August right before I left that haven't been released anywhere. Three of them were on an MCR comp and there are some other ones that we never used.

**Last question, is there a future for Nate and DUDMAN ?**

Well I moved to Connecticut and this is actually the second time that I have come back to Tokyo to play a show. In August I came back - that is another one of the greatest things that happened

- to play with GAUZE in Yokohama. Everybody in the band was just so proud that they asked us to play. I was so happy to have that opportunity and the guys in my band are like 30 – 40 years old and have been into GAUZE since GAUZE was just starting, you know, and they were saying, "this is our dream. We split the airfare to fly me back out again and I drove across country from L.A. to Connecticut and the next day flew back to L.A. the next day fly back to Tokyo had band practice at night, the next day went and played a show with GAUZE, the next day flew back out to Connecticut again. That was pretty amazing. I was incredibly fatigued and out of it mentally but it was really fun. This time I am here for two days. I got in the day before yesterday. I had my graduation ceremony at school today. We are playing a show tomorrow. And then the day after that I fly out back out to Connecticut again. So for now anyway we're going to keep trying to do that. Computers are great. The guys can record stuff on mp3s and mail it to me. Or they put it up on a site and I can pull it down. And I can listen to stuff and put some vocal tracks over things to see what it sounds like and send that back and forth to each other. So that's what we are going to try to do. We have shows set up through January. Well one more show in January, which is going to be another big GAUZE benefit show. January 25<sup>th</sup> if you're in Tokyo.

**And so you are actually going to be coming back for sure ?**

Yeah.

**Ah, fantastic.**

And it is going to be 12 bands for 500 Yen and that's at Area again. That huge place.

**And do you know what it is going to be a benefit for?**

I am not sure, but it should be really good, though. And so I am going to fly back out for that and hopefully come a week early and maybe try and get another show in the previous weekend and then if we can get enough songs together, record. We have a couple of places that want to do a full length, but we just don't have the songs for it right now, so to the extent that we can keep doing it we are going to keep doing it and hopefully try and do an east coast tour either in May or in early summer and by tour it would just be New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. Like really short because vacation wise it can't be that long. We are going to try and get that going. But you never know what is going to happen.

**Thanks a lot Nate. Good luck.**

*(For the record, Nate came back for two great shows in January and will visit Japan again this March for more Dudman shows and possibly some recording. So for the time being, Dudman definitely lives on.)*

# Deadly weapons

*The DEADLY WEAPONS are a four-piece punk rock band from San Francisco. I tracked down their bass player, Eric McD, who used to live in Toronto and was my date to see "Detroit Rock City", the KISS movie starring the dude from Terminator 2 (Sadly, said date ended before a make-out session could ensue) to talk about the band and how she's been keeping busy. Don't be retarded and go buy one (or both) of the Dead Weaps 7"s and consider yourself in-the-know.*

**Correct me otherwise, but as I understand it, you relocated to San Francisco in an attempt to replace Jason Newsted in METALLICA. Right?**

Of course I did. But mainly cause I got kicked out of a band, and realized there was no point in moving to Toronto. I was like it's either New York City or SF, and since SF was the farthest, I was like "I'll take it!" Plus, SF pretty much has the best vegetarian food on earth (gay reason), METALLICA lives and slays here, I'd have higher chances of boffing Hetfield here, and every person I'd ever met from San Francisco before I moved here were pretty much the nicest most hospitable bitches I'd ever met.

**What prompted you to move to the Bay Area?**

The kicked-out-of-band thing. At the time I was pretty devastated, but in hindsight was pretty much the best thing that could've ever happened to me (if we're not counting me getting laid by Hetfield... actually I'm sure when that finally happens it'll be mildly disappointing). **In 2001 I was visiting California, you were working at a guitar store and playing in AC/D-She (an all-girl AC/DC cover-band). Two years later, I buy a seven-inch from Birdman Sound (in Ottawa!) and I go outside to examine my recent purchase and I realize the bass player of the DEADLY WEAPONS is you! When did the DW's form?**

Yep, I was working at Guitar Center, home of



the deals, and just generally doing some good natured hustling as I'm known to do. The 3 main members that started the band were Tina, myself and Larry. Our mutual love of GG, RAMONES and the TURBS is pretty much what we had in common. It was about 2 years ago... it'll be 2 years in March. (Sidenote: I have recently quit the band... actually last week. I am scheduled to finish a tour of Japan in April, and finish up a bunch of Gay Area shows, but after that I'm fuckin out bitch!) DEADLY WEAPONS formed because of a good friendship between me and Tina the singer, and her wanting to start something more punky than any of the other shit she'd been doing. Tina and I were both in AC/Dshe together (Me=Malcolm - best member! and T=Phil Rudd) and that's where we became good friends. At the time there was some insane chicks-in-band bullshit egos and insanity, and when I got back from a ZEKE tour, Tina had quit, the Angus was threatening to quit, and I was just like this is a touch too much, fuck it. So Tina, Larry and I started DEAD WEAPS. (another sidenote: AC/DShe is currently doing extremely well - they have the hottest lineup ever, and strangely they all look like the insanely hot female versions of the original dude line up of AC/DC.)

**Who else is in the band?**

We've had 4.5 drummers so far, Justin being the longest drummer. He's on all the recordings to date. He is now in the CLOROX GIRLS where he sings and plays guitar. They are truly the best current punk band around besides THE SPITS. They've recently recorded with Kurt Bloch and have a new record coming out this spring on *Smart Guy Records*. Seriously bitch, you gotta get it! Anyways, now we've got Chris whose also in a couple of other bands; LITTLE ARMY and SEXY. He's working out great. Larry is the guitar player, he's from Washington where he was in THE RICKETS and LARRY (the band). I often crack up that I'm in a band with 2 people that have had their own bands that are named after them (TINA & THE TOTAL BABES - Tina's great and awesome power pop band, and Larry's band that was just called LARRY. - Hilarious). The ERIN album is

forthcoming.

**Have you guys been playing a lot of shows? The insert of the first EP shows a bunch of flyers of you guys playing with really cool bands like THE FLESHIES and THE HUSBANDS, are you guys being well received?**

Not to mention the fucking SPITS! You know, in my opinion we play way too goddamn much locally, but we are lucky to have played with some rad bands. We did a tour of the Northwest with the HUSBANDS

last March, and we play with the FLESHIES all the time. We've been lucky enough to play with kickass bands all over the place; THE EXPLODING HEARTS, CHANNEL 3, THE SPITS, THE TRIGGERS, THE DIRTBOMBS, S.T.R.E.E.T.S., blah blah blah.... in my opinion they all tend to blow us out of the water, but it's been a pretty good time. I believe we have more than 2 fans.

**I heard that for awhile you also played in the ZODIAC KILLERS? Did this pre-date the DEAD WEAPS, or were you doing double-duty?**

ZODIAC KILLERS was some double-duty business for me. I was the 347th member to have ever been in that band. I was in them from August - October of 2002 a big total of 3 months! Their guitar player had just quit, and Greg got my number from a mutual friend that told him I played guitar. I said I'd check it out, and he gave me their first 2 lps to learn. I liked it and said I'd do it as long as I could manage the DEAD WEAPS too. We played one show in SF, and then we went to Sacramento and LA. I actually really like the band, but I was so fucking busy at the time, and there was really no room for me to do anything that creative in the band (I was the rythm guitar player who sang some back ups... when they told me they wanted me to sing a couple of whole songs I was like "But that's not my bag baby!" ... whateves bro). They're rad but I couldn't deal with it at the time. They have great senses of humour and good taste in comedy CDs.

**How did you switch from playing in the band to engineering the latest LP?**

When they got enough material together for a new album they asked me to record it for them at the studio I work at (Coast), and of course I said yes. I'm actually really stoked on their songs on the most recent record - it's a lot slower than their previous stuff, but it's wicked. (Best songs ever by the ZKS: X u out, "Genetic Mutation" and "Microwave Slave").

**Have you been in the studio with any other bands?**

I've recorded the first CLOROX GIRLS 7", the most recent BOBBYTEENS record (Cruisin), and my husband's band; THE ADAM CARLSON BAND (who are rad). I've assisted on a bunch of other projects, but the ones I've listed were the ones I did mostly on my own.

**You grew up in Ottawa, what was it like**





growing up there? When I was in high school, I had all these great demos from that area by hardcore bands like UNION OF URANUS and WARFARE STATE and I imagined the scene there to be really exciting. Do you think the reason you're playing punk rock now is related to growing up in our nation's capital?

I loved my youth in Ottawa but there's no fucking way in hell I'd ever move back. I had a good time there, but actually when I was in high school and really big time into music, I found a lot of the music scene really fucking clique-y and gay. I did a radio show at CKCU which I was pretty heavily involved in at the time, but as far as the hardcore scene of which you speak, Katie Whitaker and Ryan Hough were the only people I knew from that scene that weren't too cool to hang out with me. I remember feeling kind of like a nerd at gay OKARA and SHOTMAKER shows (not that the music was so bad, it was the people!! Or maybe it was me!! I didn't realize how shoddy the people in Ottawa were until I left and met radder people in other cities that also liked music). Oh, but Ottawa does have one rad thing going for it and that is John fucking Westhaver. That guy has single handedly owned and operated the best record store I've ever been to in my life for years. He is completely responsible for half the music I own and am obsessed with. A national treasure! And he fronted the best band I ever saw live in Ottawa which was RESIN SCRAPER. I was into a shitload of types of music back then too (not so much anymore), and there were cool people there, my ripping on Ottawa has mostly to do with the hardcore scene and Shawn Scallen related bullshit.

**When I met you, you lived in London, Ontario. How and why did you end up there?**

I moved to London after I graduated high school. I had wanted to go to Fanshawe College for their excellent recording engineering program (the only one offered in Ontario that was in an actual public college and was affordable - not in a private institution - which cost about 10+ grand a pop). I had to bust ass to get into the program, and I did! Dude, college was like a great learning and extreme sex-having experience! I graduated in May of 2000 and moved to SF.

**Does London have anything to offer outside of The Wick?**

Absolutely not. And I've heard the sad news from friends that it changed owners and is completely lame and horrible now. Yes, I shed a tear whenst this message got into my ears. Actually it did have this amazing Indian food place called the Curry Pot that made these fabulous samosas, but I hear that's closed too. And Mike Todd was still running *Speed City Records* last I heard - a great record store.

**In addition to the *Lipstick Records* EP, the DW's also have a seven-inch on *Rapid Pulse*. Any other upcoming releases?**

We have a split single with THE HUSBANDS



coming out any minute on *Not A Problem Records* from SF, and a full length LP that we just approved the test pressing of. The full length is on *JonnyCat Records* out of Portland - Jonny from THE TRIGGERS is the dude and he has done an amazing job working with us annoying bitches (in my opinion we are the most annoying band to deal with on any sort of professional level). He also booked our tour with THE HUSBANDS last year and is generally a sweet and rad dude.

**Are you guys playing shows outside of the Bay Area at all? Do you have plans to tour?**

We go to Japan in April, and we might be playing the "Chicago Blackout" in May... We're trying to get a CD release party in town, and we have a show at the end of March at Gilman with the FLESHIES (can you say underage gutter punk??). Since I've just given my notice that I will not be playing with them after Japan, there's the chance they'll find another bass player and do these shows with someone else. Which would make this an interview with nobody!

**Why are you quitting the DEADLY WEAPONS? And what plans do you personally have once you return from Japan? Will you be starting a new band at all?**

Well, I joined DW under the premise of having



fun and making good music. For me personally, I haven't been having that much of a good time in the last year or so... I'm not really even a bass player - I'm a guitar player that ended up playing bass by default (I had a bass, Tina's my pal that was starting a band that needed a bass player - and I wasn't in any other bands at the time). There was talk the first year of the band that I'd move to 2nd guitar and we'd get a bass player to replace me... well we only tried out one dude, who said yeah, but then moved to Norway all of a sudden, and after that I realized I really just wanted to be playing guitar in a different band altogether. DEADLY WEAPONS has just been pretty unfun for me the last while - which sucks cause it's just some shitty punk rock - that should be quite fun, oui? It's for a bunch of reasons, but mainly I'm feeling pretty unfulfilled musically, and quite frustrated in the whole decision making process (regarding everything). My husband Jason kept telling me about this dude Matt at his work that was a singer. He introduced us and we threw around the idea of starting a new band. He's a singer, I'm a guitar player - I had a few of my own songs, so we worked on it. Then I got 2 other dudes through Craigslist(.com) - (can you believe that fucking thing worked? Twice!). We're called THE WESTERN DARK and we're still very much in the beginning stages of the band. We've got about 8 songs, half covers half originals. Once we're good and tight we're planning on recording at Coast (the studio I work out of), and maybe releasing an EP or 7". We are all obsessed with RADIO BIRDMAN, MC5, UFO, BLUE OYSTER CULT and the like... we'll see if it sounds anything near as good as that, but we have big aspirations! Tina and I are also talking about doing a new power pop project, but as of right now, that's still in the idea stage.

**Do you know the dates for the Japanese tour (date/city/location/other bands)?**

Yep; April 9th - OSAKA, April 10th - NAGOYA, April 11th - YOKOHAMA, April 15th thru 17th - TOKYO (3 shows). All shows with the 5,6,7,8's & the last couple of shows in Tokyo with FIRESTARTER (most amazing powerpop, ex-TEENGENERATE - seriously the best recent power pop band besides THE EXPLODING HEARTS & TINA & THE TOTAL BABES)

**Final question: Nick Flanagan, funny or no? (note: I'm not sure if I meant "Nick's stand-up comedy" or just "Nick, the guy", read into it however you like - Mark)**

Fucking funny dude. FYI, Flarnahan is my fave person in Toronto (sorry Katie and Jon! You're both just not as fucking funny!) I truly do believe that me and Nick will have children together in 10 years - just look at the bullshit on friendster!!!! No seriously - get in there and look at it: xFlansx, berryamazin@hotmail.com He is starting a mediocre rock band called SHARRONTO. I give them my best, as I am sure they'll end up being the best band in the city (but how hard is that folks?).

# ZOMBIE WALK 2003



Photo by Daymon Tucker

**It is said that there are certain eves when the moon is just right, the sky exhumes a deadly ember and the dead rise again. On this day there is a convergence of the species that is called ZOMBIE. Creatures who project ooze put their pieces together and stagger to the march. Diabolical suited undead groan their excitement as they stumble to the walk. And those that were to fast to live put on their leathers and boots over their shattered remains to get a taste of the living one more time. This is the Zombie Walk!**



By  
Thea  
Munster

The idea of the zombie walk isn't new, I have heard rumors of these marches in other towns, other provinces and distant states since I was young, but I have never met any survivors. I felt it was my duty to resurrect this idea and bring together the

legion of the dead. Maybe it was a sick fantasy of mine since I find the living dead irresistible most of the time. But I have decided to use the excuse of "getting people into the Halloween spirit", and hold it a week before Halloween to get the maximum amount of undead worshippers out I can.

For years I have tried to hold the zombie walk, but it usually ended up with one person showing up at my house and then 2 of us looking like complete idiots stumbling around town, it was still fun though. See the thing is it's the numbers that count with zombies, who would pick on a group of 20 zombies?! This year I had encouragement and help from my friend, Ghoul, so I knew at least one person would be there no matter what. I started early and made sure to put out as many flyers as I possibly could. In my



Photo by Daymon Tucker

complete excitement I accidentally mixed up the meeting place and ending point on the first set of flyers. And I still contend there must have been a whole group of zombies at the ending place that we missed. This year I had a whole whopping 7 people, yes I know it's unbelievable, but it's true! That's why 2003 was the first official Toronto Zombie Walk.

The walk started at 3:00pm on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. I figured this would be enough time for everyone to recover from their Saturday nights of debauchery and get zombied out. Me, I was up at 6:00am partly because I was too excited to sleep and partly because I didn't feel I had had enough time to experiment with liquid latex and oatmeal. I was done my make up by 8:00am and by the time I left my face was sweltering underneath my zombie skin.

The walk started at the Riverdale cemetery, Necropolis, which was conveniently located across from Riverdale petting farm. This was the perfect place for pre-zombie walk photos, so a couple of us killed some time by scaring children and getting pictures of us with sheep, pitchforks and various other oddities lying around the petting farm before waiting at the Necropolis gates.

As the assembly converged I was surprised and happy with the variety of

zombie to come. There were pale-faced zombies, camouflaged zombies, and gory brain sucking dead ones. A scary lot of living dead indeed, you can imagine my surprise when before commencing the

walk we were suckered into a hard luck story by a passer by and most of my fellow zombies emptied their pockets for change.

The walk commenced and the zombies threw themselves into the quiet residential



Photo by Daymon Tucker



Photo by Daymon Tucker





Photo by Daymon Tucker



Photo by Daymon Tucker



Photo by Daymon Tucker



Photo by Daymon Tucker



Photo by Daymon Tucker

neighborhood of cabbage town with full force. There were grunting moans and chants of “braaAAAIINNNS!” which I’m sure could be heard from blocks away. Zombies bumped into trees and slipped on curbs fighting over fortified brains. People coming in their direction quickly turned away or hurried around the corner and cars honked as zombies flew by them screaming. Although their destination was just 5 blocks away at St. James cemetery, they made enough commotion to stir up the entire east side of Toronto.

In fact our zombie crew was so riled up by the time we hit St. James Cemetery that we continued walking the dirge of the undead. There was a game of tag team football played with brains, and plenty of hide and scare through the gravestones. And I’m also fairly positive we found the stairway to hell through a broken grave but that’s a whole other story. I gave out prizes of severed limbs for best zombie walker and scariest zombie. As the sun fully set the zombies made their way home and I didn’t want to leave. My boyfriend had to promise me Licks so that I would leave. I got my last scare in when I walked into Licks and a young girl screamed and started crying. Trying to console her only made it worse. Why can’t everyday be zombie day?

Plans for the Zombie Walk 2004 are now in the works. I know everyone who was at the walk had a blast so I expect each of them will bring at least 2 more people...my goal is to get at least 40 zombies next October. I am also thinking of having a zombie picnic this summer to celebrate Hearsella’s (my hearse) 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, that’s if she’s running. I want the zombie walk to be for every zombie out there so if any of you corpses have any suggestions, questions or comments you can email me at [missfortune@zombieworld.com](mailto:missfortune@zombieworld.com).

*Thea Munster writes for 1313 Magazine and you can check out her writing at [www.1313magazine.com](http://www.1313magazine.com). Photos taken by Daymon Tucker*

# BEST OF 2003: YEAR IN REVIEW

**January** saw DSB release their "Wings Continue to Strive with Unchanged" LP, which is already talked about as a classic. The DROP DEAD / TOTALITAR split ep was released in conjunction with the TOTALITAR tour that culminated at the Pointless Fest. Most folks who went were able to get a copy, the rest of us, this release is as good as gone only to be talked about in terms of record collector lore. The FEEDERZ return to the fold with a brand new album that is just as incredible as anything they ever released previously. *Alternative Tentacles* releases two CDs that collect all of the ARTICLES OF FAITH material worth knowing about. There was new releases by WORLD BURNS TO DEATH and SKIT SYSTEM, but in terms of new bands the real story or the behind the scenes story was about CONGA FURY's first release, the KILL-A-WATTS first ep, the RITES first ep, and the AND I CAN'T WAIT ep which created quite a notice with their take on a pro-women version of the PROWL's ep cover. CUT TO SHIT's first ep was released, VIIMEINEN KOLONNA releases a CD worth of TERVEET KADET inspired material, the LAST SURVIVORS and FINAL BLOOD BATH release their first eps. There is a lot of good things to take notice of.

**February** also saw it's share of great new releases. A new band from Portland called BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS released their first of two eps this year, which lead to their name being used in a descriptor fashion in *MRR* by March. You know you've had an impression on the punk scene when *MRR* is using your band's name as a way of describing other bands. And Portland continued to generate more great new bands with the release of the BURIAL and LEBENDEN TOTEN demos. The singer from MK ULTRA returned with his new band FOURTEEN OR FIGHT who had a demo come out in February. The BCT comp "First Strike" gets re-issued. Tributes for the ACCUSED and NEGAZIONE get released. HOLDING ON from Minneapolis breaks up but releases one last ep as a split with COALITION. DEADFALL release their debut ep on their own label after that great demo they did last year. DISGUST have a new full length. But HEARTWORK, BLOWBACK and another Finnish speaking hardcore band from Japan by the name of LAUKAUS occupy our Top 10 list. There is a reason why our show is named after a GAUZE LP.

**March** saw the return of RATOS DE PORAO to the fold followed by a North American tour. Some bands continue to remind us about what is important in punk. The next TRAGEDY



LP also came out. Unofficially a GASMASK bootleg was released. A "Killed by Finnish Hardcore" comp came out. In Terms of comps, the next "Possessed to Skate" comp was released and it was a 10". SEEIN RED have a new split out with a great new Dutch band



called SHIKARA which is a 10". The guys from POUNDAFLESH and a scorching ep. Members of SVARTS SNO release their new band on *Prank* the SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS. Also from Sweden are a band called UNCLE CHARLES that feature members of HUMAN



WASTE. FRAMTID from Japan have their first full length released. CONSTRICTED from Japan self release an ep. CAUSTIC CHRIST have a split with INTENSE YOUTH. And in straight edge circles the first full length by the FIRST STEP gets released. In power violence circles, Dan from SPAZZ returns with his new band FUNERAL SHOCK and most people are shocked that it is not hip hop, but instead some raging hardcore. Their first demo gets released.



**April** showers in loads of great things. The first full length by MUNICIPAL WASTE is the main thing I remember. The "Super Sabado" comp was also a pretty phenomenal project to coincide with SHANK touring North America. Reno's SCOTT BAIO ARMY get a split LP released. The return of HELLNATION in the form of BRODY's MILITIA with their first of many ultra fast releases – this being a split with the CRUNKY KIDS making it



an Ohio north meets south battle of the bulge. A female version of TRAGEDY gets released from SWEDEN and they are called AMBULANCE. Portugal's sxe scene gets showcased with a new POINTING FINGER ep. EL CAMINO 53 have a new ep out that blows me away with their rockabilly meets fastcore hybrid. *Kangaroo* releases a BURY THE LIVING ep that is incredible. A new band from Sweden called the SKITKIDZ releases a



## Co-Hosts' thoughts

### STEPHE PERRY

*In looking at my favourite bands, I tried to stick to bands that were new to this year. Although bands may have started last year or the year before, I used the release date of their first release as a way of determining a band's new-ness. Lastly, the review section in *MRR* is how I determined when a band was released, as that is the only reliable benchmark for a release date without having to contact every label.*



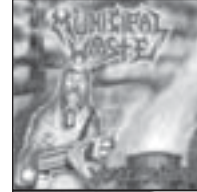
1. HISATAKA "Dirty Dog" ep. This new Japanese band blindsided me. Who they hell were they? The release is just on fire from start to finish. Every song on this ep is great and that is what makes a good release to me. This was a July release on Answer Records.



2. CUT THE SHIT "Harmed and Dangerous" LP This was a bit of a hype band featuring some prominent members in the Boston area like the singer of Bones Brigade. But he has left the band to stay with Cut the Shit full time. Cut the Shit had an ep and a one sided ep come out last year as well as this LP. All great releases, but the full length just has more greatness on one platter. And the packaging is over the top with white coloured vinyl. Released by Gloom in October.



3. BOXED IN "Progression?" ep. BOXED IN released their first ep earlier in the year. Made up of all sorts of UK scene vets it is obvious they can play. This ep is seamless in terms of how good each song is and how they flow into one another, and the lyrics are also pretty incredible. Released by Busted Heads in December.



4. MUNICIPAL WASTE "Waste 'Em All" LP. Municipal Waste had a few eps out last year, but this Pittsburgh foursome really destroyed with this full length was a bug part of that. Non-stop crossover style thrash. Released on Six Weeks in April.



5. LAUKAUS "Mika on Tuolla?" ep. I was dumbfounded that a band from Japan would sing in Finnish. But then for them to sound this authentic was beyond me. It came out in February on Distort Records and I have not been able to think of anything else, except for POIKKEUS. But listening to them against each other the LAUKAUS was better to me.



6. RELIGIOUS WAR "Cracked System" 12". I am not a huge fan of this style, but upon repeated listens, it really drilled in me. The

pounding beat, the great lyrics, the charging sound. This was released on Hardcore Holocaust in May.

7. NO TIME LEFT "Indentured Servant" 10". This is like one of those super groups that you hear about like the OATH or LIMP WRIST, except they are from a scene in your backyard. Hearing about their development





demo. A new band from Portland called CALL THE POLICE has a demo come out. And ADLOESCENT WASTE have a demo come out which is pretty incredible. Clearly demos make an impact in April. DS-13's discography comes out in April, as does an UNDEAD discography. The last SHARK ATTACK demo was pressed onto vinyl. DSB release a new ep. The DEAD ONES first LP comes out. The new VOORHEES unit the HORROR have their first release come out. And the new Chris Dodge band BURN YOUR BRIDGES have a full length get released. A new WOLF BRIGADE 10" gets released as does a new WORLD BURNS TO DEATH ep. Too many great records to comprehend in one month.

**May** flowers bring the third DSB release for the year in 5 months. PDX punks RELIGIOUS WAR have a 12" get released that is pretty incredible. There are new CRESS releases, new SNUFF releases, new SKULLS releases, new BREAKFAST releases, and new GOAT SHANTY releases. But a new band from Chicago featuring the guitarist from LOS CRUDOS called REACCION is something of interest. A great new band from the Buffalo-Rochester area named WAR SQUAD release a demo. SHELL SHOCK from New York release a demo. A Cleveland punk comp of new stuff gets released by *Smog Veil*. And the last KUNG FU RICK album gets released.

**June** CONFLICT make a return with their first single in years. The RAW POWER "You Are a Victim" LP was re-issued as a CD as was the early VERBAL ASSAULT material. The "Senza Tregua" comp was re-issued with beautiful Winston Smith artwork. CRUDE gets re-issued by *Deranged*. Holland's MILKMAN topped our charts with a great new full length. The CAUSTIC CHRIST split with R.A.M.B.O. gets released as the second volume in a series of bike comps by *Ed Walters*. RYHTMIHAIRIO have a new release. The garage scene makes an impact with releases by the CATHOLIC BOYS, the KILL-A-WATTS, and the DEADLY WEAPONS. ANNIHILATION TIME and VICTIMS also released great full lengths.

Out of **July**, the thing that blew me away the most was a new Japanese comp called "Mosh Circle, Jerk Punks" which was released in a vinyl format on 625 a few months later. New RAZORS EDGE, a band called the BBQ CHICKENS, IDOL PUNCH and new TOMORROW stuff. It was a fuckin' scorcher. It was certainly the month of comps as a *Mountain Collective* comp was released called "Decide on Change", the next "Bay Area Thrash Demolition" comp was released by 625, "a little know comp called "Now You Can Die" was released, all were very good, and the "Stab and Kill" comp which got some controversy over homophobic lyrics by one of the bands on the comp, otherwise the comp would have been golden.



It was also a banner month for local releases. The CURSED release their debut full length, CAREER SUICIDE release their debut ep, and a RAMMER ep come out. The new BORN DEAD ICONS ep comes out. Some notable mentions include DIALLO

from Connecticut with two eps released and then they break up in the same month. DEATHREAT release a new 12". The release of Martin's defunct band TRAGATELLO was of interest. SEVERED HEAD OF STATE had a full length released. The A-TEAM "Clusterfuck" ep came out. BORNAGAINST material was re-issued. ANGELIC UPSTARTS material is re-issued. F.U.'s material was re-issued. SPITFIRE was recognized with a discography. A RIPCORD discography. A FUTURES discography. A WARHEAD re-issue. And the BUZZCOCKS release a new LP that has hopes for a came back.

For **August**, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT tour Europe and release a tour ep, just before breaking up. Felix Von Havoc's new band DAMAGE DEPOSIT release their first ep. The THREATS from Scotland return with a new full length of great material. Japan's EL CAMINO 53 have a killer release. Junhio from GLOOM's new band DEFECTOR gets an ep released. GOUKA gets a release over in North America. FINAL

BLOOD BATH, CONCLUSION, and CONGA FURY also see releases so it is a good month for Japanese hardcore. Meanwhile in Northern Europe there are new releases by RIISTETYT, SKIT SYSTEM, HUMAN WASTE, and YHTEISKUNNANYSTAVAT ? A Czech band called ZEMEZLUC gets a split release with the CRUNKY KIDS. In the re-issue front SLIME, the SKIDS, and SOLGER all see old material re-vitalized. The "Nazi Raus!" comp, "Slam-Brigade Haifischbar" comp, and the "Take No Heroes" comps are also re-issued. A C.O.C. tribute gets released which is incredible for new material. And in terms of Demoes a thrash band from Moscow called GEORGE HARRISON gets released as does the GET IT AWAY demo and the I OBJECT demo. A well rounded month on all fronts.

The RUNNING FOR COVER demo was my favourite release of **September**. These unintentional power violence revivalists blew me away with this 20 song cassette. The long awaited KNIFE FIGHT first

was exciting and gave us all a little to live for, but the final goods were able to meet those expectations. Straight edge, skate thrash, and 70's rock riffs fused like you've never heard them before. This 10" finally saw the light of day in October on 625.

**8. REALITY CRISIS** "Open the Door and Into the New Chaotic World" CD. Again, a band that I knew nothing about, but upon listening to the release, there was great song writing. This came out on Answer Records in August.

**9. CAUSTIC CHRIST** "Can't Relate" CD. So this is a band with a lot of seasoned vets. But without knowing who they are, the music is straight forward hardcore, the kind from the mid-80s thrash scene. This release came out in December, but it was still one of the best things to come out this year.

**10. DISIDENCIA** "P.F.T." ep. Also in July came a release by Thought Crime from Germany of this straight edge band from Uruguay. I don't know many bands from Uruguay, let alone ones that can play a bandana thrash style that is amped up with straight edge riffs. And the recording was incredible.

#### Honourable Mentions:

- **VAARINKASITYS** from Finland released an incredible ep called "Pillerit ja Purkit" in July. They released it themselves and it was limited to 300 copies. But aside from this being rare and all, the record is great, from start to finish. It is fast Finnish hardcore played with a fury that their forefathers did. It keeps the spirit of Finnish hardcore alive.

- **POIKKEUS** is another Japanese band that sings in Finnish. There are quite a few bands that speak in other languages like TOMORROW in Italian or CURIOSO in Portuguese, but

2003 saw the release of two Japanese bands singing in Finnish. And they were both very good. The "Jarjeton Maailma" ep came out in August on Crust War Records. It looks like early RIISTETYT.

- **17th CLASS** were a band from Rochester. Injust heard that the band broke up. But Punks before profits was able to releases a 12" of their stuff. It is called "In Utter contempt of the Human race" and was released in November.

- I don't know who **OUT OF VOGUE** are but the "Chewed Up, Spit Out" ep was pretty incredible. It reminded me of Born Against in spirit and newer thrash material in terms of delivery. It was released in December.

- **UNKIND** are Finland's answer to HIS HERO IS GONE. They write sweep emotive crust and released a full length on Yellow Dog in march called "Mieliemme Tuhkasta" CD.

- **BLOODSPIT NIGHTS** from Portland gained a lot of notoriety for their worship of Japanese and Swedish noise. They had a couple of releases last year but the "Ghoulis Reminders" ep in March is the one that stood out.

- **CINDER / 33AT45** are both from Brazil and had a number of labels release this split. It is



ep is released on *My War*, which can also be said about PUNCH IN THE FACE and their first ep. CHAINSAW tour North America and their stuff becomes available here thanks to *Six Weeks*. The BORN DEAD ICONS full length comes out and becomes one of their last releases before a well deserved hiatus. A FROM ASHES RISE split with VICTIM gets released on *Havoc*. The "Toronto City Omnibus" comes out. The new PUNCHLINE gets released. Locally there is a great new band from Hamilton called RIPPED TO SHIT who have their demo released before breaking up. *Deranged* releases the next FUCKED UP ep and the next HAYMAKER ep. The SHOCKS from Germany have their next full length released. UZI SUICIDE have an incredible ep come out. The MINOR THREAT demo gets released. SHIKABANE have a full length released. A new HEADLESS HORSEMEN ep from Australia. The DEATH SQUAD debut ep. The FOURTEEN OR FIGHT ep gets released. The BORN / DEAD LP is released. It is overwhelming how many good new bands there are out there.

Including the NO TIME LEFT 10" and the CUT THE SHIT LP, **October** had its share of good material to add to the hardcore historical cannon. The New ASSAULT was one of those releases. ZOE from Osaka had an ep come out. The NO THINK ep was pretty stupendous. SKITKIDS get a 12" follow up to their demo. DISCARGA have a new 10" out. I SHOT CYRUS have a CD released. CRUCIAL UNIT's first full length gets released. A new HOLIER THAN THOU ep is released in Europe. New hopefuls from Portland's scene PHALANX gets a full length released. BETERCORE have a discography of their material released. The first STAINS ep gets re-issued. A legendary Yugoslavian band U.B.R. gets one of their LPs re-issued. Locally, MARILYN'S VITAMIN's have a greatest hits thing released as *Underground Operations* really gets things going



releasing PROTEST THE HERO and BOMBS OVER PROVIDENCE as well. Out in Halifax CAPITOL DEATH release an incredible self released ep. ASS CHAPEL get a new full length out. The RUNNAMUCKS get a new LP out, and a new band from Spain called KARNVAPEN ATTACK release their own CD.

DISCARGA have a new ep out for **November**. This great band from Portugal called CINDER release a 10" with a Brazilian band called 33AT45. An incredible Danish comp comes out called "Fak Danmark" and Jason Flowers of MPA releases "Victim of a Safety Pin" which is a comp of early Polish punk with an incredible booklet containing loads of background information. A new DISCLOSE demo is released on *G.O.T.A. A 17th CLASS 12*"

gets released. BLOWN TO BITS have their first ep released. BURY THE LIVING have a full length released on *Kangaroo*. CAREER SUICIDE's "SARS" ep gets released to embellish rumours of the city's epidemic. There is new FUCK ON THE BEACH, new DON AUSTIN, new DUDMAN, new THINK I CARE, new RITES, new WORLD BURNS TO DEATH, and new STRIKE ANYWHERE. Out of the old, the LIFE SENTENCE LP gets re-issued, KAAOS full lengths are re-issued, and URBAN WASTE, DSB, and STIFF LITTLE FINGERS are also made available again.



entitled "De Tua Agua No Beberei" and is a 10" and was released in November. This chaotic and quirky Italian band reminded me a lot of CRUNCH. The band is called CONFUSIONE and they released their own ep entitled "Angolature Deliranti" ep in August. - Luc from **FACE UP TO IT** has a label in France called Ratbone. He also does a great zine called Kangnave but that is a whole other kettle of fish. FACE UP TO IT are incredible. MELEE have been mediocre since their "Thrash Attack" demo. It is worth it solely on the strength of FACE UP TO IT's side. Released in August. - **RESOLVE** and **CONSUME** released a split together in June. Both bands of the anarcho punk tradition, both bands raging, both bands unknown, and both bands giving it their all.

## MARK RODENHIZER

1. **EXPLODING HEARTS** - "Guitar Romantic" LP - I'm a Pretender (Dirtnap) - First, let me say if I was allowed to have my way, my Top Ten for 2003 would have been all ten songs from "Guitar Romantic" placed in my favourite order, but apparently that doesn't make for good radio. Nevertheless, making the EXPLODING HEARTS number one was an easy decision. They were the best new band I had heard in years, their recorded output was flawless, and most importantly, their songs stayed with me. The HEARTS matched their poppy melodies with a fun sense of humour and a rock 'n' roll swagger that you couldn't help but love. The sad fact that there are few more EXPLODING HEARTS to be heard places "Guitar Romantic" at the top of my "must hear" list. Hands down, the best record of the year. RIP.

2. **CAREER SUICIDE** "Fallout" ep - Jonzo's Leaking Radiation (Kangaroo) - Much of my 2003 was spent listening to the two CS seven-inch and trying to decide which was better "Jonzo" or "Quarantened" (the latter from the SARS ep). My resolution for 2004 is to finally come to a decision.

3. **TURBONEGRO** "American Leather" LP - Drenched in Blood (Epitaph) - The good news is Turbonegro are back. The bad news is they're a little too "glam". Better news is they can still write a song like "D.I.B.". Best news is their live show is still the best goddamn show in town.

4. **ZODIAC KILLERS** "Society's Offenders" LP - My Boyfriend is a Masochist (Rip Off) - A decent overall outing, but this one song is so insanely good. Wow!

5. **DEADLY WEAPONS** ep - Bitch Maintenance (Lipstick) - Bubble-gum damaged punk that's so perversely repetitive it just works.

6. **MINOR THREAT** "Demo" ep - Minor Threat (Dischord) - Minor Threat + early demos + funny pictures = awesome.



### CIUT 89.5 FM - "Equalizing Distort" Top 10 Canadian Hardcore Releases for the Year 2003

Band	Title	Format	Label
1. CAREER SUICIDE	S/T	LP	Ugly Pop
2. FUCKED UP	Police	ep	Deranged
3. BORN DEAD ICONS	Ruins	LP	Feral Ward
4. HONG KONG BLONDE	Split Finger Fastball	CD-R	Self-released
5. CAPITOL DEATH	Throw Reality Out the Window	ep	Self-released
6. CURSED	One	LP	Deathwish Inc.
7. RAMMER	Suffer	12"	Slasher
8. HELLBOUND / W.A.V.E.S.	split	CD	MCR
9. DFA	Defy False Authority	LP	Six Weeks
10. S.T.R.E.E.T.S.	Bobognarnar	CD	Global Symphonic

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Dan Doh releases the next "Reason for Living" comp which is a triple LP set of all the latest Japanese bands. What a great Christmas present. It is fuckin' unbelievable. This should have easily been my number one pick, but it is a comp, not a band. The new BOXED IN ep gets released. The first full length by CAUSTIC CHRIST gets released with the CD version including their previous eps. VIVISICK have a great new split out with a band called STRUCK. OUT OF VOGUE's debut ep rips. ILLDAD from Sweden has some pummeling grind on one ep. The latest CLUSTER BOMB UNIT ep is released. An EL NUDO / QUILL split catches my ear, as does the last POINT OF FEW / RUINATION release which is a split. The month of the splits. The OUR WAR demo gets vinylized. The singer Steve Wiltsz releases an incredibly sought after comp for his zine *Town of Hardcore* which is a limited press. The new "Histeria" comp gets released. And a new Copenhagen comp gets released called "Kobenhavn I Ruiner" which is a double ep. In terms of other regional comps, an L.A. comp gets released called "Let's Get Rid of L.A." and a Japanese comp called "No Hesitation to Resist" gets a second volume released. In terms of new Japanese bands the ADDICTION have an ep, HISATAKA have a split out, a ZONE CD was released, a PERSEVERE 12" was released, the debut DISTRICT was released, CHAOTIX had an ep released, an IGNORANCE ep got released, and there is a SK8NIKS / TRAFFIX split out. From the twin cities, ANY LAST WORDS debut ep was released. From Portland the BACTERIA ep and the LEBENDEN TOTEN eps were released. The Wisconsin based MODERN MACHINES new release came out. San Francisco's SCURVY DOGS had an LP come out, along with the new ZODIAC KILLERS. It seems like all hardcore cylinders are firing. There was a LIMP WRIST split released, a SAYYADINA



split released. An INSULT discography was released. DRI re-issues in abundance. The DAMNED, DEFIANCE, MISFITS, and HUSKER DU re-issues also littered this month. A neat collection of a Denver band called the FRANTIX was also released. And a RAJOITUS discography was finally released. Too many releases, which is a great highnote for the year to end.

### Demos

As part of a weekly feature, we play a demo in it's entirety every week. It is our little part towards keeping the trading network alive. So it is only fitting that we honour the "Best of ..." with our favourite demos from last year.

1. RUNNING FOR COVER demo – The latest from the Buffalo basement scene. A 20 song cassette release that will tear you a new asshole invoking the best elements of INFEST and GANG GREEN in one release.

2. WRECKAGE "This is America" demo – From Astoria New York, that's Queen's comes this raging four piece featuring Chris Prorock formerly of SELF DEFENSE. POISON IDEA meets the Dutch AGENT ORANGE. It's all napalm to me.

3. SHELL SHOCK CD demo – This band sounds like MINOR THREAT meets NEGATIVE APPROACH with nods to early American sounding hardcore.

4. LIGHTS OUT demo – From California this band brings together east coast styles of bands like the GATECRASHERS with west coast sounds of bands like IN CONTROL creating something uniquely American in sound.



7. MODERN MACHINES "Thwap!" CD - Two Bullets, One Gun, Two Heads (New Disorder) - This Milwaukee band's sophomore effort really shows how good they can be. Excellent musicianship, awesome songwriting and a heavy Replacements influence.

8. TRAGEDY "Vengeance" LP - Revengance (Tragedy) - A lot of "heavy" bands forget their playing rock 'n' roll, not Tragedy. Driving, powerful and full of movement. See Game of the

Arseholes zine for exact details on why Tragedy are so good (cause I can't say it any better than G.O.T.A. can).

9. ANNIHILATION TIME LP - Down the Street (DeadAlive) - Remember when people thought Tear It Up were influenced by Black Flag? ANNIHILATION TIME do the Black Flag thing ten times over, going so far as to get Pettibone artwork. Really solid 80s influenced US hardcore never dissapoints.

10. HOSTAGE LIFE demo - Inside Celebrity Rectum (self released) - I always try and include a local demo in my yearly round up and HOSTAGE LIFE were the most interesting and exciting new band in Toronto. Politically motivated melodic hardcore done by a bunch of guys who can do it right.

Honourable mentions: the following records I heard, however never showed up in Toronto so I don't own them and cannot be considered for my Top Ten: No Time Left 10" (625), Marked Men LP (Rip Off). Both are really good, buy them.

## JONAH FALCO

1. Annihilation Time "Bad Reputation" 7" (DeadAlive) - A new singer made this band INCREDIBLE. A Clevo transplant now fronts this band, adding his intently snotty and troubled wailing to this already great band.

Even the Thin Lizzy cover is enjoyable. 4 tracks of Black Flag/Blast influence mayhem.

2. Street Trash 12" (Kapow) - California dementoids release face melting snot ruckus. Think THE DICKIES meets a battering ram.

3. Violent Minds s/t 7" (My War) - Bi-metropolitan hardcore powerhouse featuring members of NO WARNING and their photographer, Caleb. Totally great like the ABUSED.

4. The Prowl "Misery" 10" (DeadAlive) - I've only heard this once in my friends car but it was enough to make me want to love this. W Mass night stalkers smear a great, dark, punk record.

5. Testors - 7" and 2xLP - Amazing reissues of the only TESTORS record and a truck load of unreleased material. Phenomenal punk rock on every track. Even tracks that could have been 'hardcore' but were recorded in '77!

6. A-Team "Clusterfuck" ep (Painkiller) - Their best work to date. More sophisticated than the LP and not in a stupid way. Memorable, powerful and great.

7. Punch In The Face "Dumb Hardcore" e.p. (Highly Questionable) - Oh wait, fuck you this is a great record. I like the 1st one better, but this record is no slouch. 6 songs.



### CIUT 89.5 FM - "Equalizing Distort" Top 10 Demo Releases for the Year 2003

Band	Title	Format	Label
1. RUNNING FOR COVER	20 Song demo	cassette	Self-released
2. WRECKAGE	This is America	CD-R	Self-released
3. SHELL SHOCK	demo	CD-R	Self-released
4. LIGHTS OUT	demo	cassette	Self-released
5. WARSQUAD	Aaaahhhh!!!!	CD-R	Self-released
6. HALO OF KNIVES	Perth Wolfpack	CD-R	Self-released
7. END RESULT	demo	CD-R	Self-released
8. FOURTEEN OR FIGHT	demo	CD-R	Self-released
9. REACCION	Nuestra Vida	cassette	Self-released
10. ADOLESCENT WASTE	demo	cassette	Self-released

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5. WAR SQUAD "Aaaahhhh!!!" demo – From Rochester, comes this four piece that combines elements of the CLITBOYS with elements of 7 SECONDS. Righteous.
6. HALO OF KNIVES "Perth Wolfpack" demo – from down under comes this CHARLES BRONSON inspired band that combines DROP DEAD's speed with BJELKE PETERSENS YOUTH's sense of humour.
7. END RESULT demo – these Ann Arbor's whose who of hardcore. They recorded an incredible demo of straight forward no-nonsense style that is laced with an underlying activist message.
8. FOURTEEN OR FIGHT demo – from Chicago featuring the singer from MK ULTRA.
9. REACCION demo – Also from Chicago with a Latino based and very much in the vein of LOS CRUDOS.
10. ADOLESCENT WASTE

In the honourable mentions category I recommend:

- FUNERAL SHOCK demo featuring Dan of SPAZZ
- ON ALERT demo featuring Nick Baran of NO TIME LEFT and members of PROJECT GRIZZLY
- GET IT AWAY demo featuring Anton of Underestimated on vocals with his best Springa impersonation
- BACTERIA demo from Portland
- GEORGE HARRISON demo thrash-core from Moscow
- SFTU demo from San Francisco

#### Canadian Releases

1. CAREER SUICIDE LP (Ugly Pop) - The unanimous choice for Canadian record of the year at EXD. Fast, snotty and also fast. Imagine the Circle Jerks meet The Fix at a Sonic's show somewhere in the Pacific-Northwest, circa 1965. Did we say fast? Really fast.
2. FUCKED UP "Police" ep (Deranged) - One of the best records ever to come out of Toronto. Their two follow-ups have yet to surpass the utter perfection of "Police", but it's a hard act to follow. Look for more releases in 2004.
3. BORN DEAD ICONS "Ruins" LP - Superstitions (Feral Ward) - Well played, well written, well produced. Nothing flashy, just good hardcore. If you had any doubts, "Ruins" proved the BDI are a force to be reckoned with.
4. HONG KONG BLONDE "Split Finger Fastball" demo (self released) - Featuring Jonzo from FRATRICIDE and Eric Smith from CAREER SUICIDE, this gruesome foursome dish out some pummeling crossover. DFA move over.
5. CAPITOL DEATH "Throw Reality out the Window" ep (self released) - Maritimes youth crust amped up on D.C. go-core with the heaviness of

FINAL CONFLICT or the ACCUSED at times. The singer just moved out here and is singing for ENDLESS BLOCKADE.

6. CURSED "One" CD/LP (Deathwish) - Essentially THE SWARM with less hardcore and more metal. Thankfully, Chris continues to put a lot of thought and effort into the lyrics which helps keep the band grounded amidst the sometimes overwhelming loudness. Certainly not a hinderance, their professionalism has made them the most consistent live band in Toronto.
7. RAMMER "Suffer" LP (Slasher) - Toronto's kings of metal. The best thing about Rammer is they take their metal VERY seriously. Also the first release on Matt Bickle's *Slasher Records*.
8. HELLBOUND split with W.A.V.E.S. CD (MCR) – From Montreal, this crust attack is fierce. Like INEPSY but cleaner in sound.
9. DFA "Defy False Authority" LP (Six Weeks) - The follow-up to their Ugly Pop debut sees DFA tidy up their act with clean, crisp, and very metal production. They also do a cover of Left For Dead's "Pliant". Cool.
10. S.T.R.E.E.T.S. "Bobognargnar" CD (Global Symphonic) - The crossover revival hits Vancouver! S.T.R.E.E.T.S. proved themselves with a couple of strong recordings and a cross-Canada tour. In case you didn't know: Skating Totally Rules, Everything Else Totally Sucks. Best band name of the year!

Honourable mentions go to CLOSET MONSTER for their incredible new CD, RIOT99 on their "Last Train to Nowhere" CD released on Longshot, the "Toronto City Omnibus" comp on Schizophonic just for existing and the BALLAST demo who are an awesome band from Montreal and their demo is self-released.



8. Minor Threat "Demos" 7" (Dischord) - Previously bootlegged on 12" now on a legit Dischord 7". Incredible songs like you've never heard them before.

9. Knife Fight - 7" (My War) - Assaulting ramcharged hardcore from California. No subgenre

hugging here, just full volume, full throttle, growled attacks on us all. Intense live as well. Members of ANNIHILATION TIME and STREET TRASH.

10. Born Dead Icons "Ruins" LP (Feral Ward) - Some people might think TRAGEDY belongs on this list, but let's be honest they're not nearly as great as Born Dead Icons. Great galloping LP of gloomy, eerie Motorcharged punk rock.

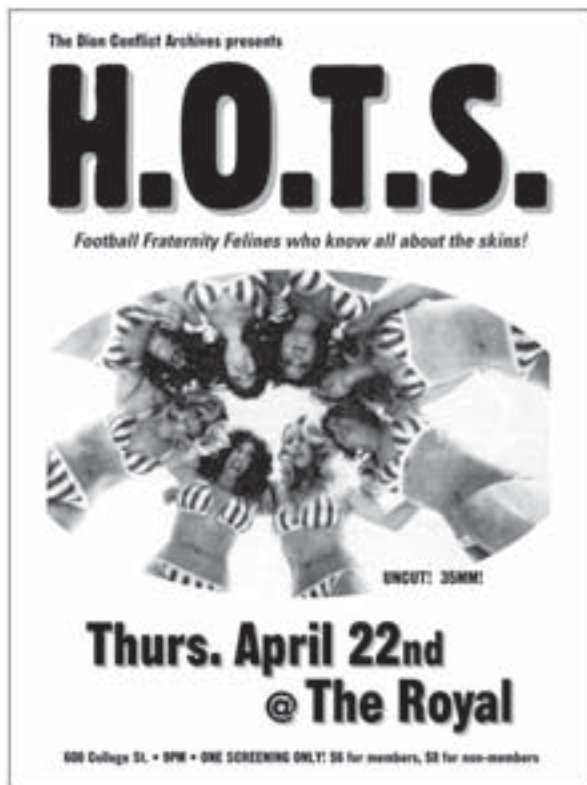
10. VIA "Kobenhavn, I Ruiner" Double 7" comp from the Danish time machine scene. Most of the good bands on here broke up last year and the bad ones still exist, but worth it alone for the A.P.A. and GORILLA ANGREG tracks. That these Grenouilles are so great at producing.

## SIMON HARVEY

1. EXPLODING HEARTS "Guitar Romantic" LP (Screaming Apple)
2. CAREER SUICIDE "SARS" ep (Deranged)
3. ASSAULT 2<sup>nd</sup> CD (HG Fact)
4. ACTION demo (self released)
5. ZONE "Squeeze State" CD (HG Fact)
6. BORN DEAD ICONS "Ruins" LP (Feral Ward)
7. INEPSY "Rock 'n Roll Babylon" LP (Feral Ward)
8. AUSGEBOMBST "Hellbomber" CD (Hardcore Holocaust)
9. FROM ASHES RISE "Nightmare" LP (Jade Tree)
10. HOSTAGE LIFE demo (self released)

## MARTIN FARKAS

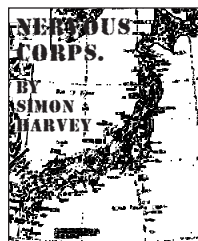
1. EXPLODING HEARTS "Guitar Romantic" LP
2. NEW PORNOGRAPHERS "Electric Version" LP (Mint)
3. THE GOOD THIEF Film
4. DIRECT CONTROL Demo Tape
5. FUCKED UP "Baiting the Public" EP (Deranged)
6. JFA "We Know You Suck" LP (Alternative Tentacles.)
7. 25th HOUR Film
8. VIA "PEACE/WAR" Compilation LP (R Radical)
9. ACTION Demo of LP (Punkcore)
- 10: though ought to be #1: NOT seeing any Matrix or LOTR movies





# columns

Several unfortunate barriers—economic, geographic and linguistic—conspire to ensure that far too many great Japanese bands and records never



receive a fraction of the recognition they deserve abroad, so it was refreshing to see Boston label Cadmium Sick collaborate with Dewa to release a fine 2002 debut EP by Niigata's HEARTWORK, a record that turned many heads among North American punks. It's a shame, then, that now Dewa alone have delivered the band's sophomore EP, a ripping three-song set



that deserves every bit as much attention as its predecessor. HEARTWORK's music hasn't changed a bit—quick, driving blasts of purist hardcore punk that recall classical US (Negative Approach, Minor Threat), Japanese (Lip Cream, Systematic Death) and even some early UK bands; current Japcore comparisons might include No Side or Deride. The pace is set by a consistent galloping beat, fortified by prominent bass, accompanied by shouted vocals and all driven along by a non-stop buzzsaw guitar that occasionally leaps into tasteful leads but never loses the essential momentum. Definitely recommended to anyone into straight forward old school hardcore, and deserving of far greater availability outside Japan. (Dewa / 89-11 Ishinada Tonojima / Tsuruoka Yamagata / 997-0815 Japan)

Perhaps somewhat more easily found is the latest from Tokyo traditionalists WORM'S MEAT. Their "Four stupid brains" CDEP has recently been pressed on vinyl, albeit in a limited edition of 750 copies, on Stuart Schrader's renowned *Game of the Arseholes* label, and it's every bit the ripper one would expect from the label. Like HEARTWORK, WORM'S MEAT spurn "progression" in favour of a purist hardcore rooted firmly in the Japanese tradition. That means stinging leads, group choruses, scowling vocals and a relentless, charging metallic punk attack. While decidedly heavier than HEARTWORK on the Burning Spirits influence (ie lots of fret-scrubbing action), this is still more direct than, say, PAINTBOX or CRUDE, sounding most like the definitive late '80's Selfish Records bands (Nightmare, So What etc). (G.O.T.A. / P.O. Box 511 / Whippany, NJ / 07981-0511 / USA)

Last column, I sang the praises of another of Stuart's releases, a cassette-only entry in DISCLOSE's increasingly ridiculous discography. Entitled "The sound of disaster", this has now hit vinyl courtesy of a Brazilian label (No Fashion / massiser@hotmail.com), in a small press of only 500 7" EPs. Needless to say, totally essential raw noise, as is the second DISCLOSE record we review this month, also an EP. Called "Neverending war" and released by the elusive Japanese Dan-Doh label, this three song rager is another uncompromising mess of smashing guitar distortion, anguished cries and the relentless, addictive d-beat drumming that makes each song seem to repeatedly collapse upon itself in torrents of noise and violence. Many hardcore punk fans will still turn their nose up at the horrendous windtunnel thrashing DISCLOSE never fail to subject us to—I recently decided that you know your tastes are fucked for life when you start craving such sonic abuse as is found on these records, even with the slightly more structured, primitively metallic BROKEN BONES influence the band have been displaying of late. As always, the music, lyrics and graphics are entirely recycled....so what? Definitely not recommended for fans of originality or creativity, but mandatory for raw hardcore freaks. (Dan-Doh c/o K-Club / 2-1-26 Honmachi / Kochi City 780-0870 / Japan)

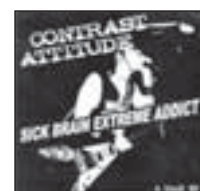
Early accounts comparing the SPROUTS to an insane blend of TEENGENERATE and LARM intrigued me enough to warrant getting ahold of their debut EP on Kentucky's *Sound Pollution* (P.O. Box 17742 / Covington, KY / 41017 / USA), and the record's 21 songs-on-a-45 RPM 7" format actually outdid the first DRI EP, but a few listens reveal this to be a moderately amusing novelty item, not an enduring hardcore rager or the long-awaited garage thrash breakthrough that had been suggested. Definitely high-energy stuff here, but the tinny, powerless sound and absence of any truly memorable songs make it unlikely I'll be pulling this one out for too many repeat spins.

EXTERMINATE are an Aichi band, and I'd been hearing good things about their new "Find out" single on the long-running MCR label. It's certainly a

competent effort, with the standard strained vox and group choruses over a full, powerful mid-tempo hardcore sound, but something's missing. Some serious bursts of speed, a particularly catchy hook or a bit of tasty melodic/metal guitar might well push "Find out" into the recommended pile, but for now it's simply another decent little record. Nonetheless, I'd definitely be interested in hearing future material, because EXTERMINATE clearly have potential. (MCR / 157 Kamiyama Maizuru / Kyoto 624-0913 / Japan)



MCR's second release this month is a four-song EP from Mie's CONTRAST ATTITUDE. Bearing the typically Japanese (i.e. nonsensical but undeniably evocative) title "Sick brain extreme addict", it's a good slab of furious, distortion-drenched thrash in the tradition of GLOOM, DISCLOSE and the recent wave of d-beat crasher crust outfits. CONTRAST ATTITUDE kick up one hell of a din for a three piece, with rabid vocals and chainsaw guitars blazing over a rough and tumble rhythm section. Definitely dig the sick, atonal leads that sometimes erupt as if on "Why?"-template cue, so no problem at all giving this full generic hardcore approval.



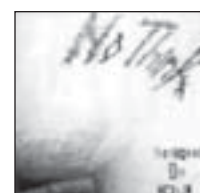
I've never heard the first EP from Kumagaya City's LITTLE BASTARDS, but if it's anything like their second, "Greed slaves", I really don't need to. Pretty dreadful disposable chug/thrash from this self-proclaimed "grind crusty" act, with cookie monster vocals, a weak guitar sound, drums way too high in the mix and no actual songs to speak of. I guess someone out there likes this grindcore stuff, since the records keep getting released, but it sure ain't me ...next. (Dewa, address above)



BATHTUB SHITTER fare a little better, since their grinding thrash has a full, clear recording and doesn't skimp on the blasting speed, but any listenability is once again trumped by utterly pointless big dog/little dog crust vocals. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of their "Angels save us" EP is that it was released on a Cypriot label (Rusted Lock / P.O. Box 27620 / 2431 Nicosia / Cyprus)

LAST SURVIVORS are a young punk band from Yamato City, and they've released two killer singles; they're not new but they deserve to be mentioned here. "Law of the land" b/w "Red danger" appeared quite awhile back on *Crust War*, but it's not that label's usual violent thrash fare, while the more recent "Hell's corner EP" on Pogo 77 is a similar divergence for a label with a very specific focus. LAST SURVIVORS have a clear allegiance to the faster, wilder UK82 outfits, and these singles find them racing through some inspired purist hardcore punk along the lines of ULTRAVIOLENT, ABRASIVE WHEELS, early CHAOS UK and the first PARTISANS 45, as well as such (relatively) tuneful Finnish contemporaries as LAMA and APPENDIX. Catchy, powerful and brimming with energy and enthusiasm, I can't see LAST SURVIVORS failing to engage anyone with a taste for straight forward hardcore punk rock. Unfortunately, the "Pogo 77" EP was a very limited edition of 300 copies sold only locally and is long gone, but *Hardcore Holocaust* should still have copies of the *Crust War* 45. Its heavy, textured sleeve is meant to resemble a leather jacket (punk enough for you yet?), so it's an expensive record, but I still recommend it strongly. (*Crust War* / 1-28-3A, Shikitsu-Nishi 2 / Naniwa-Ku, Osaka-City / 556-0017 Japan)

NO THINK's "Straight to hell" EP on HG Fact didn't interest me at all, unfortunately. Extremely fast, tight thrash verging on power violence with the alternating gruff/screechy vocals (not a style that appeals to me at all) and blasting speed, but there's really nothing memorable here. If NO THINK married their speediest impulses to a nastier guitar sound and some more coherent vocals, they might really be onto something (i.e. INFEST, NO COMMENT, even Exclaim), but for now it's another competent but forgettable entry in a very crowded field. (HG Fact 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M/2-7-15 Yayoi-Cho/ Nakano, Tokyo/164-0013 Japan)



Much better is another recent *HG Fact* release, CROSSFACE's "Red line cross" CD. This took a couple of listens to really grab me, but it's a solid batch of totally doctrinaire Japanese hardcore circa 2004. Scathing vocals, group choruses and a skilled lead guitarist soloing over very well-produced, mid-to-fast tempo hardcore with metallic leanings and some really nice melodic flourishes in the leadwork...you know the score. Neither quite so rabid nor overly melodic as various other Burning Spirits bands, but well within the idiom, and it's difficult to go wrong with this formula when performed by musicians as talented as those in CROSSFACE. I'm really digging this guitar playing the more I listen, in fact. Grab it if you like FORWARD, JUDGEMENT, ETAE or PAINTBOX.



Perhaps my favourite record of the issue is "Absolute suspicion", the new LP from Kumamoto City power trio SOULCRAFT. A few American bands have been heralded as groundbreaking lately by virtue of mixing in the occasional subpar wannabe AC/DC or Motorhead riff into their tame generic hardcore and claiming to like Thin Lizzy and Rose Tattoo. A couple have made it work (NO TIME LEFT definitely come to mind here, and they're anything but tame), yet Japanese hardcore is virtually defined by this bastardization of hard rock flash and hardcore violence and has been since the mid '80's, when bands like GISM and Gastunk first harnessed guitar pyrotechnics and big production to the raw power of serious punk rock. SOULCRAFT are just the latest to peddle this lethal combination of instrumental proficiency and reckless attack, but they do it exceedingly well. They're less measured than the Burning Spirits heavyweights, thrashing out their songs with an abandon and ravenousness that recalls the best of LIP CREAM or GUDON, but there's no let-up on the wanking either. Masashi is a superb guitarist, constantly spinning off into full flight above the rhythm section's barrelling rush, and his squealing leads provide dynamic and melody to an already impressive display of muscular thrash that might nonetheless appear one dimensional otherwise—the difference between a good record and a great one. Listen to the way "Left my thought" begins with a subdued classic rock intro before bursting into a blazing slice of vicious hardcore, only to be tempered by an exceptional, extended melodic lead break if you need the point illustrated. Ace GASTUNK cover and typical Japcore demon drawings don't hurt one bit. CD is on essential Hiroshima label, but punks will want the licensed vinyl pressing on Sweden's PFC. (PFC / Box 7092 / 200 42 Malmo / Sweden)

On the other end of the hardcore spectrum are FEROCIOUS X, who forego any hint of refinement or taste in favour of a non-stop onslaught of dirty thrash, apparently inspired by the early rawness of such Swedish noise merchants as SKITSLICKERS, ABSURD and ANTI-CIMEX but functionally more indebted to the hugely influential Osaka crust bands that took the kang style to such extremes in the '90's. Screaming vocals, furious speed and a massive wall of howling noise entirely bereft of any hint of melody or distinction ensure that this will appeal to none but the diehards, which is just fine by me. Their "Vaga tanka sjalv" EP is a prime example of the non-metal strain of Japan's thriving crust scene (ie starting with Discharge but taking the frantic early '80's Skandi route over the AXEGRINDER/AMEBIX grind preferred by EFFIGY, ZOE etc). Noise not music, indeed... On a US label, so make a point of grabbing this if it sounds tasty. (Distort / Box 3400 / Wallington, NJ / 07057 / USA)

Hailing from Kofu City, EXHALE debuted a few years back with a stellar EP on *Throw Up*, so it's a pleasant surprise to see them showing up now with an American release, specifically a split with Connecticut's DIALLO. EXHALE continue to kick out some very powerful, anthemic purist Japcore—think the late '80's Selfish greats with Roger Miret on vocals and you're in the ballpark—although it's not quite in the upper echelon of the genre. Still, definitely worth acquiring for any serious Japcore collector. DIALLO, by the way, are excellent. Heavy but melodic hardcore with throaty vocals and some nice guitar work, this is obviously in the vein of the Memphis-by-way-of-Portland outfits but retains enough individuality and character to easily avoid sounding at all contrived or paint-by-numbers. A solid split all around. (Cries of Pain / P.O. Box 1004 / Windsor, CT / 06095 / USA)

Completely removed from the very professional, rockist Burning Spirits scene that receives so much well-deserved praise in this column is the huge but much less hyped Japanese anarcho punk scene, so the overview provided by *Forest's* recent "No hesitation to resist 2" EP (Forest c/o Hideyuki

Okahara / Ceramica 2 #301, 2-1-37 Minami / Kokobunji, Tokyo / 185-0021 Japan) is an appreciated glimpse of some lesser-known Japanese punk. Six bands on this 7" slab, with the prevailing sound being a fearsomely noise, bottom-heavy take on DISORDER or early EXTREME NOISE TERROR. DISCRIPT are a standout, providing some seriously pissed sounding d-beat that isn't afraid to indulge in heavy, chugging mosh breaks, whereas CRIMINAL's strange take on early Outo's noisy thrash is less impressive. Why does every record on this label (run by Hideyuki of DISCRIPT and BEYOND DESCRIPTION) sport cover artwork featuring American soldiers in gas masks? Anyways, I think you know whether you need this or not, but I enjoyed it.



Not actually on *Forest*, but including Hideyuki (you can tell by the cover photo of a section of American infantrymen in NBC gear) is a new split EP from BEYOND DESCRIPTION and Italian crusties KONTATTO. BD destroy here, ripping through a pair of brutal, well-produced thrashers with crunching breaks and a completely sick guitar sound. KONTATTO's raw, scrappy anarchist hardcore is solidly in the early '80's tradition of EU'S ARSE, WRETCHED and IMPACT, especially with its frantic, simplistic drumming and distressed but it's not quite in that league, and the thin recording undermines what might otherwise be some gripping hardcore punk. (Disastro Sonoro c/o Alessandro Castano/CP 162 – 54033/Carrara (MS)/Italy)

Anyways, that's it for now. Try taking chances on this stuff if you see it in your local distro or store—Japanese records are rarely hyped or advertised abroad, but the quality to crap ratio is extraordinarily high and your risk-taking is frequently rewarded. As always, please get in touch if you've released a Japanese punk record (and that includes '77 stuff, thrash, garage and pop-punk, not just the crust and heavy hardcore I've been covering most), because I'm always looking for more Japanese stuff to review.

#### Show review: October 25th, 2003

The show was an early start (4pm), and I think that coupled with the fact that there were 3 other shows in Osaka that same night, really put a damper on things. Most everyone was saying the show had an odd vibe/was rather



sucky. This, of course, was not due to the bands. The crowd just didn't seem into it. Anyway...on to the positives...First up was CONSTRICTED. This was my 2nd time seeing them. Raging crossover hardcore. The drummer is a total speed freak, and the singer was rocking a manly stash. 2nd up was STUPID BABIES GO MAD. Their shirts said it all... "rock n roll genocide!" They had a very similar sound to SMASH YOUR FACE. Rockin' balls-y hardcore. I ended up buying their CD (for 500yen I might add!). Third was WARHEAD. It was obvious they had just come off a tour (w/ CHOAS UK). Everyone except for Jun looked tired. They did rip through a solid set, though again, the crowd was really tame. 4th up was a jazz band (can't remember their name, it was written in Japanese...they are the same band that has the recent split with NIGHTMARE). They were good...but they played too long, plus the show atmosphere was already iffy...yeah, it just didn't work having them play this show. It would have been better had they played a show at Bears with just 3 other bands...ah well. Next up was TECHNOCRACY. I guess this band is pretty much NO SIDE with a new drummer. The songs were a bit long, but still solid. Very COC influenced...almost too much so. 6th was POIKKEUS. It seems a lot of people back home are really into this band...I personally thought they came off as a total joke. They were musically tight, but their antics were...lame? Yes...lame. You would have to have been there to understand what I mean. NIGHTMARE played 7th and totally brought a good vibe back to the show. They ripped through some old ragers and then played a few songs off the new split (the new songs are much more rock 'n' rollish...but so well executed) and then finished with a few more old songs. By this time, the crowd had grown (as more people probably had gotten out of work), and the awkward feeling of the show had dissipated quite a bit. MUGA, from Nagoya, played next. The guy who runs *Devour Records* (forgot his name!) plays bass for this band. They can be best described as Japan's answer to TRAGEDY/HHIG, but yet they still retain a sense of originality. They had an absolutely brutal and full sound (the best of the night). I was into it. 9th (it just keeps going!!) was HUMPTY DUMPTY. They play full on Finnish HC circa 1983. Solid band, and I did like them, but





**FRAMTID**

Photos by Randy Carncross

I don't if I would listen to their records if I were to buy them. It just wasn't anything all that memorable. Perhaps I am wrong though, as I felt the same way about AI when I saw them, and after hearing the records, I was like...damn, why didn't I like them! Anyway...last band...COLORED RICE MEN, which has ex-members of LIP CREAM and OUTO (and they covered "I Like Cola!"). They were good Japacore, but the added sax put me off a bit. It fit with what they were doing, but what they were doing wasn't all that appealing to me.

#### November 2003

So much have been going on this past month. 7 or 8 shows, if I remember correctly, 3 this past weekend alone, preparation for English Festival at school, and CRUCIFY ME practice (we should be recording soon). Craig and Leah, from Hamilton stayed with me for a few days at the end of October. I took them record shopping, and between Craig and I we dropped something like 300 dollars on records in 2 days time. We picked up some killer shit though, so its all good.

In Mid November, Mark (ex-EXTREME NOISE TERROR) came to Japan on holiday. He stayed a few days with Kevin, and attended some shows in the Osaka area. Solid guy for sure. Kevin put together a party one of the nights Mark was in Kobe. Seriously some of the most fun I have had while living here. COMET (*Hardcore Kitchen Records*) together with Youppe (forgive me if I spelled his name incorrectly!) of THE FUTURES always equates lots of laughs.

Other highlights include seeing GOUKA and FRAMTID on the same show (11/15 at Bears), DEFECTOR (ex GLOOM), CURROPTED for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, THE VIBRATIONS (solid Japacore from Osaka), and VITAMIN X, THE FUTURES, ONE RIVER, and NK6 all on the same bill.

After the VITAMIN X show, a bunch of us went to Spa World. It was a bit pricey, but made the perfect backdrop for interviewing VITAMIN X (what better way to do an interview than in the nude relaxing in a hot bath!). The interview should be in an upcoming issue of SHORT, FAST AND LOUD.

That's about it for now. December is looking pretty good on the shows front...There is a big grind show as well as a big crust show towards the end of the month, RAZORS EDGE and TOTAL FURY are playing together on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December, and a few others I can't think of at the



**GAMY**

Photos by Randy Carncross

moment. As soon as CRUCIFY ME records, a demo will be sent to Equalizing Distort to (hopefully) be played on the radio for all you kiddies to here.

Shows...last show I went to was SWARRRM, GAMY, HURRICANE, and a few others in Kobe. HURRICANE was by far the best band of the night. This band is just totally in full swing. When I first saw them in September, they were a decent band...now they are just full on intense and demand your attention. GAMY was decent (I've seen them play better) and SWARRRM was great until Kapo-san became a bit too rowdie and smashed his guitar cutting their set short. But the drummer of SWARRRM...holy hot shite...dude can blast like a madman. Incredible to say the least. There are quite a few kick arse gigs coming up. JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS and EXCLAIM on the 21st (from what I have been told, JRRH will play all their songs at this gig. should be rad), MUSTANG, BLOWBACK, WARHEAD, CROSSFACE (ex EVANCE), and NIGHTMARE on the 17th in Kyoto, VIVISICK, NIGHTMARE, FRAMTID and others in Kyoto on the 28th, URBAN TERROR, RAZORS EDGE, THE FUTURES and one more at Fandango on the 29th, and March 27th...TETSU AREI 20th anniversary show in Tokyo (not sure of the other bands playing). Oh! And GAUZE, DSB and FRAMTID April 11th in Osaka!

#### February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004

What better way to spend your Valentines Day then at a raging Japacore show? Mike and I set out early Saturday so we could explore Ikoma (part of Nara Prefecture), as we knew there was a punk shop somewhere near the live house. Shortly after arriving we found Barkbox. It was a decent shop. They had a Smash Your Chains shirt (I need to go back and buy it) and a few other goodies. After killing some time, we moved on to the show. The first band to play was called GRAND LINE. They were a decent mix between punk, Japacore and HC. The singer had great presence. They were definitely a nice surprise. Next up was BACKBONE. Holy shite this band is intense. Full on Japacore and completely underrated, and they get mad points for making a long anti-war speech. Mike and I skipped out of watching the third band and shot the breeze with some of the rad people in attendance. Next band that we saw was AI. Wow. That is all I can say. The best live band I have seen here (dare I say better than GAUZE?). Both the band and the crowd were raging. It just made for a great feeling. Last up was CONTRADICTION. This all girl punk band rocked out pretty effing hard. Some fast songs, some more dirty numbers, and a bit of mellowness thrown in as well. Solid. Too bad they will be out of commission for some time, as their drummer moved to Australia the day after this show.

#### February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2004

So after rushing home from work, eating little to nothing, I made my way to Temmabashi Station to meet up with Mike and then head off to Kyoto for the show. I'd been looking forward to this gig for some time. We arrived maybe 15 minutes before the gig started, and the kind gentlemen of WARHEAD put Mike and I on the guest list. Solid dudes. So first up was NIGHTMARE. This was their first show with the new bassist (ex-NUKEY PIKES). Now, I love this band. Awesome guys, awesome music, great stage presence. How can you go wrong? But, the lack of distortion on the older songs makes their sound a bit thin. It totally works for the new songs, as they are much more rock n roll than fast Japacore, but I just wish they'd fill out those older tracks. They did end their set with 2 songs from the LP. Definitely a plus. Oh, and Maku (I believe that is how you spell his name) gets the thumbs up for being able to change a guitar string in the middle of a song and still be able to be a part of said song. Next was CROSSFACE. The singer is ex-EVANCE and the guitarist is ex-AI. I have both their CDs and think of them as being solid records, but live was just 100x better. I was hoping to see a bit more aggression from the singer, as I have heard some interesting stories about his days in EVANCE. Third up was BLOWBACK. I wasn't a huge fan of the "I Like Time" CD, but after seeing them live, I need to go back and re-listen to it. BLOWBACK live is up there with Ai's live set a few nights before. They were tight as hell and full of energy. Just incredible. 4<sup>th</sup> was MUSTANG. I really don't know what to say about this band live other than I was extremely disappointed. They played nothing off of the 1<sup>st</sup> LP (which is far superior to the "Free Style" record) and just lacked energy. They played a three piece, and I think that was part of what was lacking. Don't get me wrong, the songs I knew sounded good, but just wasn't up to what I expected. Ah well. Last was WARHEAD. Jun is such a great front man. He may be small, but damn, he comes off as the hardest MFer in place. And his vocals! Even though they had a few technical problems, they just destroyed. Definitely the best I have seen them so far. This was the best show I have been to since moving here. And next month it will only get better!!!

*Craig and Leah of Schizophrenic REcords were just in Japan. They came on the show and told us about their adventures. They were good enough to send us their show diary while in Japan.*



#### **SPEND 4, CREATURES, AI, DISCLAPTIES, ASSAULT and DSB**

Wall Saturday, October 25.

This was a great intro to the Japanese HC scene as we were devastated by 5 out of 6 bands. We hadn't heard of openers SPEND 4 until they beat us senseless with their frantic hardcore. Killer leads and really nice guys, they later gave us a single and invited us to the after party. CREATURES were an all-female band with extensive tattoos, but I just wasn't into them. AI ripped us a new asshole with their driving Japcore assault. Their singer was a scrawny guy that rocked out to all of the bands and had the most ripping voice once he hit the stage. Check out their CD's. DISCLAPTIES were a great Oi band. Sounded like a classic band from my teens playing all of the hits, I just didn't know any of the

songs. ASSAULT were amazing! Thought they would be impossible to beat but DSB managed to out do them. Had me smiling from ear to ear as I shot about 10 photos during the first 30 seconds of their set. This show made me want to move to Japan. The after party was great too, got to socialize with some Aussies and answer ASSAULT's queries about the T.O. scene as much as the language barrier would permit. Nod and smile, repeat.

#### **SATELLITE OF LOVE, BREAKFAST, CONTRAST ATTITUDE, UG MAN, ANODE, STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE, DISCLOSE**

Watts Sunday October 26

Probably the most crowded show I have been to, making CRUDOS' set in the basement of Who's Emma seem empty. Definitely the loudest show I have ever been to, Leah's ears are still bleeding from serious fuckin' trauma. Missed the first band and got there as BREAKFAST was taking the stage. Bodies flying everywhere for their 25 minute set. Singer was frantic - jumping, dancing and holding a skateboard that his mic was taped to. UG MAN were great and differed from their records. The band had a mid-period BLACK FLAG sound and reminded me of NOMIND in their over all delivery. NOMIND in Japan, go figure. ANODE were emo-ish but really good at what they do. We decided to head out for some air. It was a battle to re-enter the club but we arrived as STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE played a ripping set of U.S. inspired hardcore that was over way too quick. Finally DISCLOSE blew the roof off the place with their sonic feedback attack. They had an amazing guitar sound that wasn't lost in the feedback that was ever so present.

#### **ASSFORT, SOBUT, SA, LAUGHIN NOSE**

Club 24 Yokohama, Friday October 31

What better way to spend Halloween than seeing one of my all time favorite bands LAUGHIN NOSE, even if it did cost us \$80 US for 2 tickets. This was our introduction to a larger show and rock star attitudes. ASSFORT set their gear up only to leave the stage so house lights could dim and people could scream and yell. Repeat 3 times with each band. ASSFORT played a great set of fast hardcore similar to their first couple of releases. Mixed between the frantic sounds were NOMEANSNO-ish jazz breaks. The crowd was crazy for them with tons of stage diving and a nutty circle pit. SOBUT...so bad...so what. Hate is such a strong word and I HATED them. SA is an older band made of scene veterans that delivered amazing street punk. The band could hardly been through stage dives, dancers and the 500 fists in the air punching to ever word Taisei screamed. His hair rocked and the guitarist Naoki pulled a goofy face for every solo. I could hardly wait for their set to be over just so that I could buy a CD. LAUGHIN NOSE have reunited and sounded like they never went away. The band was had a great time on stage, as well as working their merch table and shaking hands. An energetic crowd...most of whom weren't born when the bands started They played an amazing 60 minute set of all the hits and came back for an encore of "When The Punks Go Marchin In". Unfortunately we had to leave for the last train to Tokyo, where the moshing continued as drunk salarymen negotiated the contorted crowds en route.

#### **COBRA**

Club Chop/Shuto, Saturday November 1

This would have been a great show, part of a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary party for this venue - too bad we forgot our map and couldn't find the club. Ikebukuro has a large selection of vending machines and a Virgin Megastore with free

internet access. Here we were able to find a map online and attempt to transpose it on an area map with assistance from an employee. Both the police we couldn't find until we tried to jaywalk, and a hairdresser we also asked for help with directions were none. Eventually we picked up a consolation 6-pack and headed home.

#### **DISLOYAL, ABDUCT, MUTANT, LOST PARTY, TANTRUM, PALUKA**

Chuo University, Sunday November 2

Well worth the long train and monorail ride out to the 'burbs for this free, outdoor show. Got to see our friends DISLOYAL whom we met on our first night out in Japan. They opened the show with a set of DISCHARGE-inspired hardcore. Give them some time to develop and watch for their first demo tape. ABDUCT did jazzy punk. Not my thing...but still high energy and like all the bands we saw, very proficient at what they do. Their music drove Leah away to the nearby cafeteria to set off a toilet alarm. MUTANT rocked us hard, sounding like SYSTEMATIC DEATH and early 9 SHOCKS. They ended their set by chucking their instruments onto the concrete, great stuff. Watch for a 7" on *Schizophrenic*. I was lost in a haze after seeing MUTANT and can't recall the next couple bands. At the show I got to meet Shingo Maeda of *Too Circle Records* after years of trading releases. PALUKA played next and were great. A killer mix of GANG OF FOUR/ABURADAKO/BIG BOYS keeping it hard but real. We missed STRUGGLE FOR PRIDE, which was a shame because they were amazing the other night but we had a long ride back into town to see MUSTANG.

#### **ONE YEAH ONE, CROSSFACE, STICKS IN THROAT, GUNS FRONTIER, ADVANCE, WITHOUT SYSTEM, MUSTANG**

Wall, Sunday November 2

This show was on the eve of Culture Day, a national holiday. As we arrived at the club the alleyway was littered with passed out punks. Hell, it was just after 6 p.m. and people are unconscious, this is going to be a serious party. Looking around the packed club we knew it was a different type of show, tons of big burly guys with lots of crazy neck and head tattoos. Some of them greeted each other with a punch in the chest and a big hug. Fuck, I thought I was at a HAYMAKER show! The bands delivered traditional Japcore, nothing more, nothing less. The night began with ONE YEAH ONE who featured one of the guys from the club. They have a great CD out on the venue's label, *Good Luck Records*. Their drummer beat up a storm, I think she was the most impressive I saw during the whole trip. Ripping hardcore, catch this band whenever and however you can. The rest of the bands played loud traditional Japanese hardcore, I was a happy guy. GUNS FRONTIER was the surprise of the night, playing acoustic songs that had all present singing along, nonetheless it was a nice break. The odd thing for me, besides the free beer that seemed to be coming non-stop, was the way the club emptied out after WITHOUT SYSTEM devastated the crowd with their set. Once the smoke cleared...there were 36 people left to see MUSTANG play their great Burning Spirits set. What the fuck!!

#### **?, CRISPY NUTS, NO ALL, KLAXONS, FORWARD, SECT**

Wall November 3, 2004

A night of mixed emotions as it was the last and most uneven show we had seen in Japan, while FORWARD was the pinnacle of bands seen on the trip. An unknown band with a kanji name opened the show with a great set of hardcore. Loud screaming guitars and frantic vocals the way I like it. CRISPY NUTS are a pop punk band with a few releases and have recently been to Germany. They were good at what they do just not my thing, but the singer's shirt that said "Born To Loser" was entertaining enough. NO ALL was unmemorable, maybe too-melodic hardcore. During their set I was busy saying good-bye to our friends at Wall, the best HC venue I have ever been to. We traded CD's and drank more free beer. KLAXONS played next and were another melodic band, rockish and energetic. Bought their CDR so I guess they made an impression. Next up was the amazing FORWARD. Heard lots of crazy stories about Burning Spirits shows, which prevented Leah from taking any pictures the last couple of nights. Rumours of crazy beatings, people getting knocked out for having a camera let alone taking pictures. The crowd was the same burly, big Japanese punks at the show the night before. How they could listen to some of the earlier bands remains a mystery, maybe their senses were dulled by their hangovers. Anyway, FORWARD were unfuckinbelievable. Proficient and tight with guitar solos aplenty. People punching the air in unison to the sonic boom the band made on stage. Despite their rumoured surliness FORWARD seemed jovial, they cracked the odd smile and didn't even pound the guy who jumped onstage for backing vocals. The night ended with the SECT, a RANCID-inspired rock star band that played 77-ish punk so Leah and I made for the hallway to socialize with Daragh and CRISPY NUTS. A mixed night but FORWARD did not disappoint.



# Reviews

Reviewers are: Andy Stick, Motherfucker (ASM), Craig Caron (CC), John McDonald (JM), Randy Carncross (RC), and Stepe Perry (SP)

## Ääritila "Ja Kaikki Kuitenkin Paattyy Luolemaan!" CD

Get ready for a Scandinavian attack. A band like this is long overdue. Blending both Swedish and Finnish styles ÄÄRITILA come at this with this uniquely Northern European perspective. ÄÄRITILA are made up of members from MEANWHILE, TOTALITAR and RIISTETYT and it shows. The full sounding low end bass that crackles with fuzz and played like a bulldozer soundtrack is a signature sound to most d-beat bands. ÄÄRITILA's bass is just sinister sounding. It fuckin' rules. The drum style is more Finnish in orientation. A lot of the parts could easily come from a TERVEET KADET release in their speed and varied styles. However the difference is that the drummer also plays a charging beat that drives this whole operation. The singer is Lazze from RIISTETYT with the same kind of angry shouting style. In trying to describe them he is pretty much the perfect hardcore shouter. No singing, no throaty shouting, someone who can let a riff ride out before adding his two cents, and lyrics that are very political in nature. Although this full length sounds like something out of the early 80's this was recorded in 2002, along with an ep that came out on 1000db. You can wait for the vinyl re-issue on *Partners in Crime*, but why wait. (Hardcore Holocaust / P.O. Box 26742 / Richmond, VA / 23261 / USA / [www.hardcoreholocaust.com](http://www.hardcoreholocaust.com)) - SP



## Active Slaughter "Ave a Butchers" CD

This is probably the greatest UK inspired style of early 80's hardcore that I have heard in some time. The disk starts off with news clips about retaliation in the middle east. It's very CONFLICT inspired. The vocalists sounds like something between DISORDER and the 4-SKINS, but with rapid fire back and forths that remind me of AUS ROTTEN or CRASS. The music is very chaos punk inspired, but with a political edge to it. The music brings in the street punk sound and spirit of the VARUKERS, fueled with the bare bones piss 'n vinegar attack of CRASS and seasoned with some punk rock influences as filtered through the SEX PISTOLS. Fuckin' brilliant and fuckin' punk. Up the fuckin' punx. (Active Slaughter / P.O. Box 35913 / London / N17 9YP / UK) - SP



## AK 47 "Free Palestine" CD

Victoria's favourite Maoists return to the fold with 21 new songs of self-released melodic styled hardcore. From the same scene that gives rise to RENDER USELESS and GOATBOY, but probably is the most under-rated of the bunch. That has something to do with their releases which are either DIY or on extremely hard to find labels. But I have followed Tony Galuza's progression from his days back in SECTION 46 through to NOTHING TO LOSE and LOOTBAG and they have matured quite a bit. Having said that this is not the sell-out pap of other melodic pop punk bands. AK 47 do have a melodic sensibility to them. But they also play some pretty straight forward hardcore. And when they are doing neither they are busting out some of the roots reggae parts a la the RUTS to mix it up a little. Traditionalists in their punk roots, members of AK 47 have been slugging away building a DIY scene that is very political in nature and they do a great job at it. This completely deserves your attention. (Box 1034 / 1720 Douglas Street / Victoria, BC / V8W 2G7 / Canada) - SP



## Anal Thunder "Cheap Wine and Quality Time" CD

With a name like ANAL THUNDER – one would think this band takes their cues from TURBONEGRO. That would not be far off the mark. ANAL THUNDER do rock in that Scandinavian sort of way and why shouldn't they as they are from Finland, but they have more of a country feel like NASHVILLE PUSSY. More of a redneck parody vibe. ANAL THUNDER also encompass the sweeping rock out riffage of country mates WASTED. They also write tuneful melodic parts that sound like the VANDALS. So a band that rocks out with country twang, sweeping atmospherics and good ole fashion melody. This is their fourth release and



there are some clever pisstake of LED ZEPPELIN and NIRVANA. (Hell's Tone / Poste Restante / 80100 JNS / Finland / e-mail: [htr@lprhardcore.net](mailto:htr@lprhardcore.net)) - SP

## Caustic Christ "Can't Relate" CD

If you were to pre-judge this LP on this bands former accolades (AUS-ROTTEN, PIST, REACT, SUBMACHINE) you would have a pretty solid record in your hands. Well, if the Rolling Stones taught us anything, it's that despite what you may have accomplished in the past, you can still suck today. What we have here is pretty uninspired, paint-by-numbers revivalist style hardcore with limp production values. The vocal delivery comes off a bit like Jerry A, but when you have a chorus that reads: "Frat Boy Go Home, Frat Boy Fuck Off" it leaves a lot to be desired. I may have appreciated this more, if this was made by a bunch of high school kids, but these guys are in their thirties. It just makes me wonder if punk rock is merely escapism for those who are afraid to grow up rather than creating an alternative to the status quo. In summation, the highlight of this record is a cover by the substandard early eighties band, "FLIPPER". Weak. (Havoc Records / P.O. Box 8585 / Minneapolis, MN / 55408 / USA) - JM



## Cockroach demo

This incredible band from the Netherlands emerged during the development of the Dutch fastcore scene like other places in Japan and New Jersey and Sweden. The Netherlands called it Neder thrash and seemed to be rich with bands like this as comps like "Maximaal Onthaal" demonstrated. COCKROACH are one of the bands that were able to capture overseas interest releasing a great ep on *Acme Records*. The new stuff sounds like AMDE PETERSENS ARMÉ in that complex drawing on loads of hardcore references, but their sound never compromises as anything less than a blistering attack of ultra fast hardcore. There are quite a few references to SEEN RED's material but COCKROACH is no cheap imitation. The vocal inflection and some of the song structures are the similarities. (Cockroach / 3512 BG Utrecht / Jansveld 28 / Netherlands) - SP

## Corrupted "Se Hace Por Lose Suenos A Sesinos" LP

We all know CORRUPTED by now. Slow, punishing sludge-core that is often a step above the rest. I don't think much of a description beyond that is needed. There are 3 songs on this release. 2 are of the typical CORRUPTED style most are used to, and one is an acoustic number. This LP is limited to 1000 copies, and is not available for wholesale outside of Japan. Meaning, if you want a copy, you have to order one from *HG Fact*. But, I would assume by the time you read this, it will be sold out. If you know someone living in Japan and want a copy, I'd suggest having him or her get you one ASAP. (HG Fact 105 Nakanoshinbashi – M 2-7-15 Yayoi – Chou Nakano Tokyo 164-0013) - RC

## Cut Offs, The "Fat, Drunk, and Angry" CD

Sometimes the CUT OFFS play garage rock inspired by something like the RIP OFFS, whereas songs like "Shotgun Libertarian" seem mildly inspired by early 80's UK oi. Then you get songs like "Time Goes By" that feel like something off a QUEERS record. A good mix of punk influences with a singer that sounds like Jeff Beardall – GUILT PARADE era. Good stuff. (The Cut Offs / P.O. Box 123 / Schwenksville, PA / 19426 / USA / [www.thecut-offs.com](http://www.thecut-offs.com)) - SP



## Desperate Measures "Never Enough Time" CD

Never have I heard a breakdown done as well since YOUTH OF TODAY. That's because this band has the drummer from NO JUSTICE, that pit mayhem generating band from Maryland. Consequently DESPERATE MEASURES are also from Maryland and this has been one of the most awaited releases from the edge scene in some time. And it lives up to the hype. Taking the energy of the first YOUTH OF TODAY record and combining some of the crunch of the GORILLA BISCUITS ep, DESPERATE MEASURES come out with the best youth crew like releases I have heard in years. (Youngblood Records / P.O. Box 236 / Ephrata, PA / 17522 / USA) - SP



### Disfear "Misanthropic Generation" CD

I can't begin to tell you how annoyed I was when I heard that *Feral Ward* was releasing this on vinyl with a gatefold and a NO SECURITY cover the day after I picked this up on CD. Anyways, this is the third full length installment from these Swedes and over the span of ten years since their debut 7". With numerous changes in personnel, Bjorn and Frykman have recruited Tomas Lindberg of AT THE GATES and SKITSYSTEM fame on vocal duties. The differences with this record and their previous two LP's are so great, they may as well be different bands. But fear not fans of DISFEAR as this is definitely their best work to date: Lots of "Wah-Wah" leads and the vocals are shouted with the same rasp as Tompa's other bands. But what makes this a great record is the ultra catchy choruses most notably the title track and my favourite: "A Thousand Reasons". No filler on this disc, but you should really buy the vinyl as I will. This so good that it will make the listeners of both genders want to grow facial hair. (Relapse / P.O. Box 2060 / Upper Darby, PA / 19082 / USA) - JM



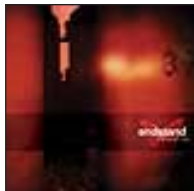
### The Dogs "Suburban Nightmare" CD

These Motor City rockers enlisted in the Guitar Army in 1973, twilight era of the Hi Energy crusade, and promptly shipped out to the Western Front (LA theatre), where they hooked up with vanguard units of the Punk Rock Explosion and proceeded to make some killer music in the enduring spirit of their hometown. Over thirty years later, one could be forgiven for holding less than stellar expectations for a new full-length, but this turns out to be a very pleasant surprise indeed. First and foremost a guitar record through and through, "Suburban nightmare" is a truly remarkable showing for a band that have been functioning for nearly as long as I've been alive. The pace is consistently fast and rocking, and the DOGS thankfully eschew any attempt at "maturity" or contrived "progression" in favour of a lean, riff-oriented punk-informed hard rock (or vice versa—same difference) that's shot through with Loren Molinare's electrifying leads and powered by a non-stop energy that would be impressive in a band half their age. Definitely recommended to anyone who digs the STOOGES, MC5, DICTATORS, NEW CHRISTS etc, and you can bet that "Class of '70" will be a mixed tape staple around these parts for years to come. (Dionysus / P.O. Box 1975 / Burbank, CA / 91507 / USA) - SH



### Endstand "Hit and Run" CD

SXE emo. ENDSTAND come from the straight edge scene of big burly guitars and a heavy thick guitar sound that can play fast and then slow it down in a stutter manner to break shit down. They also play their guitars a bit more acoustically then hardcore bands to get those air-y emo structures that bend and make notes whine. They layer them and strum them fast creating swooping atmospheric pieces. But none of it ever gets too wimpy. ENDSTAND are a more gutsier hardcore version of GRADE. Think of GRADE but as a band that wears more of their hardcore influences on their sleeve. (Combat Rock Industry / P.O. Box 65 / 11101 Riihimäki / Finland) - SP



### Entropia CD

Italian fastcore with a beefed up guitar that makes a ringing noise. The style is very much reminiscent of classic fast bands like the RAPED TEENAGERS. Or a little less frenetic version of CRUNCH. Take the multitude of parts in a song structure from CONFUSIONE, give them a VICTIM'S FAMILY wash over in the guitar department, and inject it with some AMDE PETERSENS ARMÉ umph. Actually ENTROPIA are a little more multi-dimensional than your average fastcore band drawing on influences as basic as Greg Ginn's dischordant guitar crunch to some post punk repetition a la MARGINAL MAN to their racing breakway style that is the genre. This is not for those who love to be pidgeon-holed, but definitely strongly recommended for those looking to break out of the norm with hardcore that is fast and twisted. And they feature some members from CRIPPLED BASTARDS for chistsake. (Six Weeks 225 Lincoln Avenue / Cotati, CA / 94931 / USA) - SP



### Flux of Pink Indians / the Epileptics "Fits and Starts" CD

What you have here is a chronological look at FLUX OF PINK INDIANS beginning with the EPILEPTICS, which starts off with a very raw and off tune version of probably their most well known song "Tube Distaster". This first session is taken from a live show in 1978 and makes you wonder why they included it. 5 months we get a demo recording that is very basic in terms of sound. This session reminds me a lot of the early CRASS material with a more stripped down punk beat, angry screaming vocals, and a guitar that is pushed to the background with a sonic buzzsaw fuzz. It grows on you. By the time the EPILEPTICS recorded their first ep "Stortbeat", which was only 5 months later they already added the sophistication of syncopation that made GANG OF FOUR stand out. They still retained the CRASS like origins heard in songs like "System Rejects" however the GANG OF FOUR style was creeping in. The next session is live material from the same period as the "Stortbeat" ep and there is noticeable improvement from the first live material. The song "Anarcheet [69]" is great. The last 3 tracks of the EPILEPTICS are "Stortbeat" recorded 2 years later. What a difference. This is essential FLUX OF PINK INDIANS as they were known. The ep that FLUX OF PINK INDIANS did for CRASS as is the rest of the good stuff before they became a funk hybrid band with the "Uncarved" LP. *Dr. Strange* captures the precursory material that made the band behind the legendary "Neu Smell" and "Strive to Survive Causing Least Suffering Possible" LP. (Dr. Strange Records / P.O. Box 1058 / Alta Loma, Ca. / 91701 / USA) - SP



## video Review

### V/A "All Crusties Spending Loud Night Noize 2002" VHS, 58 Minutes

This looks like it was filmed all in one night. A gig that took place in Osaka back on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002 put together by the fine folks at *Crust War*. All the audios are sound board recordings that have been sunk into the video footage so it is excellent quality. And the camera work is pretty incredible catching 10 bands doing 21 songs. The opening footage is of ZOE starting out with some metal leads and breaking into two songs that I have not heard committed to vinyl yet. "Grief of the End" starts out with some chaotic drum rolls and the amount of head banging in the crowd is pretty insane. The Finnish inspired POIKKEUS were a highlight for me. They were new. The buzzsaw guitar fuzz is biting and the punishing thom drum attack is only matched by how fierce the rest of the band attacks every note in this live set. Sheer spikey hair insanity. The crowd reacts in surging fits. The echoes on the vocals is daunting like a VEIMEINEN KOLONNA record. Excellent in a tribute sort of way. The next band - DECONSTRUCTION - was an unexpected surprise for me. These FINAL CONFLICT look-alikes tear away at the sonic fabric that becomes akin to listening to a vacuum cleaner on stun. It is incredibly noisy. The vocalist has a great set of deranged pipes and this band really knows how to bring the chaos, with the longest song of the whole night. Then FRAMTID really sends everyone in a frenzy. Is that the same drummer as ZOE? After ABRAHAMs CROSS is Japan's DISCHARGE - DISCLOSE - who rip into three tracks of d-beat glory. The crazy-ness on the stage during DEFECTOR looked like a 9 SHOCKS show. Jhonio is a character like Erba and steals the fuckin' show with his running on the spot keeping his knees super high. Looks like a football training video if he didn't have a bass strapped to him. "Keep those knees high." The set for LIFE was probably the most explosive in terms of a sound and yet the crowd didn't seem to respond. It was weird because I thought they delivered one of the best sets. REALITY CRISIS have 6 members in the band and could barely fit on the stage. But that didn't stop them from moving around, probably the liveliest of the bunch. Spikey hair, fists pumping, dual vocal attack. This video ends with 2 tracks by EFFIGY who play some crunchy metallic rock. The one guy has a good set of hair for some ace head banging. The other guitarist has some soap spikes. This is the crossover dream from '86 come to fruition. Punks and long hairs creating powerful and chaotic noise to pummel the brain and the system as well. The tight edits, the multiple camera angles, the expert audio synching. This is pretty professional looking and well worth the coin. A perfect video follow up to *Inferno Punx* - photo book. (MCR Company / 157 Kamiagu Maizuru / Kyoto 624-0913 / Japan)





### G-10 (title in kanji) CD

I knew nothing about this band before I bought this CD, so other than knowing that *Bloodsucker* usually puts out quality releases, this one was all up to chance. And I'm sure glad I took a chance. Total Japacore on the mid-paced side of things. The vocals remind me some of SLANG and it has that ever so slight NYHC feel to it. And the packaging is killer to say the least. Great glossy cover and layout. Pick this up if you can find one. (Bloodsucker Records / 1-16-18-403 Kusunoki / Chou Nishi / Ku Hiroshima City / 733-0002 Japan / [www.bloodsucker-records.com](http://www.bloodsucker-records.com)) - RC

### Gewalt – S/T EP picture disc

This band was made up of Yoshinaga (ROM), Kapo (Swarrm) and the singer of 1-MINUTES. While the 1<sup>st</sup> track is more on the tough side of HC, this record maintains a strong Japacore influence. Some songs have brief blast beats, and a few have leads with a Wa pedal (Can't go wrong with that in my opinion!). There is also a bit of a GAUZE influence creeping into some of the songs. Overall, a solid release. Worth checking out. (No Address) - RC

### Haykh, the “Hackbozb” CD

This St. Petersburg foursome play a style very reminiscent of the TOY DOLLS. And the “Auld Lang Sye” intro to one of their songs doesn't help distinguish them. Nor does the music, which is super syrupy with a pop punk melody when not playing at a breakneck hardcore pace. And the lead vocalist has that sucking helium effect that the TOY DOLLS singer has. And the group choruses are beefed up in a classroom style that is clearly British whether it be the TOY DOLLS or PINK FLOYD's the Wall. Some of the songs even contain celtic parts played by slide whistle, which reeks of the TOY DOLLS. Basically, this is Russia's version of the TOY DOLLS. Having said that there are some other punk moments like the DISCHARGE rip off in “Katactpopa” or the “Pretty Vacant” lifting at the beginning of the song “Citiwan, Banomnyhan”, but it sounds like it is done to take the piss out of these punk monoliths...something I could see the TOY DOLLS instigating. (The Pauki Records / Tankovich Sasha / St. Petersburg / Metallostro, 196641 / P.O. Box 86 / Russia / e-mail: [pauki@nm.ru](mailto:pauki@nm.ru)) - SP



### Heartwork S/T EP

This is their 2<sup>nd</sup> EP and it shows much improvement from the 1<sup>st</sup>. 3 songs of full on Japacore with great hooks and such. My favorite track is “Undertaker”. Just a great song to rock out to and sing along with. Definitely a band worth checking out if you haven't already. (Dewa Records 89-11 Ishinada Tonojina Tsuruoka Yamagata 977-0815 Japan) - RC

### Hurricane Demo CD

This band has members of CHAINSAW and ROM. Raging Japacore with some newer HC influence thrown in the mix. Not sure if any of these CDRs are still floating around or not, but order one if you can (they didn't list an address, but they may have a webpage, so try doing a search!). Also, watch out for future releases from these guys. I believe some of these songs also appear on the Reason For Living 2003 3xLP comp on *Dan-Doh* Records. (no address) - RC

### Inepsy “R’N’R Babylon”

If anyone can't understand the indelible influence that MOTORHEAD has left on punk, then they should probably skip this review, or take interests in another genre of music altogether. This release simply obliterates their debut 7" “See You in Hell” with a new bass player and the addition of a second guitarist assuming leads. What you get here is a blended concoction of driving, early eighties d-beat punk with the obvious comparisons drawn to the ugliest rock n' roll band ever. Mix that with some layered, yet unpretentious leads and enough musical sense to incorporate a harmonica in the last song, but don't think this band doesn't take their cues from metal Gods CELTIC FROST with the breakdown in “See You in Hell” and the “Oohs” that are quite prevalent throughout. Best band in Canada? Probably. ([www.feralward.com](http://www.feralward.com)) - JM



### Inhuman “The Nightmare Continues” CD

This Brooklyn based outfit embodies that tough New York sound that JUDGE started. Most people want to credit AGNOSTIC FRONT and the CRO-MAGS with this sound, but once JUDGE came out it really popularized

## demo features

**Lights Out** demo 2003 - featured on the December 7<sup>th</sup> program  
LIGHTS OUT are a 4-piece from Felton California. They play a slower more mid-tempo brand of fast breakaway style hardcore that knows how to throw down a break down. It kind of reminds me what the GATECRASHERS would sound like in a fight with IN CONTROL. Two very energetic scenes colliding. And kind of the way the natural evolution for straight edge in terms of sound if you are from the east coast. (1040 Laguna Avenue / Felton, CA / 95018 / USA / e-mail: [hardxtimes@hotmail.com](mailto:hardxtimes@hotmail.com)) - SP

### Disclose “The Sound of Disaster” demo 2003

- featured on the December 14<sup>th</sup> program  
Japan's most infamous DISCHARGE tribute band is at it again, this time with a 4-song cassette release on *Game of the Arseholes*. Here is “the Sound of Disaster”. (Game of the Arseholes at P.O. Box 511 / Whippany, NJ / 07981-0511 / USA) - SP



### Domestik Doktrin “Manufacturing Karma” demo

- featured on the January 4<sup>th</sup> program  
DOMESTIK DOKTRIN are a fastcore band from the island of Jawa Barat in Indonesia. They play a power violence influenced style of fastcore right down to the in between song samples. This was recorded back in may 2002 but it was the recording that made Max Ward want to put out an ep by them. Loaded with incredibly cutting humour in that COMBATWOUNDEDVETERAN meets CHARLES BRONSON tradition, DOMESTIK DOKTRIN are an overlooked band. (Domestik Doktrin c/o Ari Purnama / Mekarsari #F5 / Cibaduyut / Bandung 40235 / West Java / Indonesia / [www.sphosting.com/dxdx](http://www.sphosting.com/dxdx)) - SP



### The Kill Decibel Demo - featured on the January 11<sup>th</sup> program

The Kill Decibel are a local Toronto group made up of kids from various suburbs. They play a style of hardcore heavily influenced by INTEGRITY or the CURSED. A thick heavy guitar sound that can crush a chest cavity with one chug as quickly as it can a gallop. And the fuckin' mosh plods along like the soundtrack to a hardcore stalker flick. The guitarist, Jason, recorded this in his basement studio. In fact, he must have quite the set up because this sound is better than most releases I hear today. ([www.thekilldecibel.com](http://www.thekilldecibel.com)) - SP

### Unleash “Full Spread Punk Rock Anthem” Demo

- featured on the January 18<sup>th</sup> program  
UNLEASH are a band from Tokyo that feature a member of a fastcore band called SCREW UP. They play a style of blistering fast hardcore that is common place in the new school scene in Japan. It reminds me of RAZOR's EDGE - just great intro riffs, the odd party sounding rock out part, lots of group vocals based around a style of hardcore that is played as fast as one can. Sometimes the blinding speed sounds like it is going to collapse in on itself, like the way the second EXCLAIM ep sounds, as a result of playing so fast, but like EXCLAIM, UNLEASH have a remarkable ability to keep it together. Recorded April 14<sup>th</sup> of 2002, this is the current sounds of Tokyo. Get this if you dig Japanese thrash-core. (Depression Records c/o Hiroyuki Karaki / Hagiwara Ichinomiya / Aichi 491-0365 / Japan) - SP



### The Endless Blockade Demo 2004 - featured on the January 11<sup>th</sup> program

THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE are a local 3-piece featuring Andy Nolan of SHANK, NATION OF FINKS, EBOLA fame. The demo was recorded a couple of months back and it is out already. 7 tracks of rough agonizing hardcore that comes at you like a freight train. Dirty and sludgy sounding, while ripping through some of the fastest hardcore I have heard since BURN YOUR BRIDGES. They have an ability to be tortuously slow and face tearing fast. (e-mail: [Ape\\_militia@hotmail.com](mailto:Ape_militia@hotmail.com)) - SP



especially within straight edge circles and certainly within New York tough guys circles pretty much developing a genre out of it. This is their third full length by INHUMAN along with countless eps and comp tracks and "The Nightmare Continues" is produced by the same guy who does MADBALL and SICK OF IT ALL. If you can't figure out the emulation, INHUMAN are all about breakdowns and building up to a breakdown. They play a slow plodding style of hardcore that sounds like a soundtrack to a stalker movie, should one be shot by new school straight edge kids or star Van Deisel. It's not bad for the genre and does try and incorporate things like a piano in one of the songs, should you think piano is punk. I also think that there is a hidden Joe Jackson cover at the end of this CD if you listen long enough. (A-F Records / P.O. Box 71266 / Pittsburgh, PA / 15216 / USA) – SP



**Insult** "Emobashing Fastcore Pimps" CD  
Blast beat power violence from Holland. This looks to be a discography that collects material from their debut ep "Scumbag Duke Sessions", the split with B.S.E., a mini CD entitled "The Moshpit is our Sabbath", comp tracks from "Short, Fast + Loud" and unreleased songs that were to appear on a split with POINT OF FEW. The band credits LARM, HERESY, DRI and the like as their primary motivators and that is certainly true of the speed side of things. For me current references would be more DROP DEAD meets INFEST. The vocals have a definite SPAZZ influence. Coincidentally they do a cover of SPAZZ' "Swampfoot". They also cover INFEST and in the later material a cover of CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER becomes aptly appropriate as their later stuff was influenced more by metal. A good collection from a band that could have been shamefully overlooked. (Six Weeks 225 Lincoln Avenue / Cotati, CA / 94931 / USA) – SP



#### I Object demo

According to the liner notes this is to be I OBJECT's ep. It's just a special tour CD-R version – a different recording from the demo. It is a better recording. I OBJECT are from the Buffalo area and they tear through their own tracks like an early 80's hardcore band. Musically they kind of remind me of ARTICLES OF FAITH. I think it has something to do with the guitar sound. (Punks Before Profit\$ / 209 Center Street / Olean, NY / 14760 / USA) – SP



#### Jed Whitey "Mongoloid Cage Match" CD

These Aussie rockers belt out 10 new tracks of amped up garage rock from down under. Using clever punk reference points as in songs like "My Own Private Altamont" JED WHITEY combine the country punk of early Texas and bring it together with the scandi flavour of TURBONEGRO. The back up vocals could be lost tracks from the "Get Down" LP. The band can rock and to prove that Aussies can rock they pull together a blues bar riff laden track like "I'm Okay, You're Fucked", which would do AC DC proud. "The Butler did it" is a short rager that gives nods to MINOR THREAT and their hardcore roots. "Are You Ready to Hate Us" puts the MONKEES inspired melody up front. This versatility suggests that JED WHITEY are a garage rock band that hasn't forgotten about their hardcore past. Their approach is one very similar to that of TEEN CRUD COMBO, which was to take the early Texas scene and put it through a MOTORHEAD filter, however the TURBONEGRO influence is a bit more apparent in JED WHITEY's song writing. 666 copies of this record were pressed, 66 of which are on blue vinyl, 100 of which are on orange vinyl. There is a great version of "Uncontrollable Urge" on here, as well. (Out of the Loop Records / P.O. Box 222 / Tuart Hill W.A. / Australia 6939) – SP



#### Kuolema "1982 – 2002 and the Noise Continues" CD

What you have here is a brand new studio recording by KUOLEMA with a bunch of live recordings. The live recordings I could do without. The studio recording is raw Finnish thrash the way it was made in the early 80's, but played a lot faster. It's like crossing early Finnish hardcore with a grind band.



It is fucking fast. Great stuff. My only complaint is the tracking. The 15 songs of the new studio recording is in one track as are each of the live sessions, which makes it difficult for maneuvering through this disc unlike vinyl where you just lift the needle and drop it on the next song. (Alternative Action Records / P.O. Box 174 / 11101 Riihimäki / Finland) – SP

#### 'lectric Chairs "Sparkalounger" CD

Six songs of generic bar band rock with agreeable Detroit/punk influences.

## zine Reviews

**Not a Game #2**, 8-1/2" x 11", 32 pages, \$2.00ppd  
*Not a Game* is a new zine from Thornhill, which is pretty close to where I grew up. It's got an old school look using traditional cut and paste for the design, which uses white space and large photos to the full extent. This issue starts off with a FUCKED UP interview, which has all the members partaking. It's pretty good without all the distractions of Damian hassling Jonah about a record trade. The transcription captures the typical back and forth joking that prevents the band from getting at what they are about. Nonetheless, a good read for folks who know them. There is also an interview with MOMENT OF YOUTH from Maryland, which I found pretty informative. The re-print of YOUTH OF TODAY from the krishna rag is a waste of paper. And there is a hilarious CAREER SUICIDE interview included as an add-on. I call it an add-on, because it doesn't quite work as an insert. The CAREER SUICIDE interview was conducted for the *Breakout* zine that never came to being. Our loss, not the editors, as this was good stuff, but the piece was developed to use on their European tour. There is also a load of reviews and some great photos of local bands and bands who have passed through here in the last little bit. (Tim Wesson / 59 Prince Edward Blvd. / Thornhill, ON / L3T 7G1 / Canada) – SP



**U.P.S. #9 / Platform #4**, 5-1/2" x 8-1/2", 56 pages  
The latest issue of *Underground Punk Support* has surfaced and it did so with the moral support of *Platform*. Richard of U.P.S. is the mastermind behind the label of the same name and this issue seems to be inspired by a recent trip to Brazil. The lead article is a diary of a 2 week trip to Brazil, which gets into bits and pieces of the people behind the scenes in Sao Paulo and Porte Alegre. It is a great read. The rest of the zine is the result of this trip. An interview with GRITOS DE ALERTA from Porto Alegre who have released a split ep with HERESIA and a new split ep with JESUS CROST. The interview reveals their activist motivations behind the band, which is refreshing to see. The interview with VITAMIN X is also cool as Mark talks about the importance of bringing hardcore elements into sXe. Odd as VITAMIN X are from the Netherlands, where Richard is from, but the coincidence of being in Brazil was too much and he got into talking to them about the band. The last interview is with I SHOT CYRUS – did you know that Boka from RATOS DE PORAO drums for I SHOT CYRUS, as well? The interview is pulled off the internet, which doesn't make it any less interesting, just less unique to the zine. There are scene reports from Serbia and Pozega – northeast section of Croatia (a.k.a. Slavonska). Loads of news from these former republics of Yugoslavia, which was quite the power house of early punk rock and judging by these interviews continues to be despite the warring. There are reviews, along with a tirade on diseases that come from eating meat. Great stuff and I especially liked the Neder thrash update at the beginning. This issue is a split issue with another zine called *Platform*. *Platform* starts off with an outpouring in favour of the internet and finishes with some reviews that include MP3s. There is also an interview with LOMB which goes through their favourite things. There is a tour diary for SKULLS AND FLAMES. And I also liked the interview with the guitarist from LOS ASESINOS DE LA SUPERFIADAD. Excellent stuff from both editors. (U.P.S. c/o Mos / Vliegtuiglaan 3 / 3769 JM Soesterberg / the Netherlands / e-mail: [r.ups@wanadoo.nl](mailto:r.ups@wanadoo.nl)) – SP





It's competently played, well-recorded and occasionally summons a well-executed facsimile of STOOGES or MC5 power, with some great guitar playing courtesy of Bernie Barrett (replaced by the DOGS' Loren Molinare since this recording; they even play the DOGS' 'GST 483' here), but "Sparkalounger" ultimately just isn't energetic or original enough to warrant any special attention in 2004. (Dionysus / P.O. Box 1975 / Burbank, CA / 91507 / USA) - SH



#### Low Vision "Bet This Moment" demo

LOW VISION are touted as Tokyo's No. 1 skate thrash unit. And I would tend to agree as they play as fast as a lot of the fastcore bands coming out of Japan. But their sound is laced with the crossover heaviness of skate thrash icons the ACUSSED. I would like to think of it as part of a wider movement inspired by bands like HOLIER THAN THOU and DFA, but I think it has probably more to do with loving bands like C.O.C. and playing with bands like RAZOR'S EDGE. Fast and heavy and some dual vocal insanity to sweeten the pot. This is the band's third demo so happy hunting for their earlier stuff. You might be able to do so at 123@hotmail.com or via the internet at <http://happycokebag.hp.infoseek.co.jp/lowvisionhp.html>) - SP



#### Millions of Dead Cops "Now More Than Ever" CD

I'm not sure if this is a greatest hits because a greatest hits for MDC should include the STAINS material along with the Millions of Dead Cops LP, the "Multi-Death Corporation" ep, and the "Chicken Sqwauk" ep, and that's it. Instead this collection gathers recordings from all the various line ups that ever called themselves MDC, which includes Chris from STIKKY, Pig Champion from POISON IDEA, and Matt Freeman of OP IVY / RANCID and some of the more recent rock dudes. Some of the material on here is incredible and some of it is forgettable, but only from a musical standpoint, as Dave Dictor always had a way of writing a resistance song that is often poetic and all encompassing in his summation. And further kudos for continuing to release your stuff in a D.I.Y. fashion. (MDC / P.O. Box 142 / Glen Cove, NY / 11542 / USA) - SP



#### The New York Rel-X "She's Got a Gun / Paranoia" CD

The singer of the NEW YORK REL-X sounds like Becki Bondage of VICE SQUAD. I keep waiting for a rendition of "Stand Strong, Stand Proud". Erika, the singer for the NEW YORK REL-X, sings which is the style of preference by Becki Bondage, she has the same kind of projection in terms of loudness on her voice, and she uses a similar type of inflection for the wording. It's spooky and it overshadows everything else about this band. The band mostly plays simple 3-chord punk songs, which only add to the VICE SQUAD comparison. This CD collection compiles the "She's Got a Gun" 10" that was released on *Dirty Faces* as well as the "Paranoia" 12" that came out on *Knock Out*. One easy format. (TKO Records / 3216 W. Cary Street #303 / Richmond, VA / 23221 / USA) - SP



#### 9 Shocks Terror Fall 2003 tour CD/DVD

Fuck!!! I am trying to work and I have the new 9 SHOCKS CD playing quietly. Despite the low volume I rock out as my co-workers watch. The hell with it, the volume needs to increase so I can write my review. Fuck the shit I'm being paid to do! This 5 song (really 4 tracks) tour CD sounds like lost outtakes from their classic "Zen and the Art..." LP. This is a serious contender thrashing 5 tracks into less than 12 minutes. Steve is one of my favorite vocalists in all of hardcore and has been experimenting with his delivery ever so slightly, incorporating some spoken words and then throwing some reverb into the mix. Kev isn't too far behind, ripping out some classic Japcore sounding tuneage. This is a great CD - watch for the bonus DVD that is included in some copies as the packaging doesn't differ. The DVD includes a selection of live footage ranging in quality from good to great, featuring the classic bashing of Wedge, as well as newcomer Jim. My only wish is for a series of complete live sets. (Mad at the World / P.O. Box 20227 / Tompkins Square Station / NYC, NY / 01009 / USA) - CC

#### Paintbox - Live CD

This was self releases and rather limited. It contains about 10 tracks recorded at various places throughout the past 3 or 4 years. The sound quality is decent, and I appreciate live records that aren't just one show straight through, but honestly, this is not essential unless you are just a die-hard PAINTBOX fan. Not sure if they have any left, as they put up fliers for them a few months after the tour. You are supposed to email them to get one. (mane@mamaka.com) - RC

#### Physical Challenge "Some Still Care" CD

At first PHYSICAL CHALLENGE reminded me a bit of what HOLIER THAN THOU might sound like as a sXe band. But they play up too much on the sXe formula parts. Of the same school as SHARK ATTACK, with the exception that PHYSICAL CHALLENGE let loose a bit more on the breakdowns and their respective build ups. From Oregon, they started out two years ago as a joke band called MARC SUMMERS. They have come along way since then going through 14 different line up changes, 2 tours, and now an official release. This is a follow up to their 5-song demo. (Rival Records / P.O. Box 5242 / Concord, CA / 94524) - SP



#### Poison+Poison Arts - 2xCD Discography

I won't try and act all knowing and say I loved this band for years and I am happy to see this discography. I knew nothing of this band when I saw it for sale all over Osaka. On the recommendation of some friends living here, I bought it. And damn, I am glad I did. Japacore through and through, this record puts a smile on my face every time I listen to it. CHELSEA of DEATHSIDE (later on PAINTBOX) plays on the tracks from the "Hotrod" ep. And the vocals are incredible. I think only Japanese can pull off vocals that have become synonymous with Japacore. Again, another hard to find release, but well worth the effort of hunting down and buying. (Self released by the band, address written in Kanji) - RC

#### Pressure Point "To Be Continued" ep

PRESSURE POINT play some pre-working class street punk fueled by their love for bands like the ANTI-HEROES, the ANGELIC UPSTARTS, the BUSINESS, the OXYMORONS and the like. Some progressive minded chaos punk with an excellent Phil Ochs cover to prove it. But their sound is modern influenced in an homage style towards early British oi would lead one to believe. For instance, the bass lines are played in a rolling manner the way Matt Freeman of RANCID would. And the pace of the music is played much faster at a WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES pace. The vocals are some of the best part of this band in their John Brannon toughness that sounds like it has been gargling from the same glass as Tom Waits. The chorus group vocals only back this up. This anti-racist skin band from Sacramento has been playing around since 1994 and this is what I believe is to be their third official outing. "This is Sacto" is a great anthem for their home town and I bet is a hometown favourite. (GMM Records / P.O. Box 15234 / Atlanta, GA / 30333 / USA) - SP



#### Remains of the Day "Hanging on Rebellion" CD

After months of delays due to fuck-ups at the pressing plant, expectations mounted even higher upon awaiting for the arrival of this sophomore release. Hailing from Portland, REMAINS OF THE DAY play dark, melancholic, lamenting hardcore with urgent screaming much like FROM ASHES RISE, but with more in depth song structures and best of all-violins. The songs on this release are definitely more geared towards the weeping strings than their debut. However, upon first listen, I was left with a sense of dissatisfaction as at times the violin wasn't as prevalent as I had hoped for or it just seemed lost in the mix. But after repeated hearings, I soon realized that this is not for the instantly gratified and will continue to grow upon the listener where they will keep replaying it in its entirety once the last song has ended. The aforementioned fuck-up is still there and easy to spot, but it definitely doesn't dissuade my opinions that this flattens their "Underlying Frequency" LP and is one of the best releases of the last year. (Crimes Against Humanity / P.O. Box 1421 / Eau Claire, WI / 54702 / USA / [www.cahrecords.com](http://www.cahrecords.com)) - JM



### Rösvett "Thitma Karin" CD

A new full length from this Swedish mainstay to mark their 20<sup>th</sup> year in existence. This is their fourth full length and it hasn't backed down with more full on charging style hardcore that Sweden is known for. There is an ever so slight metal influence that gets played out in guitar picking and mild note bending, but nothing that POISON IDEA wouldn't approve of. What should one expect from a band that blames their existence on POISON IDEA and even do an entire release as a tribute to the band ("Burn the Gay Nuns"). Jerker, the singer, sounds very much like Jerry A and the band plays a beefed up sounding hardcore that Pig Champion and the lads perfected. Take POISON IDEA and season it with DISCHARGE and RATOS DE PORAO and the new RÖSVETT is what you get. (Six Weeks 225 Lincoln Avenue / Cotati, CA / 94931 / USA) – SP



### SA "Stiff Upper Lip" CD

S.A is comprised of scene veterans with histories in COBRA, LAUGHIN NOSE and other old guard Japanese bands. Their sound is classic Jap-punk and could easily be mistaken for COBRA's second LP. Great chanted vocals over driving street punk. Get it if you can find it. Better yet, visit Japan to see them live and witness the insanity of 500 people punching the air in unison. They are featured on a Japanese DVD zine released last fall. (Pineapple Records, Japan / <http://www.bandsjapan.com/SA>) – CC

### Screw Up demo

This is Hiroyuki Karaki's (the guitarist for UNLEASH) band prior to UNLEASH's existence. They are a shade slower than UNLEASH. I think they were part of that whole sound of Japanese bands Americanizing their sound like BLIND JUSTICE, but instead of going for the mosh SCREW UP went for a very east coast sXe sound. The demo reminds me a lot of the first SIDE BY SIDE ep, except SCREW UP are more raw in terms of production quality and there is a really weird moment in the chorus of "B – B" that sounds like SEPTIC DEATH's "Thaw". Even in the first song "Chance the Reality, the singer Junyi has an effect on his vocals that sounds like Pushead. When you get down to the analysis of an American (Pushead) imitating Japanese hardcore, which has been brought back into a Japanese sound a decade later, you realize that things have come full circle. It's like punk rock time travel except it hasn't lost its relevance. (Depression Records c/o Hiroyuki Karaki / Hagiwara Ichinomiya / Aich 491-0365 / Japan) – SP



### Time for Living "The Cheat is Not Dead" CD

TIME FOR LIVING play a heavy mosh influenced style of hardcore. The guitars are thick like DOWNCAST and make me think that this is what STRUGGLE might have sounded like with a little more production and grown up a few years from when they did. The vocals are all throat and very strained. They work pretty good with the style.

And to go in conjunction with the throaty singing is an underlying mob theme to the artwork. It works particularly well against the mob theme given all the tv mob characters that seem to have laryngitis. (Rival Records / P.O. Box 5242 / Concord, CA / 94524) – SP



### Tomorrow "Chiedi Troppo" CD

Does anyone know why TOMORROW sing in Italian? The only thing I can think of is that they worship Italian hardcore and pull a POIKKEUS by cheating and using an internet translator for the lyrics. But does it matter how they write their songs, especially if they consistently crank out ragers like the latest. The only low point is their samples, which are lo fi bad mariachi music. Is there a purpose to such filler? And why honour it by making it the title of your release? To each is their own, just as long as TOMORROW keep ripping through the shredding-est fastcore this side of VIVISICK or CONGA FURY. And it's laced with sung group choruses that harken back to NEGAZIONE or frantic thrash a la INDIGESTI. Yes they honour scrappy traditions of early Italian hardcore, but they really make it their own with punishing and unrelentless cataclysmic attacks of galloping beats and racing guitars that intersperse with their Italian style of call and response on vocals. And will TOMORROW's "Hevy Metal Prince" become like SSD's "How Much Art?" (Answer / Hase Bld. No. 2 / B1. 5-49 / Osu 3 Naka-Ku / Nagoya City, Aichi 460 / Japan) – SP



### Tomorrow (title) CD

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> full length from this Nagoya band. Fast and energetic HC punk drawing influences from old South American and Italian HC. I believe the lyrics are all in Italian as well. They will be hitting the US sometime soon, so be sure to check them out when they do. They put on a killer live show. Great energy and all around solid dudes, they'll definitely get you moving. (Answer Records / Hase Bld. No. 2 / B1. 5-49 / Osu 3 Naka-Ku / Nagoya City, Aichi 460 / Japan) – RC

### Wolfbrigade "In Darkness You'll Feel no Regrets"

It's actually quite difficult to review one of your favourite bands in the universe. Trying to conjure up words for a band that spurs much energy and emotion and try and articulate it may be something left for someone who's more literally talented than I. Residing from Sweden, they play heavy, d-beat hardcore much like many of their native peers, but with the force of a high-speed freight train that's possessed with the fury and omnipotence to plough through all that stand in its way. This is WOLFBRIEGADE's fifth full length and second under the bands slightly amended moniker, which was formerly WOLFPACK. This release is most comparable to their last "Progression/Regression" LP without those deadpan female guest vocals. "In Darkness.." sees them journey into a darker musical realm, with discordant guitar leads abound. Also present are re-takes of a couple of older tracks "Outlaw Vagabond" and "Gun Head Battalion". They even make an attempt at covering POISON IDEA, which I personally could've done without, but still applaud their efforts. They will be making their second trip to North America in May and will be playing Montreal on the 10th. Go see them!!!!!!!!!!!!!! ([www.feralward.com](http://www.feralward.com)) – JM



### Various Artists "Banned in Nagoya" cassette comp

DISTRICT start out this comp with some AGNOSTIC FRONT riff co-optation and quickly dispense of the breakdown for some thrash mayhem. It is like listening to a modern Japanese hardcore version of URBAN WASTE. ONE LINE follow up the straight edge influenced fastcore with more of the same. The first song is an intro that goes into an anti-cop song. NINE CURVE pull out some riff riding like the fastcore output of LOW VISION. Think HOLIER THAN THOU with super fast breaks. LINKAGE treat us to 2 more fastcore ragers that emphasize straight forward sounding hardcore over speed. The group call and response takes their music over the top. FURIOUS ABOUT play a quirky sounding hardcore with loads of twang. They sound like what the MEAT PUPPETS would sound like staffed with members from the FUTURES. UNLEASH give up 3 previously unreleased ultra fastcore thunder. One of the songs is a MOB 47 cover. Every track on here is a keeper and this comp really deserves a vinyl or CD re-issue. (Depression Records c/o Hiroyuki Karaki / Hagiwara Ichinomiya / Aich 491-0365 / Japan) – SP



### Various Artists "Disturbing the Peace" CD comp

Even if this were a *Six Weeks* sampler it would fuckin' rage because *Six Weeks* releases the cream of the crop in terms of ultra hardcore. However, I don't think most of this material has been released yet which means the songs are exclusive to this comp. This makes it a real comp and having listened to it all the way through I would put it on par with "Cleanse the Bacteria" in terms of all the bands rage. Every song on here is great and covers many styles of extreme hardcore like Pushead did with "Cleanse the Bacteria". However, all the bands are from the Bay Area so it performs the function of regional snapshot and is on par with "Flex Your Head" or "Boston Not L.A." In my mind these are really the two main reasons for doing a comp. This one performs both. As for the music this comp gets the pit started with 5 tracks of raging CROSSED OUT like hardcore performed by DYSTROPHY. DEADFALL follows that up with early CIRCLE JERKS style thrash. HATEMAIL KILLERZ remind me of LOS CRUDOS meets CHARLES BRONSON. BLOWN TO BITS sound like a more straight forward hardcore sounding version of HIS HERO IS GONE – Bay area dis-core. BORN/DEAD have an LP out on *Prank* and have a FREEZE quality to them. S.T.F.U. come off like a fired up version of the ACCUSED. And aside from all these great styles you get neat things like FUNERAL SHOCK doing a NEON CHRIST cover. This comp was put together with the help of *Urban Guerilla* zine and it is damn solid. (Six Weeks 225 Lincoln Avenue / Cotati, CA / 94931 / USA) – SP





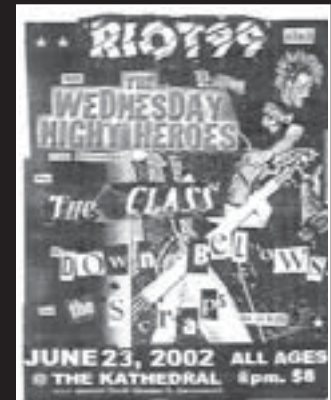
# rumourmill

The UNDERTONES are touring and will be playing Toronto with a Feargal Sharkey sound-a-like imposter \* *My War Records* will be releasing a second KNIFE FIGHT ep entitled "Burning Bridges" \* Todd from TRAGEDY and Brad from FROM ASHES RISE have a new band called WARCRY \* AUSGEBOMBT from Portland feature members from BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS and HELLSHOCK. This is getting incestuous. \* DFA will be touring Europe this year. To support the tour they will be doing a tour ep that will be a split with Winnipeg's UNDER PRESSURE. The ep will be released by *Flower Violence Records*. \* UNDER PRESSURE will have a split with BLOOD I BLEED (ex MY MINDS MINE) and a 6 song EP coming out this year \* FUCKED UP have a new ep coming out on *Test Pattern Records*. The eps and some other mixes will be collected and released on a CD by *Deranged* \* the TIJUANA BIBLES have just released a 19 song CD entitled "Rock and Roll Fighting" on an Italian label called *Ammonia Records* \* The DEAD BOYS are getting back together to tour with the singer from HANOI ROCKS standing in on vocals. \* SHELL SHOCK will be releasing two splits in the upcoming year. The first is with a band called BULLET TREATMENT and will be on a Californian label known as *Punk n Vomit* and the other is with a band called DIU on a DC label called *Friends and Enemies* \* Andrew has left BONES BRIGADE to focus on singing for CUT THE SHIT \* *Fight Fire with Fire* is working on a sXe comp and a JUDGE DVD \* After the GET IT AWAY 7", *Third Party Records* will be releasing a MY REVENGE split 7" with FxPxOx right now (Kevin McElligott from THE CONTROL is doing the art), plus a U.S. version of DAY OF THE DEAD's "Old Habits Die Harder" to be released as a 10", a BAD BUSINESS CD with their 7", demo, comp songs, and a new song, a POINTING FINGER 'Best Bruises Collection' CD (basically a discography so far), a WITNESS 7", and the HOLDxTRUE "Invincible" 7". Madness \* *Throw Up Records* out of Japan has just released a BRUCE BANNER split with SOUND LIKE SHIT \* *Busted Heads* are about to release an ep by that great new NY band WRECKAGE. *Busted Heads* have a few more projects up their sleeve like a re-issue of the incredible VIVISICK "Punks were made before sounds" ep that was released on *Sound Pollution* \* Chris from DS-13 fame has started a one off band to be called SUICIDE BLITZ and the band features Andy (VICTIMS) on drums, Kelly (SEVERED HEADS OF STATE) on bass, Jocke (WOLFBRIGADE), and Dadde (WOLFBRIGADE) on guitars. They have just recorded so let the bidding war begin. \* Watch out for a new DESCENDENTS LP called "Cool to Be You" coming out at the end of March \* *Crimes Against humanity* is about to release something by this new Swedish supergroup called TO WHAT END, and they feature members from BURNING KITCHEN, SECOND THOUGHT, DISCULPA, SKELETOR, WOLFPACK, MOMENT MANIACS, SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS, and BRUCE BANNER. Crazy ! \* Jeremy, who organizes the Anti-Warped tour shows is in a new band called THE FALLOUT and they will be releasing a CD with *Longshot Records* to be called "Turning Revolution into Money". \* Dom from DAY OF MOURNING is still at it in Maryland. He is playing with one of the guys from FIGHTING CHANCE in a band called WAKE UP COLD. They just got back from Europe. His second band is with Jeff Breakdown and they have a demo out and a new recording that they hope to release \* MAXIMUM RNR recorded some live footage on the new Toronto TV station Toronto One which has started to air. Look out for the songs Switchblade, Cutthroat, Lucky Charm, and 2 newer ones, Trust Us and Say What?, which were recorded back in December of last year. \* The FLUX OF PINK INDIANS may be getting back together after their discography that came out on *Dr. Strange*. \* A Documentary about the suburban scene is in the works tentatively entitled "Straight out of the Suburbs: The 905 Music Scene". Folks wanting to participate should get in touch with ATG Productions at [atgproductions@hotmail.com](mailto:atgproductions@hotmail.com). \* *DeadAlive Records* has now become *Manic Ride Records* \* IGNORANCE from Japan will be releasing a split CD with a band called NATURE on *DEWA Records* \* *Six Weeks* released a band called STRIKER recently which features members of RÖVSVETT \* *Out of the Loop*, the Aussie label that brought us JED WHITEY, will be releasing the SPITFIRES latest LP to be entitled "Illustrious Career". \* the Vancouver based GO IT ALONE will be releasing something on *Rival Records* \* DEMOB will be releasing a new LP to be called "If It Ain't Punk, It Don't Rock" and *GTA* will be compiling a collection of their material from 1978 – 2002 and they will be touring the States this summer and filming "Crime Through Time" which will become part of a TV documentary. \* *Bat Attack Records* will be issuing a version of the compilation "Hardcore Ljubljana" to be called "Hardcore Ljubljana: 1984-2004" which is to have the original tracks from this classic Yugoslavian comp along with

a number of unreleased tracks and some tracks of some bands from the comp that are still around today like ACTIVNA PROPAGANDA and KASTRATOR. The second releases will be a split 7" with AK-47 from Canada and AK-47 from Croatia. The e.p. is to be titled "The Guns of Revolution" which is appropriate considering the Canadians are revolutionary Maoists and the Croatians are Black Bloc anarchists. \* Max from 625 is set up in Japan now and is joining CHARM on drums. The label is getting ready to releases an LP by INFECT, a THREATENER ep from Michigan, Indonesia's DOMESTIK DOKTRIN with their ep, xFEUDx from the Philippines, and an OUT OF VOGUE split, among other things. Some of those other things include two new comps that look phenomenal. Go check his website as there is an update for the first time in months.... [www.625thrash.com/new.shtml](http://www.625thrash.com/new.shtml) \* FUNERAL SHOCK have an ep coming out on *Intolerance Messiah* \* COCKROACH from the Netherlands have a 10" to be released by *KAZ Re-cords* from the Slovak republic this summer \* Bay Area's dis-core sensations BLOWN TO BITS have an LP coming out this summer which is a split release *Despotic Records* and *Yellowdog* and the dude from NEUROSIS is involved in recording it \*

## show listings

**TUESDAY MARCH 2nd** @ x-treme wheels (Buffalo) - THE CASUALTIES, A GLOBAL THREAT, THE BRIGGS  
**FRIDAY MARCH 5th** @ Midnight Train studio (Brampton) - FELIX THE ASSHOLE, BLINDED HOPE, DISARMED BANDITS, NO SENSE  
**FRIDAY MARCH 5th** @ Underground (Hamilton), \$6.00 or \$10 with CD - MICKEY DE SADIST (of the Forgotten Rebels)  
**SATURDAY MARCH 6th** @ Horseshoe Tavern – SMUGGLERS, THE EVAPORATORS, THE HIGH DIALS, DEATH FROM ABOVE, THE CANDIDATES  
**SATURDAY MARCH 6th** @ Q-Bar, Free - THE FALLOUT, INNER CITY 4, METAL EDDIES  
**SATURDAY MARCH 6th** @ Corktown (Hamilton) – SEXHEAD, CREEPS (Ottawa), VAPIDS, SCREAMING HALLWAY GIRL  
**SUNDAY MARCH 7th** @ Horseshoe Tavern, afternoon matinee – SMUGGLERS, THE EVAPORATORS, DEATH FROM ABOVE, THE GOBLINS  
**TUESDAY MARCH 9th** @ the Opera House - THE GET UP KIDS, RECOVER, ROCKY VOTOLATO  
**SATURDAY MARCH 13th** @ Clinton's Tavern - NO TIME LEFT, ACTION, ENDLESS BLOCKADE  
**SUNDAY MARCH 14th** @ CIUT, Studio 3, 10:30pm - I OBJECT (from Buffalo)  
**SUNDAY MARCH 14th** @ the Foundation (Barrie) - PROTEST THE HERO, HOSTAGE LIFE, SAINTS ON STRIKE, A DYING RACE  
**MONDAY MARCH 15th** @ E.P. Taylor (Durham College) - ANOTHER DARK DAY, RUTTEGER, DEAD ONLY BETTER, AT THE MERCY OF INSPIRATION  
**SATURDAY MARCH 20th** @ Clinton's Tavern - CATHOLIC BOYS (from Wisconsin), HOLY SHIT (from Wisconsin)  
**MONDAY MARCH 22nd** @ tba (Buffalo) - VITAMIN X (from Holland)  
**SATURDAY MARCH 27th** @ Clinton's (Toronto) - PUNCH IN THE FACE (from Chicago), 14 OR FIGHT (from Chicago), CAREER SUICIDE, FUCKED UP  
**SATURDAY MARCH 27th** @ Oasis - LEGION666 (record release party for the BOMBSTRIKE split), RAMMER, MURDERSQUAD T.O., AND HELL FOLLOWED  
**SATURDAY APRIL 3rd** @ Clinton's - THE STATE, CAREER SUICIDE, BORN IN HELL, BLACK EYES CLUB  
**THURSDAY APRIL 8th** @ TBA - THE FALLOUT, RESISTANCE (from Manitoba)  
**THURSDAY APRIL 22nd** @ Royal Cinema, 9:00pm  
**FILM: H.O.T.S. - Description:** What is poor Honey to do when her friends and her are ostersized from the "snooty girls sorority"? Start your own! But when the two female sororities have to have a battle as to who's best (after a wet t-shirt contest), there's only one way to find out, with a game of strip football! H.O.T.S, the "Casablanca" of t&a flicks (and in Maxim's best b-movies) gives everything a modern audience wants: Nude parachuting! Disco Dancing! Strip football! Hijinx! Folks pokin' in vans with lots of shag carpeting! And to top it all off, Danny Bonaduce (The Partridge Family, The Other Half) singing at a Frat Party with a rock band AND in bed with a seal! With an intro by Dion Conflict, and your chance to win lots of "hot" prizes, it's the HOTTEST film event of the year. Don't miss it!



# Post No Bills

