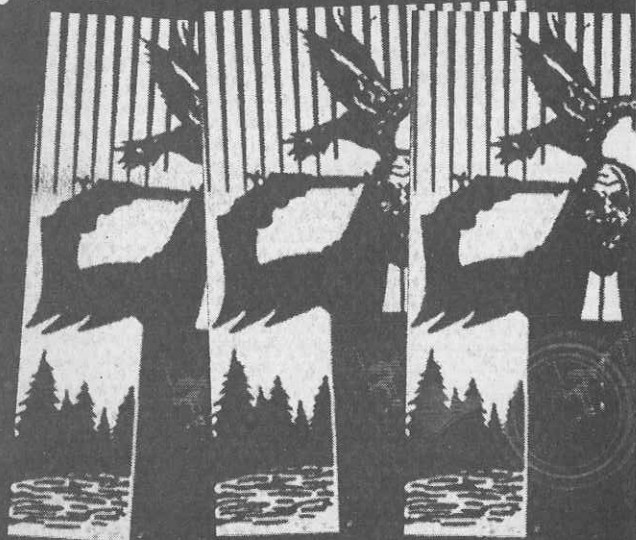


SCHIZOPHRENIC

interview by
stephe perry

RECORDS

Craig Caron has been a staple in the Hamilton punk scene for as long as I can remember. Often coming to Toronto shows, I remember picking up a RABID DEFIANCE demo from him. He did a show for a band I was in at the legendary Corktown. After talking to him, I remember him working on the SONS OF ISHMAEL/RAPED TEENAGERS split and talking to him about his work at a psychiatric institution. In the last few years, his label has started to get off the ground, first with his comps, then with his commitment to the BCT reissues, and now more formally with full-fledged releases. We pulled together details about the label over a few emails.



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MRR: How long have you been doing a label for?

The label began in about 1985 when I first started to distribute tapes and records. I started out selling BCT tapes, demos, and the odd record. From there, I made a few tapes. The first tape was an all Canadian Punk/hardcore tape called *Northern Assault*. Then I had a few demo tapes from my band RABID DEFIANCE and an international hardcore compilation tape called *Communicate Not Exterminate*. The Label per se began in the mid-90s when I co-released a few releases like the NEOS *Fight With Donald 7"* and the NEOS CD discography.

MRR: Where did you get the name Schizophrenic from?

While I was still in high school I always had this dream of putting out a record. The actual label name came to me in sociology class when we were having a heated debate about psychiatric survivors and pharmaceuticals. Anyhow, the first Schizophrenic record was going to be a split 7" with the SONS OF ISHMAEL and RAPED TEENAGERS. At the time, I was in high school working odd jobs and any money I had went

towards the typical things like records, shows, and beer. To pay for the record, I worked at a minimum wage job at the psychiatric hospital. It was the greatest summer job a kid could ask for, however I never did save the money I needed and the record never happened. This release will one day happen, as the tapes are still kicking around.

MRR: How did the idea to start a label come up?

At the time, I was in a band seeing tons of bands and just wanted to do as much as I could. I was just a kid with lots of dreams. I was also lucky because I was friends with Imants (Note: Imants has been in the scene forever being around in the first wave of punk. Imants was a radio DJ at CFMU in Hamilton and has the largest collection of punk records in Canada) and started to correspond with Chris from BCT and other like-minded folks who showed us kids that we could do whatever we wanted, on our terms. With photocopies, the postal system, and tape decks there was a world of punk rock to be discovered and to be shared. It has all snowballed

from there.

MRR: You are co-releasing the legendary BCT Tapes. Can you explain the arrangement with this and how it came about?

I began to write Chris in 1984 when I purchased my first BCT tape. Chris and I continued to write each other. As well we started to trade records, tapes and then I started to sell BCT tapes. The *Northern Assault* tape was originally going to be a BCT release; however Chris wanted a couple of the slower punk songs removed. By the time the tape was released BCT had stopped producing new tapes. There were a couple of other tapes that my buddy Imants and I edited and created that never saw the light of day as BCT releases. In particular, there was an all-Yugoslavian tape we put together and a tape by the British band called THE FIEND. Although BCT wasn't releasing new tapes, Chris and I maintained contact. Chris and I lost contact for a few years in the late 90s, and then we reconnected on-line. I asked him about releasing the CDs and offered to sort through the original tapes to recreate the tapes as CDs. Here we are

today with five CDs out and more to come. The CD project has been helped out by some new buds, Mike from Human Stench label and William and the guys at Interruption label.

MRR: What is Hardcore Amerika?

Hardcore Amerika is another BCT release. It combines the best tracks from two other BCT comps, *Eat Me*, which was the third comp, and *I'm Buck Naked*, which was the tenth comp. The CD was edited and mastered by myself and is the first BCT release of the Interruption folks, who are my partners in crime in re-releasing the remaining BCT tapes. The CD features bands like WHITE FLAG, DETENTION, DISORDERLY CONDUCT, LOVE CANAL, and PSYCHO. There are 57 songs in total.

MRR: What are the next BCT comps that you plan on releasing?

First Strike is the next release. It is the first BCT tape and has material by the CLITBOYS, VIOLATION, EAT THE RICH, and VATICAN COMMANDOS.

MRR: You started out by putting out some NEOS releases. Why the NEOS and how did this idea come about?

The NEOS were one of the first bands that really turned my head as a kid. I found their single at a local shop and it just ripped my head off. They took hardcore the next step by playing as fast as they could. Another real important piece for me was their age. They were young kids playing as fast as they could. Back then I was a little kid making noise in the basement and to see kids just a bit older than us was great. The bands that we were into like BAD BRAINS, MDC, BIG BOYS, DK's they all seemed so much older. The NEOS *Fight with Donald 7*" and then the CD discography came about as a result of a friendship and a mutual love for the band. Jason, who was instrumental in the planning and coordinating of these releases, is planning a NEOS LP discography plus bonuses. This LP will rule once it sees the light of day.

MRR: Did your involvement with the NEOS lead you to releasing the MEXICAN POWER AUTHORITY material?

Yes, Kev from the NEOS played in MPA. Again I think MPA is one of the most underrated bands around. They played some amazing, innovative music. Much like the NEOS, they pushed the boundaries of hardcore. The CD is a disc I totally love; however it remains unknown because a lot of the larger hardcore mags have refused to review it claiming the CD isn't punk. What the fuck? Where did all these boundaries and borders come from? When I first got into punk it was everything from MR. EPP to I REFUSE IT to LEATHER NUN.

MRR: How did you come to put out the LEGION666 release?

Well, I have always loved LEGION. They are solid band, good guys that never get the recognition they deserve. Anyway, they had a great CD recorded and were having differences with the label that had originally planned to release it. Trying to keep the scene politics aside, I approached the band to release the disc. By the time I became involved in the project the CD had a new cover; however the original cover art is included with the CD.

MRR: How did the split with a band from Brazil like SICK TERROR come about (referring to the LEGION split)? Did you know them or did LEGION know them? I thought initially Ugly Pop was doing a release with SICK TERROR. Did this come as a result of the band working with Ugly Pop?

Shortly after the LEGION CD came out, Paul was visiting and we were talking about future plans for LEGION. I mentioned to Paul that I had recently been in contact with SICK TERROR and was planning a split project with them. Without any hesitation LEGION committed to it. The split LP came as a result of SICK TERROR contacting me and had nothing to do with Ugly Pop. Actually Simon and I did have a few emails about this, more in the sense of "What is happening with this release?" "What is on it?" and at this point I am not sure if it ever materialized. I do know a CD version of the Fight label 7" has been released and Ugly Pop was credited for doing a vinyl version of the 7"; however, I thought the UP project was going to be exclusive tracks.

MRR: What has been your favorite release on your label and why?

That's a difficult question to answer. As far as my own releases that I play for myself or others it has to be either the LEGION CD or the *Spanking Nurse* comp. The comp is one of my favorites to date. The LEGION/SICK TERROR split is up there, as well. It is the record I love to look at. Darrin did a great job on the cover and both sides



Defiance Music Bastard System

four words that summarize my concept of my label and what punk and hardcore means to me...

of the vinyl destroy you.

MRR: What is your rationale for releasing material? What makes you decide to put a record out? What does it have to have?

Well I have to really like the band; but more importantly I have to be able to connect with the band on a personal level. To me that connection is more important than the combination of music and presentation. I don't think there is a Schizophrenic sound, so you won't win me over with a particular sound, just be approachable, sound people. This is very ironic as today the planned ASBESTOS 7" was scrapped. This is a perfect example of a good record by a band I wasn't able to connect with. After I promised them the record and made the band a top priority, I found out the record was already released, and the band was very secretive about their plans, and about a canceled US tour. When the band was pushed for information, the band packed the deal in. I still like the band, but I am glad that the record did not happen. I have to be able to stand behind the band and their records, and it just wasn't happening.

MRR: What releases are you working on?

Upcoming projects include a project with the CRUNKY KIDS, a SLANG release, a THEY LIVE discography, the T.O.H.C. comp, more BCT comps, and a split release with 9 SHOCKS TERROR and SICK TERROR. There are so many things in the planning stages at this time.

MRR: Are you working on a revised version of the T.O. hardcore comp?

Yes, I am trying to get a regional comp. out that will focus on the Toronto scene. The comp was originally a project Simon from Ugly Pop had initiated. The project has been expanded to an LP/CD, but it is going slow. Bands had been approached a while ago, but I had only received a couple CDRs and art to date. I have approached bands again. It will happen in punk time. If all goes well the CD will include a CD ROM that combines punk rock and demolition derbies.

MRR: Who will be on the comp and how has it developed from the initial Ugly Pop release?

Some of the bands that have been approached include SCARE TACTIC, HAYMAKER, CAREER SUICIDE, FUCKED UP, MURDER SQUAD, RIOT 99, CLASS ASSASSINS, and the TIJUANA BIBLES. The project has grown from a 7" to an LP or CD. I want bands to have a the opportunity to show their wares. So they will have

a chance for a few songs and if I am lucky, a Demolition Derby CD ROM.

MRR: It seems like there is something between Ugly Pop and Schizophrenic. Are these shared or passed-off projects coincidental, or are you purposely working with the same bands?

As far as any connections, they are mainly coincidental. Simon and I share the odd email back and forth on projects, but that is really the end of the conspiracy. The LEGION CD came out after the band and the label had some differences, and I stepped up to bat. The T.O.H.C. comp came to life because I wanted to do a regional comp and Simon had told me that he had started a 7" that has never come to life. At this point, I am not sure if any of the bands on the original project will be on the CD/LP. So I think any connections are likely because we both hang out at the same shows, sell our distros at the same shows, and are in contact with many of the same folks around the world.

MRR: How did this 9 SHOCKS split come about? It has a "Terror" theme?

SICK TERROR really liked the split LP and are recording new songs. SICK TERROR wanted to do another split record and asked if I knew anybody in 9 SHOCKS. I spoke with Tony the other day and he is into doing a project of some kind. So there are few details at this point. I am thrilled about it as I have been leaving Schiz 13 open for a 9 SHOCKS release. At this point the "terrors" theme has not worked out.

MRR: "Defiance Music Bastard System" appears on a few of your releases. Why do you keep using it? Where does it come from? What is the significance of the phrase?

Defiance Music Bastard System: four words that summarize my concept of my label and what punk and hardcore means to me. Punk is more than music-it's about social justice, getting your hands dirty in the garden, living your life by your standards and values.

MRR: How can people get in touch with the label?

The label and the distribution have recently moved into the 90s. We have a web page at www.schizophrenicrex.com. I can be contacted by email at jimjones@schizophrenicrex.com. For those preferring paper and pen I can be contacted at 17 West 4th, Hamilton, ON, L9C 3M2, Canada.