

ART + MUSIC + PHOTOGRAPHY + WHATEVER

FANE

FEATURING: INTERVIEWS WITH MARIA IOLANDA, TOMASZ C., XAYLA KIA DAISY, PAIN CHAIN, PLAGUEHORSE, DEATH SPA, CHV.VOLK, AND A.S. VALENTINO. POETRY AND PROSE FROM DANIEL LAND, CELESTE ZIEHL, AND STEFF JUNIPER.

PLUS READER MAIL, COMICS, MUSIC REVIEWS, AND MORE!

ISSUE NO. 2

SPRING 2024



Derek

Looking back at legendary film maker, writer, painter, queer activist and saint, Derek Jarman, 30 years after his ascension.



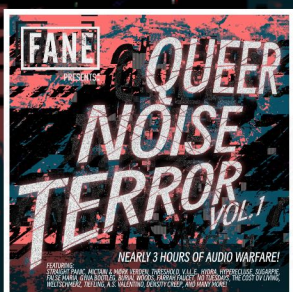
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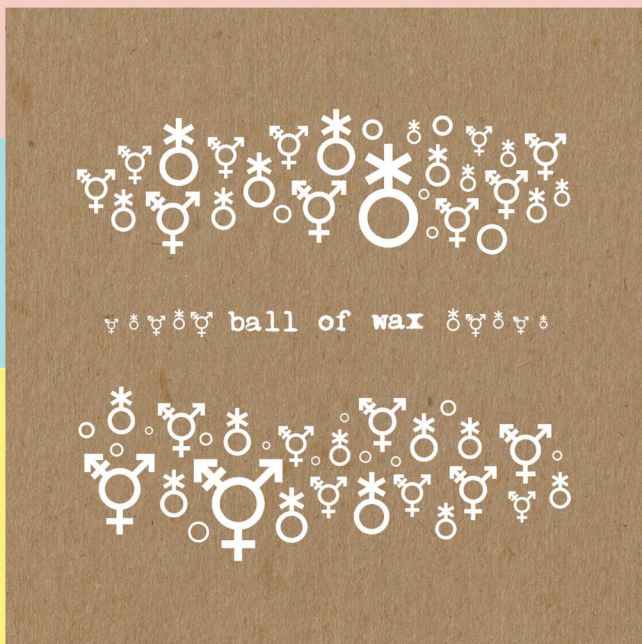
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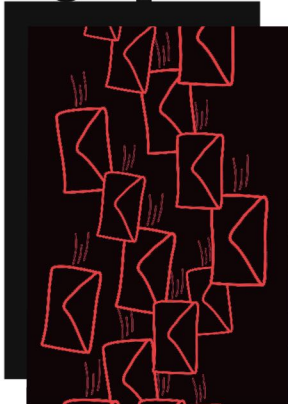
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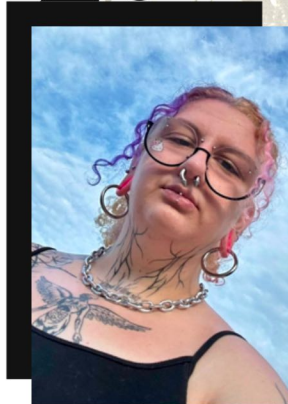
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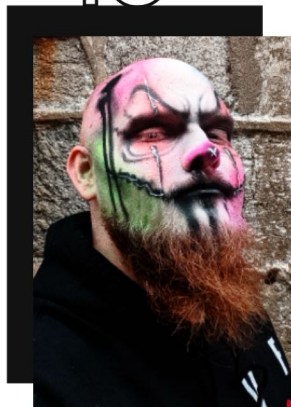
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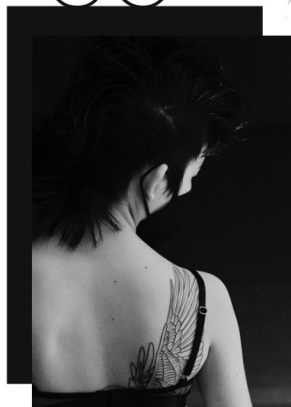
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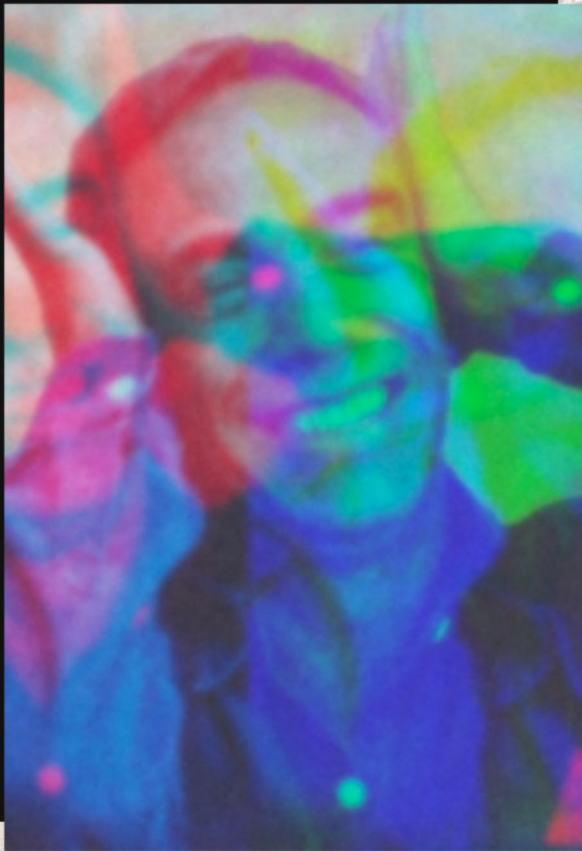
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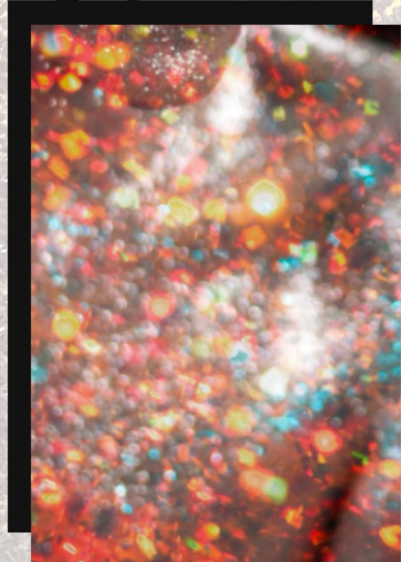
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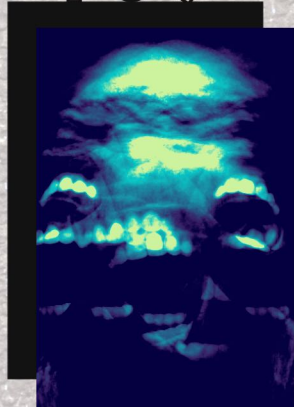
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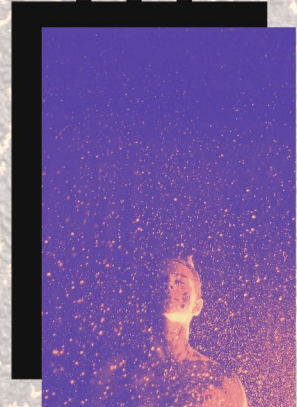
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Credits

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LETTERS

Dear Reader,

Welcome to Issue 2 of FANE. If you're returning to us after reading Issue 1, thanks for coming back! I think you'll find that I've made some significant improvements since our previous installment (in terms of my skills/abilities), and we're getting closer to professional a little more every day. I mean, we're never gonna be corporate, lol. I'm much too free for that nonsense.

For this offering, we've really upped the meat and trimmed the fat. We've got a swath of fresh art to be devoured from some fresh faces, accompanied by some q&a with the artists to shed some insight; something I neglected to do in Issue 1 (we all make mistakes). Hey, I'm still crawling outta my shell... gimme a break.

Also, we've got 300% more interviews with musicians/bands than we did in Issue 1. While I'm no James Lipton, I tried to ask meaningful or atypical questions and give plenty of space for thought out responses. In that respect, it's a huge success.

Many of the creators we spoke to really put themselves out there. There's discussion about family complications, religious guilt, the pitfalls of coming out, living with chronic illness, self harm, drug addiction, the whole gamut. All of these things are discussed in an honest and non-exploitive way, but the content may still be difficult for some readers, so let this serve as a generalized trigger warning.

We've got some wonderful poetry pieces covering far more pages than before: A lovely long-form poetic testimonial piece, and a small collection of Burroughs-esque stream of consciousness pieces.

For those unaware, we lost an absolute visionary in the queer community, Derek Jarman, 30 years ago this February to complications relating to HIV/AIDS. You may know Derek from his plethora of music videos (lots of The Smiths and Pet Shop Boys), his cinematic masterpieces (*Edward II*, *Jubilee*), or maybe his paintings, which grew larger and more fierce as he progressed.

Or perhaps, like me, you came to know Derek through his work in the early industrial underground. Experimental films with soundtracks provided by bands like Throbbing Gristle, Psychic TV, and Coil, especially *In The Shadow Of The Sun* and *The Angelic Conversation*.

We pay tribute to Derek with a lovely article by songwriter Daniel Land, accompanied by some images very graciously licensed to us by James Mackay (via Zeitgeist Films). An overwhelming kindness I am beyond grateful for. Additionally, we asked around the community for some comments on Derek, and have printed some of them following the article.

Lots of emotion throughout this Issue. I'd be a liar if I said I didn't cry many times, as embarrassing as that may be. Anyhow, let's get to our first ever real Letters section before signing off:

LETTERS

“Standards & Values”

The following is an email exchange that went on over the course of a couple of days. Some names/places have been changed or redacted, and some punctuation has been added for readability. Any instances of a changed or redacted name will appear in brackets.

Please, do NOT harass anyone who writes into FANE in any way. We're not about that shit here. However, I am a believer in “do no harm, but take no shit”, so by all means, stand up for and defend yourselves by any legal means you like.

We're also all about a teachable moment, which is why I'm including this letter exchange in this issue. I will not be humoring this discussion in the future.

March 28th, 9:41AM
To: FANE
From: [“NS”]
Subject: Standards & Values in First Issue

Hi Fane,

Was really stoked to read your zine, but was really disappointed in only the first issue to see in print things that you were not looking for, such as racism and EDGELORD shit.

Hopefully this will not be repeated.

March 28th, 10:12AM
To: [“NS”]
From: FANE
Subject: Re: Standards & Values in First Issue

Hey [“NS”],

I appreciate the feedback. Could you please explain further or point out where the offending bits are so that I can review them? I'll take every opportunity to learn and grow I can get, and I'm never intentionally trying to be hurtful or harmful.

-Rob

March 28th, 10:23AM
To: FANE
From: [“NS”]
Subject: Standards & Values in First Issue

Hi Robert,

Sure and thanks for the reply, the False Maria interview - Tomasz ends it by saying "Cishet white people ruin everything." which is not a particularly nice, although not your standard racism. I was quite shocked at the interview ending like that and furthering this, a lot of the statements Tomasz makes in the interview are, to me, edgelord worthy - a few digs at cishet people, allusions to straight white culture and if I am honest the interview with Tomasz seemed like it was being done with a wannabe edgy teenager who wants to say the most outrageous things for attention. Its just what I took away from the piece, which is a shame as I kinda now feel like I should not be a fane reader because I am white and CISHET even though I could not care about labels or sexuality.

Cheers,

[“NS”]

March 28th, 12:17AM
To: [“NS”]
From: FANE
Subject: Re: Standards & Values in First Issue

Hi [“NS”],

Before reading, please understand I'm “speaking” in a low tone, I am not upset in any way, I'm not using sarcasm anywhere, and I'm not dismissing your feelings or experience. As you probably figured out from my email signature, I've got ADHD and other things going on, so I tend to overthink some things or ramble a tad. When you hear my voice in your head as you read, I should never be yelling or heard as talking down to you. Cool as a cucumber :)



LETTERS

I can absolutely see your point (I come back to this later). However, it's important to realize the context of what Tomasz is talking about and where they're coming from. While I can't fully speak for Tomasz, I can speak to the general LGBTQIA+ experience from a Cis White Homosexual Male point of view.

All of the people I have personally encountered in life that have attacked me for just being who I was were White Cisgendered Heterosexual Males. If we look at places like the US (where I'm from) and the UK (where Tomasz is from), the individuals who are pushing legislation harming the LGBTQIA+ community are overwhelmingly White Cisgendered Heterosexual Males, and they also typically do it while claiming some religious or patriotic superiority.

When minorities cry out about White Cisgendered Heterosexual Males, it's the organizations and systems and people who keep those organizations and systems as the norm that the minorities are complaining about. Example: When you turn on the news and hear "North Korea is threatening bomb strikes" and talking heads bring up how "North Korea" is a threat to the world, they're not talking about the impoverished and starving captive citizens of North Korea. They're talking about the fascist military dictatorship in North Korea.

I think you should give the interview another read with this context in mind. When Tomasz talks about the people who treat them poorly, or the individuals who are trying to solicit something sexual out of their band mate Jhane, or those people who felt entitled to Jhane's body because they bought an MP3... those people were all White Cisgendered Heterosexual Males, and it was those people Tomasz was talking about when they said what they said. They certainly weren't talking about allies, like Chris Carter of Throbbing Gristle, one of Tomasz favorite groups of all time.

In ally-ship, in my opinion, something one has to get used to and over is the condemnation of the traits of the oppressors.

I used to jump to conclusions, too... anytime I heard "Cis" or "White" or "Men" come up. "Not all men!" "Not all Whites!" I had to stop thinking everything was about me and just look at the big picture and the absolute facts of the matter. Not all Conservatives are Christian Nationalists, but all Christian Nationalists are Conservatives. It's that type of dynamic at play.

In minority communities, it's a given that when people condemn the "White Cisgendered Heterosexual Male", they're talking about those in/with power who keep colonialist tradition alive. People who deny the reality of white privilege (I've seen WP in action countless times, especially since I'm not immediately detectable as a minority), or shrug off the plight many minorities have gone and continue to go through... those are the peeps.

When the context is appropriate, and a person is speaking from genuine experience about those who are truthfully ruining everything around them, while at the same time NOT calling for their extermination, or for them to be converted through camps, or calling them less than human, I'm inclined to let it go. Had Tomasz called for the systematic eradication of White Cisgendered Heterosexual Males and engaged in truly racist rhetoric while calling white people "Crackers" or "Honkies", I wouldn't have printed it. They didn't do that. They echoed their experience, which they talked about a bit in the interview, and pointed out that, in their world, White Cisgendered Heterosexual Males were ruining everything. If you look at their complaints on paper and remove emotion, anyone capable of academically objective rational thought would agree with what they said in the context of their personal experience.

I've known Tomasz for quite some time thanks to tumblr (I think 10 years now... maybe more), so when they speak on something, I feel confident that I know where they're coming from. Tomasz doesn't have hate in their heart (I've never seen it). Frustration at constantly having to defend against bigotry and abuse, absolutely, but not hate.

LETTERS

["NS"], I hope this shed a little light on things. If you disagree with my view/assessment, I respect that. I hope you do continue to read the zine, though. Issue 2 is going to have quite a few interviews with people who have experienced all kinds of difficult stuff, and I think it might be a good experience to "see how the other half live", so to speak. It won't cost you anything but your time.

Thank you again for reaching out. Regardless if we see eye to eye, I greatly appreciate you taking the time to send constructive feedback my way.

-Rob

*March 30th, 11:48AM
To: FANE
From: ["NS"]
Subject: Follow Up*

That response basically is making excuses for the content.

[Location Redacted] Police are now reviewing the piece for hate speech and discrimination.

Cheers

*March 30th, 12:45PM
To: ["NS"]
From: FANE
Subject: Re: Follow Up*

["NS"],

I didn't make excuses for anything. I explained how things actually are. We can simply agree to disagree.

I'm not intimidated by your Police threats. The piece does not in any way incite violence, and the individual responsible for the comment isn't a US citizen. Even if you were somehow correct about Tomasz, which you aren't, that would mean publications like Time or Life or countless others would be guilty of hate crimes if they published an interview with David Duke.

Do you recall shows like Maury Povich, Jerry Springer, Oprah and countless others, where they had the KKK answering interview questions very bluntly on the regular?

I feel that your problem is with Tomasz personally, which is who you should calmly address it with like a rational adult instead of trying to use the Police to intimidate a minority owned and operated free publication protected under the 1st Amendment because your feelings are hurt.

I respectfully request you refrain from any future contact. Feel free to keep reading the magazine, though. I feel like this interaction is a good learning experience and I may include it in the editors "Letters" section of the magazine. Should I do that, I will 100% keep your identity and contact information private (I'll refer to you as "NS" or "Concerned Reader" or some similar vague thing) so you have no fear of retaliation of any kind. I'm not interested in having overzealous readers who disagree with you try to harass or intimidate you.

Best of luck to you in your future endeavors. I hope you find the catharsis you're looking for. Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got a magazine to edit.

Respectfully yours,

-Rob

*March 30th, 12:47PM
To: FANE
From: ["NS"]
Subject: Re: Follow Up*

[Location Redacted] Police is the Police force that covers where Tomasz lives.

See ya

*March 30th, 12:50PM
To: FANE
From: ["NS"]
Subject: Re: Follow Up*

Also you do not have permission to use any of these emails as they are being reviewed by [Location Redacted] police UK in an ongoing investigation.

LETTERS

*March 30th, 2:23PM
To: ["NS"]
From: FANE
Subject: Re: Follow Up*

I have every right and don't need your permission. You should have thought about that before reporting my journalistic organization to the Police, and definitely before sending letters to me, the editor of a magazine.

You have zero right to, or expectation of, privacy here. My keeping your anonymity is a journalistic courtesy and not a legal requirement. Consider that next time you're feeling vindictive.

It's laughable to me that you don't see the irony in what you've done.

Also, as someone who has mental health issues and advocates for health care, it could do you some good to check in with a therapist and work some shit out. No shame in it... I've done it, and it works wonders.

If you let me know who your lawyers are, I'll forward their information to mine so they can connect. Any future contact on this matter will be through them.

Be well.

*March 30th, 2:29PM
To: FANE
From: ["NS"]
Subject: Re: Follow Up*

Tomasz will be investigated for his comments in your magazine, UK law is different to USA law and one thing I also have a magazine so go stare at the vodka bottle and try not fall of the wagon you sad lush xx

*March 30th, 6:13PM
To: ["NS"]
From: FANE
Subject: Re: Follow Up*

lol

So, that was quite the exchange. Reviewing it all now, it's clear I thought they were just coming for me before realizing that it was Tomasz whose life might get turned upside down in a very real way.

Having associates in the UK, we were able to contact the Police in question there, and while they couldn't confirm or deny that a Police Inquiry had indeed been opened, they did laugh at how absurd such a report/inquiry would be.

Once the matter has been investigated and closed (probably 30 days from now, if the inquiry does indeed exist), we will be able to obtain a full copy of the report, which I plan on framing and putting on the wall.

Obviously, we alerted Tomasz to these events. It would have been irresponsible not to, considering their safety could potentially be in jeopardy. I'd like to turn this over to them now so they can speak for themselves, cuz this Cis White Male has done enough talking on their behalf:

Dear National Socialist (as I can only assume that's what NS refers to),

It would be easy to say that your sad, pathetic ramblings entirely prove me right and leave it at that. After all, this is just another clear and classic example of a cisgender, heterosexual white man pushing his way into marginalised people's spaces and demanding attention. But I'm going to break it down for anyone who may have read your nonsense and now feels like they can't share their experience because of your ridiculous outburst.

1. My words were no kind of racism. Racism is a tool for oppression, invented by white people to subjugate and control people of colour. For racism to succeed, it requires a combination of prejudice and oppression. You, a member of the dominant race, gender and sexuality in any part of the world you might find yourself in, are *in no way whatsoever* oppressed or disadvantaged due to my words. Quite the opposite, in fact - when you decided to throw your toys out of the pram, your first instinct was to attempt to bring the jackboot of white western imperialism down on my neck.



LETTERS

Yes, my editor informed me that you made a futile attempt to involve the police. It's funny how the first thing that straight white men do, when they (almost always incorrectly) perceive the tools they use to oppress others being pointed back at them, is run to the authorities. Here in the U.K., we call people like you a gammon. Or a snivelling shit. The concept of "the white race" didn't really exist, prior to the Atlantic slave trade. White people invented it to put shackles on black people and declare "It's ok! They're subhuman!" Even then, you used racism on yourselves (see Ireland, Italy and all of Eastern Europe. How dare they see themselves as equal to you?). Straight white men look at the treatment of people of colour, women and queers and say "how can I make myself the victim in all of this?" Reverse racism doesn't exist. It's peak bullshittery, pedalled by white nationalists whenever their fragile egos get bruised.

2. The queer/femme noise & post-industrial scenes, for the most part, deal with trauma. The majority of that trauma is being/has been inflicted by cisgender white men. Those same cisgender white men are not the intended audience. Do you know why? Because they don't see their own actions reflected. They, and you, don't have the self-awareness for that. You listen to the horrors you inflict and see it as masturbation fodder. When we tell you it's not that, you throw a fit. Don't get me wrong, everyone is welcome to listen. But if you think we owe you an apology for holding a mirror up to your face, you need to clear the fuck out. If you aren't willing to learn, you aren't welcome.

3. You seemed to be upset about my comments about "white culture". I would answer that with "what culture?" Here in the U.K., at least, white culture consists of racism and transphobia. But in a more serious tone, I ask again: what culture? Your music was stolen from people of colour. The spices that you flavour your bland food with were stolen from my ancestors by your ancestors.

4. You made a very poor attempt to paint yourself as an ally. Please tell me - what part of forcing your way into a queer, non-white, neurodivergent and disabled safe space and demanding to be catered for is allyship? A real ally to queer, non-white, marginalised

people would know when to sit down, shut up, take notes and do better. A real ally would reflect on their privilege and empower marginalised voices. Saying "now I feel like I shouldn't read Fane" shows that you don't have a clue. But you're right; you shouldn't. Your words and actions show you to be an enemy to people like us. Marginalised people are at greater risk of violence from the police and your first thought, after whining like a baby, was to involve them. You rotten, nazi piece of shit. Something like the Daily Mail might be more to your liking.

As to my own experience:

I'm mixed race. It's not like I don't have any white in me (shout-out to my boyfriend. Hi babe). I can pass for white in certain situations and I know that that affords me certain protections. I know when to defer to my loved ones who can't, and I know when to learn from them. I joke with my straight white friends that I fill their diversity quota by being a part of numerous minorities. But here's the other side of things. I've been beaten up and spat on and called a Paki. I've been chased and harassed and called a poof, a queer, a tranny and a faggot. I've been threatened just for expressing my gender identity. Cisgender white men have forced themselves upon me. Violated me. Everyone who has ever sexually assaulted me has been white. I've been told that I'm disgusting, something to be pitied, while simultaneously being told to get down on my knees and open my mouth because I "dress provocatively" and white men are scared that they'll turn queer if they show me any hint of kindness. I'm Schrödinger's queer - somehow repulsive and fuckable. My beautiful brown, trans body bears the scars of your ignorance and hatred.

I am, and will always be unapologetically and unashamedly militant in my desire for BIPOC and queer liberation. I will not temper my words or bow down to bullies, bigots or nazis. To try to silence me is to put another boot on my neck.

This is just another in a long list of entitled cishet white men trying to shut down, control or wipe out marginalised spaces because their feelings got hurt.



LETTERS

And I'm not going to sugarcoat it. You come off as unhinged. The irony of someone like you calling anyone else an "edgelord" will be lost on you. As for your comment "you should know I also own a magazine"; please, write about us. Tell the world that a queer, Paki femme left you so angry that you frothed at the mouth. See who your friends are then. Here's a hint - it'll be the people with the red armbands and Hugo Boss jackets.

My comments in issue one weren't about all cisgender, heterosexual white men, but they were definitely about you. Thank you for entirely proving my point. Grow the fuck up and stop trolling.

Love & Light,

Tomasz C. (they/them) ♥

I would like to echo some of what Tomasz has said or alluded to. FANE is a safe place for marginalized people. There is no world, no alternate universe where I bend to the tantrums of an oppressor with a complete lack of self awareness. Barring threats and lies, you are free to speak your truth when your words are featured in these pages.

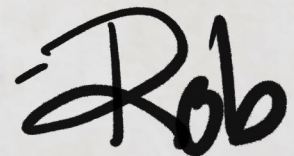
Also, when I publish someone's work in this mag, regardless if I 100% agree with every sentiment, I am 100% ready to defend it. No amount of internet trolling or harassment will make me regret including your work, or resent you as a person. These types of troll attacks are from people who can't handle reality and they'll piss and moan about any and every thing... We just happened to be the thing of the moment.

Like Tomasz, and so many others within marginalized communities, I've survived all kinds of abuse perpetrated by White Cisgender Heterosexual Males throughout my entire life. Since the 80's I've been beaten, I've been terrorized, I've been ostracized, I've been bullied, and I'm still here, living my life, my way. My courtesy and resistance to lashing out are not an indication of weakness. I can be very, very petty, and thorough, when someone tries to hurt me or my family, and make no mistake... the entire LGBTQIA+ community is my family.

However, I would much rather expend what little energy I have on something positive, like putting together this little magazine, and interviewing amazing people, and treating artists like the superstars they are (in my eyes). I've spent an unfortunately long time looking for my community. Through FANE, I genuinely feel I've finally found it.

Alright, let's conclude this edition of the Letters section here. If you've got something to say, preferably constructive, send us an email at FANEmag@gmail.com. We're always looking for constructive feedback, positive or negative. Who knows, maybe you'll appear in a future issue!

Stay safe out there!



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THE BRUTAL & ETHEREAL
PHOTOCOPY ART OF

XAYLA KIA

DAISY



ABOUT THE ARTIST

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AGE: 28
PRONOUNS: SHE/THEY/IT
GENDER: ???
LOCATION: DENVER, CO
MEDIUMS: PHOTOCOPY,
COLLAGE, ILLUSTRATION,
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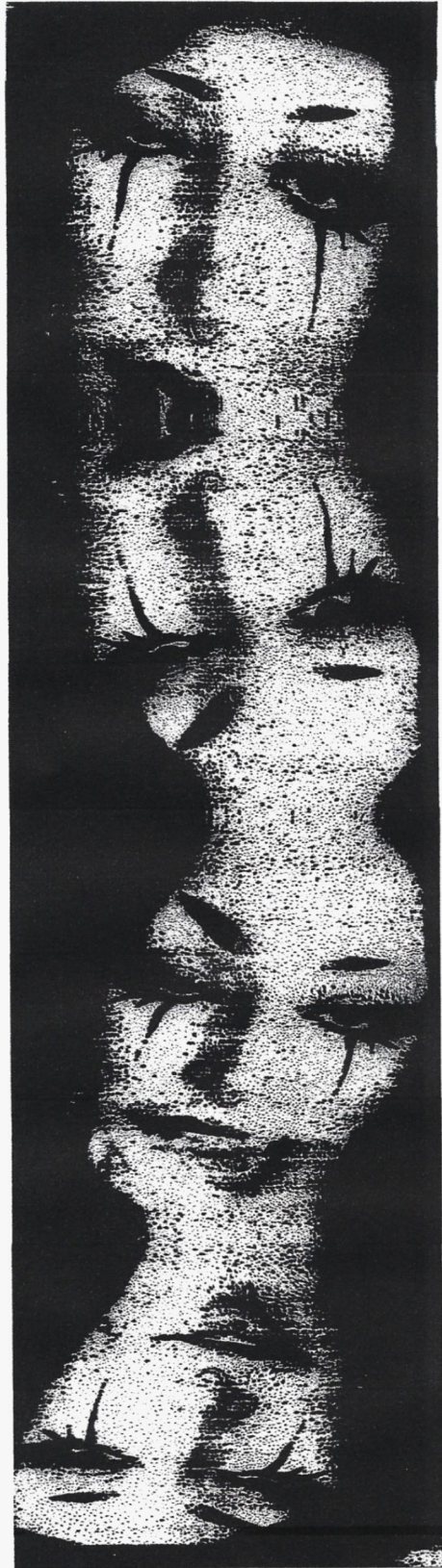
FANE: TELL US ABOUT A HAPPY MEMORY FROM YOUR CHILDHOOD.

XAYLA KIA DAISY: WHEN I WAS LIKE 4 YEARS OLD I WAS OBSESSED WITH MONSTER TRUCKS. MY FAVORITE ONE WAS GRAVE DIGGER. YOU USED TO BE ABLE TO GO VISIT THE, LIKE, HOME OF GRAVE DIGGER. IT WAS CALLED DIGGER'S DUNGEON. I DON'T REMEMBER TOO MUCH OF IT BUT I REMEMBER SEEING THE TRUCKS UP CLOSE AND THINKING IT WAS THE COOLEST THING EVER. A GUY THERE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT THE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF GRAVE DIGGER. THEY HAD ONE THAT YOU COULD RIDE IN SO I GOT TO RIDE IN MY FAVORITE MONSTER TRUCK. I CRIED THE WHOLE TIME BECAUSE I THOUGHT THE DRIVER WAS GOING TO RUN OVER CARS AND I WAS SCARED. IT WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF MY ENTIRE LIFE.

F: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PURSUE A CAREER IN ART?

XKD: I HATE JOBS. I LOVE ART.

"I CRIED THE WHOLE TIME BECAUSE I THOUGHT THE DRIVER WAS GOING TO RUN OVER CARS AND I WAS SCARED. IT WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF MY ENTIRE LIFE."



"PORTRAIT OF HARLEY"

F: ARE YOU SELF TAUGHT?

XKD: I SEE ALL MY PRACTICES AS ONE BIG PUZZLE. EACH PIECE CREATES THE WHOLE PICTURE. SOME PIECES I HAD TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO CREATE MYSELF. OTHER PIECES HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO ME. SOME PIECES ARE CREATED IN INSPIRATION OR WITH THE GUIDING HAND OF OTHER ARTISTS. I THINK IT'S UNFAIR TO SAY SELF TAUGHT BECAUSE IT DIMINISHES THE HUGE INSPIRATION ALL THE CREATIVE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE HAVE HAD ON ME. VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO MY CHILDHOOD GUITAR TEACHER BEN, AND MY 8TH GRADE WRITING TEACHER MS. GARCIA FOR SHOWING MY YOUNGER SELF WHAT I WAS CAPABLE OF.

F: FOR THIS ISSUE, YOU'VE SHARED WITH US SOME OF YOUR PHOTOCOPY WORKS. WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THIS MEDIUM?

XKD: THE LIMITATIONS PUSH ME TO KEEP EXPERIMENTING. THE ELEMENT OF CHANCE CONSISTENTLY SURPRISES ME. PHOTOCOPY WORKS WELL WITH COLLAGE AND ILLUSTRATION. IT FEELS LIKE IT UNIFIES ALL MY MEDIUMS. I ALSO JUST LOVE HOW IT LOOKS. IT'S A TIMELESS AESTHETIC.

F: TAKE US THROUGH YOUR PROCESS A LITTLE BIT, IF YOU DON'T MIND. HOW DO YOU GO FROM IDEA TO REALIZATION?

XKD: I USE MANY DIFFERENT SOURCES LIKE FOUND PHOTOS, PLANTS, CHAINS, DOLLS, PHOTOGRAPHS I'VE TAKEN AND MORE. IT ALL STARTS WITH THE SOURCE MATERIAL. SOMETIMES I HAVE A VISION OF EXACTLY WHAT I WANT AND HOW I WANT IT BUT MORE OFTEN SOMETHING WILL STRIKE ME AND I WILL SPEND TIME EXPERIMENTING WITH IT. THE PROCESS OF EXPERIMENTING WITH MY SOURCE MATERIAL TAKES ME MANY DIFFERENT PLACES. SOME PIECES TAKE HOURS AND



"WEEDS #4"

OTHERS MINUTES. IT'S ALL JUST PLAY. HAVING FUN UNTIL I MAKE SOMETHING THAT MOVES ME. IT LOOKS DIFFERENT EVERY TIME.

F: I'VE NOTICED QUITE A BIT OF FLORA IN YOUR ART. HOW DOES NATURE PLAY A PART IN YOUR WORK? DO THE SEASONAL CHANGES HAVE AN EFFECT?

XKD: NATURE AS A FEATURE IN MY ART IS A RELATIVELY NEW ADDITION SO I HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO REALLY SEE ANY CHANGES WITH THE SEASONS. I'VE ALWAYS LOVED BEING IN NATURE BUT SINCE MOVING TO DENVER AND BEING MORE IN THE CITY IT'S BEEN INSPIRING TO ME THE WAYS NATURE CHANGES THE ENVIRONMENT. IT'S PERVERSIVE. THINGS LIKE WEEDS GROWING THROUGH THE SIDEWALK, WEATHERED CEMENT, OR VINES GROWING ON A BUILDING MOVE ME TO MY CORE. CIVILIZATION IS OUR OWN POOR ATTEMPT AT ORDER. IT COVERS UP NATURE, OR USES IT AS AN AESTHETIC FEATURE. IT TRIES SO HARD TO KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL BUT IT'S A NEVER ENDING BATTLE. THE WILD ALWAYS WINS.

F: DO YOU FIND YOURSELF MOST CREATIVE IN THE DAY OR NIGHT?

XKD: WHENEVER I CAN SET ASIDE THE TIME FOR IT. WHEN I WAS WORKING A JOB IT WAS MOSTLY AT NIGHT. SINCE PURSUING ART FULL TIME IT JUST HAPPENS WHENEVER IT CAN.

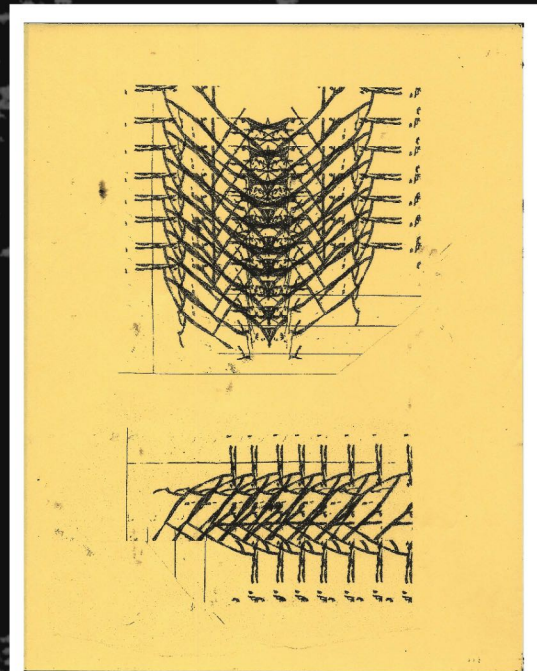
F: IF YOU COULD PUT YOUR ART STUDIO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, WHERE WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

XKD: I LIKE THE IDEA OF MOVING AROUND. I WANT TO TAKE MY STUDIO WITH ME TO DIFFERENT PLACES.

F: WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A CREATIVE SLUMP, WHERE DO YOU GO FOR INSPIRATION?

XKD: I HAVE A COUPLE WAYS TO DEAL WITH CREATIVE BLOCKS. IT HELPS TO GO AS FAR AWAY FROM MY WORK AS I CAN PUT MYSELF. I USED TO LET CREATIVE BLOCKS DRIVE ME CRAZY BUT

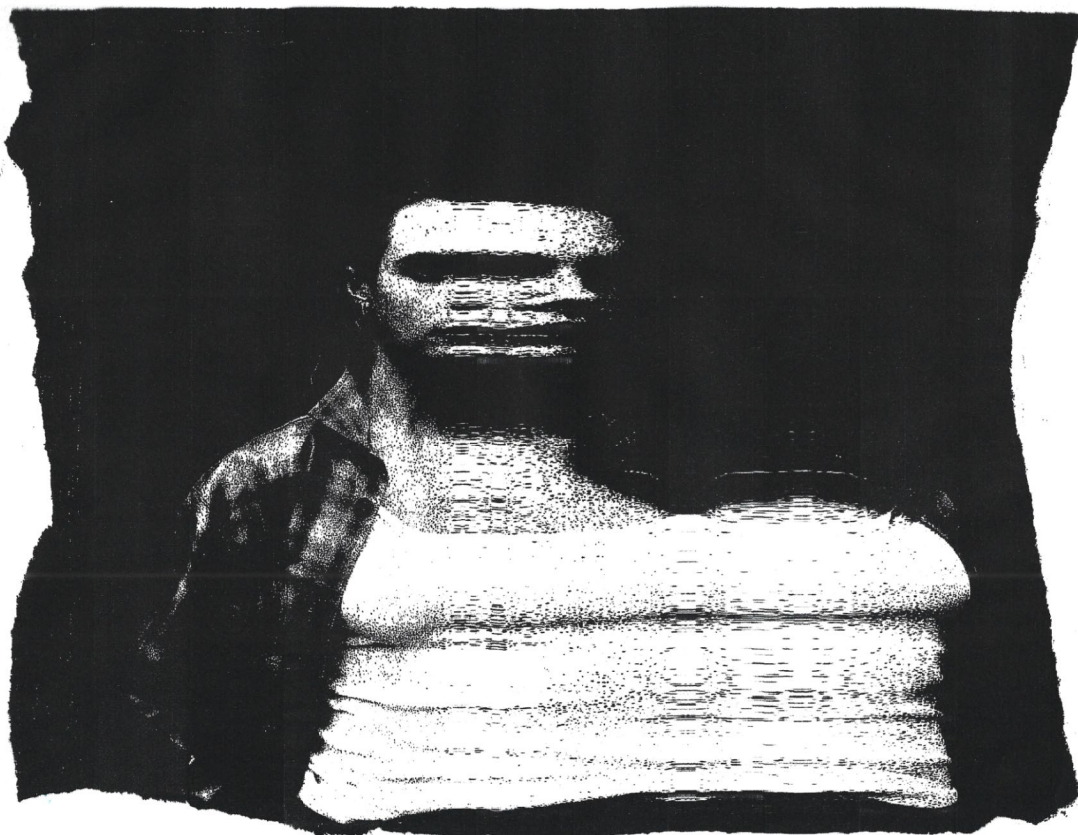
SOMETIMES IT JUST DOESN'T HAPPEN. MIGHT AS WELL SPEND THAT TIME ENJOYING SOMETHING AND THEN YOU CAN COME BACK TO IT REFRESHED WITH NEW EXPERIENCES AND HOPEFULLY SOME GOOD INSPIRATION. SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO JUST MAKE SOMETHING STUPID OR FUNNY AND JUST LAUGH ABOUT IT. IT'S IMPORTANT NOT TO GET SO CAUGHT UP IN BEING SERIOUS. IT KILLS CREATIVITY.



"HEAD IS A HOLE"

F: WHAT WAS IT LIKE COMING OUT AS PART OF THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY?

XKD: I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF "COMING OUT" AS A SINGLE EVENT. IT'S A NEVER ENDING PROCESS. ONE THAT HAS SHOWN ME SOME OF THE BEST AND WORST SIDES OF MYSELF. IT HAS CHANGED ME SO MANY TIMES I COULDN'T COUNT. THE PERSON I WANTED TO BE AT THAT INITIAL EXPERIENCE OF COMING OUT VERSUS WHO I AM NOW AND WHO I WANT TO BE IN THE FUTURE ARE SO WILDLY DIFFERENT AND CONSTANTLY CHANGING. I THINK THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I'VE LEARNED IS TO JUST LET GO. HAVE FUN WITH IT. MY BODY AND MY IDENTITY ARE JUST ANOTHER ART PROJECT. I DON'T EVER WANT TO STOP EXPERIMENTING WITH WHO I AM TO MYSELF OR OTHERS.



"UNTITLED"

"MY BODY AND MY IDENTITY ARE JUST ANOTHER ART PROJECT."

F: WHO HAS BEEN YOUR GREATEST SUPPORTER/ALLY? WHAT DO THEY MEAN TO YOU?

XKD: MY BROTHER ICY. I'VE KNOWN HIM FOR WHAT FEELS LIKE FOREVER AND WE'VE HAD SO MANY UPS AND DOWNS IN OUR FRIENDSHIP BUT I FEEL REALLY COMFORTABLE BEING WHOEVER I WANT TO BE AROUND HIM. WE'VE GIVEN EACH OTHER ENDLESS INSPIRATION FOR SO MANY YEARS NOW AND OUR LIVES WOULD BE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WITHOUT EACH OTHER.

F: I SEE A LOT OF DUALITY IN YOUR WORK, PARTICULARLY IN PIECES LIKE "FREAK SHOW" AND "IDEATION #3". DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE LIVING IN TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS?

XKD: I WANT MY ART TO REFLECT ME AS A WHOLE. I DON'T SEE IT AS DIFFERENT WORLDS. I SEE IT AS ONE EXPERIENCE. SO MANY OPPOSING THINGS EXIST INSIDE OF ME AND ARE ALWAYS INFORMED BY EACH OTHER. I WANT TO CAPTURE THAT.

F: WHAT WAS THE LAST ALBUM YOU REALLY CONNECTED WITH? WHY?

XKD: THE UNION OF DEATH BY NORILLAG. I HEAR SO MUCH INFLUENCE FROM SOME OF MY FAVORITE BANDS BUT ITS NOT JUST ANOTHER CARBON COPY OF WHAT'S BEEN DONE ALREADY. ITS AN EXCITING ALBUM WITH SO MUCH FLOW THAT YOU HARDLY NOTICE ONE SONG ENDED AND ANOTHER STARTED. THE PRODUCTION IS INCREDIBLE. THE ATMOSPHERE IS BEAUTIFUL AND EERIE. THE UNION OF DEATH IS A MODERN INDUSTRIAL CLASSIC.



"IDEATION #3"



"FREAK SHOW"



"SPOOKY #3"

F: WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING ON ART, WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

XKD: DANCING AT RAVES, GOING TO SHOWS, HANGING OUT WITH MY BOYFRIEND, GOING OUTSIDE, READING BOOKS.

F: WHAT MESSAGE, IF ANY, DO YOU HOPE PEOPLE RECEIVE FROM YOUR WORK?

XKD: MY ART IS AN ATTEMPT TO KNOW MYSELF BETTER, PROCESS MY TRAUMA, AND SHARE THINGS THAT I THINK LOOK COOL. WHAT ANYONE SEES IN MY ART IS JUST AS VALID AS WHAT I SEE. IT'S ALL UP FOR INTERPRETATION.

F: WHAT ARTIST DO YOU FEEL IS CRIMINALLY UNDERRATED AND DESERVES MORE ATTENTION?

XKD: THERES SO MANY SO I'M GONNA JUST SHARE A LIST OF INSTAGRAM HANDLES OF PEOPLE WHO INSPIRE ME.

@CIEJETM

@LAMBLOVER

@GHOULISH.CO

@P.VANTRIGHT

@OURFUTUREWHATFUTURE

@PLATHIANURGES

@SAEULEN

@DOGBITESBACK

@BONGBROKE

@UNRADEMOTIONS

F: WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT TO SEE FROM YOU IN THE FUTURE?

XKD: CLOTHING, LARGER WHEATPASTE PROJECTS, MORE TATTOOS, A ZINE SERIES, AND PLENTY OF XEROX ART. ■

THE ART OF
MARIA
TOLANDA



ABOUT THE ARTIST:

LOCATION: BRAZIL

AGE: 24

PRONOUNS: SHE/HER

GENDER: FEMALE

ART MEDIUMS: GOUACHE/MIXED

BIO: MARIA IS A PAINTER LIVING IN A SMALL TOWN IN BRAZIL. SHE USES HER ART TO PROCESS AND COMMUNICATE THE COMPLEX EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE OF AN AUTISTIC LGBTQIA+ CREATIVE IN A HETERONORMATIVE, NEUROTYPICAL ENVIRONMENT.

LINK: @NEGATIVEQUEER ON IG

12 ARTWORKS



FANE: WHEN DID YOU FIRST
START PAINTING?

MARIA IOLANDA: I FIRST STARTED PAINTING WHEN I WAS AT MY FIRST JOB. THERE WAS NOTHING TO DO, SO I STARTED DOODLING AND DRAWING. THEN, FOR SOME REASON I SHOWED THEM TO MY PSYCHIATRIST AND SHE ENCOURAGED ME TO PAINT. SO, BASICALLY, I STARTED PAINTING BECAUSE I WAS BORED.



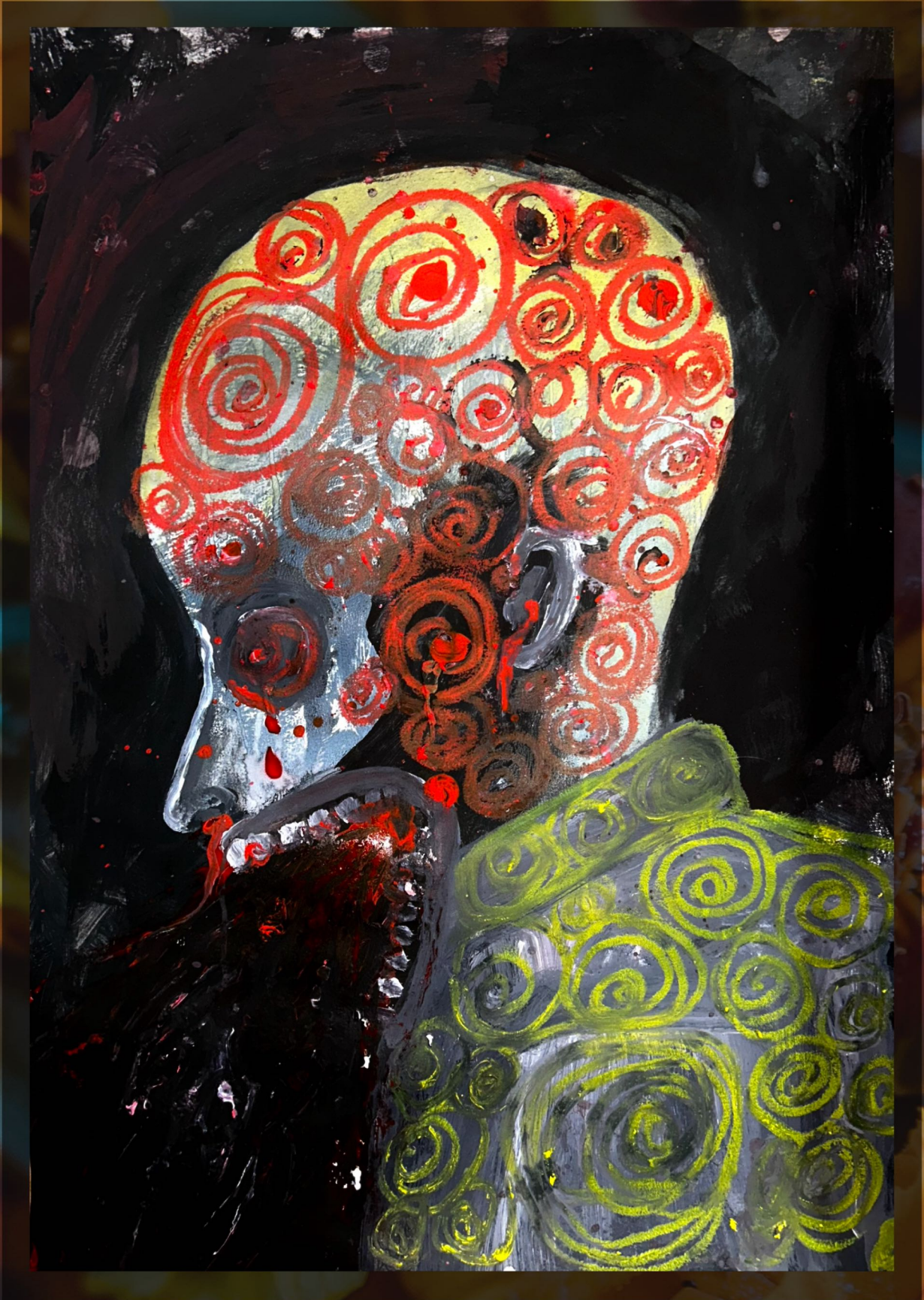
F: WHAT DOES
AUTISM MEAN TO
YOU ON A
PERSONAL LEVEL?

MI: IT'S MY ENTIRE
PERSONALITY. IT MADE ME
FIND WHO I AM AND WHY I
AM. IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO
ME BECAUSE I KNOW I'M NOT
ALONE; THERE ARE MORE
WEIRD PEOPLE LIKE ME OUT
THERE.

F: WHAT DO YOU
FIND THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL ABOUT
THE COUNTRY YOU
LIVE IN?

MI: I LOVE THE NATURE
HERE IN BRAZIL. I
LOVE THE ANIMALS,
THE TREES... I JUST
LOVE IT.





F: WHAT BOOK (NOVEL, POETRY, COMICS, ETC.) ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?

ME: I CAN'T READ BOOKS AT THE MOMENT. I CAN'T CONCENTRATE.



F: WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR
GREATEST WEAKNESS/STRENGTH?

**MI: I THINK IT'S NOT LYING. I GENUINELY CAN'T LIE.
THAT HAS TO BE BOTH A WEAKNESS AND A STRENGTH.**

F: WHAT IS IT
LIKE BEING
LGBTQIA+ IN
YOUR HOME
TOWN?

**MI: IT'S SAD. THERE ARE
A LOT OF DUMB PEOPLE
HERE, BUT ALSO A LOT OF
LGBT PEOPLE, SO AT
LEAST I DONT FEEL
ALONE.**



F: HOW DO YOU
APPROACH
CREATING A
NEW PAINTING?

**MI: I JUST START MAKING
LINES, SOMETIMES USING
THE PAINT FROM ANOTHER
PAINTING, AND JUST START
SPRAYING IT ON A PIECE OF
PAPER. I DO EVERYTHING
YOU CAN IMAGINE THAT'LL
TRASH MY WHOLE ROOM
WITH PAINT. I JUST THROW
EVERYTHING ON THE PAPER.**



F: WHAT DO YOU WISH MORE PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD ABOUT AUTISM?

MI: THAT IM FINE. I'M NOT SICK, AND I CAN'T BE CURED.

F: WHAT, IF ANYTHING, DO YOU HOPE PEOPLE TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR ART?

MI: THE FEELINGS I EXPERIENCED WHILE MAKING IT.





F: TELL ME ABOUT A TIME YOU FELT AFRAID.

MI: I'VE LOST A LOT OF PEOPLE IN MY LIFE, BUT THE THOUGHT OF DEATH STILL SCARES ME. IT'S WEIRD, BECAUSE AT TIMES I FEEL SUICIDAL AND SCARED, BUT ALSO CURIOUS. SOMETIMES I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN.

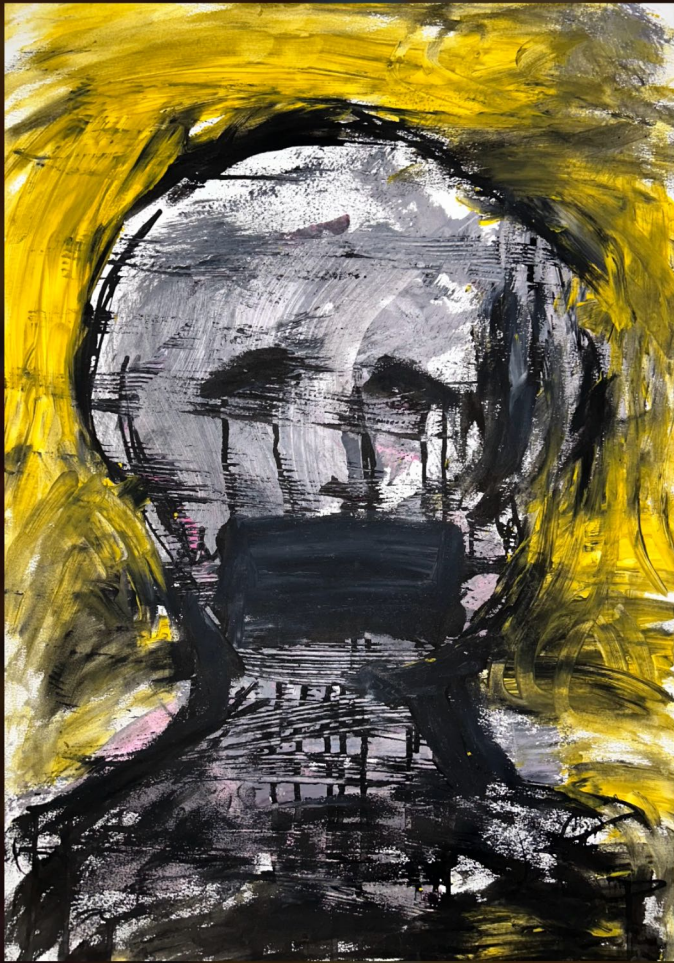
F: WHO IS YOUR
GREATEST ALLY?

MI: MY BROTHER FROM ANOTHER MOTHER, JULIO. HE TRULY IS MY BEST FRIEND. HE HELPS ME SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY. LIFE IS JUST BETTER WHEN I'M WITH HIM. HE TRULY APPRECIATES MY ART, AND EVEN HELPS ME SEE MY ART IN A BETTER LIGHT. HE'S A GREAT ARTIST, AND WE MET THROUGH OUR LOVE OF ART. HE WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO APPRECIATE MY WORK SO MUCH HE HAD TO GET TO KNOW ME. I LOVE JULIO.



F: WHO IS YOUR
GREATEST ARTISTIC
INFLUENCE? WHY?

MI: BASQUIAT, BECAUSE HE DID SOMETHING NO ONE DID BEFORE. WHEN PEOPLE SAY IT'S CHILDISH OR "MY SON COULD DO THAT" I'M ALWAYS READY TO SAY "WELL YOUR SON DIDN'T". I JUST LOVE HOW PEOPLE REACT TO ART THAT'S NOT REALISTIC. ON A DEEPER LEVEL, BASQUIAT WAS AN INCREDIBLE ARTIST. I JUST LOVE HIM AND HIS ART. I HAVE A LOT OF HIS ART IN MY ROOM (REPRODUCTIONS, OF COURSE!).

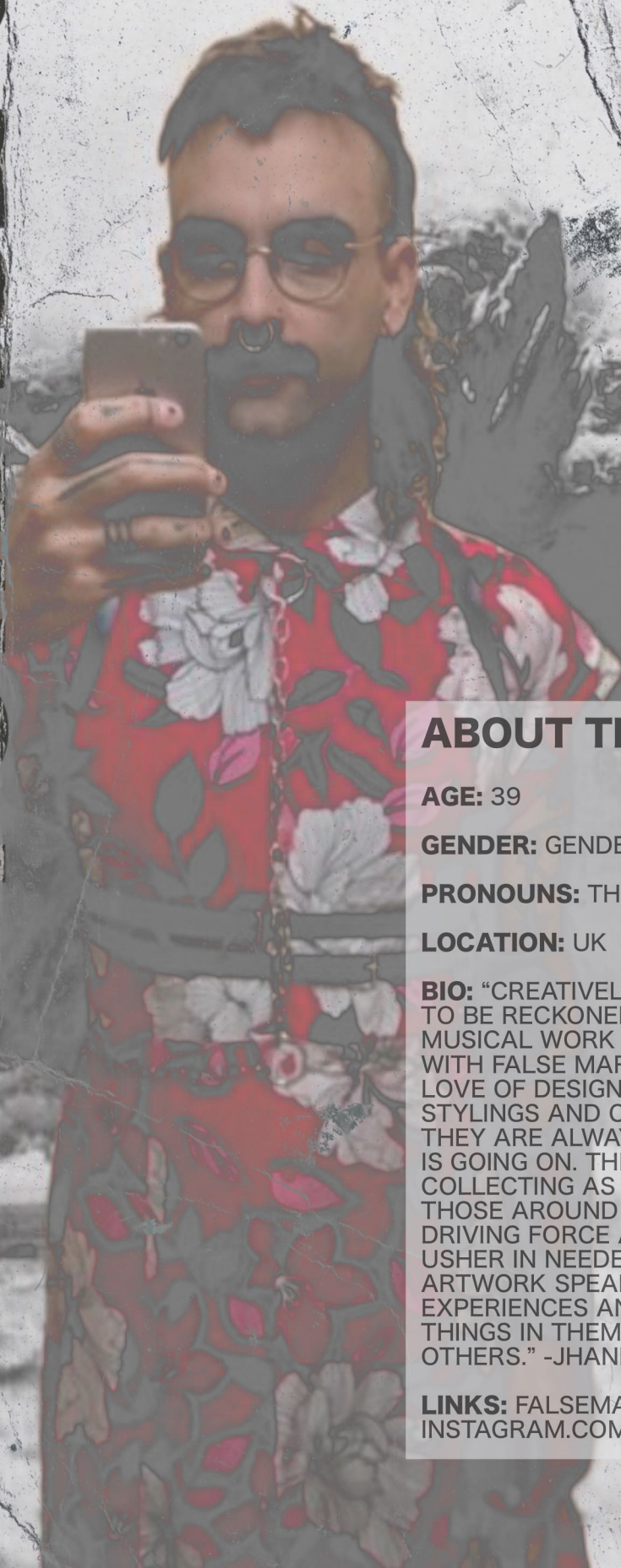


»FIN«

VISUAL ARTS BY **TOMASZ C.**

THE UK HALF OF INTERNATIONAL NOISE POWER DUO "FALSE MARIA" CHECKS IN WITH

US TO SHARE SOME OF THEIR COLLAGE AND PAINTINGS, AS WELL AS ANSWER A FEW OF OUR QUESTIONS.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

AGE: 39

GENDER: GENDERQUEER

PRONOUNS: THEY/THEM

LOCATION: UK

BIO: "CREATIVELY SPEAKING T IS A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. THROUGH THEIR MUSICAL WORK AND ARTISTIC CREATIONS WITH FALSE MARIA TO THEIR CONSTANT LOVE OF DESIGNING PERSONAL FASHION STYLINGS AND COOKING VEGAN DELIGHTS, THEY ARE ALWAYS KEEPING IN WITH WHAT IS GOING ON. THIS GOES FOR MUSIC COLLECTING AS WELL AS CARING FOR THOSE AROUND THEM IN NEED. WITH A DRIVING FORCE AND EXCITABILITY TO USHER IN NEEDED CHANGE THEIR ARTWORK SPEAKS FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND A WAY OF HEALING THINGS IN THEM THAT IN TURN ALSO HELP OTHERS." -JHANE P.

LINKS: FALSEMARIA.BANDCAMP.COM
INSTAGRAM.COM/COLLAPSING__



“UNTITLED” (COLLAGE, 2023)

FANE: SOMETHING I FAILED TO BRING UP WHEN WE LAST SPOKE [NOTE: SEE FALSE MARIA INTERVIEW IN ISSUE 1] WAS FALSE MARIA'S ARTWORK/DESIGN. YOU'RE BEHIND THE CUT UP/ COLLAGE AESTHETIC, YES?

TOMASZ: FOR THE MOST PART, BUT I WOULDN'T SAY IT'S ENTIRELY ME. J OFTEN SENDS THINGS TO INCLUDE. I THINK OF IT AS AN EXTENSION OF HOW WE GO ABOUT WRITING MUSIC TOGETHER. BUT IT KIND OF SPRUNG UP OUT OF NECESSITY, REALLY. I COULD'VE SPENT WEEKS PAINTING SOMETHING TO PUT ON THE COVER OF OUR RECORDS, WHEREAS I CAN GO FROM AN IDEA FOR A COLLAGE TO THE FINISHED PIECE WITHIN A DAY OR TWO. I'VE ALWAYS LOVED GEE VAUCHER'S WORK FOR CRASS. THAT'S WHY YOU'LL SEE A LOT OF BLACK AND WHITE ON OUR COVERS; IT'S DEFINITELY NOT BECAUSE COLOUR COSTS MORE TO PRINT...

F: WHEN DID THE COLLAGE WORK START? DID THAT COME WITH FOUNDING FALSE MARIA, OR WERE YOU CREATING PIECES BEFORE?

T: I'VE BEEN MAKING COLLAGES FOR DECADES. MAILING THEM OUT TO FRIENDS AND ENEMIES. OR USING THEM AS COVERS FOR MIX TAPES. I WENT THROUGH A PERIOD OF MAKING MAYBE TEN A WEEK TO ABSOLUTELY NONE. I'VE STEERED MYSELF BACK TO IT OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS.

F: WHY COLLAGE? WHAT ABOUT THE MEDIUM DO YOU FIND MOST APPEALING?

T: I USED TO PAINT A LOT MORE, MOSTLY WATERCOLOURS AND ACRYLICS, BUT NINE TIMES OUT OF TEN WHATEVER VISION I HAD IN MY HEAD EXCEEDED MY SKILL. I THINK THAT WITH COLLAGE - AND DON'T GET ME WRONG, THERE'S DEFINITELY A SKILL TO IT - IF YOU HAVE A PRINTER AND A SCALPEL IT'S SOMEWHAT EASIER TO GET THOSE IDEAS OUT OF MY MIND. I'VE BEEN LUCKY IN THAT I'VE HAD ACCESS TO ALL SORTS OF MATERIALS THROUGH MY WORKPLACE. I'VE DEFINITELY WASTED A LOT OF TAXPAYER'S MONEY DRAWING AND PAINTING AND PRINTING WHEN I SHOULD BE WORKING. I ALSO LIKE WORKING WITH FOUND IMAGES. COLLAGE LETS YOU COMPLETELY CHANGE THE INTENTION OF SOMETHING.



“UNTITLED” (COLLAGE, 2023)



Worshippers leaving the Basilica after Papal Mass. The two tents in the right background are the mobile dispensary and first-aid station.

14

“UNTITLED” (COLLAGE, 2020)

F: WHEN WORKING ON VISUAL ARTS, WHERE DO YOU DRAW YOUR INSPIRATION?

T: CONVERSATIONS WITH J INFORM A LOT OF MY VISUAL WORK. WE ALWAYS JOKE THAT WE HAVE A TELEPATHIC LINK. IF I HAVE AN IDEA FOR A PIECE, I DON'T EVEN NEED TO TELL HER AND SHE'LL MENTION IT IN CONVERSATION AND HELP ME FIGURE IT OUT. A LOT OF THE THEMES IN OUR MUSIC ARE THINGS WE'VE BOTH BEEN CREATING ART AROUND FOR A LONG TIME. SEXUALITY, TOO, OBVIOUSLY. OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS I'VE FOUND MY WAY BACK TO RELIGION. I WAS RAISED PROTESTANT AND I SEEM TO HAVE FLOATED TOWARDS THAT AGAIN. I'M VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN THE OVERLAP BETWEEN RELIGION AND GOVERNMENT, AND RELIGION AND SEX.

F: WHAT IS YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS LIKE?

T: I DON'T KNOW IF I NECESSARILY HAVE ONE. I DON'T HAVE A DESK OR A SET SPACE TO GO TO FOR CREATIVE ENDEAVOURS. I TEND TO WORK ON THE FLOOR WHEN INSPIRATION COMES. I DON'T HAVE ANY SET WAY OF WORKING. PROCESS ISN'T SOMETHING I THINK ABOUT A LOT.

F: TELL ME ABOUT THE COLLAGE PIECES YOU'VE PICKED FOR US.

T: THE SIMPLE VATICAN-SWASTIKA ONE IS THE OLDEST. I THINK IT'S PRETTY SELF-EXPLANATORY. AS MUCH AS I LOVE THE RITUALS AND CEREMONIES AND ICONOGRAPHY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, I DON'T THINK THAT ANYONE SHOULD IGNORE HOW MUCH THEY HELPED NAZIS FLEE TO SOUTH AMERICA AFTER THE WAR.

THE TWO SKULLS WITH SIGILS ARE FROM OUR ALBUM. THE SKULLS ARE FROM ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, WHERE I WAS CHRISTENED. THERE WERE A LOT OF TERRIBLE THINGS GOING ON IN MY LIFE WHILE WE WERE WRITING THE ALBUM AND BY THE TIME WE FINISHED IT I'D SPENT A LOT OF TIME AT THAT PARTICULAR CHURCH. IT KIND OF FELT LIKE THE BEGINNING AND END OF CERTAIN THINGS HAPPENED THERE, SO IT MADE SENSE TO PUT IT ON THE ALBUM. THE ALBUM ALSO COINCIDED WITH US BOTH DECIDING TO CLOSE THE DOOR ON A LOT OF THINGS THAT DIDN'T SERVE US ANYMORE. ALL OF THAT IS HELD IN THOSE TWO SKULLS. AS FOR THE SIGILS, THEY'RE INDIVIDUAL TO US, AND I WANTED TO INCLUDE THEM. THE BACKGROUNDS TO BOTH OF THOSE PIECES ARE FROM A COUPLE OF MY OTHER FAVOURITE CHURCHES. IF ANYONE EVER FINDS THEMSELVES IN THE SAME CITY AS ME, I'LL GIVE YOU A TOUR OF THE BEST HOLY BUILDINGS.

THE CRUCIFIX IS WHAT J AND I CALLED RUSTY BLUE JESUS. HE SITS IN THE MIDDLE OF A HOUSING ESTATE AND THE CHURCH THAT HE WAS ORIGINALLY PAIRED WITH WAS DEMOLISHED A LONG TIME AGO. HE'S OXIDISED AND TURNED THE MOST BEAUTIFUL TURQUOISE. I GREW UP NEARBY AND “BLUE JESUS” WAS ALWAYS IN MY THOUGHTS. THE BACKGROUND IS A SHOT OF THE CANAL NEAR MY OFFICE. IT WAS MAYBE SEVEN IN THE MORNING AND EVERYTHING WAS SHROUDED IN MIST. I'D BEEN DISSOCIATING A LOT IN THE WEEKS BEFORE THAT PHOTO AND FEELING COMPLETELY DISCONNECTED FROM MY BODY AND LIKE I WAS WATCHING EVERYTHING FROM A THOUSAND FEET UP. IT SEEMED LIKE A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF EVERYTHING I'D BEEN FEELING. THE FIGURE AT THE BOTTOM IS FROM A CEMETERY IN FRANCE. A LOT OF GRAVES ARE HEAVY WITH RELIGIOUS ICONOGRAPHY AND IT JUST SEEMED TO FIT. MAYBE THE THEME OF THIS PIECE IS THAT HOWEVER FUCKED YOUR MIND IS, WHITE JESUS IS ALWAYS HOT. WHO KNOWS?



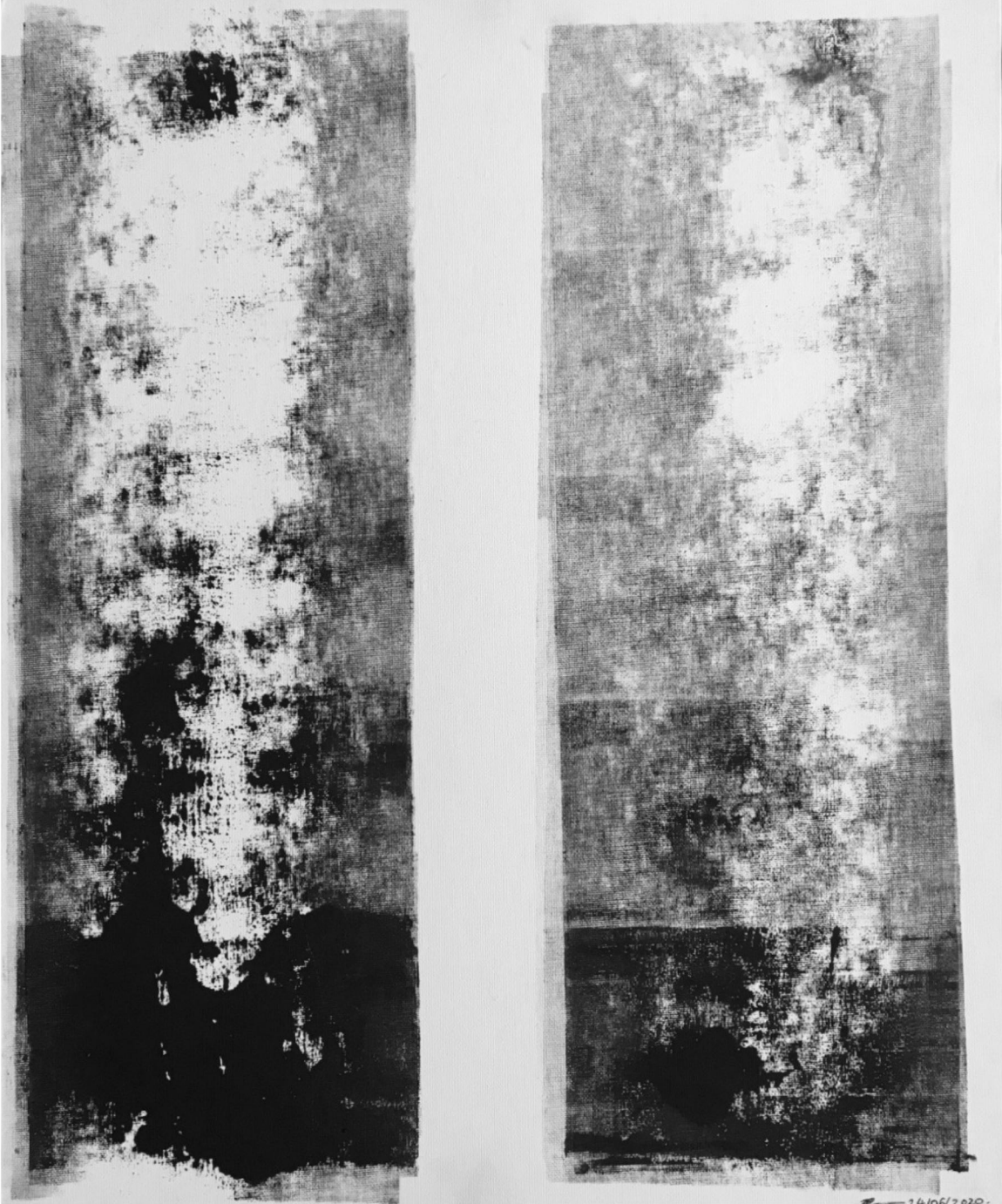
OWING NOTE - Patient copy

We are sorry we cannot supply all your medication
Bring this ticket with you when collecting the owed item(s).

SON/SLAVE

ITALIAN DAD WANTS hot, slim very boyish youngpunk needing training-domination by sadistic dad 32 5'10", 140#, 8" thick uncut cock. Must have high pain threshold for submissive humiliation, S/M, B/D, CBT, spanking-wipping. Call (212) 475-7811

“UNTITLED” (COLLAGE, 2023)



“UNTITLED” (PAINTING, 2020)

THE LAST PIECE, I COULD SAY ALL SORTS OF THINGS ABOUT IT. I DON'T KNOW IF I WANT TO GO THAT DEEP. I GUESS IT COULD BE SUMMED UP BY SAYING IT'S A WAY FOR ME TO HAVE AGENCY OVER MY BODY. I USED TO HAVE A LOT OF BODY DYSMORPHIA AND GENDER DYSPHORIA AND I DON'T FIND SEXUAL INTERCOURSE, OR EVEN BEING TOUCHED, EASY. ADD TO THAT THAT FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN AWAY MY CHOICE WHEN IT COMES TO SEX. I'M JUST SAYING "TO SHARE MY BODY IN THIS WAY IS MY CHOICE".

F: YOU'VE ALSO DECIDED TO SHARE A PAINTING. TELL ME ABOUT IT.

T: I PAINTED IT A FEW MONTHS INTO THE LOCKDOWN. I DON'T REALLY KNOW IF IT'S ANY KIND OF REACTION TO THAT POINT IN TIME, OR NOT. I WORK FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MENTAL HEALTH TEAM AND UP UNTIL THE LOCKDOWN WE HAD A HUGE BASE WHERE WE WOULD RUN VOCATIONAL SKILLS AND THERAPY GROUPS. AT THE TIME, I MOSTLY DID WOODWORK AND ART THERAPY. ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE THE LOCKDOWN WAS ANNOUNCED, WE WERE TOLD WE COULDN'T

SEE PATIENTS FACE-TO-FACE. THERE WAS A RUSH TO PACK UP ALL OF OUR EQUIPMENT, BUT I ALSO HAD AN HOUR OR TWO EVERY WEEK TO PAINT. THIS IS WHAT CAME OUT OF IT. IT DOESN'T HAVE ANY HIDDEN MEANINGS. IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO RESEMBLE ANYTHING. I LIKE IT BECAUSE IT'S BLAND AND INTRICATE AT THE SAME TIME. THERE'S A SMUDGE IN THE TOP RIGHT CORNER, ENTIRELY UNINTENTIONAL, WHICH IS PROBABLY MY FAVOURITE PART.

F: HOW IS YOUR PROCESS OF CREATING VISUAL ARTS DIFFERENT FROM YOUR MUSIC CREATION?

T: THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE. YOU CREATE SOMETHING. YOU RECORD OR PAINT OVER IT. YOU PULL IT APART AND PUT IT BACK TOGETHER AND SEE WHAT FITS.

F: SHOULD WE EXPECT TO SEE MORE OF YOUR ART OUTSIDE OF FALSE MARIA?

T: I HOPE SO! I'M SOMEWHAT CHAOTIC AT THE MOMENT. I WAS RECENTLY DIAGNOSED WITH C-PTSD SO I'M TRYING TO JUST GO WITH THE FLOW. IT'S NOT REALLY WORKING; I'M AN ANXIOUS MESS. BUT I'LL GET THERE. ■



"UNTITLED" (COLLAGE, 2023)

Pain Chain
Original Photos: Shley Bridges
Remixed by FANE

A STORM UNTAMED

An interview with Pain Chain

pain Chain

is the industrial noise / experimental electronic music project of LGBTQIA+ artist Sam Gruca. In this interview, they talk to us about their analog collage work, the almighty power of the banjo, aiding political prisoners, and more.

FANE: Why don't we start with the basics? Tell me a little bit about your background; where you grew up, family/school life, that kinda thing.

Pain Chain: I grew up in Lowell, MA in a Catholic household with my parents and younger brother. I attended Catholic school from Kindergarten thru 8th grade. It was really isolating and caused delays in my social development. I was basically non-verbal for most of my childhood; it was rare that I spoke. I turned to journaling, writing short stories, and other creative outlets to express myself and as a way to escape reality.

F: When did you first realize you were LGBTQIA+? What kind of emotions did that stir up in you?

PC: As long as I can remember really. I think it was most evident when I was attending school and really noticed how binary the world is. Girls must wear skirts, and boys wear pants. Boys couldn't have hair past their ear lobes, and girls had long hair. Girls had to shave their legs and under their arms. Why didn't boys have to do this? I also didn't feel like a girl and having to wear skirts everyday and play pretend was mortifying for me. I was suicidal at the age of 12. I discovered writings in my later years, that I have since burned, of my childhood self wishing to die and I really mourn for that child who couldn't be themselves fully.

F: How was coming out for you? What was the response like from your friends and loved ones? Did things go as you expected?

PC: It was liberating. Jamezie from the band WIMP was the first person who ever asked me what my pronouns were and that was the first time I said "they/them" out loud. At that point, I realized that I wanted to tell more people. I told my partner and I CRIED SO HARD because I was terrified, but they were not surprised at all and embraced me fully. I am not out to my parents, brother, and extended family. It's honestly just exhausting to even think about, so I haven't told them. I have a cousin who is trans and my family misgenders him constantly. I would rather them not know so I feel like I can't be mad at them for misgendering me... If that makes sense.

"I attended Catholic school... It was really isolating and caused delays in my social development."



"A SIGH, A TEAR" (Analog Collage)

“I have to advocate for myself a lot and that gets really exhausting.”

F: I imagine that has to be quite difficult. Does that mean they're unaware of your art and music?

PC: They are aware that I make art and music but aren't involved. They don't come out to my shows or seek it out.

F: When did you start expressing yourself through music creation? Was there a catalyst, or did you just sort of end up there?

PC: I wrote a lot of song lyrics when I was young. I was never effectively able to turn them into music/songs, though, as I never knew how to play any instruments. I could sing really well, though; that's one good thing that Catholic school taught me. It wasn't until I met my partner that I was really encouraged to explore the possibility and truly realized that you don't have to know how to play an instrument to be able to make music.

F: Is there a story behind the name “Pain Chain”?

PC: It has a couple meanings. I suffer from chronic pain and the pain chain is the series of pedals in my noise setup.

F: If you don't mind my asking, what affliction is causing your chronic pain? Are you able to mostly keep it under control?

PC: I don't currently have a diagnosis. I have to advocate for myself a lot and that gets really exhausting. There are periods of times where I pause seeking treatment and try to self heal. That is where I am at currently. It's just something I live with and that has become my norm.

F: That must be deeply frustrating. What, if anything, do you wish people understood about those in your position?

PC: That even though someone might look fine and healthy they may be suffering immensely. Not all medical/physical illnesses are visible to the eye.

F: How did you get involved with Mutual Aid Records?

PC: Mutual Aid Records was founded by myself and co-founded by my partner Cam whose project is Chuck Steak. We were self releasing our music for a bit and decided to create a label, not only for our own music, but to uplift other artists in the community as well.

F: It's awesome that Mutual Aid donates proceeds to charitable causes. What made the label decide to go that route? What cause is close to your heart?

PC: The label has always been not for profit. Any funds made from the label go right back into it or to others in need. The primary cause we focus on is political prisoners. I've been writing to political prisoners and helping raise funds to support them for years. It's something I've been passionate about for a long time and will continue to do moving forward.

F: Is there someone in particular unjustly imprisoned right now that you feel people need to be made aware of? We know not every political prisoner makes the news.

PC: Oso Blanco is the first person who comes to mind. He is a native warrior with an absurdly long prison sentence. He belongs to the Earth and is a healer and nurturer. He found a healer in me and encourages me to lean into my power. He has become a big brother to me. I want to uplift his voice whenever I can. I have helped him record some of his music over the phone, and have released it digitally and on CDs as well. His voice will not be silenced.

F: Your visual collage work is wonderful, and has featured on many artists album covers. Why collage? What about the medium drew you in?

PC: I really love collage because it's a form of destruction into creation. I can cut up or rip something apart and make it into something new. It's free form and also a great way to recycle!



"ENERGY" (Analog Collage)

F: Do you have a source of inspiration for your collage work? What artists working in that medium do you follow?

PC: I love @fleshflies work! I was making collages before I discovered her work, but that is definitely an artist that I admire.

F: You recently released an art book, "More Than Flesh". Tell me about it. Was this your first art book? What was your vision for the project?

PC: No, this is not my first. I have done a few prior to this. The vision was to incorporate my artwork and combine that with film photos that I have taken of artists/bands throughout the years to create something beautiful to document the scene.

F: In addition to creating music as Pain Chain, you're part of the group The Cost ov Living. How did that come about?

PC: The Cost ov Living has been Cam's project for a long time. I jumped in a few years ago doing noise and vocals. The original lineup had disbanded, and Cam wanted to take a different route with it. It went from being full band (drums, bass, guitar) to programmed drums, noise, synths, etc.

F: I've also heard bout the HIRS collective, and that you're a part of that. Could you tell us about your history with HIRS?

PC: I would go to their shows a lot and jump on stage and grab the mic, I also slept on Jenna's floor when I was on tour with WIMP. HIRS is a band that I've always loved and cherished and that I believe stands for so much. I started sharing a lot of bills with HIRS and that's when Jenna and I started becoming friends. She asked me to be a part of the latest record and that was a huge honor. Love love love HIRS forever <3

F: Take us through your creative process. How do you approach creating new music? Do you try to start with some kind of rhythm? Does it start with an interesting sample/noise?

PC: My process is entirely by feeling. It's my catharsis. I use it as a way to express how I'm feeling internally. That's why my music can sometimes be harsh, sometimes ethereal. It really depends on my mood. I refuse to stick to one sound because that is not genuine to me.

"...my music can sometimes be harsh, sometimes ethereal. It really depends on my mood."

F: What inspires your lyrics? Do you tend to focus on personal experiences, poetics and abstracts, or something else?

PC: It's often personal to me or stems from my view on the state of the world. In addition some of them also come about thru cut up poetry that I create.

F: What Authors/Poets do you like to read (if any)?

PC: I have been reading soooo much lately. My latest favorites that I have read are "Organ Meats" by K-Ming Chang, "Monstrilio" by Gerardo Samano Cordova, and "I Keep My Exoskeletons to Myself" by Marisa Crane.

F: What music gear and/or software are you loving at the moment? Why?

PC: I just got back into banjo. I'm able to make it sound really haunting and atmospheric, but also harsh and chaotic at times, and you would never in a million years guess that the sound was created with banjo. I also got a really cool touch oscillating device from Molasses Industries that I LOVE and am excited to use more. And of course the Kaosillator is something I've used for years in my setup and continue to. I love the loops you can make!

F: Are there any other projects you're a part of (past or present)?

PC: Diva Karr, The Ethyrik Body, Dawntreader, and C.U.M.

F: If a complete stranger wanted to get into what you're about, what release(s) would you suggest they check out?

PC: "The Omens in My Bones". That release is so special to me. It conveys very raw and real emotion and grief that is lifelong.



"REGENERATION" (Analog Collage)

F: Who would you most like to collaborate with, living or dead (musically, artistically, or both)? What is special about them, to you?

PC: Dreamcrusher or Deli Girls - they both just have crushing, powerful sound and energy that is completely unmatched.

F: What would you consider your greatest achievement? How did it change you?

PC: My greatest achievement isn't musically. It is the work that I do in the community with individuals who are incarcerated or returning from incarceration. Re-entry work is so crucial and I've seen so much change since I first started this work in 2017. It's what I am most proud of participating in.

F: That has to be difficult work. What do you find is the most challenging part of helping people re-enter society? What has this work taught you about people?

PC: The most challenging part is the lack of funding in this area. There is a housing crisis right now. We have to be really creative and loud in letting the world know what our communities need. This work is so important. It has taught me that we are not the sum of our worst decisions. We have the ability to grow and if our communities are held accountable as well and contribute to healing we can all feel whole and renewed.

F: Who is (are) your biggest ally (allies)? What do they mean to you?

PC: My partner and my cat. I wouldn't be where I am without them.

F: What music are you currently listening to? Heard anything that blew your mind recently?

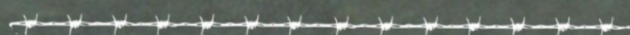
PC: Deli Girls, Moor Mother, Guerilla Toss, Cicatrice, King Woman - all mind blowing stuff!

F: What's next for Pain Chain?

PC: Touring in May with Professor A!!!

F: Any last words/thoughts?

PC: Abolish Prisons & Abolish Time!



Thanks go out to Pain Chain for taking the time to answer our questions.

You can check out more music from Pain Chain at their Bandcamp page: PAIN-CHAIN.BANDCAMP.COM

For even more music from Pain Chain, The Cost of Living, and more, check out the Mutual Aid Bandcamp: MUTUALAIDRECORDS.BANDCAMP.COM & their website: MUTUALAIDRECORDS.SQUARE.SITE



STAND IN PRIDE

BUILDING A FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK FOR THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Stand In Pride is a 501(c)3 nonprofit connecting members of the LGBTQ+ community with chosen family. We believe in the **power of acceptance and the profound impact of having a supportive family**—especially for those in the LGBTQ+ community who have taken the brave step to come out.

OUR VISION

is to have every member of the LGBTQ+ community receive the support and love that they need.

OUR MISSION

is to help any member of the LGBTQ+ community who has lost the love and support of family. We will help them get connected with a loving heart that will be their Stand in Family.

GET INVOLVED

Dealing with the challenges of today requires problem-solvers who bring different perspectives and are willing to take risks. Stand in Pride has thousands of members ready and willing to shower you with the support and love you need. Whether you just need to talk, or you're looking for someone to physically show up for any variety of special occasions, our members will be there for you.

For more information, please visit

WWW.STANDINPRIDE.ORG



PLAGUEHORSE

ON HIS NEW ALBUM, PLAGUEHORSE EXPLORES
RADICALIZING LADY GAGA'S MOST DARING
PROJECT.

INTERVIEW BY LAPYX

Experimental noise musician Plaguehorse plans to push the boundaries of music with his upcoming debut remix album of a pop record that has garnered a cult-following for over a decade. As he is in the final stages of this unconventional body of work, I wanted to discuss this upcoming album with him ahead of its release. I want to examine why Lady Gaga's third studio album, *ARTPOP* (2013), serves as the foundation for his budding solo career. I aim to understand how he plans to find a place for Gaga's personal politics, themes of sexual abuse, and her presence within a queer counterculture within his own catalog.



Plaguehorse and Lapyx circa 2021. From the Lapyx Archives.

Lapyx: Why *ARTPOP*?

Plaguehorse: I want the world to remember *ARTPOP* because it holds an extremely special place in my heart as being one of the most impactful albums of my youth. *ARTPOP* was released the same year that I began producing and releasing music. That album has been by my side for the majority of my formative years, as well as the entirety of my musical journey.

L: Why did you want this to be your debut project?

P: I want to introduce myself under the philosophy of creative rebellion and retrospect. I wish to honor the courageous final attempt from Lady Gaga to elect herself as the transgressor of modern pop music; a martyr for subversion and divisiveness in an era that was already rapidly approaching its demise. Much like those who paved the way for her, Gaga had once controlled the cultural narrative, but *ARTPOP* was an unstoppable trainwreck, doomed to become yet another anecdotal illustration of art that could not idealize its way through mainstream culture, no matter how outrageously it came chugging along.

L: Is there a central message that you want people to pull from this album?

P: As a speaker at YALE's Emotion Revolution Summit 2015, Gaga states that you have to become the antithesis of the status quo in order to start a rebellion. The beauty behind *ARTPOP*'s creative rebellion is its adaptability and its elasticity with the vast subject matter and topics presented throughout the album. My pursuit of this project has changed over time, from initially being reimaginings of some of my favorite songs to now being a retrospective analysis in hopes to recontextualize the album to represent my catalog as well as my personal politics.

L: Artists you chose to sample include Diamanda Galás, Ayesha Erotica, Hennessy Fyah, and Muslimgauze. Describe your process for incorporating these seemingly unrelated people.

P: *ARTPOP*'s thematic commonalities include Greek mythology, persecution, queerness and sexual abuse. To honor the true nature of *ARTPOP*, I juxtaposed absurdity with prestige by sampling works that fall on a spectrum of thematic relevance to radical subject matter. Songs like *MANiCURE* and *Swine* take the perspective of female rage and seek out revenge, similar to the debut album by Greek-American musician and AIDS activist Diamanda Galás, *Wild Women With Steak - Knives (The Homicidal Love Song For Solo Screen)*. Alternatively, in *Aura* or *Sexxx Dreams*, Gaga juxtaposes this perspective by playing the seductress or the role of the damned to personify sexual repression. Although both themes are expressed through the sentiment of empowerment, the lyrical content is at times misguided by stereotypes. To compromise this, I camouflaged *Aura* in an extremely noisy sample of *Bethlehem Is Free* by British-Experimental musician Muslimgauze. His works primarily function to bring awareness to the ongoing Palestine-Israel conflict, as well as the influence The Islamic World has had on his art. He states that his music is politically influenced before a sound is even made.

L: Was there a strategy for the exclusion of certain elements and the inclusion of certain outtakes?

P: Albeit, I worked with almost every song on *ARTPOP*, the goal of this project was never to rework the album front to back. I never force the magic, it has to feel like a natural union of my sound and the original piece. Excluding certain elements of the album is where my integrity takes priority, such as omitting the word *Gypsy* entirely. I wanted to challenge the song's enormous failure in concept, showcasing the effectiveness of the songwriting without the use of an ethnic slur.



Plaguehorse. From the Plaguehorse Archives.

I included certain outtakes because unreleased songs have always been a part of my music library. As a child, I was burning my own Lady Gaga mixtapes full of outtakes from sketchy websites. My choice of *ARTPOP* outtakes were intended to expand the project's sound and message, as well as include easter eggs for fans to discover. I included *Partynauseous* to showcase Gaga's solidarity with her Indonesian fans after threats of violence and religious backlash causing the cancellation of her 2012 Jakarta concert. I expanded *Red Flame*, turning it into a campy, triple-threat mashup to represent radical women in music: Azealia Banks, Diamanda Galás and Sainkho Namtchylak, a Tuvan-experimental musician and one of the first women to embrace the traditionally male-dominated style of Tuvan throat singing.

L: You have educated yourself on some of the flaws of *ARTPOP* in order to reverse the missteps that were done. 'Aura' has been revised to be more mindful of Muslim culture, and the slur "Gypsy" has been redacted from your adaptation of the song. Did it cross your mind to try to reclaim 'Do What U Want' which is arguably *ARTPOP*'s most controversial yet misunderstood song?

P: Gaga plays a unique role in *Do What U Want*, seeking empowerment through the means of disempowerment. She trades in repression and objectification for sexual liberation. She turns her focus to the audience, similar to *Applause*, or *I Wanna Be With U*. Gaga appears statuesque, placed front-facing on the canvas, distorting all that precedes her. Gaga reveals herself to you in fractions, only. In this song, she invites you to bear witness to her heart and her soul, but first you must make an observation of selfhood through the reflection of her gazing ball. *Do What U Want* is a representation of the entire album. A manifestation of

cognizance and self awareness, that attempts to idealize its way through a concept that is not yet fully realized. Sexual liberation through healing is not a linear path, nor is there a monolithic approach. We see Gaga struggle through this, as the role of her perspective changes throughout the songs that follow. For that reason, I don't feel it appropriate to reclaim that song as my own.

L: Were there other ways that you wish you could have honored this legendary album?

P: I will continue to find ways to honor this album for the rest of my life. Gaga introduces *ARTPOP* as a celebration; her pain, exploding in electronic music. I hope to honor creative rebellion and celebrate queer counterculture for the rest of my musical journey through radical approaches to electronic music. *artpop*² has been an incredible project to take on and its release next month does not signify the end of an era. I'm excited to expand the world of *ARTPOP*. ●



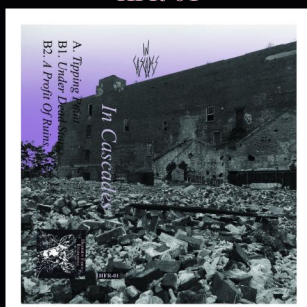
artpop² will be released on May 15th. Look for this release from Plaguehorse on YouTube, SoundCloud, and Bandcamp!



Heathen Fawn Recordings is a PNW based record label. Founded in the beginning of 2024, the intention of Heathen Fawn Recordings is to support new artists amongst the thriving PNW experimental music scene. A particular focus is showcasing new projects from artists who built their chops in metal, hardcore and punk.

The Heathen Fawn represents rebellion from convention. Through unconventional recorded sound we show our true and vulnerable self (fawn). We share this without expectation of reception or popularity, only to continue the conversation of authentic expression (heathen).

HFR-01



In Cascades *In Cascades*

Upcoming 2024 releases:

May Cranial Key *Only Noise is Real* cs

June Meltdown Archive *Plastic Soup* cs

July Fawn Frequencies Volume 1 CD

August Dronerom/Corpse Pose split cs

HFR-02



Hidden Gateways *Penial Stargates*

HEATHENFAWNRECORDINGS.BANDCAMP.COM

"Heresy is the spring in which new ideas flow."

-John Charles Polyani



DROWN IN SOUND WITH DEATH SPA

DEATH SPA IS A SEATTLE BASED HARDCORE NOISE ROCK TRIO COMPRISING OF MIA ROSE MALONE (GUITAR/VOCALS), LEVI FULLER (BASS), AND JONATHAN RODRIGUEZ (DRUMS). WE RECENTLY CORRESPONDED THROUGH EMAIL ABOUT THEIR INFLUENCES, HORROR MOVIES, THE IMPACT OF TRANS REPRESENTATION, AND MORE.

FANE: LET'S START WITH A BIG ONE. WHAT, OR WHO, FROM YOUR CHILDHOOD WAS THE CATALYST THAT MADE YOU WANT TO BECOME A MUSICIAN?

MIA ROSE MALONE: I CAN'T PINPOINT A SPECIFIC BAND OR MOMENT THAT MADE ME REALIZE I WANTED TO PLAY MUSIC. MY DAD WAS A PRETTY GREAT GUITARIST IN A WANKY, CONSTANTLY SOLOING KIND OF WAY, AND I'M SURE MY INTEREST IN PLAYING MUSIC AT LEAST PARTIALLY CAME FROM HIM, BUT HE WAS ALSO A MONSTROUS PIECE OF SHIT AND IS IN NO WAY A MUSICAL INFLUENCE OF MINE. I HATE PLAYING SOLOS.

I STARTED SEEING LOCAL PUNK BANDS WHERE I GREW UP IN TACOMA IN MY EARLY TEENS AND I REMEMBER HAVING AN OVERWHELMING FEELING OF ENVY OF THE BANDS I WAS SEEING. I THINK PROBABLY SEEING BANDS AT THAT SCALE MADE ME REALIZE IT WAS POSSIBLE TO ACTUALLY HAVE A BAND MYSELF.

WHEN WE WERE THIRTEEN OR FOURTEEN, MY FRIEND AND I MADE A TRULY BOTTOM OF THE BARREL CASSETTE DEMO OF ONE "SONG" FEATURING A VERY, VERY POORLY PLAYED GUITAR AND TWO DIPSHITS YELLING ABOUT COWS COMING FOR EVERYONE. WE WERE CALLED COW. WE THREW OUR DEMO AND A REALLY EARNEST NOTE ONSTAGE AT SEAWEEED WHILE THEY WERE PLAYING ONE NIGHT AND REALLY THOUGHT WE'D MAKE IT.

L-R: JONATHAN RODRIGUEZ, MIA ROSE MALONE, LEVI FULLER.
ALL DEATH SPA PHOTOS TAKEN BY MEGHAN FULLER.



JONATHAN RODRIGUEZ: I REMEMBER BEING VISCERALLY MOVED BY MUSIC AT AN EARLY AGE. MY PARENTS AND BROTHERS BASICALLY ALWAYS HAD SOUND ON. MY FAMILY ISN'T MUSICAL IN THE SENSE THAT THEY'RE DEDICATED TO PLAYING INSTRUMENTS, BUT MUSIC WAS ALWAYS PRESENT IN MY HOUSEHOLD AND DAY-TO-DAY MEANDERINGS. AT SOCIAL FUNCTIONS IN THE AREA I'M FROM, MUSIC AND DANCE ARE A BIG DEAL TOO. I THINK BEING CONTINUOUSLY EXPOSED TO A WIDE VARIETY OF MUSIC REALLY CAUGHT MY ATTENTION AND KEPT ME INTERESTED. WHEN I HEARD MAIDEN'S 'THE TROOPER,' I THINK THAT'S WHAT REALLY CEMENTED MUSIC FOR ME. IT CAME ON THE RADIO, AND INSTANTLY I FELT BUTTERFLIES. IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL EXPERIENCES I'VE HAD TO THIS DAY.

WHEN I GOT TO SEVENTH GRADE, I HAD AN AWESOME MATH TEACHER WHO'S NOW ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS. HE'S A HUGE MAIDEN FAN, AND WHEN HE FOUND OUT I FREAKED OUT ABOUT 'THE TROOPER,' HE WAS KIND ENOUGH TO MAKE ME MIXTAPES OF REALLY GREAT MUSIC. I THINK I JUST GOT LUCKY. MUSIC AS A PRACTICE DOESN'T THRIVE WHERE I'M FROM, BUT I MANAGED TO SURROUND MYSELF WITH OTHER PEOPLE WHO WERE INTERESTED AND HAD THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MY FAMILY. I COUNT MY BLESSINGS. IT'S SUCH A PRIVILEGE TO HAVE MUSIC AND SOUND AS A TEACHER. IT CAN BE HUMBLING, AND FOR ME, IT'S ALSO THE FILTER IN WHICH I PERCEIVE MY SURROUNDINGS.

LEVI FULLER: I'VE HAD MANY INSPIRATIONS AND ROLE MODELS OVER THE YEARS, BUT MY FIRST TEACHER, WILLIE SORDILLO, WAS ABSOLUTELY INSTRUMENTAL (NO PUN INTENDED) IN SETTING ME ON THIS COURSE. MY FIRST INSTRUMENT WAS SAXOPHONE, AND HE TAUGHT ME HOW TO PLAY THE INSTRUMENT AND PROVIDED MY FIRST GROUNDING IN THEORY AND IMPROVISATION, AND FOSTERED AN EARLY LOVE OF JAZZ. I MOVED ON TO GUITAR AND BASS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL (DON'T ASK ME ABOUT THAT ONE EMO BAND I PLAYED SAX IN), BUT THE FOUNDATION HE LAID HAS CARRIED THROUGH ALL THESE YEARS. ADDITIONALLY, HE WAS BOTH A PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN AND SOMEONE WHO PRIORITIZED BEING A GOOD PERSON AND STANDING UP FOR CAUSES YOU BELIEVE IN, WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT TO ME AS WELL.

F: TAKE ME THROUGH THE EARLIEST DAYS OF DEATH SPA. HOW DID THIS PROJECT KICK OFF?

MRM: MY PREVIOUS BAND PINK MUSCLES BROKE UP IN THE SUMMER OF 2017. I WAS BRIEFLY IN A COUPLE OF BANDS AFTERWARD THAT DIDN'T WORK OUT AND I STARTED WRITING THE TWELVE SONGS THAT WILL EVENTUALLY MAKE UP THE FIRST DEATH SPA LP IN LIKE 2018 OR SO. ONE OF THE SONGS "PREGNANT TIME SLAVE" DATES ALL THE WAY BACK TO PINK MUSCLES.

“... COMING OUT AS A TRANS WOMAN HAS BEEN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MOST PAINFUL THING THAT’S EVER HAPPENED TO ME.” -MIA

F: WHERE DID THE NAME “DEATH SPA” COME FROM?

MRM: DEATH SPA IS A LATE 80’S HORROR MOVIE ABOUT A HEALTH CLUB THAT KILLS PEOPLE. I’VE BEEN COMPLETELY OBSESSED WITH HORROR SINCE I WAS A REALLY LITTLE GIRL.

F: THE 80’S WERE GREAT FOR HORROR FANS. OF THE HORROR MOVIES/FRANCHISES YOU WATCHED GROWING UP, WHICH FASCINATED/FRIGHTENED/INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST?

MRM: I LOVED SO MANY HORROR MOVIES GROWING UP, BUT I WAS ALWAYS A HUGE FREDDY GIRL. I HAD THE GLOVE AND DRESSED LIKE FREDDY FOR HALLOWEEN. I EVEN WON A TV CONTEST FROM AN EPISODE OF FREDDY’S NIGHTMARES THAT INCLUDED A SIGNED ROBERT ENGLUND PHOTO AND THE NOES 4 SOUNDTRACK ON VINYL. I STILL HAVE BOTH. DREAM WARRIORS WAS THE ONE I LOVED THE MOST AND IT PROBABLY STILL IS. THE PUPPET SCENE REALLY FUCKING BLEW ME AWAY. I JUST COULDN’T BELIEVE WHAT I WAS SEEING.

THE MOVIE THAT HAD THE MOST PROFOUND IMPACT ON ME, THOUGH, WAS ERASERHEAD. A FRIEND OF MINE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL LET ME BORROW A VHS COPY RECORDED FROM TV AND THAT MOVIE CHANGED MY LIFE FOREVER IN SO MANY SIGNIFICANT WAYS. DAVID LYNCH HAS AND WILL ALWAYS BE MY TIPPY TOP FAVORITE FILMMAKER. I GET EMOTIONAL JUST THINKING ABOUT THE IMPACT HE’S HAD ON MY LIFE.

OTHER HORROR MOVIES THAT WERE A HUGE DEAL TO ME GROWING UP WERE REANIMATOR, THE LOST BOYS, NIGHTBREED, SLEEPAWAY CAMP, NIGHT OF THE DEMONS, BAD TASTE, TROLL 2, SUSPIRIA, FRIDAY THE 13TH 5, THE GATE, EVIL DEAD 2, HELLRAISER, PREDATOR, CHILD’S PLAY, DEMONS, HALLOWEEN, CAT’S EYE, MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE, THE SHINING, FRIGHT NIGHT, AND DEADLY FRIEND.

F: HOW DID THE THREE OF YOU COME TOGETHER?

MRM: THIS IS ACTUALLY THE SECOND ITERATION OF DEATH SPA. THE PREVIOUS BAND PLAYED A FEW SHOWS AND RECORDED A SINGLE, BUT OUR COMMUNICATION JUST TANKED COMPLETELY AND WE BROKE UP PRETTY EARLY ON. I LOOKED FOR BAND MEMBERS FOR A LONG, MISERABLE YEAR AFTER THAT AND LEVI AND I WERE AT LONG LAST CONNECTED BY A FRIEND OF HIS THAT DUG MY DEMOS AND WE IMMEDIATELY GOT ALONG SUPER WELL BOTH PERSONALLY AND

MUSICALLY. LEVI HAD COINCIDENTALLY MET JONATHAN AT PRETTY MUCH EXACTLY THE SAME TIME THAT WE STARTED REHEARSING TOGETHER. HE PLAYED ME SOME RECORDINGS OF ONE OF JONATHAN’S OTHER BANDS TILL THE TEETH, AND THEIR MUSIC HONEST TO GOODNESS BLEW MY FACE OFF. LEVI ASKED JONATHAN IF HE WAS INTERESTED IN PLAYING WITH US, AND HE WAS, BUT HE WAS TOO BUSY TO PLAY WITH US AT THE TIME. AFTER A FEW MONTHS OR SO, HE WAS ABLE TO FIND TIME IN HIS SCHEDULE. LEVI AND JONATHAN ARE SUCH INCREDIBLE MUSICIANS AND PEOPLE. WE’VE ALL BECOME CLOSE FRIENDS. I LOVE THEM BOTH DEARLY. I REALLY CAN’T IMAGINE PLAYING THESE SONGS WITH ANYONE ELSE.

LF: A FRIEND (ACTUALLY MY OLD BASS PLAYER) FOUND MIA’S POST ON FACEBOOK LOOKING FOR BAND MEMBERS, AND SAID I SHOULD LOOK INTO IT, AS HE KNEW I’D BEEN LOOKING FOR A NEW PROJECT. I TOOK ONE LISTEN AND REACHED OUT IMMEDIATELY. AFTER A WHILE (AND AFTER I’D HAD ENOUGH TIME TO LEARN HER BANANAS BASS PARTS) WE GOT TOGETHER IN PERSON TO PLAY AND JUST CLICKED RIGHT AWAY. I MET JONATHAN FOR THE FIRST TIME THE FOLLOWING DAY AT MY WORK, WHERE HE WAS A COLLABORATOR IN A GALLERY INSTALLATION. I JUST HAD KIND OF A FEELING ABOUT HIM, AND ASKED IF HE MIGHT BE UP FOR ANOTHER PROJECT. EVENTUALLY WE GOT HIM INTO MY BASEMENT PRACTICE SPACE, AND WE JUST KEPT GOING FROM THERE.

JR: AS LEVI MENTIONED, I MET HIM DURING THE OPENING OF A GALLERY INSTALLATION I HAD WORKED ON, AND WE JUST KIND OF HIT IT OFF. WE SPOKE FOR A BIT, AND DEATH SPA CAME UP. I WAS INTRIGUED BUT DIDN’T THINK I COULD SWING IT AT THE TIME. WHAT’S CRAZY, OR PERHAPS SERENDIPITOUS, IS THAT ABOUT A YEAR PRIOR, I HAD SEEN MIA’S POSTS LOOKING FOR BAND MEMBERS, ACCOMPANIED BY LINKS TO RECORDINGS. I CHECKED THEM OUT AND WAS BLOWN AWAY BY THE MUSIC, THINKING TO MYSELF IF ONLY I HAD MORE TIME. SHORTLY AFTER MEETING LEVI, I WENT ON TOUR AND KEPT THINKING ABOUT MY MEETING WITH HIM. WHEN I MADE THE CONNECTION THAT THE BAND LEVI WAS REFERRING TO WAS THE SAME BAND I HAD SEEN IN MIA’S POST, I JUST KEPT COMING BACK TO THE IDEA THAT I COULD FIND A WAY TO MAKE IT WORK. MAYBE I’M A ROMANTIC, BUT I THOUGHT IT WAS TOO MUCH OF A SIGN FOR ME TO PASS UP, SO WHEN I GOT BACK, I REACHED OUT TO THEM, AND EVERYTHING JUST FELL INTO PLACE. IT ALL FELT SO EASY.

F: “CRACKED EGGS/BODY HORROR” IS ONE HELL OF A SINGLE. THESE STUDIO RECORDINGS SOUND GREAT. HOW HAS RECEPTION BEEN SO FAR?

MRM: AWWW THANK YOU! THAT’S SO NICE TO HEAR. THE REACTION HAS BEEN WONDERFUL. CRACKED EGGS HAS BEEN PLAYED ON KEXP SEVERAL TIMES AND WE GOT A HANDFUL OF REVIEWS THAT REALLY BLEW ME AWAY. ONE OF THEM COMPARED THE SONGWRITING IN CRACKED EGGS TO A DAY IN THE LIFE, WHICH IS A MIND-BLOWING COMPARISON I NEVER IN MY WILDEST DREAMS THOUGHT I WOULD EVER SEE.

LF: I HAVE NO IDEA BEYOND MY OWN FRIENDS' REACTIONS (AND YOUR VERY KIND WORDS), BUT PRETTY MUCH EVERYONE SEEMS BOWLED OVER AND BLOWN AWAY. AND I'M IN A POSITION WHERE I CAN JUST SAY "I KNOW, RIGHT?" BECAUSE MIA IS THE PRIMARY CREATOR BEHIND ALL THIS WORK. I'M JUST THRILLED WE WERE ABLE TO DO IT JUSTICE IN THE STUDIO.

F: "CRACKED EGGS" IS ALSO FEATURED ON BALL OF WAX 70, A COMPILATION OF TRANS AND NONBINARY ARTISTS. TELL ME HOW THIS CAME ABOUT (THE SCREEN PRINTING LOOKS GREAT, BY THE WAY).

LF: IT WAS PERFECT TIMING THAT I STARTED PLAYING WITH MIA AND SHE SAID "I WANT TO MAKE A COMPILATION OF TRANS AND NONBINARY ARTISTS" NOT LONG AFTER I'D RECEIVED A GRANT TO START PAYING PEOPLE TO CURATE VOLUMES OF THIS SERIES THAT I'D MOSTLY BEEN DOING ON MY OWN FOR ALMOST TWO DECADES. SHE TOOK OVER 100% OF THE JOB OF LINING UP ARTISTS, GETTING TRACKS, ORGANIZING THE RELEASE SHOW, AND I JUST HELPED COORDINATE AND EXECUTE AS BEST I COULD. AND THANKS FOR THE KIND WORDS! I LOVE PHYSICAL OBJECTS; NOTHING QUITE REPLACES THE FEEL OF SCREEN-PRINTED CHIPBOARD IN YOUR HANDS.

MRM: I HAD TO LEAVE A JOB I LOVED BECAUSE OF SOME REALLY FUCKED UP TRANSPHOBIA FROM THE FOUNDER OF THE COMPANY I WORKED FOR AND A TOTAL LACK OF SUPPORT FROM ALMOST EVERYONE ELSE THAT WORKED THERE. THE INCITING INCIDENT COMPLETELY WRECKED ME. I'M STILL STRUGGLING EMOTIONALLY WITH ALL OF IT AND THIS HAPPENED NEARLY A YEAR AGO. THE IDEA FOR A TRANS/ENBY COMPILATION CAME AS A DIRECT RESPONSE TO THAT SITUATION AND MY SUBSEQUENT DESIRE TO HELP LIFT UP MY NEW FOUND COMMUNITY. I MENTIONED IT TO LEVI AND HE WAS SUPER EXCITED ABOUT THE IDEA AND GOT A GRANT THAT FUNDED THE WHOLE PROJECT. WE JUST PLAYED THE RELEASE SHOW AT A WONDERFUL VENUE CALLED SOUTHGATE ROLLER RINK. IT DOUBLED AS A BENEFIT TO HELP GET TRANS FAMILIES OUT OF STATES THAT WANT TO KILL THEM.

F: MIA, YOU RECENTLY (WITHIN A YEAR) CAME OUT AS TRANSGENDER AND HAVE BEEN OPENLY LIVING AS A WOMAN. WHAT HAS THIS TRANSITION BEEN LIKE FOR YOU IN YOUR DAILY PERSONAL LIFE?

MRM: I'VE SAID THIS BEFORE, BUT COMING OUT AS A TRANS WOMAN HAS BEEN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MOST PAINFUL THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO ME. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE CHANGE IS THAT WITHIN A MONTH OF STARTING HRT, A SIX YEAR LONG BOUT I HAD WITH A NEARLY FATAL CHRONIC NAUSEA AND VOMITING CONDITION COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED AND HASN'T RETURNED OVER A YEAR LATER. THERE'S ALSO SUCH RELIEF IN NOT HAVING TO SUFFOCATE MAJOR PARTS OF WHO I AM BECAUSE OF THE SOCIETAL PRESSURES TO BEHAVE IN CERTAIN WAYS WHEN I WAS FORCED TO BELIEVE I WAS A STRAIGHT CIS MAN. THE ENORMITY OF THAT RELIEF IS INDESCRIBABLE. AND THEN I HAD EPIPHANY AFTER EPIPHANY ABOUT DIFFERENT PERIODS OF MY LIFE. LIKE, I BECAME OBSESSED

WITH BARBIES AND HAD A BARBIE PARTY FOR MY 22ND BIRTHDAY OR HOW I USED TO OPENLY WISH THERE WERE STORES FOR ADULT MEN THAT SOLD LITTLE GIRL CLOTHES. IT'S LIKE THIS POOR GIRL WAS SCREAMING AT ME MY WHOLE LIFE TO WAKE UP. THE MOST PAINFUL PART IS REALIZING HOW MUCH OF MY LIFE I MISSED. I CAME OUT WHEN I WAS 44. THAT'S FOUR AND A HALF DECADES OF MY LIFE GONE. THERE'S SO MUCH REGRET AND FURY AND HEARTBREAK. IT'S FUCKING DEVASTATING AND IT WILL HAUNT ME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE. I FIND SOME COLD COMFORT IN REALIZING IF I HAD COME OUT WHEN I WAS MUCH YOUNGER, I ALMOST CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED OR KILLED MYSELF, I GUESS. ALSO, HAVING AWESOME TITS HELPS EASE THE PAIN A LITTLE.

F: I CAN RELATE TO THE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS, REGRETS, AND THE ANGER OVER LOST TIME. NOT EASY TO KEEP THAT STUFF AT BAY. WHAT'S SOMETHING, OR THINGS, YOU'VE DONE TO GET THROUGH DIFFICULT EMOTIONAL MOMENTS?

MRM: OH GOSH, I'M NOT REALLY SURE. IT COMES AND GOES, YA KNOW? I'M SURE WRITING SONGS ABOUT IT HELPS A LITTLE. I USED TO SMOKE A BUNCH OF WEED ABOUT IT BUT I CAN'T FUCK WITH THAT STUFF ANYMORE. SHARING EXPERIENCES WITH OTHER TRANS PEOPLE HELPS. SPENDING TIME WITH MY KITTY HELPS.

F: WHO HAS BEEN YOUR GREATEST ALLY SINCE COMING OUT?

MRM: IN AUGUST, I FLED MY HOME AND FAMILY TO ESCAPE AN EXTREMELY ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP. I WAS SUDDENLY HOMELESS, HAD NOWHERE TO GO, AND I WAS SO EMOTIONALLY DEVASTATED I WAS BARELY ABLE TO FUNCTION. AT THE SAME TIME, I HAD TO ADJUST TO BEING OUT OF THE CLOSET COMPLETELY BY MYSELF FOR THE FIRST TIME, BECAUSE MY EX AND I RARELY SPENT ANY TIME APART IN KIRKLAND WHERE WE LIVED. WHEN I MOVED BACK TO SEATTLE, I COULD BARELY WALK DOWN THE STREET TO GET A COFFEE BY MYSELF. AFTER A MONTH AND A HALF, A DEAR FRIEND OF MINE FOUND ME A PLACE TO LIVE WITH THESE AMAZING SISTERS THAT KEEP A ROOM OPEN IN THEIR HOUSE FOR PEOPLE IN BAD SITUATIONS. THEY TOOK ME IN, HELPED ME MOVE, GAVE ME A ROOM, LET ME MOVE IN MY KITTY JANEE-E, SHARED THEIR FOOD WITH ME, THEY'RE COOL WITH IT IF I CAN'T MAKE RENT, THEY'RE SUPER AFFIRMING, WONDERFUL TO LIVE WITH, AND HONESTLY TWO OF THE BEST PEOPLE I'LL EVER MEET. IT'S NOT EVEN A TINY BIT HYPERBOLIC TO SAY THAT THEY SAVED MY LIFE.

“ . . . IT'S HONESTLY INCREDIBLY REFRESHING TO BE IN THE MINORITY AND BE SURROUNDED BY SO MUCH QUEER AND TRANS JOY. ” -LEVI

F: WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE BEEN LIKE FRONTING A BAND NOW THAT YOU'VE TRANSITIONED? ARE YOU ENCOUNTERING TRANSPHOBIC BULLSHIT WHILE ONSTAGE, FINDING SUPPORT AND ACCEPTANCE FROM THE CROWD, OR SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY?

MRM: WE'RE BASED IN SEATTLE, WHICH IS MAYBE THE SAFEST PLACE IN THE STATES FOR TRANS PEOPLE. I'VE DEALT WITH SOME MICRO AGGRESSIONS HERE AND THERE, BUT NOTHING AS FAR AS PLAYING SHOWS GOES. WE'VE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY PLAYED WITH TRANS/QUEER BANDS ANYWAY. I'LL GET BACK TO YOU WHEN WE PLAY WITH STRAIGHT CIS METAL BANDS.

PLAYING SHOWS AS AN OUT AND PROUD TRANS GIRL IS SUCH A SPECIAL THING FOR ME. LOOKING BACK, I WORE DRESSES WHEN I PLAYED SHOWS IN PREVIOUS BANDS MORE THAN I REALIZED AT THE TIME, BUT I ALWAYS DRESSED IN THE UGLIEST SHIT I COULD FIND, PROBABLY TO HAVE A WAY TO INDULGE IN THE CLOTHES I ALWAYS WANTED TO WEAR BUT MAKING IT UGLY SO I COULD KEEP AN EMOTIONAL DISTANCE FROM IT. BEING ABLE TO PICK OUT A CUTE OUTFIT AND DO MY MAKEUP FOR A SHOW FILLS ME WITH SO MUCH JOY. IT'S SO MUCH MORE FUN THAN WEARING THE BLACK JEANS/BLACK HORROR MOVIE T-SHIRTS I MOSTLY WORE IN THE BEFORE TIMES. I HAVE SO MUCH MORE CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF. I THINK MY GUITAR PLAYING HAS EVEN GOTTEN A LITTLE BETTER.

"WE'RE ALWAYS READY TO DEAL WITH WHATEVER COMES OUR WAY AND BE THERE FOR MIA. . ."
-JONATHAN

F: LEVI . . . JONATHAN, SIMILAR QUESTION. WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE AS CISHET MEN BEEN LIKE HAVING MIA AS A FRONT-WOMAN?

LF: HONESTLY IT JUST FEELS LIKE BEING IN A KILLER BAND WITH TWO WONDERFUL NEW FRIENDS. THE THREE OF US HAVE A LOT IN COMMON AS WELL AS MANY OBVIOUS AND NOT-SO-OBVIOUS DIFFERENCES, AND I THINK WE'RE ALL JUST LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER AND ENJOYING EACH OTHER'S COMPANY. (AT LEAST I HOPE SO.)

JR: I'D HAVE TO AGREE WITH LEVI. EVERYTHING FEELS SO NATURAL. MIA HAS WRITTEN THESE KILLER SONGS, AND WHEN WE GET TOGETHER, WE HAVE A GREAT TIME. BUT WE ALSO GET DOWN TO WORK AND FIGURE OUT THE BEST WAY OF REALIZING HER SONGS THAT EVERYTHING ELSE JUST KIND OF GETS FORGOTTEN. EVERYONE HAS A LOT OF RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER AS MUSICIANS, OBVIOUSLY, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, AS HUMANS. HAVING THAT GROUNDWORK, I THINK, PUTS US IN A HOLISTIC SPACE THAT ALLOWS US TO CREATE, OR AT THE VERY LEAST STRIVE FOR OUR BEST ART AS A COLLECTIVE, BUT ALSO RECOGNIZING THAT MIA IS DEFINITELY DOING THE HEAVY LIFTING.

F: OBVIOUSLY YOU'RE BOTH LGBTQIA+ ALLIES. HAVE YOU HAD TO DEAL WITH ANY TRANSPHOBIC/HOMOPHOBIC NONSENSE AS A RESULT OF BEING IN DEATH SPA WITH MIA?

LF: NOT AT ALL TO DATE, ALTHOUGH WE'VE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE SO FAR IN PLAYING ALMOST ENTIRELY WITH OTHER QUEER AND TRANS-INCLUSIVE BANDS. GET BACK AT US AFTER OUR FIRST SHOWS OUTSIDE OF OUR PROGRESSIVE LITTLE SEATTLE BUBBLE. AS A STRAIGHT CIS WHITE DUDE, IT IS HONESTLY INCREDIBLY REFRESHING TO BE IN THE MINORITY AND BE SURROUNDED BY SO MUCH QUEER AND TRANS JOY.

JR: I HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED IT EITHER. WE DO A GOOD JOB OF NOT PUTTING OURSELVES IN QUESTIONABLE SITUATIONS, AND IT DEFINITELY HELPS BEING IN A CITY LIKE SEATTLE. AT THE SAME TIME, WE'RE ALWAYS READY TO DEAL WITH WHATEVER COMES OUR WAY AND BE THERE FOR MIA IN WHATEVER CAPACITY.

F: WHEN I LISTEN TO DEATH SPA, I HEAR THE LOVE CHILD OF THE MELVINS AND THE JESUS LIZARD. WHO WOULD YOU SAY ARE THE BIGGEST INFLUENCES ON YOUR SOUND AS A BAND?

LF: AHFFF, THAT WARMS MY HEART. MIA IS THE CREATIVE FORCE BEHIND THE COMPOSITIONS, BUT JESUS LIZARD AND THE MELVINS WERE ABSOLUTELY TOUCH POINTS FOR ME AS FAR AS BOTH MY BASS SOUND AND WHAT I'D LOVE FOR THE LIVE SOUND OF THESE SONGS TO BRING. I DON'T LISTEN TO AS MUCH HEAVY MUSIC AS I DID IN MY TEENS AND TWENTIES (OR AT LEAST I DIDN'T BEFORE JOINING THIS BAND), BUT THAT '90S TOUCH & GO/AMPHETAMINE REPTILE UNIVERSE IS A VERY HAPPY PLACE FOR ME, AS WELL AS SOME OF THE BRUTALLY BRILLIANT BANDS I KNEW COMING OF AGE IN BOSTON: SLUGHOG, BLOODLETTER, BARBARO, SPORE, AND SO MANY MORE.

MRM: I APPRECIATE BOTH OF THOSE BANDS, BUT I WOULDN'T NAME EITHER OF THEM AS AN INFLUENCE. MY LIST OF INFLUENCES WILL ALWAYS START WITH BOTCH. THEY REALLY CHANGED MY WHOLE VIEW OF WHAT WAS MUSICALLY POSSIBLE WHEN I WAS TEENAGER. FROM THERE IT'S LIKE LIGHTNING BOLT, ARAB ON RADAR, WEEN, GOBLIN, SLAYER, DAUGHTERS, THE RESIDENTS, ZEKE, THE BLOOD BROTHERS, NIRVANA, SICK OF IT ALL, FABIO FRIZZI, BRITNEY SPEARS, ASSUCK, LATE PERIOD SCOTT WALKER, STEVE HACKETT, KING CRIMSON, ATARI TEENAGE RIOT. I COULD DO THIS FOREVER.

JR: WHILE I ALSO HAVE A LOT OF RESPECT FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO MUSIC, I'D ALSO SAY THAT PERSONALLY, THEY'RE NOT MY GO-TOS. I GREW UP ON A LOT OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF MUSIC—TONS OF CUMBIAS AND RANCHERAS, WHICH ARE INHERENT TO WHERE I'M FROM, A LOT OF IRON MAIDEN AND METAL. IT SEEMS LIKE DURING REHEARSALS, THOUGH, THE MUSIC THAT SEEMS TO MOST POP UP IN OUR CONVERSATIONS ARE REFERENCES TO THE JAZZ GREATS—COLTRANE, MILES, ALL THE BIG NAMES FOR SURE, BUT ALSO THE LESSER-KNOWN GIANTS TOO, LIKE ANDREW HILL, ALBERT AYLER, ETC. IT'S COOL. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MOST STOOD OUT TO ME UPON JOINING DEATH SPA IS MIA'S ORGANIZATION OF METER AND RHYTHM, WHICH IS A TESTAMENT TO MIA'S ECLECTIC PALETTE. I'VE HAD TO REFRAME MY APPROACH IN HOW I COMMUNICATE MUSICAL DEVICES LIKE RHYTHM, METER, GROOVE, ETC., WHICH HAS BEEN A GREAT LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR MYSELF.

F: IF YOU COULD MUSICALLY COLLABORATE WITH ANY ARTIST, LIVING OR DEAD, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

JR: I WOULD LOVE TO COLLABORATE WITH JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT, WHICH MAY BE A LITTLE TRITE. OBVIOUSLY, HE WAS A GREAT VISUAL ARTIST, BUT I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE FORGET HE WAS IN A NOISE BAND CALLED GRAY. HE WAS AN 'UNTRAINED' MUSICIAN AND, FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, DIDN'T REALLY GRASP THE MECHANICS OR TECHNIQUES OF HIS INSTRUMENTS BUT WAS INTERESTED IN CREATING SOUND. TO ME, WORKING WITH THAT SORT OF FREEDOM FROM CANONS AND CODIFICATIONS IS INTERESTING. IT OFFERS A DEPARTURE FROM THE RIGID FRAMEWORKS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH CREATIVE ENDEAVORS, ALLOWING FOR GENUINE EXPERIMENTATION AND EXPLORATION.

LF: IS IT CORNY IF I SAY MIA AND JONATHAN? I REALLY FEEL LIKE I'M INCREDIBLY LUCKY TO BE PLAYING WITH THESE TWO, AS I HAVE BEEN WITH COLLABORATORS GOING ALL THE WAY BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL.

MRM: I WOULD LOVE TO WORK ON A SCORE FOR A HORROR FILM WITH FABIO FRIZZI.

F: WHAT IS WRITING A DEATH SPA TRACK LIKE?

MRM: MY PROCESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME. I WRITE AND RECORD SONGS UNTIL I HAVE AN ALBUM'S WORTH AND THEN FIND MUSICIANS TO PLAY THEM WITH. I WRITE OUT THE DRUM PARTS IN FRUITY LOOPS BEFORE I DO ANYTHING ELSE. MY BRAIN LIKES IT A LOT BETTER IF I COME UP WITH GUITAR PARTS TO DRUM TRACKS. THEN I FIGURE OUT GUITAR PARTS THAT EXCITE ME UNTIL I HAVE A BASIC OUTLINE OF A SONG WITH GUITAR AND DRUMS. I DO A LOT OF BACK AND FORTH REFINING BETWEEN THE DRUM AND GUITAR PARTS UNTIL I'M RELATIVELY HAPPY. THEN I ADD BASS. LYRICS AND VOCALS ARE ALWAYS LAST. HAVING NEW MUSICIANS INTERPRET MY SONGS IS ALWAYS PRETTY DICEY. I LUCKED OUT SO HARD WITH LEVI AND JONATHAN. THEY'VE TRANSFORMED THESE SONGS INTO SOMETHING WAY GREATER THAN I EVER COULD HAVE HOPED FOR.

F: BASED ON THE VERY PERSONAL SUBJECT MATTER, I'M ASSUMING YOU ARE THE SOLE LYRICIST. WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE SCREAMING OUT YOUR TRUTH TO CROWDS OF STRANGERS? CATHARTIC? CHAOTIC?

MRM: I'VE BEEN WRITING SONGS FOR MY WHOLE ADULT LIFE AND THESE ARE THE FIRST INTENSELY PERSONAL LYRICS I'VE EVER WRITTEN. IT'S A LOT CATHARTIC AND A LOT SCARY, BUT I'M GETTING MORE CONFIDENT WITH IT. I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME CRACKED EGGS WAS PLAYED ON KEXP, I HAD A WEIRD MIX OF PRIDE AND TERROR KNOWING A BUNCH OF RANDOM PEOPLE WERE HEARING LYRICS ABOUT MY TRANSITION.

F: AMONG THOSE RANDOM PEOPLE, THOUGH, THERE ARE SURELY SOME WHO GENUINELY "NEED" TO HEAR THEM TO VALIDATE THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE POSITIVE IMPACT ON OTHERS YOUR HONESTY AND VISIBILITY PROVIDE? DO YOU FEEL ANY SENSE OF OBLIGATION IN THIS REGARD?

MRM: I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT A LOT AND IF ANYTHING I EVER WRITE HELPS OUT EVEN A SINGLE STRUGGLING TRANS KID, THAT'S THE MOST AMAZING THING I COULD EVER IMAGINE. IT'S WEIRD BECAUSE I'M PROUD OF MY LYRICS AND KNOW THAT THEY COULD POTENTIALLY HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PEOPLE THAT NEED SOMEONE TO RELATE TO, BUT MY SELF-ESTEEM IS TERRIBLE AND IT'S HARD FOR ME TO THINK OF MYSELF AS HAVING THAT KIND OF IMPACT ON ANYONE. MY BRAIN REALLY HATES ME.

I DON'T FEEL OBLIGATED, NO. I WROTE WHAT I WROTE BECAUSE I HAD TO GET IT OUT OF ME. I SUDDENLY HAD ALL OF THIS STUFF I NEEDED TO SAY. I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT WHAT THEY COULD MEAN TO OTHER PEOPLE UNTIL AFTER I WROTE THEM AND THEN IT REALLY HIT HOME AFTER GETTING AIRPLAY. I HAVE MY FINGERS AND TOES CROSSED SO HARD THAT SHARING MY EXPERIENCES SO BLUNTLY WILL DO SOME GOOD IN THE WORLD.

F: WHAT IS A SONG YOU LOVE SO MUCH THAT YOU WISH YOU WROTE IT? WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE SONG YOU MOST IDENTIFY WITH?

JR: MY INITIAL INCLINATION IS TO SAY THAT IF I HAD WRITTEN ANY OF THE SONGS I LOVE, THEY'D PROBABLY SUCK, OR AT THE VERY LEAST, NOT CONTAIN SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT DREW ME TO THE SONG IN THE FIRST PLACE. LYRICAL CONTENT ISN'T NECESSARILY WHAT MOVES ME, SO I RARELY IDENTIFY WITH LYRICS ANYWAY. HOWEVER, I'D SAY THE SONG THAT MOVES ME THE MOST AS OF LATE IS 'TEARS FOR FEARS' 'HEAD OVER HEELS/BROKEN,' AND IN GENERAL, 'SONGS FROM THE BIG CHAIR' HAS BEEN STEADILY MAKING AN APPEARANCE IN MY HOUSEHOLD IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS.

MRM: THE FIRST SONG THAT POPPED INTO MY HEAD WHEN READING THIS QUESTION WAS JODY AND THE KID BY KRIS KRISTOFFERSON. I DON'T WISH I WROTE ANYTHING SOMEONE ELSE DID, BUT THAT SONG MAKES ME UGLY CRY ALMOST EVERY SINGLE TIME I HEAR IT. I THINK IT'S A PERFECT SONG.

LF: HMMMMMM, FOR WHATEVER REASON NOTHING COMES TO MIND HERE. EITHER MY BRAIN DOESN'T WORK THIS WAY OR I'M JUST TIRED AND DRAWING A BLANK.

F: FOR THE GEARHEADS OUT THERE, WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT FAVORITE PIECE OF MUSIC GEAR THAT YOU OWN? WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU REALLY WISH YOU COULD ADD TO YOUR RIG/SETUP?

LF: I DON'T TEND TO BUY A LOT OF GEAR; I HAVE A HANDFUL OF THINGS THAT WORK WELL FOR ME IN VARIOUS SITUATIONS, AND I'VE STUCK WITH THEM. TWO KEY PIECES OF MY BASS SOUND ARE MY BELOVED FENDER MUSICMASTER BASS AND MY FULLTONE FULL DRIVE 2 PEDAL. HAVING PLAYED WITH ONE YEARS AGO, I AM ENVIOUS OF FOLKS WITH ONE OF THE ORIGINAL OLD GREEN BIG MUFF PI FUZZ PEDALS, BUT I DOUBT I'LL GET AROUND TO ACTUALLY ACQUIRING ONE ANY TIME SOON.

MRM: MY SETUP IS PRETTY SIMPLE. I HAVE A TIGHTMETAL DISTORTION, DIGITECH WHAMMY DT, AND A BOSS SY300 RUNNING THROUGH A ROLAND JC 160 AND I PLAY A LES PAUL STUDIO. MY FAVORITE PIECE OF GEAR IS THAT BOSS SYNTH PEDAL. I LIKE IT BEST WHEN MY GUITAR DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A GUITAR AND I CAN MAKE SO MANY COOL SOUNDS WITH THAT THING. HAVING TOO MANY PEDALS MAKES ME ANXIOUS, BUT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED ONE OF THOSE EARTHQUAKER RAINBOW MACHINES.

JR: I WOULDN'T CALL MYSELF A GEARHEAD BUT I DO LOVE MY GRETSCHE HAMMERED BRASS SNARE. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A VISTALITE DRUM KIT... AHH SOMEDAY!

F: WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING ON MUSIC, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES? GUILTY PLEASURES? WHAT ABOUT THEM DRAWS YOU IN?

MRM: MOVIES ARE MY EVERYTHING. I'M AN OBSESSIVE MOVIE COLLECTOR AND I SPEND MOST OF MY FREE TIME TRYING IN VAIN TO KEEP UP WITH MY COLLECTION. MY BACKLOG IS ABOUT 500 MOVIES DEEP AT THE MOMENT.

LF: I HAVE A DAY JOB I LOVE AT JACK STRAW CULTURAL CENTER, WHERE I GET TO WORK WITH EVERYONE FROM ELEMENTARY STUDENTS TO ESTABLISHED ARTISTS AT THE TOP OF THEIR GAME, HELPING THEM EXECUTE THEIR ARTISTIC VISION THROUGH SOUND. I ALSO HAVE A DELIGHTFUL AND BRILLIANT 8-YEAR-OLD KID WHO KEEPS ME AND MY WIFE QUITE BUSY. SO, ALL THAT ADDS UP TO A PRETTY BUSY AND FULL LIFE.

JR: I'M PRETTY MUCH ALWAYS IMMERSSED IN ART. WHEN I'M NOT WORKING ON MUSIC, I'M USUALLY ENGAGED IN MORE MUSIC-RELATED TASKS OR SOME FORM OF SOUND DESIGN. BEYOND THE BAND, I'M INVOLVED IN A VARIETY OF SCORING AND INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS, SPANNING A WIDE RANGE. I ALSO COLLABORATE WITH A FEW OTHER PROJECTS - TILL THE TEETH, SELF-DEPRECATOR, GREIN, ETC. ADDITIONALLY, I TEACH IN THE ART DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE PERCUSSION WORKS, AND THE SEATTLE SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA SO I'M CONSTANTLY SURROUNDED BY ART AND SOUND IN SOME CAPACITY. I DO ENJOY PLAYING SOCCER AND OTHER PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES, I VIEW THEM AS AN EXTENSION OF THE SAME PRACTICE AND FOCUS REQUIRED FOR CREATING ART. SO, IN A WAY, IT'S A CONTINUATION OF THE ART MAKING PROCESS.

F: WHAT'S NEXT FOR DEATH SPA? SHOULD WE EXPECT MORE SINGLES IN THE FUTURE? IS THERE AN ALBUM ON THE HORIZON?

MRM: THE ALBUM IS WRITTEN! WE HAVE A FEW MORE SONGS TO LEARN, BUT WE'RE GOING TO RECORD EVERYTHING A FEW SONGS AT A TIME OVER A HANDFUL OF SESSIONS WHILE WE FIGURE OUT THOSE LAST FEW SONGS. WE HAVE A SESSION BOOKED IN APRIL AND WE'RE HOPING IT'LL BE OUT SOMETIME THIS YEAR.

F: IS THERE A CHANCE YOU CAN GIVE US A LITTLE SPOILERY DETAIL ABOUT THE ALBUM, OR IS IT JUST TOO EARLY YET?

MRM: THERE ARE TWELVE SONGS TOTAL. THE OPENER IS AN INSTRUMENTAL THRASH METAL SONG. KINDA. LORI GOLDSTON IS HOPEFULLY GOING TO PLAY CELLO ON A SONG AND I'M REALLY HOPING COLIN MARSTON IS GOING TO MASTER IT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO CALL IT YET.

F: ANY PARTING WORDS/THOUGHTS?

MRM: THANKS FOR CARING ENOUGH ABOUT OUR BAND TO WANT TO INTERVIEW US, AND THANKS FOR THE THOUGHTFUL QUESTIONS.

THANKS TO MIA, LEVI, AND JONATHAN OF DEATH SPA FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS. BE SURE TO CHECK OUT DEATH SPA'S LATEST SINGLE "CRACKED EGGS / BODY HORROR" AT DEATH-SPA.BANDCAMP.COM

ALSO, DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT BALL OF WAX 70, WHICH FEATURES A BUNCH OF GREAT ARTISTS. ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE COMPILATION ARE GOING TO RAINBOW RAILROAD, WHICH IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT HELPS AT RISK MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY ESCAPE THEIR HOSTILE SURROUNDINGS. PICK IT UP AT BALLOFWAX.BANDCAMP.COM



DEATH SPA

DEATH-SPA.BANDCAMP.COM

DEATH SPA



CRACKED EGGS
B/W BODY HORROR

CRACKED EGGS

MY BODY TRIED TO EAT ITSELF
ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO
IT WAS STARVING FOR ESTROGEN
AND CHOKING ON TESTOSTERONE

I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS ANXIETY
THAT WAS LITERALLY KILLING ME
BUT IT WAS BEING FORCED TO BE A BOY
THAT MADE MY INSIDES BETRAY ME

MY DYSPHORIA
ATE MY BODY FROM THE INSIDE
I ALMOST STARVED TO DEATH
I ALMOST DIED

THEN I CRACKED MY EGG, GIRL
I CRACKED MY EGG, GIRL
GIRL, I CRACKED MY EGG, GIRL
I CRACKED MY EGG

CRACKED EGGS
I CRACKED MY EGG

BODY HORROR

WORMS BEGAN TO GROW
OUT OF EVERY SINGLE PORE
OF MY BODY

I KEEP RIPPING THEM OUT
BUT THEY ALWAYS COME BACK
THE NEXT DAY

THEY'VE ALSO BURROWED IN MY BRAIN
AND THEY TELL ME AWFUL THINGS

MAYBE I CAN BURN THEM
MAYBE ELECTROCUTION

I WENT TO MY GARAGE
FOR A CAN OF GASOLINE
AND AN ELECTRICAL OUTLET
I COULD STICK A FUCKING FORK IN

I GRABBED A FORK
AND DOUSED MYSELF WITH GAS
FOUND MY FAVORITE OUTLET
CAUSE I KNOW THAT I DON'T PASS

WENT OVER TO THE OUTLET
AND STUCK MY FORK IN
MY PROBLEMS ARE ALL GONE
MY WORMS AND I ARE DEAD

WRITTEN BY MIA ROSE MALONE
LYRICS REPRINTED BY PERMISSION

Chicago



Chords of Misery and Misericordia

Chv.Volk is an Industrial Noise-Pop Vocalist based in Orange County, CA. In this questionnaire style interview, Chv.Volk talks to us about his Catholic upbringing, sneaking forbidden music on MTV, surviving a series of traumas, and finding his voice.

FANE: Let's talk about your history a little bit. Where did you grow up, and what was your life like then?

Chv.Volk: I grew up in different places within Orange County, CA. My life then was always on the go. My parents were Mexican immigrants, so they worked multiple jobs and we moved around a lot. At the time they were very Catholic, so lots of churches and Catholic schools were a part of my life.

F: Tell me about a great memory from your childhood. What makes it so significant to you?

CV: Even though my family was quite Catholic, my mom really embraced the Easter Bunny thing. I always looked forward to it every year. My mom is a baker and she used to go all out; Bunny jellos on a platter of green jello that looked like grass, jello and chocolate eggs, giant chocolate bunnies, all made by her. There's just something about tradition that is so important to me, and now that I have children, I want to carry on these little gestures.

F: When did you first realize you were a part of the LGBTQIA+ community?

CV: I was very young when I started having crushes on boys in school; I would say around the 3rd grade. I didn't know what anything meant, really. I just really looked forward to going to school to talk to someone I liked.

F: What was coming out like for you?

CV: Honestly, people just knew. I acted and dressed differently than other boys in school. I loved Britney Spears and the Spice Girls. I got picked on a ton, got into lots of fights up until high school. My family was very hard on me. I never had to come out because I didn't hide anything. I would get in lots of trouble for singing to a Spice Girls song and I just didn't care. My neighborhood when I was 10 was mostly girls, and sometimes my dad wouldn't let me go play outside as a kid because he felt being around girls was influencing me to like "girl stuff" more. It was a different time and I got smacked a lot. I'm the only boy out of 5 sisters and my dad had a different expectation of me. He's the only boy of 6 sisters and this "macho manly" thing was just how he grew up. He tried to instill all of this on me and we just clashed.

F: Who would you say was your greatest ally during those early years? Why?

CV: It was definitely my friends. I had a best friend who was also gay, and slowly coming to terms with identifying as female. She ended up moving our 3rd year of high school, but we were lucky to have PE together before her move (we shared a locker). We would fight back together against everyone making fun of us... throwing food and milk at us. Every single day at school, the boys in the locker room picked on us. But, I'm so grateful I went through all that with her. I had a very strong group of female friends, and they had my back all the time; telling people off and standing up for me. Even though it's been years, I'm still very much in touch with my best friend since middle school. I'm a godparent to her daughter.

“There was so much TV I wasn't allowed to watch, so much music I wasn't allowed to hear.”

“I was kicked out of my apartment, my pets were taken from me, I was managing a restaurant, my grandma was dying, and I was overwhelmed.”

F: What first drew you to music?

CV: My mom listened to a lot of Spanish rock. Cleaning the house in the morning, she always had music on. She also had an exercise CD with lots of Vengaboys, Crystal Waters, 2Unlimited, and that's where my love for dance music came from. From there, I discovered my own tastes. Obviously Britney Spears, Spice Girls, and as I got older tATu, Bloc Party, OceanLab, The Adicts, The Smiths... it was all a mixed bag of genres.

F: Who would you say has been your greatest musical influence?

CV: I know most of us are aware of the gimmick that tATu was. It was definitely a very controversial thing, especially when you find out how old they were when they were told how to act and behave so explicitly, but in all honesty, in 2002, it's what I needed. I needed to see some sort of representation outside of heterosexual relationships. There was so much TV I wasn't allowed to watch, so much music I wasn't allowed to hear. I looked forward to getting ready for school because my older sister would put MTV videos on in the background. That's where I had a good 20 mins to discover something different. Björk, Prodigy, Depeche Mode, At the Drive In, are just a few of the artists that helped shape what I do today.

F: Tell me about an album you can't live without.

CV: tATu's "Lyudi Invalidi" album. It's the Russian counterpart to their second English album, "Dangerous and Moving". When it came out, I was obsessed with the junkyard/crash dummy style the visuals for the album had. There was something so interesting about the "morally corrupt" subject matter. Songs representing selfishness, infidelity, becoming a new person or in their case a new version/new model. That, along with its somber techno styling and almost lifeless production was just so intriguing.

F: What does "Chv.Volk" mean to you?

CV: First, it's my nickname. Chava. Which comes from my actual name, Salvador. That's the human being part of this project. The Volk part is an alias I had used as a kid to be someone else. Someone whose traumas weren't weighing them down. That's the part of the project that speaks up for Chava; that isn't afraid to speak about my traumas and pain. Volk comes from Volkova which is actually the last name of Julia, from tATu. Like I mentioned before, growing up tATu was always a big influence of mine.

F: In late 2021 you released your debut album "Art of Being Hurt". How did this record come together? Who did you work with?

CV: This album came to me when I needed it the most. I had gotten out of an almost 9 year relationship with someone that did everything possible to destroy me. They took away as much as they could from me. The entire relationship was secret because they weren't ready to come out, but at the same time that made it easier for them to step out of the relationship as many times as they wanted because no one in their life really knew I existed. With the abuse I went through, I remedied it with self harm, unfortunately. I started therapy because I wanted to stop, but I just didn't know how. I was kicked out of my apartment, my pets were taken from me, I was managing a restaurant, my grandma was dying, and I was overwhelmed. I didn't have time to myself to breathe and grieve my relationship. I had to move to another city with my parents and start my life over. In this process, I was writing so many little poems about how I was feeling and I would share them with my therapist. I made a great friend at work, Noah Lipsey. He produced music, and would always tell me he wanted to work on something with me. Since I was basically a shell of myself, I always said no. The ending of my relationship, and doing therapy, opened up a can of worms and unearthed traumas. Years and years worth. Stuff I'd forgotten about resurfaced, and I was really struggling mentally. Noah had told me "you have so much to say, people need to hear it". That struck a chord with me. He gave me a beat, I got my therapy notes together, and we wrote "Body Bag". From that day forward, Noah and I began working hard on what became "Art of Being Hurt".



“Art of Being Hurt” (2021, Self Released)

F: What’s the songwriting dynamic like between yourself and Noah? Is it typical for Noah to come up with a beat first and then you expand with lyrics and so on?

CV: Noah and I have created songs in many different ways. Sometimes I have something completely written, send it to Noah and we brainstorm ideas for production. There have been a few times where he sends me an idea he’s been working on and almost immediately I start coming up with how the verses should go and after looking at my notes, I see which lyrics go best with the beat. Also, sometimes I just send vocals with zero plan and he creates something very quickly that goes with the vocals. Noah is extremely creative. Uses real sounds and items around the house and he chops up vocals to create our sound.

F: Which track was the most difficult for you to write?

CV: It was definitely “Paralyzed”. It actually almost didn’t make the album. I was so embarrassed to talk about sexual assault, and I didn’t want anyone to feel bad or give me pity. My voice was so shaky. I couldn’t even record it in person. I recorded it by myself, through my phone while I was getting ready to open the doors to the restaurant I was working at. No structure. Just vomiting lyrics to my phone. It didn’t take long for Noah to send me a fully formed track. It was a one take song and didn’t go through any revisions. It was perfect from the start. I cried when I heard it, but shame was taking over and I thought it would be best to leave it out. I wasn’t ready. Noah encouraged me, and told me it’s a very important message and song but he’d support whatever decision I made. After lots of thought, we put it on the record and I’m so glad we did. It’s one of my favorite songs I’ve ever worked on.

“Am I scared of God enough to only kinda believe in him because of fear? Is that even really believing?”

F: Which track gave you the greatest sense of relief?

CV: “Slaughterhouse”. I was afraid that if he heard that I was calling him a narcissist in this song, my Ex might start harassing me again. Being with someone that was so impulsive, that lacked empathy and disregarded my feelings and well being, had me feeling like I was heading towards my death; heading to the “slaughterhouse”. After recording this track, getting all my feelings out, and Noah perfecting the production, I felt like I could breathe again. I felt free. I know that sounds so cliché, but I truly felt my fear dissipate. I wasn’t afraid anymore.

F: What was it like for you to openly talk about your traumas on this record? Terrifying? Cathartic?

CV: At first, I felt scared and embarrassed. I kept so many things to myself out of respect of not outing my previous relationship, that I lost who I was completely. No one really had any idea what was going on. I didn’t talk to my family about anything. A handful of friends knew, but this whole situation was embarrassing for me. I even had my neighbors come tell me how many times I was cheated on. Neighbors who had no idea I was part of the relationship and assumed I was a younger brother. So, navigating my feelings and my reaction was hard. I had to be careful in order to not get my family or I hurt. I made jokes about keeping the music to myself and never putting it out because I’ve never been this vulnerable before. A little more than halfway through this project, I started to gain confidence and feel secure. I was finally being myself. Finally had a voice. It was such a new experience for me. For years I was nobody. I only existed behind closed doors. With “Art of Being Hurt”, I exist. There was no more hiding or protecting my abusers.

F: Do you have any advice for others who are going through what you went through?

CV: It's really hard to say because first and foremost, your safety is important. It took me almost 9 years to leave. And honestly, I only left because I was told I wasn't important enough to be given the respect you deserve in a loving relationship. At the same time, the woman my Ex was cheating on me with was attacking me, sending me death threats, doxed me. When he was at work one day, I packed as much as I could and left. It's a difficult thing to navigate because you have to feel safe to make that decision. I felt less safe staying than I did leaving. Despite the threats and turmoil, it was best for me to run from this. The harassment didn't stop for years after I left, but I was at a safe distance that I wasn't in total fear.

F: Around Christmas of last year, you released "Nephilim in Bethlehem", which was the first new Chv.Volk music since 2021. How'd this track come together?

CV: I've been reading the Bible a lot because I find religion and its history so interesting, but it's not something I practice. I kept thinking about how we basically have to choose to be good, or to allow negative influences to take over our decision making and thoughts. Can someone who denounces God be forgiven? Am I scared of God enough to only kinda believe in him because of my fear? Is that even really believing? The song explores that. Religious people of all sorts have told me homosexuality is a horrible sin. Is there no hope for someone like me? Who knows.

F: What does the track title mean to you? Who do you consider to be Nephilim?



"Nephilim in Bethlehem" (2023, Self Released)

CV: The book of Enoch says the Nephilim are the offspring of fallen angels and humans. In other areas, they're said to be the children of Seth and Cain. Whatever you believe their origins are, the split between a pureness of humanity and chaos remains. In this case, the Nephilim, which can be anyone, is fighting its dark side and trying hard to be a better person. It's been so accustomed to chaos that this battle of good and darkness is very difficult. It feels it'll best be heard going to Bethlehem, and asking for forgiveness in Jesus's birthplace.

F: You just released the single "Mercy For The Frozen". Tell me about the track. Who are the frozen, and why do they deserve mercy?

CV: It's my first track that I believe has more of a darkwave vibe. Haven't put out anything like this before. The song has references to ice and snow, which symbolize drugs. The Frozen are people struggling with drug addiction. I've lost more than half my friends to this disease. It's my cry for help, pleading they find their way back. These people deserve mercy because some sort of trauma is holding them hostage. There's something deeply rooted making them incapable of healing.

F: You worked with GhostTrainInc to create a music video for the single. What was your vision for the video?

CV: We've talked about the video having this lost footage/lost tapes, Blair Witch Project type of style. We shot this in Mt. Baldy because I wanted real ice and snow to help reference the lyrics and the song's icy vibe. We knew the video was gonna be shot from different perspectives, and that there was going to be this stalk/chase feel to it. It's not meant to be clear, so GhostTrainInc chased me around and we got the shakiness I really wanted. We filmed churches and cemeteries around the area for the other clips that are shown throughout the video.

F: The Dark, Horned Figure is an unsettling presence. I see it as pestering negativity that won't relent. What does it mean to you?

CV: The figure is Addiction. Watching you, following you, waiting for you to slip up. When you're lonely it creeps up on you. At the end, addiction kills if you don't get help/get away from it. Drugs are the devil.

F: It sounds like this is something you unfortunately have first hand knowledge of, yes? I'm an alcoholic, and it took me a long time to break out of the cycle. How are you holding up?



“Mercy For The Frozen” (2024, Self Released)

CV: When I was in my very early teens, I experimented with everything I could get my hands on, which was surprisingly quite a lot of stuff. Through the years I saw my friends overdose, die, develop behavioral issues; I saw mental illness start peeking its way through. I saw them become homeless, become victims of sexual assault, and I did everything I could to help while fighting for my life at the same time. I've been drug free for 12 years. I did lots of therapy, lots of out patient programs, but what really got me to drop everything was watching my friends go down one by one. Funerals, hospital and jail visits: that's what scared me into getting real help.

F: Asking to be forgiven/receiving mercy is a theme across both of these new tracks. Are you the one looking for forgiveness, or are you searching for the strength to forgive others?

CV: I think both. “Mercy...” is about asking forgiveness for others. “Nephilim...” asks for forgiveness for ourselves. From my experience with church and its followers, I'm the Nephilim; a Child of God, but bound to sin for being a homosexual. So, I'm applying that logic to a few songs on this new album. Internally, and I know it'll sound ridiculous, but that Catholic child in me still has the fear of God and hell. Maybe my fear is a trauma response from the stories I was told but I do feel like it's there subconsciously. Every time I get truly afraid of something my hands immediately do the sign of the cross. Father, son and holy spirit, amen.

F: With two new singles out now, I have to assume there's a new album on the way. What can you tell me about the upcoming record?

CV: My 2nd album drops April 12th 2024. It's called “Secrets I Kept From God”. It's taken me almost 3 years to perfect it, and I'm extremely proud of the work Noah and I were able to create. I sound and feel much more confident.

“Funerals, hospital and jail visits: that's what scared me into getting real help.”

I wrote every song referencing the bible, without being preachy. The album is somewhat of a story about feeling isolated and abandoned by God. I talk about religious childhood trauma, and how much the church and its people ripped me apart for being different. I talk about my fear of God and my anger towards him; how when I reached out as a child, I wasn't heard. I question lessons and why people say “God has a plan” or “everything happens for a reason”. I don't believe that. As the album goes on, I talk about self harm, death, and finding some peace. Not in religion, but in myself.

F: You've mentioned self harm a couple of times, and sadly this is something very common in the LGBTQIA+ community. Pardon me if this is too much, but would you mind talking about your experience coping with this predilection? What has helped you suppress or eliminate those urges?

CV: I used to cut my arms, legs and thighs a lot. It felt like taking a big breath for me. I used to starve myself, rip hairs off of my head and eyebrows... These were all negative coping mechanisms. I haven't cut since 2021. I was open about it in therapy, and we worked on more positive ways to relieve my anxiety and mood changes. I tried medications for a few years but it didn't work for me. If it works for you, it's important that you stick to the regimen your psychiatrist and or doctors set for you. I don't really get triggered anymore since I'm in a very positive environment now. My writing is a huge outlet of mine. Breathing exercises and tuning the world out and listening to music is how I cope now.

F: What are you listening to right now?

CV: I listen to the Mars Volta almost every day. Lots of Depeche Mode, Chelsea Wolfe, Björk, OceanLab, and I'm loving everything Shygirl has put out this year. Eartheater has been putting out great stuff as well.

F: If you could work with any artist, living or deceased, who would you choose and why?

CV: I honestly haven't really thought about this. I enjoy the production in a lot of Mars Volta tracks, so it could be cool to incorporate more instruments into my music. I think Arca's production is great. That would be something I'd totally be up for as well.



“Secrets I Kept From God” (2024, Self Released)

F: Tell me about a quirky hobby or thing you collect in your spare time. What do you love about it?

CV: I love building spider homes for my pet jumping spiders. Crafting is my thing. I decorated the hell out of my new apartment. Made so many candles. Flower arrangements. Candle holders out of concrete. I'm also a baker so I'm constantly baking at home, trying new recipes and I love cooking dinner. I enjoy putting my energy into building a more positive lifestyle for myself and for the people around me.

F: Who, or what, do you feel the greatest amount of love for?

CV: My life has changed so much the last few years, and I've learned to cherish the people around me much more. My parents mean the world to me. Our relationship has come a very long way. My sisters are an amazing source of support. My niece. My fiancé has been an extremely positive impact in my life. Our kids have taught me so much. My tight group of friends. I love them all so much.

F: I'm glad to hear your relationship with your parents has turned around. What opened their hearts and minds? Are they aware of your music?

CV: Once I took a big step away from drugs, fighting, not coming home and being a trouble maker on the streets, I was more pleasant to be around. I got a job and was doing extremely well and matured, so we were able to really have meaningful conversations. I was able to express myself without the anger. We were able to apologize for how much we all misunderstood each other. My parents were raised much more differently than I was. Strict Mexican values, I'm first generation and it was heavy trying to carry

all their expectations. So we needed to communicate, acknowledge, and listen instead of just expecting change from each other. They are aware of my music and have heard a few songs. I did write a song for them on my new album, called “Vida Eterna”. It's the final track of the record and all in Spanish. It's about the passing of my grandma and sister who passed a year apart from each other. I haven't played it for them yet since I haven't found the right time, but it's definitely soon.

F: Also, congratulations on your engagement, and your journey into parenthood. What do you see in the future for your new family?

CV: Thank you! We got engaged at a show on Depeche Mode's recent Momento Mori tour while “Black Celebration” was being performed, so it couldn't have been any more perfect. I want to continue creating positive spaces for our children. Lots of communication and listening. The home we've built together is everything we've wanted. I couldn't be happier. Our youngest turned 9 and our 14 year old starts high school next school year, we're planning a wedding, so we have so much to look forward to.

F: Any last words/thoughts?

CV: I really appreciate this opportunity. There really isn't very many spaces for us LGBTQ+ artists that create art some may deem too different or difficult to digest. You're making that space for us. You're helping me connect with others and I hope my music can connect people with me.

Thanks to Chv.Volk for taking the time to talk to us about some very heavy stuff. It's important to remember that there is help out there, and you are not alone.

You can find all of Chv.Volk's social media links and more at ChvVolk.com

If you want to get right to the music, head on over to chvolk.bandcamp.com

A hand is shown reaching up from the surface of a body of water. The background is a vibrant sunset or sunrise with a rainbow-like spectrum of colors in the sky and water. The overall mood is one of hope and reaching out for help.

*Life can be overwhelming.
Feeling alone makes it worse.*

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ALONE**

Suicidal Ideation doesn't have to destroy your life. There's no shame in asking for help. Therapy can give you the tools to reclaim your life. findahelpline.com, which is sponsored in part by the International Association of Suicide Prevention, is a free resource to find support in your country.

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CIRCUITBENT FOR LEATHER: AN INTERVIEW WITH
A.S. VALENTINO

THE DARKWAVE MUSICIAN, SOCIAL ADVOCATE, AND SELF PROCLAIMED "GOTH GUIDO", CONVERSED WITH US OVER EMAIL ABOUT THEIR DEBUT SOLO ALBUM "SUMMONING", BDSM, JUSTICE REFORM, AND MORE.

FANE: WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE TOY OR TOY LINE AS A CHILD? WHAT DID YOU IDENTIFY WITH MOST, OR WHAT WAS IT ABOUT THAT TOY THAT PULLED ON YOUR HEARTSTRINGS?

A.S. VALENTINO: IT'S HARD TO RECALL, BUT I REMEMBER LOVING TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES, THE TOYS, THE CARTOON, THE ARCADE GAME. RAFAEL WAS MY FAVORITE BECAUSE HE WAS MORE MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND BROODY. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, I FEEL LIKE MOST PEOPLE I KNOW WHO WERE INTO TMNT ALSO CHOSE RAFAEL AS THEIR FAVORITE, SO MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING INHERENTLY QUEER ABOUT THE CHARACTER. OR MAYBE IT'S THE FACT THAT HE SEEMS CHRONICALLY DEPRESSED. WHO KNOWS, SOMEONE IN POP CULTURE STUDIES SHOULD WRITE ABOUT IT.

F: WHAT WAS IT THAT DREW YOU INTO MAKING MUSIC? WAS IT AN EVENT? A PERSON?

ASV: I'VE BEEN OBSESSED WITH MUSIC SINCE I WAS A KID. I FIRST STARTED LEARNING HOW TO PLAY GUITAR PICKING OUT NIRVANA AND HOLE SONGS BY EAR. I STARTED WRITING MUSIC PRETTY MUCH AS SOON AS I COULD STRING A HANDFUL OF CHORDS TOGETHER. FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I'VE JUST ALWAYS HAD A CREATIVE URGE AND DRIVE WITHIN ME. I GREW UP IN A RURAL AREA AND MUSIC WAS A WAY FOR ME TO ESCAPE THE CLAUSTROPHOBIC ENVIRONMENT I GREW UP IN. THE TOWN I GREW UP IN WAS REALLY HOMOPHOBIC AND RACIST AND HOMOGENOUS. IN HIGH SCHOOL, ME AND MY BEST FRIEND BOTH CAME OUT TO EACH OTHER QUIETLY AT THE SAME TIME - IT WAS ACTUALLY REALLY SWEET, BUT WE WERE THE ONLY QUEER KIDS I KNEW AT THAT TIME, WITH A FEW RANDOM PEOPLE HERE AND THERE. CERTAINLY, NO QUEER OR TRANS ADULTS OR ROLE MODELS. WE WERE BOTH REALLY CREATIVE, AND DRAWN TO ART, MUSIC, AND DRUGS (HAHA).

F: TAKE US ON THE JOURNEY OF HOW YOU WENT FROM ASPIRING MUSICIAN TO BECOMING ONE HALF OF THE GROUP GAYMOUS? THAT WAS YOUR FIRST GROUP PROJECT, CORRECT?

ASV: NO, I'VE BEEN IN BANDS SINCE I WAS THIRTEEN, BUT NOT ALL OF THEM RELEASED MUSIC OFFICIALLY. I'VE BEEN IN PUNK BANDS, METAL BANDS, INDIE ROCK, MATH ROCK, ELECTRO FUNK, ELECTRONIC POP GROUPS. IN SOME WAYS, A.S. VALENTINO IS A RETURN TO MY EARLIER DARKER MUSICAL ROOTS.

I FIRST STARTED DOING ELECTRONIC MUSIC MAYBE 20 YEARS AGO BECAUSE I LIKED THE FREEDOM OF BEING ABLE TO WRITE AND PERFORM A WHOLE SONG BY MYSELF. I'VE NEVER ENJOYED WRITING FOR JUST ONE INSTRUMENT - TO ME, THE ARRANGEMENT OF A SONG FEELS MORE INTERESTING. HOW ALL

THE ELEMENTS COME TOGETHER TO MAKE A WHOLE. GAYMOUS WAS FUN. MUSIC THAT WAS EXPLICITLY QUEER AND POPPY WAS ON THE RISE AT THAT TIME.

IT'S HONESTLY HARD TO HEAR MYSELF IN PAST PROJECTS ANYMORE, SINCE MY VOICE SOUNDS SO DIFFERENT AND DECIDING TO MOVE AWAY FROM POP MUSIC HAS BEEN AWESOME FOR ME. SO MUCH ABOUT WRITING POP MUSIC IS THINKING ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR, IT'S VERY OTHER-ORIENTED. THAT'S NOT A DIG, I LOVE POP MUSIC, MOST PEOPLE DO, THAT'S THE POINT!

F: I REALLY ENJOYED YOUR DEBUT SOLO EP, "DANCING WITH DYSPHORIA", WHICH SHOWCASED YOUR EMERGING DARKWAVE SIDE. TELL ME A BIT ABOUT PUTTING THE EP TOGETHER.

ASV: AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, I THINK IT ACTUALLY FELT LIKE MORE OF A RETURN TO THE DARKER STYLES OF MUSIC I WROTE BEFORE TRYING MY HAND AT ELECTRONIC POP MUSIC. IT FEELS MORE AUTHENTIC TO ME.

I WROTE THE SONGS ON "DANCING WITH DYSPHORIA" WHEN I WAS GOING THROUGH THE EARLY STAGES OF MEDICAL TRANSITIONING, SO IT'S INTERESTING TO HEAR THE SUBTLETIES OF MY VOICE CHANGING FROM ONE RECORD TO ANOTHER. ON THE FIRST EP, I WAS MORE LIBERAL IN MY USE OF DIFFERENT SYNTHS AND SOUNDS, AND ON SUMMONING, I TRIED TO ADHERE TO A STABLE GROUP OF CORE SYNTHS AND SOUNDS, ALTHOUGH I ALWAYS LIKE TO THROW SOME OUTLIERS IN THERE TOO.

USUALLY, WHEN I AM WRITING, I TRY TO COMPLETE THE SKELETON OF THE SONG FIRST - THE MELODY (IF THERE IS ONE), HARMONY, BASIC ELEMENTS, AND THE LYRICS. THEN I LET MYSELF DO THE FUN PART, WHICH IS PRODUCTION AND ARRANGEMENT AND ADDING NEW SOUNDS AND TEXTURES. OTHERWISE, I'LL JUST GET LOST IN PRODUCTION AND WON'T FINISH WRITING THE SONG. THEN, I ALWAYS END UP TAKING OUT A LOT OF STUFF. I THINK IT'S HARDER TO EDIT AND CARVE A SONG INTO A PERFECT SHAPE, RATHER THAN JUST KEEP ADDING ELEMENTS THAT DISTRACT FROM ONE ANOTHER - UNLESS THAT'S THE EFFECT YOU'RE GOING FOR.

BUT YEAH, I FEEL LIKE "DANCING WITH DYSPHORIA" KIND OF OUTLINED THE STYLISTIC RANGE I WOULD EXPAND ON WITH THE FULL-LENGTH RECORD - SOME SONGS MORE FUN, DARK AND SEXY, OTHERS MORE INTERNAL OR POLITICAL IN CONTENT, RANGING FROM EBM, DARKWAVE, TO MORE HEAVY SYNTH METAL.



"DANCING WITH DYSPHORIA" EP (2022, SELF RELEASED)

F: THE SOUND ACHIEVED HERE, AT TIMES, REMINDS ME OF THE HEYDAY OF WAX TRAX! (ESPECIALLY THE TITLE TRACK) AND I FEEL LIKE THIS EP WOULD FIT QUITE NICELY IN THE WAX CATALOG. ARE YOU A FAN OF THE WAX TRAX! STABLE OF ARTISTS? WHAT WAS INFLUENCING YOUR SOUND DIRECTION ON THIS EP?

ASV: I DO LIKE SOME OF THE ARTISTS ON WAX TRAX, ALTHOUGH I WILL ADMIT, I DON'T FOLLOW ANY OF THEM TOO CLOSELY, BUT I DO LIKE CHRIS AND COSEY AND NEON JUDGMENT.

I LISTEN TO A LOT OF METAL, SO YOU CAN HEAR THAT ON THE RECORD. I PARTICULARLY LOVE BLACK METAL, DOOM, SOME DEATH METAL, THAT KIND OF STUFF. I'M DEFINITELY INFLUENCED BY AUTHOR AND PUNISHER, MINUIT MACHINE, SHE PAST AWAY, BUT ALSO SOME OF THE CLASSICS LIKE SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, COCTEAU TWINS, AND I GREW UP LISTENING TO NINE INCH NAILS. I LISTEN TO A WIDE RANGE OF MUSIC AND I THINK IT ALL INFLUENCES ME. I HAVE A VORACIOUS APPETITE FOR NEW MUSIC AND NEW-TO-ME OLD MUSIC. THIS PAST YEAR, I WENT THROUGH A BIG OPERA PHASE (I FOUND THIS LIST ONLINE OF TOP 50 BEST OPERAS IN HISTORY AND WENT THROUGH THEM ALL - MY GIRLFRIEND ALMOST KILLED ME) AND ITALIAN DISCO DIVAS FROM THE 70S AND 80S. THE PAST FOUR MONTHS, I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO A LOT OF JAZZ. I REALLY CAN GET INTO ALMOST EVERY GENRE OF MUSIC, EXCEPT JAM BANDS. I CALL IT THE OATMEAL OF MUSIC, SO BLAND AND UNMEMORABLE. BUT I KNOW SOME PEOPLE ENJOY IT, AND THAT'S COOL FOR THEM. I JUST CAN'T GET INTO IT.

F: WHAT KIND OF GEAR ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING? YOU A FAN OF DIGITAL SOFTWARE PRODUCTION, HAVING RACKS AND RACKS OF MODULES AND COMPONENTS, OR BOTH?

ASV: I WISH I HAD RACKS OF HARDWARE SYNTHS AND MODULES, BUT SADLY, I DO NOT HAVE THE FUNDS OR THE SPACE. I OWN ONE VINTAGE SYNTHESIZER, A JUNO 106, WHICH I ADORE, AND TONS OF SOFTWARE SYNTHS, MANY OF WHICH EMULATE FAMOUS VINTAGE SYNTHS THAT I WISH I HAD IN MY COLLECTION. I LOVE IZOTOPE'S PRODUCTS AND KOMPELETE. I HAVE A BIG COLLECTION OF ONE-SHOT DRUM SAMPLES I'VE COLLECTED OVER THE YEARS FROM FRIENDS AND THE INTERNET. I ALSO SAMPLE MY OWN VOICE AND ACOUSTIC SOUNDS A LOT, AS WELL AS ANIMAL SAMPLES. ELECTRONIC SOUNDS CAN SOUND SO STERILE WHEN THEY'RE NOT MIXED WITH ANYTHING THAT REVERBERATES IN SPACE. MY DREAM WHEN I HAVE A BIGGER BUDGET TO RECORD AND PRODUCE IS TO DO STUDIO SESSIONS WHERE I CAN REAMP ALL MY SYNTHS, SO IT CREATES A MORE LIVE/ALIVE SOUND. RIGHT NOW, I DO ALL THE RECORDING, PRODUCTION, MIXING IN MY TINY SPACE AT HOME, AND SEND THE TRACKS TO BE MASTERED BY A PROFESSIONAL MASTERING ENGINEER. I'VE BEEN WORKING WITH JESSICA THOMPSON IN THE BAY AREA FOR A WHILE NOW - SHE DOES AN AWESOME JOB AND SHE'S VERY COOL!

F: DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE PIECE OF GEAR AT THE MOMENT? IF SO, TELL US WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT'S BRINGING TO THE TABLE FOR YOU TO HOLD IT IN HIGH REGARD.

ASV: I'M REALLY ENJOYING PLAYING WITH IZOTOPE IRIS 2 RECENTLY, A SAMPLE-BASED SYNTHESIZER - YOU CAN TURN ANYTHING INTO A SYNTH AND DRAW TO CREATE DIFFERENT FREQUENCY MAPS. SADLY, I THINK THEY'VE DISCONTINUED IT. I USED IT SPARINGLY ON SUMMONING BECAUSE I WAS GOING FOR A MORE VINTAGE SOUND, BUT I THINK I'M GOING TO MIX IN MORE MODERN SOUNDS FOR THE NEXT RECORD.

"I THINK D/S CAN BE DEEPLY ROMANTIC. SPIT CAN BE AS WELL."

F: ON FEBRUARY 27TH, YOU RELEASED YOUR DEBUT FULL LENGTH RECORD "SUMMONING" ON PSYCHIC EYE RECORDS. HOW DID YOU AND PSYCHIC EYE HOOK UP?

ASV: I HAD BEEN FOLLOWING THEM FOR A WHILE AND A FAN OF THE ARTISTS THEY PUT OUT AND WHAT THEY STAND FOR. IT TOOK ME A COUPLE MONTHS TO WORK UP THE COURAGE TO REACH OUT TO THEM (IMPOSTER SYNDROME), BUT I'M GLAD I DID! AKIKO IS REALLY AWESOME AND PASSIONATE ABOUT UPLIFTING UNDERGROUND MUSIC. THE WHOLE PSYCHIC EYE ROSTER IS SO FUCKING GOOD.

F: THE ALBUM HAS A SOUND THAT I'VE PERSONALLY BEEN LOOKING FOR IN MODERN MUSIC. TO ME, YOU'VE CREATED A SONIC RELATIVE OF MINISTRY'S "TWITCH" THAT HAS THE BITE AND THE SOUNDS OF THAT ERA BUT WITH MODERN PRODUCTION AND A BIT MORE OF A TECHNO DANCE FEEL. DO YOU AGREE? WAS THIS SOMETHING YOU WERE WORKING TOWARDS, OR IS IT JUST COINCIDENCE?

ASV: YES, I LISTEN TO EBM AND HOUSE MUSIC, SO I THINK THAT BLEEDS INTO MY MUSIC PRODUCTION. I LOVE LISTENING TO GOOD PRODUCTION IN HOUSE AND BASS MUSIC, ALL THE TINY DETAILS AND PRODUCTION TRICKS.

F: "LET ME SEE YOUR SIN", "BUTCH DYKE" AND "SPIT" ALL GIVE ME DARK ROOM BONDAGE AND DISCIPLINE VIBES. ARE YOU REPRESENTING FOR THE LEATHER COMMUNITY? ARE YOU IN THE MARKET FOR SOMEONE TO DOMINATE?

ASV: OH YES, DEFINITELY. I HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE LEATHER COMMUNITY FOR OVER A DECADE. LEATHER IS A PART OF MY HEART AND THE CLOSEST THING I'VE FOUND TO SPIRITUALITY OR TRANSCENDENCE - BESIDES MUSIC AND NATURE. "LET ME SEE YOUR SIN" MIXES THE RITUAL OF RELIGION AND BDSM AND "SPIT" IS ABOUT THE ROMANTIC SIDE OF D/S. I THINK D/S CAN BE DEEPLY ROMANTIC. SPIT CAN BE AS WELL.

F: THE TITLE TRACK, "THE SUMMONING", FEELS LIKE A CALL TO ABANDON CONSTRUCTS AND EMBRACE OUR FERAL NATURE. WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T ALWAYS EMBRACE, BUT DO NOW? COULD BE SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT OR SOMETHING COMEDICALLY MUNDANE.

ASV: A LOT OF THINGS, BUT DEFINITELY MYSELF. I THINK AS CHILDREN WE KNOW OURSELVES BETTER THAN WE DO ONCE WE FACE THE PRESSURES OF THE EXPECTATIONS OF OUR FAMILIES AND SOCIETY. SO I THINK PART OF THE SUMMONING FOR ME IS A CALL TO A MORE NATURAL STATE, A LESS INHIBITED STATE. I ALSO THINK THE NIHILISM OF LIVING UNDER LATE-STAGE CAPITALISM AND THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGY ON OUR LIVES SIMMERS UNDER THE SURFACE OF MOST PEOPLE. THE SUMMONING IS THE BOILING POINT, THE FACADE OF CIVILITY CRUMBLING, THE ANIMAL COMING OUT.

F: ON "CIRCLE OF DISSONANCE", YOU SING THE LINES "THEY KEEP THE PEACE / WITH A LOADED GUN / IF YOU CALL FOR HELP / THEY MIGHT KILL SOMEONE". THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY HAS LONG BEEN AT ODDS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND FOR VALID REASONS. HAVE YOU PERSONALLY HAD A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT? DO YOU THINK TENSIONS ARE GETTING BETTER OR WORSE? WHAT, IF ANYTHING, DO YOU THINK WE CAN DO TO BETTER THE SITUATION?



"SUMMONING" LP (2024, PSYCHIC EYE RECORDS)

ASV: "CIRCLE OF DISSONANCE" IS ABOUT THE EVERY DAY COGNITIVE DISSONANCE WE LIVE WITH. FOR INSTANCE, RIGHT NOW, KAMALA HARRIS IS ANNOUNCING PURSUING A 6 WEEK CEASEFIRE IN GAZA. HOWEVER, THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION HAS DONE NOTHING TO STOP THE GENOCIDE IN GAZA, IN FACT, THE U.S. IS ACTIVELY FUNDING THE GENOCIDE AND PROVIDING ISRAEL WITH FUNDING, WEAPONS, AND SUPPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE. THE GENOCIDE WOULDN'T EVEN BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE U.S. THOSE TWO IDEAS DON'T MAKE SENSE TOGETHER. IT BREAKS MY BRAIN, AND I THINK IT HAS THAT EFFECT ON OTHER PEOPLE TOO.

THAT LINE ISN'T ABOUT ME, IT'S ABOUT THE FACT THAT LAW ENFORCEMENT IS HERE ALLEGEDLY TO "SERVE AND PROTECT", BUT THEY ARE OFTEN LETHAL. THEY CARRY GUNS, THEY KILL BLACK AND BROWN PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AT ALARMING RATES. SOMETIMES EVEN THE PERSON WHO CALLED THE COPS TO THE SCENE IS KILLED BY THE COPS. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO "KEEP THE PEACE" BY KILLING PEOPLE.

YES, LAW ENFORCEMENT HAS A TERRIBLE HISTORY AND PRESENT WITH TRANS PEOPLE. HOWEVER, BLACK AND BROWN TRANS PEOPLE ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE TARGETED BY POLICE. I AM A WHITE, SOMETIMES MALE-PASSING TRANS PERSON, EVEN THOUGH I DO NOT IDENTIFY AS MALE. OF COURSE I AM SCARED OF WHICH PRISON I'LL BE THROWN INTO IF I GET ARRESTED PROTESTING AND WHAT COPS WOULD DO TO ME IF THEY CLOCK ME, BUT I HAVE THE MOST PRIVILEGE OF ANY DEMOGRAPHIC OF TRANS PERSON, SO I WOULD SAY THAT LINE ISN'T REALLY ABOUT ME.

I AM AN ABOLITIONIST, SO I BELIEVE IN FUNDING CARE, SOCIAL SERVICES, TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE INITIATIVES, RATHER THAN PRISONS AND ENFORCERS. I THINK IF PEOPLE'S BASIC NEEDS WERE MET AND PEOPLE FELT CONNECTED TO A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTED THEM, MANY OF THE "PROBLEMS" LAW ENFORCEMENT ARE IN CHARGE OF POLICING WOULD NOT EXIST.

F: "HOUSE OF MIRRORS" AND "BODIES" ARE BOTH TRACKS THAT I THINK DIRECTLY CONFRONT THE TRANSGENDER EXPERIENCE. "HOUSE..." TALKS ABOUT A FAVORITE PHOTOGRAPH WHERE THE VIEWER CAN'T RECOGNIZE THEMSELVES IN IT ANYMORE, AND "BODIES" LAYS OUT THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS PEOPLE HAVE WITH THEIR PHYSICAL SELVES. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR BODY?

ASV: "BODIES" DEFINITELY TOUCHES ON THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING TRANSGENDER - YOUR BODY BEING EVALUATED, CONDEMNED, JUDGED, POLICED. BUT IT ALSO DEALS WITH LARGER ISSUES OF HAVING A BODY, THEY CAN BE SITES OF MIRACLES (INTENSE PLEASURE, ATHLETIC FEATS, DANCE, ETC.) AND TRAGEDIES (ILLNESS, INJURY, DEATH). SO MUCH OF HOW OTHERS PERCEIVE YOU IS BASED ON YOUR BODY - YOUR RACIAL AND GENDER IDENTITY, SIZE, ABILITY, AND IT'S BOTH A GIFT AND DIFFICULT TO HAVE A BODY.

"HOUSE OF MIRRORS" IS ACTUALLY A SONG ABOUT THINKING YOU KNOW SOMEONE, BUT YOU DON'T. THE FACADE IS SHATTERED, AND IT MAKES YOU FEEL DESTABILIZED BECAUSE YOU WERE WRONG ALL ALONG - LIKE YOU ENTERED INTO A HOUSE OF MIRRORS, SHAPES ARE DISTORTED, NOTHING IS AS IT SEEMS.

" I FIND DOING OTHER ART FORMS HELPS OPEN UP PORTALS IN MY PRIMARY MEDIUM - MUSIC. "

F: WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE STRUGGLING WITH SELF ACCEPTANCE? DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE?

ASV: HM, THAT'S A TOUGH ONE AND EVERYONE IS SO DIFFERENT. I CAN SAY FOR MYSELF, IT'S HELPFUL TO FIND PEOPLE WHO REALLY SEE AND SUPPORT YOU, AS WELL AS TO FIND PEOPLE WHO YOU CAN LOOK UP TO, ANCESTORS, PRESENT DAY FIGURES, SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE, OR SOMEONE YOU DREW OR WROTE ABOUT OR IMAGINED OR DREAMED, WHO EMBODIES SELF ACCEPTANCE, MAYBE ACCEPTING A PART OF THEMSELVES THAT IS A PART OF YOURSELF YOU STRUGGLE WITH.

F: "THE ATTIC" IS A REAL DYNAMIC SHIFT TO CLOSE OUT THE RECORD. MOST OF THE TRACKS BEFORE IT HAVE A HARD EDGE, AND YOU CERTAINLY SOUND VERY MUCH IN CONTROL. HERE, HOWEVER, THE CORNERS HAVE SOFTENED AND I HEAR YOUR VULNERABILITY IN THIS STORY OF, I THINK, UNREQUITED AFFECTION. HOW DO YOU COPE WITH THOSE INTENSE FEELINGS OF LONGING? ASSUMING THE SONG IS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL, IS THAT RED HAIR STILL WRAPPED AROUND YOUR HEART?

ASV: YEAH, I INTENTIONALLY LIKE TO BURY THE MOST VULNERABLE TRACKS AT THE END. THE ATTIC IS ACTUALLY ABOUT A LONGTERM PARTNER OF MINE THAT DIED BY SUICIDE A FEW MONTHS AFTER WE BROKE UP. IT ISN'T A SONG ABOUT UNREQUITED AFFECTION, ALTHOUGH, I GUESS YOU COULD SAY THAT DEATH INEVITABLY LEADS TO UNREQUITED AFFECTION, THERE'S A BLACK HOLE WHERE THE PERSON USED TO BE. YOUR MEMORIES ARE NO LONGER SHARED, THEY ALMOST BEGIN TO FEEL UNREAL, JUST AN ACHING VOID. I DON'T KNOW, I DON'T THINK YOU EVER GET OVER IT, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, AND TIME GROWS LIKE IVY AROUND IT.

I ACTUALLY HAD THE CHORUS MELODY AND WORDS IN MY HEAD FOR ABOUT 5 OR SO YEARS, BUT I DECIDED TO SIT DOWN AND WRITE IT LAST YEAR BECAUSE IT JUST WASN'T THE RIGHT TIME BEFORE.

F: WHAT MUSIC IS IN YOUR CURRENT ROTATION? WHO HAVE YOU BEEN LISTENING TO RECENTLY?

ASV: MY CURRENT ROTATION INCLUDES A LOT OF DOOM METAL BECAUSE IT'S ETERNALLY RAINING HERE. TODAY, IT WAS FVERNAL'S ALBUM, LET THE EARTH BE SILENT, WHICH IS A REALLY SOLID ALBUM FROM START TO FINISH. I'M ALSO LISTENING TO A LOT OF SHABAKA HUTCHINGS AND HIS VARIOUS PROJECTS LATELY. I JUST SAW HIM PERFORM AT THE PDX JAZZ FESTIVAL AND HE WAS INCREDIBLE, A REALLY GORGEOUS, SUBTLE, CEREBRAL PERFORMANCE. OTHER STUFF I'VE BEEN INTO LATELY INCLUDE LITTLE SIMZ'S MOST RECENT ALBUM, IVY LAB'S LATEST EP - I LOVE ALL OF THEIR PRODUCTION - AND YAMA UBA'S NEW ALBUM, WHICH IS SO GOOD, A REALLY TIGHT, POLISHED, AND BEAUTIFULLY ARRANGED POST-PUNK RECORD.

F: WHAT ARTIST WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO COLLABORATE WITH, LIVING OR DEAD? WHY?

ASV: HM, LIVING ARTIST - I'D HAVE TO SAY BJORK BECAUSE SHE WOULD HAVE AN ENORMOUS BUDGET - WE COULD HAVE A FULL ORCHESTRA IF WE WANTED. AND I WOULD LOVE TO SEE HER CREATIVE PROCESS UP CLOSE. I HEARD A REALLY FUNNY STORY FROM AN ENGINEER THAT WORKED WITH HER THAT AFTER THE ENGINEER FINISHED POLISHING AND EDITING HER VOCALS, SHE ASKED WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO ALL HER "MOUTH SOUNDS" - YOU KNOW, LIKE BREATH, SPIT, SALIVA, AND SHE INSTRUCTED THE ENGINEER TO PUT THEM ALL BACK IN THE MIX. SO YEAH, IT'D BE FUN TO COLLABORATE WITH HER. I'D BE DOWN TO TURN UP THE MOUTH SOUNDS, MAKE IT THE LEAD VOCAL.

DEAD, I'D HAVE TO SAY PRINCE. I'M A BIG PRINCE FAN. IT WOULDN'T BE MUCH OF A COLLABORATION THOUGH, HE'D PROBABLY JUST SEND ME TO GET COFFEE WHILE HE SITS ON HIS PURPLE THRONE IN THE STUDIO. OR DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH - HE'S ONE OF MY FAVORITE COMPOSERS AND I THINK IT WOULD BE SICK TO SAMPLE SOME OF HIS STRING ARRANGEMENTS AND MAKE SOME DISSONANT, BRUTALLY BEAUTIFUL MUSIC.

F: WHEN YOU'RE NOT MAKING MUSIC, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT ANY CAUSES OR DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES?

ASV: I'VE BEEN DOING SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT WORK FOR A LONG TIME, SO THAT'S DEFINITELY A BIG DRIVER IN MY LIFE. I LIKE PLAYING POOL, I DO POWERLIFTING, I'M ACTIVE IN THE LEATHER AND KINK SCENE, AND LAST YEAR, I STARTED TRYING TO DO VISUAL ART AGAIN. I FIND DOING OTHER ART FORMS HELPS OPEN UP PORTALS IN MY PRIMARY MEDIUM - MUSIC. BUT I ENJOY DRAWING AND PAINTING, I RECENTLY PAINTED A GLASS BOX WITH SOME LEATHER DADDY MERMEN ON THEM - IT'S FUN TO PAINT ON MATERIALS OTHER THAN CANVAS OR PAPER.

F: ANY LAST THOUGHTS/WORDS?

ASV: FOR YOUR READERS WHO LIKE DARKWAVE, DEATH ROCK, POST-PUNK, AND MUSIC LIKE THAT, THEY SHOULD CHECK OUT PSYCHIC EYE'S COMPILATION, THE ANCIENT WALL. A 2 CD COMP WITH OVER 50 BANDS THAT BENEFITS MECA (MIDDLE EAST CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE), SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN GAZA AND PALESTINE. THE COMPILATION IS WICKED GOOD AND FUNDS AN IMPORTANT CAUSE - CEASEFIRE NOW AND FREE PALESTINE!

THANK YOU TO A.S. VALENTINO FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS! FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ARTIST, INCLUDING LINKS TO THEIR SOCIALS, BE SURE TO VISIT ASVALENTINOMUSIC.COM

BE SURE TO PICK UP A COPY OF "SUMMONING" ON CD OR DOWNLOAD FROM PSYCHICEYE.BANDCAMP.COM YOU CAN CHECK OUT "THE ANCIENT WALL" COMP WHILE YOU'RE THERE, TOO.

THE "DANCING WITH DYSPHORIA" EP IS STILL AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD FROM ASVALENTINO.BANDCAMP.COM

ALL ARTIST PHOTOS TAKEN BY CAI INDERMAUR. MORE OF THEIR WORK CAN BE FOUND AT CAI-INDERMAUR.COM



Photo has been remixed by FANE

Photo: "Derek Jarman" by Group de Besanez is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0

*The Inspiration of
Derek Jarman
by Daniel Land*

Derek Jarman, visionary filmmaker, artist, writer, activist, my hero, died 30 years ago this February.

I first heard about him through the work of Brian Eno. One of the first albums I bought when I started listening to Eno in the mid-1990s was his soundtrack for Jarman's last film (which was reworked by Jah Wobble, and released as the underwhelming album *Spinner*). That last film was *Glitterbug* — a great, mischievous title — a compilation of Jarman's Super-8 films from the 1970s and 1980s. He never saw it finished.



Still from Super-8 film "Art of Mirrors", courtesy of the Luma Foundation.

Jarman is primarily known as a filmmaker, but if I'm honest I'm not *that* big a fan of his films.

Blue is, of course, a defining work, and his Super-8 film work had an obvious influence on the promotional videos I've made for my recent album *Out of Season*.

His film *Wittgenstein*, shot against a black backdrop (in front of which the actors and key props were placed, theatre-style) was an example of budgetary constraints working to artistic advantage — proof of Brian Eno's dictum that "If you want to get unusual results, work fast, and work cheap, because there's more of a chance that you'll get somewhere that nobody else did. Nearly always, the effect of spending a lot of money is to make things more normal".

You could never accuse *Wittgenstein* of looking "normal":



Promotional image from "Wittgenstein", courtesy of Zeitgeist Films.

But it's Jarman's writing that speaks to me the most. Anyone reading him must feel the same incredible sense of intimacy with the voice speaking there; you want to reach out to him; he's so vulnerable, and courageous, so unfairly vilified. You want to call him Derek.

In 1986, shortly after his HIV diagnosis, he bought Prospect Cottage, a fisherman's shack in the shadow of Dungeness nuclear power station. In *Modern Nature*, my favourite book of his — the only book I've read ten times — he intertwines reflections on his creation of a garden at the cottage, with musings on health, creativity, and mortality.

Dungeness — Britain's sole desert — is about as unlikely a habitat for a botanist as you can imagine. It is a microclimate of extremes, marked by drought, fierce winds, and corrosive sea-salt, which frequently damaged his plants. But amidst this rocky expanse, overshadowed by the looming nuclear facility, Jarman dug into the shingle and crafted an unlikely sculptural garden out of hardy flora, and various bits of repurposed flotsam that he found washed up on the 'Ness's shoreline.



Detail of the Garden by Jeremy Weate. CC BY-SA 2.0

Modern Nature invites you to look closer at this landscape, the same way that Derek — who had initially dismissed the area as barren — had only started to notice the unexpected abundance of flora and fauna that the area supported after he had moved in. The language he uses in *Modern Nature* guides you into this closer inspection, and seems, somehow, to breathe life into the landscape — transforming what might appear desolate, or inhospitable, into a

kind of paradise teeming with life. (There is, of course, an obvious metaphor in the fact that the most beautiful of flowers can thrive in the most hostile of environments.)

Derek's descriptions of Dungeness are not merely factual, but are imbued with a poetic resonance, dancing with the rhythm of the seasons, and capturing the ephemeral beauty of blooming flowers, the delicate flutter of butterflies, and the ever-changing hues of the sky.

Modern Nature brims with lists of flora: *purple iris, borage, houseleeks, sedums, horned poppy, sea kale, dianthus, saxifrage, forget-me-nots, sempervivum, clove-scented gillyflowers, bluebells, calendula, santolina, mullein, viper's bugloss...* I barely know what half of these things are and, if I'm honest, I don't care; the litany of beautiful names is enough. *Modern Nature* is a kind of ambient book (back to Eno again, as always); you don't read it for horizontal movement, for plot, or development — you read it for the mood it creates; you read it to immerse yourself in that world, for a while.

Tuesday 7

The rain and fine warm weather have quickened the landscape — brought the saturated spring colours early. The dead of winter is passed. Today Dungeness glowed under a pewter sky — shimmering emeralds, arsenic, sap, sage and verdigris greens washed bright, moss in little islands set off against pink pebbles, glowing yellow banks of gorse, the deep russet of dead bracken, and pale ochre of reeds in clumps set against the willow spinney; a deep burgundy, with silvery catkins and fans of ochre yellow stamens fringed with the slightest hint of lime green of newly burst leaves.

This symphony of colour I have seen in no other landscape. Dungeness is a premonition of the far North, a landscape Southerners might think dreary and monotonous, which sings like the birch woods in Sibelius' music...

Monday 28

Eno's "On Land" is the music of my view: a crescent moon under a dog star, clouds scudding in the grey dawn.

(Excerpt from "Modern Nature" by Derek Jarman)

Of course, beyond his contributions to the arts, Derek was an advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and HIV/AIDS awareness, and *Modern Nature*, as well as being beautifully written, also fizzes with anger. Derek was enraged by the discrimination surrounding HIV, the suppression of information about the epidemic, and the inadequate research and funding that went into tackling the spread of the virus. He used his platform to raise awareness about the AIDS crisis and to combat homophobia; his advocacy helped to destigmatize the virus and played a crucial role in shaping public perception and policy responses to the epidemic within the UK.

Mixed in with all of this is a sense of frustration with the country, and a yearning to return to a more expansive, more diverse, less jingoistic idea of what England — then in the throes of the Thatcher Revolution — could be. Like many, Jarman abhorred the New Right's combination of ultra-liberal economics with an extremely restrictive morality, and felt that the emergence of AIDS had normalized levels of homophobia not witnessed since the 1950s. And yet despite this (or perhaps because of it) he retained a deep, unwavering, almost idealistic love for England — albeit a kind of love clouded with disappointment and criticism.



Derek Jarman (on bed) in "The Garden", a film by Derek Jarman. Photo: Liam Daniel © Basilisk Communications Ltd



Derek Jarman's Super-8 Camera. Photo by Luke McKernan. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

These mixed feelings are evident in *Modern Nature*, and also in the films he was making around this time, like *The Last of England* and *The Garden* (this is the same strand of thinking about England that I was drawing from in the making of my recent album, *Out of Season*).

As one of the first genuinely famous people to come out as HIV positive, he was a regular target for tabloid ire, grimly noted in *Modern Nature*, and reflected in his later paintings. But throughout, he remained charismatic, humorous, and brimming with mischief. Here he is, dealing with a photographer from the UK tabloid newspaper, *The Sun*, in 1989:

A letter from the Folkestone Herald alerted me: the Sun wanted to buy their photos of me.

Meanwhile the lawyers' letter to the People and the Mirror have produced an apology and a correct reporting of my HIV status under the headline 'Del's Not Dying'...

A motorbike draws up and a hapless reporter from the Sun clammers off. This is his third trip down here from London.

"Do you mind if I photo you?"

"Yes, but since one way or another you're going to, we might as well do a good job of it" [...]

I fix him with a basilisk stare as he clicks away.

"You look uncomfortable", he remarks.

"Not as much as you should".

"Oh?"

"I'm writing a diary, which I'm publishing. You're today's entry. When all is said and done what I choose to write will, I expect, be the only trace of your life. Your memory is in my hands".

Long silence.

"The Sun's not kept by the British Museum; the paper destroys itself, it's so acid. When you get back, tell your editor to read the retraction in the People. Because the next time I'm going a million..."

(Excerpt from "Modern Nature" by Derek Jarman)

In his later years, he said he had two aims: to outlive the Thatcher government, and to survive AIDS. He achieved only one of those, of course; effective treatments for AIDS came along two years after he died.

I can only imagine what he would have created, had he survived, or what he would have thought of the last 30 years; what he would have thought of gay marriage; whether he would have thought it remarkable that HIV was survivable; what he would have thought of things like Brexit. He was a complicated man, with counterintuitive feelings about things; his opinions may well have surprised us.

Filmmaker; writer; poet; designer; gardener; painter; sculptor... he transcends the boundaries of medium, and reminds me that it's not dexterity nor technical skill that makes an artist; it's the sensibility.



About the Author

Name: Daniel Land

Age: 43

Pronouns: He/Him

Gender: Cis Gay

Location: London & Somerset

Creative Mediums: Music & Writing

Bio:

Daniel Land studied music and literature at the universities of Manchester, Westminster and West London. His music - a unique blend of confessional gay poetry and Dream-Pop sounds - has been described as "Like Slowdive reimaged by Phil Spector" by the NME, and "The spawn of Elizabeth Fraser & ANOHNI*" by The Guardian. His most recent album is "Out of Season", and he is currently writing a memoir about homophobia.

Links:

danielland.co.uk/about
[instagram.com/daniellandmusic](https://www.instagram.com/daniellandmusic)

*The Guardian article predates the artists transition and uses their dead name. We have modified the quote simply to avoid deadnaming ANOHNI.

Jarman NOW

is a collaborative research venture exploring the prescient nature of artist *Derek Jarman's* practice.

It seeks to initiate new scholarship and artwork in response to the legacy of *Jarman's* work through collective discussion and activity. Begun as a series of online conversations between friends and colleagues of *Jarman's*, during lockdown 2021, including his film director *James Mackay*, his gallerist *Amanda Wilkinson* and the co-creator of the garden at Prospect Cottage, Dungeness, *Howard Sooley*, four publications were developed exploring themes such as archives, arcadia's and dissent with newly commissioned writing and images.

Subsequently a podcast on queer space and workshops with *Goldsmiths University, London*, and the *University of the Creative Arts, Canterbury*, have further disseminated *Jarman's* particular methodology of collaborative working and interdisciplinary approaches to creativity.

Jarman Now is open to project development and collaborations and can be contacted via its instagram platform [@jarman_now](https://www.instagram.com/jarman_now).

Remembering Derek Jarman

I suppose I first met Derek at the time of *The Final Academy* in late 1982 – a series of multimedia events celebrating William S. Burroughs & Brion Gysin. My very dear friend Geff Rushton (later known as ‘John Balance’) had recently begun a relationship with Peter ‘Sleazy’ Christopherson, who as one half of the newly formed ‘Psychic Television’ along with Genesis P-Orridge, were key players in organizing the events, and this gave me a ringside seat.

To be honest, at that time – about three weeks shy of my 16th birthday! – it was all a bit of a whirl, what with all the experimental bands, film-shows, performance art, and readings, and anyway, Derek was busy most of the time filming as part of the comprehensive documentation of proceedings. I was introduced by Genesis P-Orridge, we exchanged “hellos” – and, from Derek, the occasional cheeky glance or reassuring smile during some particularly hardcore ‘Art’ – but that was about it.

Because of my burgeoning friendship with Geff & Peter, especially as they moved on to their own new project, Coil, as my late teens progressed, I began to spend more and more time with them in London, and inevitably ran into Derek again.

I particularly remember one night, standing in the queue outside Heaven, a slightly sozzled Derek passed by, and I called out to him. When he came over, I

teased him about probably not remembering me, and without missing a beat he answered, “Yes I do – you’re the schoolboy reporter!” [a reference to my writing for one of the many-and-various cheapo DIY fanzines of that Post-Punk, New Wave era, and young age at the time.] At his suggestion we swapped phone numbers, and then each went our separate ways.

About a week-or-so later, I received a postcard of a lighthouse, postmarked somewhere called ‘Dungeness,’ which bore in a beautiful italic penmanship the simple message:

“I am up to my eyes, over the hills and far away – but if you would care to call for tea Monday or Tuesday of next week, you would be most welcome.”

So began a friendship which lasted on and off – sometimes closer, sometimes at more of a distance, depending on what was happening in our respective lives – for over a decade, and only then came to an end because of Derek’s untimely death.

And it *was* a friendship, truly a friendship, in every sense of the word. As I would come to see a number of times, both with Derek and others in his various overlapping circles, the ‘romantic’ and sexual connection between us was relatively short-lived – and, I have to stress, as far as I witnessed and experienced, never anything but

scrupulously considerate and Safe – but it laid the foundation of a deep and lasting friendship, in which Derek could be inspiring, infuriating, but never anything less than encouraging, always. Even the last time I saw him, blind and dying at St. Mary’s, he was *still* trying to offer encouragement to those around him, *still* trying to console and advise a visitor’s young friend, who was struggling to come to terms with their own diagnosis.

Derek had always been ‘understanding’ about my experimental music (probably too much in the shadow of my illustrious forebears!), ‘polite’ about my attempts at visual art – but when it came to writing: “*That is what you should be doing, dear boy!*” he said, and I knew that he meant it. In fact, when the live-in companion of his last years, dearly beloved H.B. [Keith Collins], was involved in the glossy ‘Gay Arts’ journal, *Square Peg*, in his own inimitable fashion Derek encouraged me to get involved. He knew that I had met with William Burroughs at the Private View of his paintings at *The October Gallery*, knew that I had been to tea with Gilbert & George, suggested “Why don’t you write a few words?” Likewise, when Coil were scoring what would become *The Angelic Conversation*, it was suggested that I interview them – to which they happily agreed – sewing the seeds of what would ultimately result in my first book, *The Magical Universe of William S. Burroughs* (Mandrake of Oxford, 2014.)

Speaking of “magic” this was something conversations between Derek and myself would often circle around. As much as we shared appreciation of the works of Kenneth Anger, Derek

could not really muster enthusiasm for Aleister Crowley and his whole ‘Sex-Magick’ posturing. His was an older magic, reaching back through Classicism to Pagan Antiquity: early on in our friendship, he gifted me a copy of Dame Frances Yates’ *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, which was a treasure-trove, referencing the likes of Cornelius Agrippa, John Dee and Ramon Llull, Marsilio Ficino’s esoteric engine for the Renaissance. This kind of thinking carried through from head to heart and even to hardon: I have no doubt that for Derek, part of the appeal of the anonymous abandon of back-rooms and heath was, as well as the very direct *political* act and liberation of self-assertion, was also an almost equal *spiritual* connection, via a lineage he saw stretching back through Caravaggio to Edward II, Alexander the Great and his Hephaestion, all the way back to that first blameless-and-shameless ecstatic coupling in some forgotten Arcadia!

Derek Jarman was many things, artist designer filmmaker gardener poet and very sexy man. But to me he was primarily a friend and teacher of the best kind: the kind that marks your life for the better, and passes on to you something that you take forth into your life to then share with others.

I am certainly richer for having known him, and the world poorer for his passing.

Let us remember him with joy and celebrate his example.

-Matthew Levi Stevens
(Author/Friend)

“It’s a great pity that Derek Jarman, this charming man, swept away by the AIDS epidemic like innumerable other brilliant gay artists of his era, was denied the opportunity to continue making films past 52, the age at which he died in 1994, a mere year before the magic cocktail began to thwart the cruel virus. Although in his all too brief time on Earth he did manage to accumulate 91 directorial credits – mostly shorts, video shorts, and music videos – including eleven feature length films, one cannot help but wonder how his work might have matured into the new century, which other historical figures he might have queered so mischievously, which new musicians, like Marianne Faithful, The Smiths, the Pet Shop Boys, and Suede before them, might have been inspired by his voluptuous imagery and indomitable queer spirit.

But it’s also clear that Jarman’s career as a gay activist (he came out as HIV positive very early on, in 1984, a time when calls for quarantine were not uncommon, and fought against the UK’s anti-gay Section 28 amendment enacted in 1988) is inseparable from his artistic practice, and that his films are very much a product of his struggle – both financially and creatively – to make cinema as an expression of gay radicalism in opposition to heterosexual indifference to homophobic violence and the “gay plague.” (“I didn’t have to adopt a cause,” Jarman once said, “I became one.”) His final feature, “Blue,” made after the disease had robbed this most visual of directors of his sight, packs a lifetime of reflections and revelations behind a simple blue screen, an auto-eulogy as elegant and profound as the man himself.”

-Bruce LaBruce
(Author, Director, Photographer, Gay Icon)

“It’s 1982, I’m into industrial music, art and avant garde cinema. If I’m not at a gig, I’m at the Scala Cinema or somewhere similar absorbing all I can. I’m thinking of buying a super8 camera. I do. And I see *In the Shadow of the Sun* and read up about it - a feature film shot on super8 for £200 using projections onto postcards to make a very crude optical printer. I decide that’s my future.

It’s 2024, I’m officially retired and I’ve had a 40+ year career as an artist and film-maker. I’m currently working with a 76 year old writer on 150 short films for social media. I still love *In the Shadow of the Sun*. Thanks Derek. Much Love xx”

-Barry H.

“I saw Caravaggio at the movies when it came out in 1986, the same period when I met my first longtime partner. We thoroughly enjoyed it and we started collecting all movies/books we could find, still have them on DVD and Blu-ray. Jarman has been consistently in my artistic life, even some months ago when I was reading a book on his last cabin and the last period of his life, and we were “watching” *Blue* afterwards.

Jarman gave me a view of the world where nobody has to fit in, fluidity is constant, actors like Tilda Swinton are sublime and where we learn that art and kitch can sometimes meet. A lifetime companion.”

-Jo Z.

“The first Derek Jarman film I saw of his was *The Angelic Conversation* and it was the first time in film that I would understand it wasn't as much as what a film was telling you, as how it made you feel. I always lived a very dissociative dream like existence and Jarman created films that showed me that there were others who too moved through life in much of the same way. He was a heavy influence on my ways of not focusing on mere creation of art, but truly expressing in all that I do, whether it be music, writing, communication or any medium or care given to ideas. He would come to represent the queer princes in my world. He became another of our Saints.

When I saw the intimacy of the boys near the end of *The Angelic Conversation*, I broke down crying. I was crying because it was so beautiful and I could nearly feel the heat between their skin and the way their breath must have felt on one another. I was crying because intimacy is always beautiful to me and crying that I lived in a world that could condemn any kind of love. I cried because I knew many more would feel pain and suffer for wanting that love. Lastly, I cried because I knew we'd be okay. There was a powerful connection being made. I knew in that moment that was what his art was about. Us connecting through the art. Strengthening. Showing us we have a place.”

-Jhane P.
(False Maria)

“When I saw the blue screen of *"Blue"* and heard Derek's narration at the Berlin Film Festival (Berlinale) in 1993 it moved me more than any other film or moving image did before. And later on Derek's book *"Chroma"* taught me how to see colors in a poetic way in every day life.”

-Kassi W.

"Jarman was a visionary in the truest sense of the word, unlike anyone who came before him. He really changed the way I saw film as a visual medium, not just to tell a story but to take the viewer to a different world. I am most into his work with the SUPER-8, shorts of a strange realm that exist entirely elsewhere."

-Florian-Seraphim Fauna
(uncertain)

“Long ago, I recognised that Jarman was an artist who could weave magic into film, whatever the budget. It's a dangerous game—to show you can thrive on less when it comes to funding—but Jarman's cinema was often richer for the restrictions. His films, the short films especially, feel like watching subtle spells at work. Seeing *Journey to Avebury* exemplifies how something ceaseless got under my skin, into my bloodstream, after first encountering it. I don't remember the first time, but I vividly recall the second, and later I could return to those impressionistic amber meadows at leisure.

In 2021, I became part of that Wiltshire landscape myself when I visited the stones, the birds, the fields... unchanged after 50 years, 500 years. I researched the starting point of that original journey, learnt with whom he walked, what route they took and second-guessed their conversations. I then invited my own companions to further that eternal journey, recognising the same moments that prompted Jarman +1 to stop while discovering our own. How did he do that?”

-Ben Waddington
(Author)

'Into that world Inverted'

Peter

ian

Jarman
NOW

in my

crises

Jarman
NOW

Jarman

Jarman
NOW

Jarman
NOW

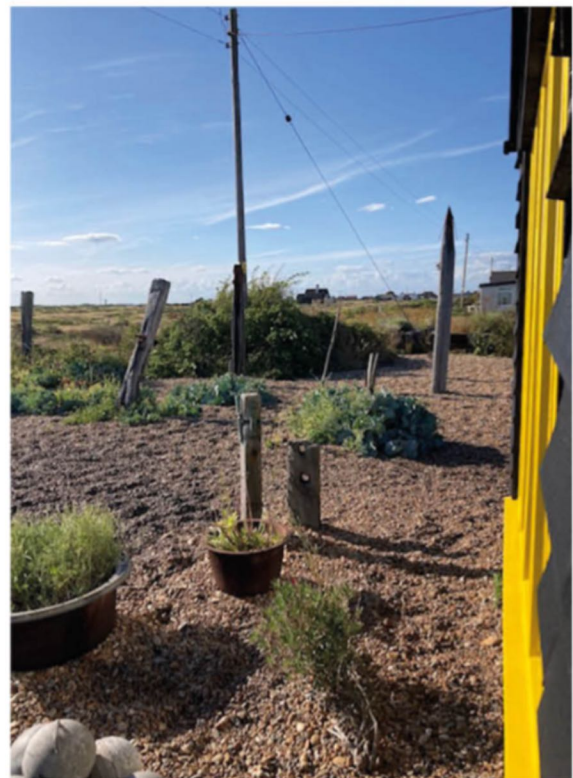
Jarman
NOW

Jarman
NOW

A collaboration between
'Prick up Your Ears' and
'Jarman Now'

A New Podcast

Join us as we discuss,
Derek Jarman,
Shakespeare and
the Queer spaces of
the Romney Marsh
Coastline.



DEREK JARMAN *Imperial Dreams Material Nightmares*,
1988, (Detail)
oil, photographic print, mixed media on canvas, 30 x 25.5 cm.



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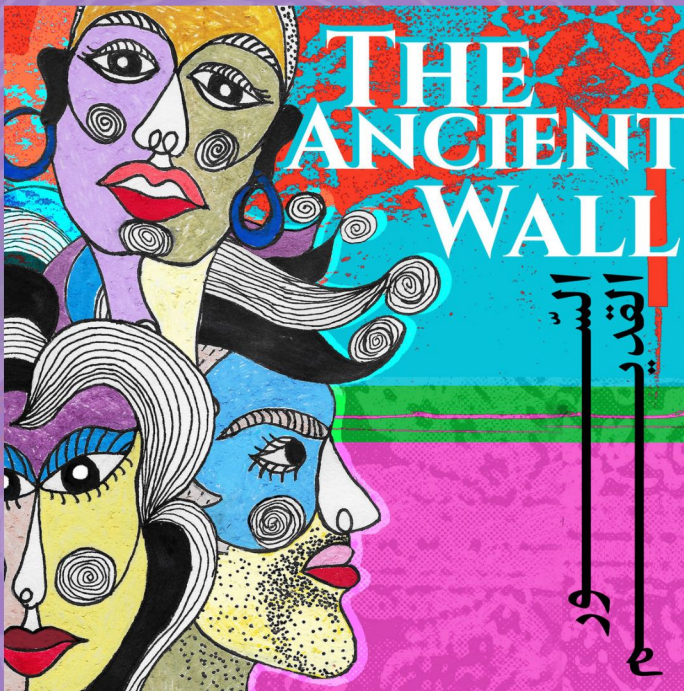
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Dysphoric Days

by Celeste Ziehl

Dysphoria,

It's anxiety.

It's discomfort.

It's panic.

It's distress.

It's worry.

It's doubt.

It's insecurity.

It's fear.

It's disappointment. It's anger.

It's frustration.

It's pain.

It's guilt.

It's dread.

It's uncertainty.

It's exhaustion.

It's confusion.

It's knowing to expect these emotions but never knowing when.

It's wearing long sleeves and hoodies despite the 90-degree weather in an effort to hide the curves you wish would disappear.

It's taking your binder with you everywhere you go because you never know when you might need it.

It's tying your hair up even though you always wear it down because you can't stand the feeling of hair on your shoulders.

It's bad hygiene as you reject and refuse to care for a body that doesn't feel like belongs to you.

It's not being able to fall asleep at night because you can't stand the way the sheets cling to the body you wish you didn't have.

It's forcing yourself to stay up just so you can wear your binder for a few more hours because you can't bring yourself to take it off.

And it's crying over the fact that you can't wear it to sleep but wish you could.

It's the feeling of drowning on the days where you can't stand being in your own body.

It's crying alone in the basement with the lights turned off because you don't want to see any part of yourself.

It's laying motionless on the floor as you attempt to forget your physical self.

It's your mind wanting to leave your body but being left with nowhere to go.

It's constantly wondering if you'll ever be able to find relief.

And it's the fear that you never will.

It's not wanting to text your friends because you know they must be sick of hearing about it, and it's you wishing that you didn't have to because you are sick of it too.

And it's mourning the days that you remember where you never felt this way.

It's 7:00 am, and your eyes slowly flutter open.

The soft morning light trickles in through your window, and you hear nothing but the soft hum of the emptiness and space of the room.

The light pierces your eyes, and you take a minute to rub the sleep away.

You notice your body feels stiff and you already know that today is going to be different.

You roll out of bed and make your way to the bathroom with each step feeling heavy as if lead were coursing through your veins.

You gaze into your bathroom mirror and instantly find it difficult to decipher what exactly it is that you are looking at.

Your reflection seems foreign to you and you struggle to recognize any of the details.

You turn your head from side to side and then up and down.

But the soft features in your face that you usually recognize feel completely alien.

As you regard your reflection, a cold wave of sadness washes over you and you are left feeling as though all of the confidence that you had in yourself has vanished.

But none of this is new.

You've felt this way before. Many times actually. There have been so many days like this that you've lost count.

You knew this was going to come at some point or another.

You've been expecting it.

You grab your sports bra from the closet—the one you wore months before purchasing a binder.

You think today might be one of your more manageable ones and so you slip the worn piece of blended nylon and polyester over your head and feed your arms through.

Before pulling it the rest of the way down, you inhale sharply as you begin to realize that it might not be as good of a day as you thought.

You coax yourself into putting the bra on completely and can't help but notice the pathetic amount of compression it provides.

You wonder if you should take it off and replace it with your binder instead, but you are reminded of the horror stories of others who had worn theirs for too long.

It's time for you to go into work, so you head back to your room to get dressed.

You pull a shirt out from your drawer and pause as you study it.

Too tapered, you think to yourself. As you put it back, you cringe at the mere thought of the fabric clinging to your waist.

You pull out another shirt and look at the logo.

"Women's March 2016" it reads. You shudder and immediately feel guilty.

You shouldn't have. Women's rights are important, you tell yourself. They are important to women and minorities and they are important to me. But your body can't help itself at the sight of that word. Woman.

It feels unnatural to you. Like a wool sweater that was meant to be soft, but has only felt rough and coarse against your skin.

You slip the shirt back into its place and decide to fumble through the heap of clothes that you haven't found the time to wash in search of the one plain black t-shirt that you always find yourself wearing when you feel like this.

You finally find it at the very bottom of the laundry hamper and you lay it on the bed to smoothen out the week-old wrinkles.

As you stand underneath the kitchen's large industrial fan, feeling its not so cooling gusts of air against your skin, you find yourself thinking about both everything and nothing. It's only 6:30 pm, which means you still have a couple hours until you get to go home.

You gently poke the chips down into the fry oil avoiding the drops that you've learned like to jump out at you.

Your boss leans in through the door and tells you to start sweeping the floor. You grab the broom and make your way to the far side of the kitchen.

"Excuse me, ma'am," you hear behind you. You whip your head around and see that it's a customer; an older gentleman with silvery white hair and a kind complexion. "Where are the bathrooms?" he continues.

You point him in the right direction and smile kindly, but his words echo in your ears.

You start to bite the inside of your cheek.

Ma'am.

The word swirls inside your head despite your best attempts to dispel it. You grip the broom handle until your knuckles turn white.

Navigating a world that wasn't built to include people like you, you realize that most will never view you as anything but a woman.

You lament your invisibility and you know that no one will understand, so you keep it to yourself.

“Est-ce que vous avez quelque chose à ajouter?” (Do you have something to add?) your French teacher chimes.

You instantly flinch. “Pardon, est-ce que vous pouvez répéter?” (Sorry, can you repeat that?)

“Est-ce que vous avez quelque chose à ajouter?” she repeats.

For the next minute and a half you try your hardest to come up with something to share with the class, but nothing comes to mind.

“Uh, non, pardon.” (No, sorry) you respond weakly. Embarrassed, you turn your microphone back off and recede into yourself.

You've been spacing out for the past hour and you are struggling to focus on anything. As a matter of fact, you can't even remember what you've been spending the past hour of class time learning.

You know the reason behind your distraction, but you're too ashamed to admit it. It makes you feel selfish and superficial, which are two characteristics that make your stomach turn.

As your teacher has been teaching the rest of the class how to conjugate irregular verbs in the subjunctive, your mind has preoccupied itself with the deliberation as to whether or not you've bound your chest tight enough.

You feel the elastic against your chest, but it doesn't feel flat enough.

Your eyes travel downward. You check your video feed and decide that no one would be able to see you slip your hand underneath your shirt.

The logical side of your brain, however, persuades you not to.

It's indecent. It's perverse. What if your teacher could call you again? What if other students can actually see and they catch you?

But the need to check yourself overwhelms you. Like an itch you need to scratch. The kind that only gets worse the longer you ignore it.

Unable to push your thoughts away, you stealthily pull your shirt away from your body with your left hand as your right slides up your torso.

As your eyes scan each student's video feed, you hope no one can see you.

You let your fingers run over the fabric of your binder as you inspect the compression that it offers and a great wave of disappointment rushes to the forefront.

Just as you thought. Not flat enough.

You rip your hand out of your shirt and sit back with your mood having been spoiled for the rest of the evening.

The late night hours begin to approach, but you've only just noticed.

You've been on your phone since you woke up.

You've spent the entire day blasting your favorite music. The kind that always seems to make time to melt away.

You glance out of the window and stare at the darkness.

It's 12:00 in the morning.

You rub your eyes and head to the bathroom.

Looking in the mirror, you let your eyes scan your sternum.

You run a hand over your binder and begin to anticipate the grief you know will hit you once you take it off.

Moving your toothbrush in little tiny circles across your teeth, you feel the minutes slowly tick by. 2 minutes. 3 minutes. 5 minutes.

You spit out a mouthful of toothpaste and blood and only just realize that you've been sanding away at your teeth for a whole 15 minutes.

You bite your lip and turn the faucet on. You watch the water slowly chase the red and white mixture down the drain.

Exiting the bathroom, you flick off the lights with the tip of your finger and head to bed.

As you sit on your bed, you inhale sharply before removing your shirt.

You squeeze your eyes shut as you undo the clasps one by one. With every clasp that unhooks you feel hot tears begin to well up inside you.

You've only made it to the third one but your cheeks are already streamed with tears.

As you unhook the fourth you feel your binder loosen. You think about turning back, but you know you can't. It's been more than 8 hours since you put it on. It needs to come off. You know better than to sleep in it, but another part of you wants it so bad.

You quickly undo the last four clasps and tear the binder off.

You jerk your head up letting your eyes dart back and forth along the ceiling.

The sensation of your chest without your binder is all too overwhelming.

You feel yourself begin to rip apart at the seams as everything bubbles up to the surface. You burst into tears.

But the crying doesn't help. It's not the cathartic kind that you know.

This one is painful and exhausting.

It stings and pinches as it sucks every ounce of energy out of you.

You lie down in hopes that the change in elevation will help get your mind off of the part of yourself you wish would disappear.

But it doesn't do a thing.

You roll onto your side and instantly regret it.

You roll back onto your back before finally sitting up again.

After hours of compression, it seems as though you can feel every sensation on your chest.

You put your shirt back on and grab your headphones as you storm into the basement.

You lie yourself down in the center of the floor and turn your music up to almost deafening levels.

You squeeze your eyes shut and wish that you could simply evaporate into nothing.

The tears keep coming, and your chest spasms between each desperate gasp for air.

Hours pass. You wake up and feel the cold, unforgiving cement against your spine.

Your phone has died and so you can't check the time. Through the small glass window, however, you are able to see that it is almost light outside.

Your vision fogs as your brain tries to jump start itself, and you soon realize that your mind is completely empty.

And then come the days where you wish you didn't exist at all.

These days, you wake up only to wish that you hadn't.

On these days, you wish your eyes would forget how to open or your brain to stir.

These are the days where you fear that you'll be stuck feeling like this forever. Exhausted. Empty. Numb.

On these days, you find yourself wondering if life itself is even worth living.

But you'd never do it.

You have friends and family that care about you and a whole life ahead of you.

There are so many things you haven't done yet and so many people you have yet to meet.

You tell yourself you would never do it because you want to stick around for the good that could come your way, but the truth is, you're too chicken.

But it doesn't matter what the reason is. The bottom line is that you would never.

And besides, you've grown accustomed to feeling this way.

It's taken a while, but you've gotten used to the discomfort and the hopelessness.

And how do you even begin to describe to someone what it feels like to live in a world where you feel completely invisible.

Unseen. Unrecognized.

As if every interaction was meant to remind you that you aren't meant to exist.

Sometimes the thought is so powerful that you begin to doubt whether you exist at all.

Overwhelmed by a society that tells you who you are and who you must be.

A girl because your parents flew halfway across the world to add three little girls to their family. A girl because you liked to play dress up.

A girl because that's the team you were always placed on.

A girl because boys would chase you in the school yard.

A woman because that's what the tags on your clothes say.

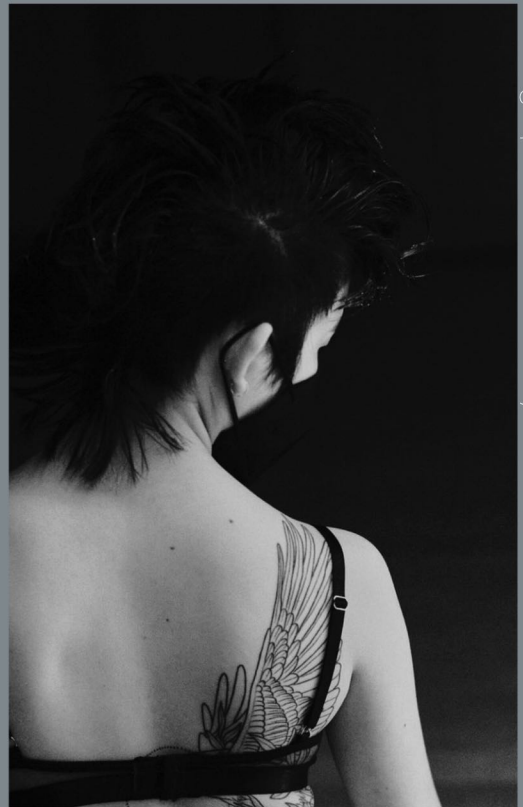
A woman because your voice over the phone is high pitched.

A woman because your name is feminine.

A woman because you buy products labeled "feminine hygiene."

A woman because you're not a man.

A woman because no one can see you as anything else.



Photograph of the Author by Nikki Ziehl

About the Author:

Name: Celeste Ziehl

Pronouns: Any Pronouns

Gender: Non-binary

Location: Northampton, MA

Creative Mediums: Charcoal, Watercolor, Text

Bio: Adopted from China and originally from Los Angeles, Celeste is finishing an undergraduate degree in Psychology at Smith College. Celeste is a proud kinkster, pony, and has successfully founded two organizations on Smith College campus: FEEL and Kinksters Konnect.

Link: celesteziehl.medium.com

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ABOUT POETRY

by

Steff Jumper

About the Author

Name: Steff(ania)

Pronouns: They/Them

Gender: Non-binary

Location: Turtle Island

Creative Mediums: Writer, Noise Artist

Bio: Steff(ania) is a non-binary trans, neuroqueer, cultural worker, writer and noise artist from Turtle Island. They passionately align themselves with gay leather politics, harm reduction networks, disability justice and DIY ethics. They appreciate community building in all of its many forms in the leftist spirit that grieves for lost futures and fights for better possible worlds!

Link: quivering.bandcamp.com

Contact: @mx.steffania on IG

Spoiled Milk

Waiting for the circus was just a way to
measure time passing in our hopes for
something that could help us forget about the
clocks in our back pockets

I remember when we held our breath to the
baritone ticking of a metronome with the sound
knocking on us as funnels of blood pressurized
into bubbling oil scolding my tongue

We can even stop wondering what we missed,
while the scriptures soaked in dirty
bath water full of flowers dried out by capturing
the dizzying light of dawn

I found a crow's carcass' severed head half
eaten by ravens
if only we were able to get to be unspooled with
thimbles intact, we wouldn't have to wait
anymore for blossoms, thorns and unsung
songs pricking our thumbs

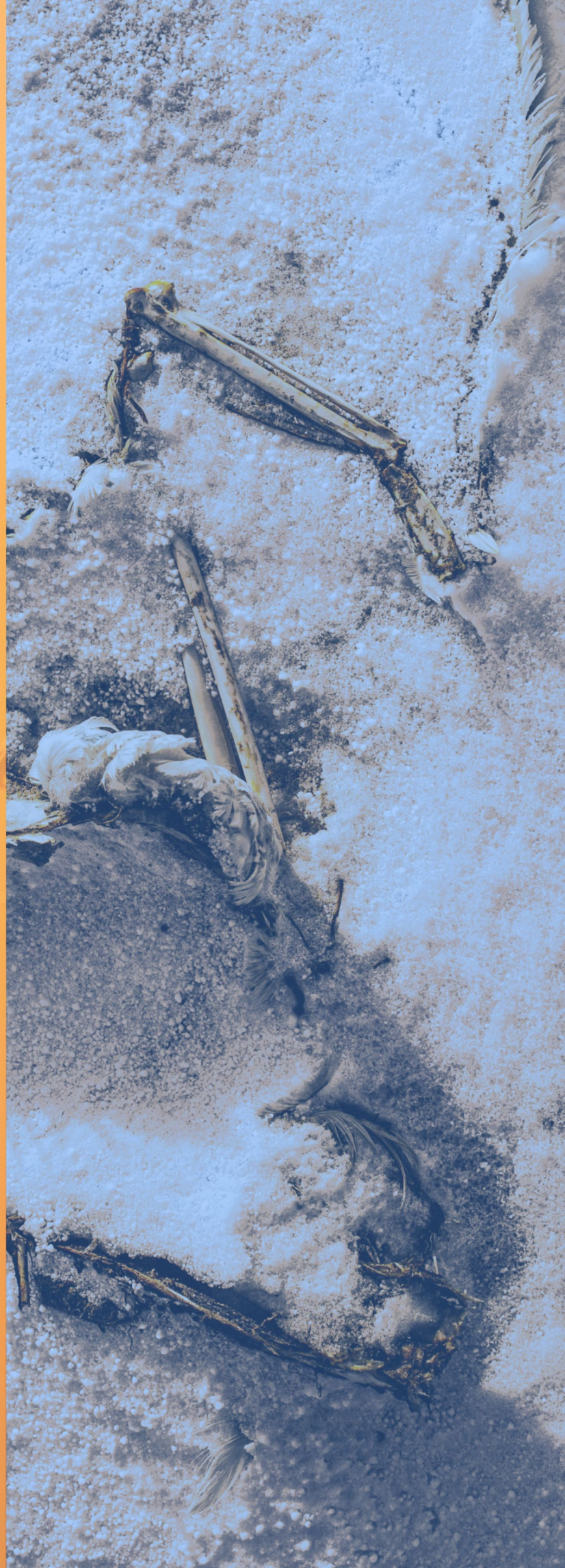
I left the molded strawberries next to the
dumpster to thank the ravens in fumes for
devouring me before the ticker tape ran me
down
dry, unclean, the rest I ate whole

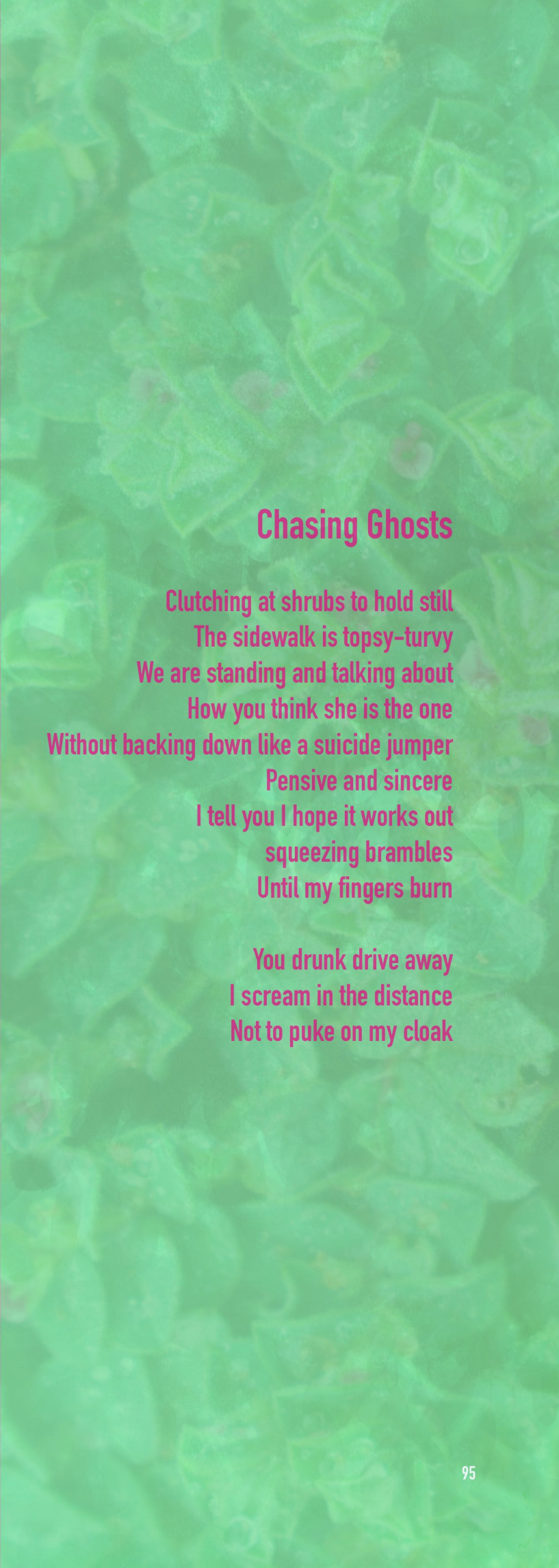
entwined in grapevines without
olive branches in sight line to reach for before
I unraveled, again
with a sticky wet face
howling gaggles at spilled milk the laughter of
breathing stills
to stain glass
vivaciously
patient in plenty
vivisecting vicissitude

an expiry date long past due
when time was not on our side
still severe
microwave rotating

in disbelief

the desert was never meant for human life





Chasing Ghosts

Clutching at shrubs to hold still
The sidewalk is topsy-turvy
We are standing and talking about
How you think she is the one
Without backing down like a suicide jumper
Pensive and sincere
I tell you I hope it works out
squeezing brambles
Until my fingers burn

You drunk drive away
I scream in the distance
Not to puke on my cloak

Collision

Lidocaine is a quick fix
for the vehicular collision
while I'm observing
the internal abscess
there's no need to
lessen the blow
I see I can go numb
for you without the fix

I imagine we could
fly through the glass
I could land in a pile of
melted rubber

Oh how pretty my broken bones would
Be

Chaste

like newborn babies and deer antlers
piercing through my skin
you could pluck out the shards of shrapnel
and wear them as a crown
round and round the merry-go-rounds



Vinegar, Papa

I thought about mailing you my cigarette
butts.
To show you this is who you raised,
A pensive chain smoker,
The person that doesn't run for cover.
When the thunder rattles and the sky
splits open with bright white light,
Completely soaked I
keep walking and smoking while my shoes
fill with water
I pee through my clothes to
decide not to pay money to send you my
garbage because I feel shy and
embarrassed.
And anyways, it's too soon to say it. We must
earn our titles.
I just know that your presence concretized
my concept of fearless.
The ground shakes in tremors, I am pitted
stone.
Without any apprehension to reach my hand
deep in a mouthful of sharp teeth.
Prying out the garbage in a young dog's
throat
You kept saying gentle leader and showing
me leashes, one day
I remembered while the newscaster
reported on how memories are being
lost in old photographs that are leaking
vinegar
disintegrating the image
I wanted lashes
Because I cannot cover you in shit and
blood
Long lashes and a fist full of god

MUSIC REVIEWS



MATRIMONY "RUIN001"

(March 2024, Self Released) | matrimonymarryme.bandcamp.com

"RUIN001" is the debut EP from Brighton And Hove experimental electronic producer MATRIMONY. Over the course of this 7 track resumé, MATRIMONY show off their ability to crunch through the dance floor. "NEWDRIVER*" dabbles in Aphex style IDM, "HORNYJAIL" flirts with Chicago House, "RUINer" is serving Minimal Techno before venturing down avenues reminiscent of Meat Beat Manifesto, and you can even find a little bit of Ambient Experimentation on "BONE/STAIN". At only about 11 minutes in length, this EP is an ever so brief introduction and not a big investment of your time. It'll be interesting to see how MATRIMONY approach a full length album of material in the future. Definitely one to watch.

Tags: Experimental, Electronic, Queer, Alternative



Unicorn Hits "Unicorn Hits"

(March 2024, Self Released) | unicornhits.bandcamp.com

If Slint, Mogwai, and Sleater-Kinney could have a child, it would probably be Unicorn Hits. Atmospherics abound, math rock ratio cycles, twang turn thrash turn twee... accompanied by a warm, although often deadpan, vocal delivery. "Great Lakes Freighter", the instrumental opener, showcases the chameleonic nature of this four-piece perfectly. "Lines From A Wedding" bursts with post-punk desperation. "Incarnational Sounds" floats with dancing guitar and a chill, shifting drum beat. "Lipstick Linkedin" gives off a youthful Sunny Day Real Estate vibe. "Fuck Summer" leans into dissonance akin to 90's Sonic Youth, all while delivering a message this hater of heat can get behind. A solid offering sure to touch the hearts of post-rock lovers.

Tags: Rock, Garage Rock, Queer, Indie, Psychedelic



Solar Hex "The Squirrel is a Pretty Thing"

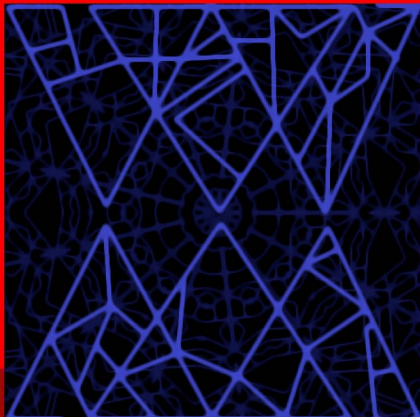
(July 2023, Self Released) | solarhex.bandcamp.com

Somewhere deep in the woods you'll find a self proclaimed "dirt goblin" practicing sonic alchemy under the name Solar Hex. On "The Squirrel is a Pretty Thing", Solar Hex bring the forest, and its inhabitants, to you. There's absolute magick resonating in those cello strings. Warm, lush, and vulnerable fluctuations carry delicate and perfectly paired vocals. I can feel loose soil beneath my feet, tall grass grazing my fingertips... smell petrichor around me. I could, and will, blissfully drone out to this all day.

Somebody alert David Tibet... he may want to snatch this artist up for the next Current 93 album/tour.

Tags: Folk, Drone, Cello, Horror, Goth, Experimental, Queer

We are always looking to discover new outsider artists from marginalized communities around the world. If you know of an artist we should check out, or want us to check out your project, let us know! Email links or download codes to FANEmag@gmail.com I promise, we don't bite or leave nasty reviews. We're only interested in lifting up, not tearing down. If you fit the bill, we'll praise you. If you don't, we'll keep our opinion to ourselves.

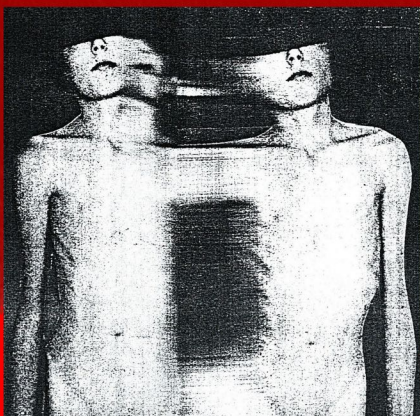


WELTSCHMERZ "RECLVSE"

(December 2023, Self Released) | weltschmerzmusic.bandcamp.com

I struggle to find the words to describe this one, but that's not a bad thing. On one hand, there's an absolute dirge of swirling static and noise, on the other hand there's music that sounds like it was ripped from your favorite JRPG or Anime, and then both of those hands are cut off and thrown in a blender with broken glass, metal and prog guitar riffs, glitter, and maybe a few drops of gender fluid for good measure. There's a lot to take in, and I guarantee you'll find something new every time you listen.

Tags: Experimental, Metal, Dark, Electronic, Weird



Walter Campbell "Who Goes There?"

[Doppelgänger Edition]

(November 2023, Self Released) | waltercampbell.bandcamp.com

In 2022, Walter Campbell released his alternative soundtrack to John Carpenter's "The Thing". On this freshly assembled Doppelgänger Edition, Walter has remastered and expanded his vision and fuck does it continue to capture the anxious dread of its motion picture inspiration perfectly. It's not easy to make minimal sounds have maximum effect, but it's effortlessly pulled off here. It's claustrophobic, it's paranoia inducing, it's subversively unsettling, and it's biting cold. It feels like some freshly unfrozen alien threat is stalking in the shadows, waiting for its chance to fuse with your weak human DNA and tear you apart from the inside... in a good way, of course.

Tags: Experimental, Walternative



uncertain "of thrones and chariots"

(January 2024, Self Released) | uncertain.bandcamp.com

Intersex/Trans artist Florian-Seraphim Fauna returns with another single from the æther. "of thrones and chariots" sees uncertain pumping up the 303s, but not in your typical warehouse rave fashion. It's reminiscent of both industrial techno producer Perc and the 2000's era output from the trailblazing Chris & Cosey/Carter-Tutti, or even X-TG. Synths swirl, drums pound ritualistically, bell chimes dance. The b-side, "foxtrot", continues the pounding techno experimentation but this time accompanied by more relaxed ambient electronics shifting upwards and downwards with apparition-like vocals. Another great pairing from uncertain. I wonder if the forthcoming album is going to lean into this style? Time will tell.

Tags: Ritual Ambient, Techno, Transgender, Acid, 303, Intersex



False Maria

"False Maria"

(November 2023, Helen Scarsdale Agency) | falsemaria.bandcamp.com

After more than a dozen EPs and Singles, False Maria have finally released their eponymous debut full length via the Helen Scarsdale Agency in a beautiful double cassette package.

This is classic Industrial in the tradition of Throbbing Gristle, and executed just as expertly. TG brought us their "Entertainment Through Pain". Here, FM bring us their definitive collection of "Uncomfortable Electronics".

"Her Blood: Communion" and "Who Let Her In: Protecting" are death factory slabs reminiscent of classics like "Slug Bait". "Cherry Sundae" is anything but just desserts... the milk has soured, the cream has curdled, the love isn't love.

"NHI: No Human Involved" has a great disjointed electronic rhythm with sputtering machinery and a monotone recollection of sexual exploitation and abuse.

"Things They Did To My Head: Programming" is a deluge of information. News reports, screams of agony, sputtering analog noises, mattress springs. Unsettling.

"Was It A Life: Patterns" has an almost bouncing ball type rhythm that comes and goes as it pleases. Jhane's vocals, at times, sound like the dying pleas of some desperate humanoid hybrid.

"The Realisation: Seeing" make me think of groups like Controlled Bleeding who would put symphonic world music chamber pieces next to noise walls or electronic rock or Chicago industrial. Serves as a great bait & switch here.

"Mixed Signals: An End" opens with medical instruction before steering into improvised poly-synths, field recordings, and a looping Jhane reciting "You're Brilliant, No, You're Broken" over and over and over.

This is a must hear album, and was my personal favorite of 2023. Every physical edition of this album has sold out, but you might luck out finding a standard copy at a distribution somewhere (the art editions and ridiculously limited 2x12" lathe cut are long gone).

This masterwork concludes False Maria's Phase 1. By the time this sees print, FM will have already dropped their 1st release of Phase 2: "Letting Go". I'm sure I'll review it next issue, but don't wait for me! Jump on that right away, especially if you want any of the physical formats... they go fast!

Tags: Queer, Industrial, Noise, Experimental

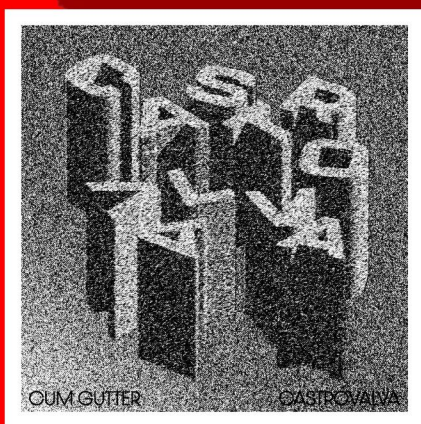


Dumb Dog "What If I Don't Want To Be Good"

(December 2023, Self Released) | dumbdognoise.bandcamp.com

Tyler Jordan is the creative force behind Dumb Dog, a Queer/Furry performance art noise project. For "What If I Don't Want To Be Good", Dumb Dog turn to amplified knives, deconstructed guitars, feedbacking pianos, and no-input mixers to generate intense noisescapes, as demonstrated on the opening track "Burrowed in Separate Bodies". Then, on "Each Morning", the mood shifts to relaxingly long drones, ethereal vocal samples, and the pitter-patter of shimmering metalics. Closing out the 3 track MLP, "Feral Dog with No Master" throws us back into noise territory (I think it's the knives), touches back on drone, and then blasts forward again. This album... It's very live, very hot, and very punishing. Overall, a solid debut effort.

Tags: Experimental, Noise, Furry, Drone, Queer, Avantgarde, Harsh Noise

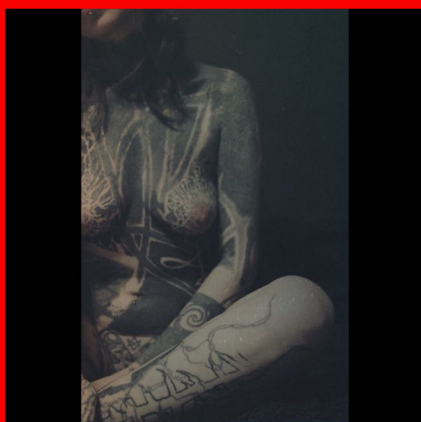


Cum Gutter "Castrovalva"

(March 2024, Self Released) | cumgutter.bandcamp.com

Cum Gutter self describe as "Monolithic Queer Antimusic", and on this 11+ minute single they show us why. This piece starts off gently, drones enveloping, percussive elements. It's only after we've settled in that the abrasion and agonizing screams begin to claw their way to the surface. From there, we're dropped into an abstract segment that leaves you feeling uneasy before switching gears again into a warm ambient swell; light crackling guiding us into a slow fade to total transparency. This is currently available as "Name Your Price" on the artists Bandcamp, where you'll also discover over 70 other Cum Gutter releases.

Tags: Electronic, Glitch, Ambient, Gay, Noise, Harsh



smr.tni "unrelieving"

(March 2024, Self Released / EK Verlag) | smrtni.bandcamp.com

This is the newest release from queer German sound artist smr.tni, and the first release on EK Verlag, the newly formed label of ester kärkkäinen (himukalt). On "unrelieving", smr.tni take us for an unforgiving walk in their shoes. "hysterie" delivers the most uncomfortable laughing I've heard in some time amid a grinding wave of noise. "your reason to cry" gutted me... they've put their trauma on the cutting board to be hacked and diced while an overbearing voice reminds them that if they cry, they're going to be given something to cry about... as if the depression, and body dysphoria, and chronic unrelenting pain wasn't enough. The album continues onward, sandblasting our faces clean off with pure and honest anguish. A tough listen, but very rewarding if you can make it out alive. Pro-Cassettes from EK Verlag are sold out, but you can still grab the digital version (and hope for a 2nd run of tapes).

Tags: Power Electronics, Industrial, Harsh Noise, Queer, Experimental

Gender Is The Bastard

"Inflamed Amygdala"

(March 2024, Anti-Mind Music)

genderisthebastard.bandcamp.com



Gender is the Bastard is the Noise/ Grindcore project from prolific UK based artist Daniel Page. Here, we're treated to something that sounds like Scum era Napalm Death meets Merzbow. "Inflamed Amygdala" presents fast, aggressive, blast-off grindcore infused with wild electronics and blistering noise; 26 untitled tracks spread out over about as many minutes.

Tracks mostly alternate between explosive noise-grind and abrasive dark ambient pieces, ranging between 30-60 seconds in length. Tracks like "I", "III", and "V" show off the high energy anger, while tracks like "VIII", "IX" and "X" form a suite of slow, high frequency odes to agony.

Daniel's vocal delivery is at times fueled by rage, sorrow, frustration, and madness. While I struggle to decipher all of their lyrics, I never have any trouble understanding the emotion behind them. To say it's raw would be an understatement.

The album closes out with its longest piece, the 5:17 long "XXVI". Here, everything they've shown in the previous 25 pieces are blended into a blistering epic that resides at the place where Godflesh and Wolf Eyes intersect. Heavy guitars, thundering bass, squelching electronics, droned out frequencies, pounding drums all crash into each other in ever shifting rhythms. Daniel's vocals run the gamut of emotions while never relenting in force.

Personally, I had only ever heard GitB's more HNW/PE material, so this album really took me by surprise. It is refreshing to see another side of Daniel's work, especially where it's clearly a heartfelt "all in" effort. If you like the heat of the mosh pit and having your face ripped off, this one's for you!

Tags: Power Electronics, Grindcore, Noise, Trip Metal



Quivering + Nausia "The Earth Bleeds Fire"

(February 2024, Self Released) | quivering.bandcamp.com & nausia.bandcamp.com

On the latest from Quivering + Nausia, we're served up 2 slices of blistering noise clocking in at around the 24 minute mark. "The Earth Bleeds Fire" starts off with what sounds like violent waters before exploding into harsh noise. Organic sounds, like the crackling of burning leaves and brush stab from all angles, placing you in some wooded area, desperately running to escape a suffocating heat death. "Open" takes the urgency of its preceding track and cranks the dread up to 100 on this 17 minute epic. The fire's not in the woods anymore... it's in our cities, our homes. Emergency sirens, metal collapsing, panic, fear, agony... the soundtrack to a complete societal collapse; all the while the industry of death keeps chugging along endlessly. Not for the faint of heart.

Tags: Experimental, Drone, Avantgarde, Harsh Noise



Yellow Belly "Signal"

(April 2024, Self Released) | bandcamp.com

Yellow Belly is the dreamlike project of Dominique Finnegan, an Australian born producer of downtempo, electronic music. On "Signal", the gorgeous first single from the upcoming album "Ghostwriter", we're treated to ethereal keys, sultry vocals, and minimalist percussion. The occasional searing synth stab prevents us from getting too comfortable in the warm digital bath drawn for us. The track deals with communication breakdown. I see a couple who have grown painfully distant, but lines like "I know I don't say it back / It's not like that" cut, and I can't help but question their true intentions. I dunno... maybe I'm misreading the signals? Whatever the case, this is a lush offering previewing what's sure to be a beautiful album. "Signal" is available now, and "Ghostwriter" drops on May 15th.

Tags: Electronic, Ambient, Downtempo, Ethereal

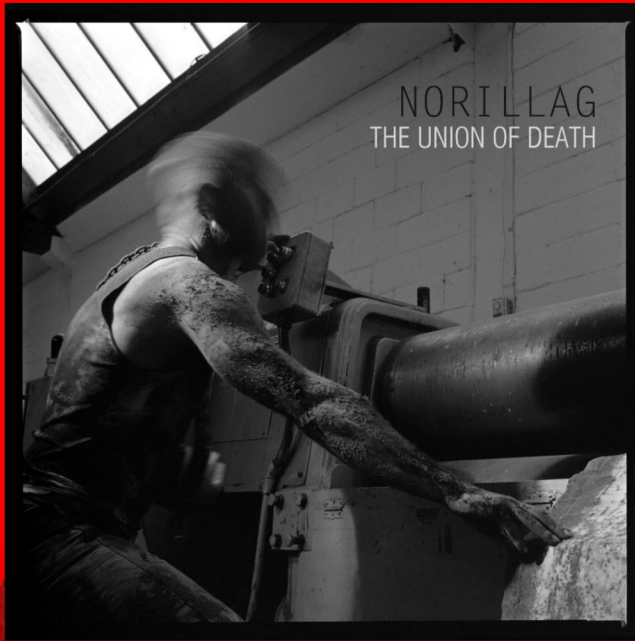


Death Spa "Cracked Eggs / Body Horror"

(January 2024, Self Released) | death-spa.bandcamp.com

This is wild! Seattle based trio Death Spa deliver shell smashing squelchy serendipity with brutal uncompromising honesty. "Cracked Eggs" tells the story of lead singer Mia Rose Malone's life saving transition. It's intensely personal, and one hell of a banger. If you're not singing "Girl, I cracked my eggs, girl" to yourself all the time after hearing this, check for a pulse. "I CRACKED MY EGGS!" is a new personal mantra. "Body Horror" takes us to darker territory, with horror soundtrack motifs oozing into thrashing guitars and wild drums. Noise rock sounds fresh again. This is music to curb stomp a TERF to. Looking forward to whatever's next!

Tags: Noise Rock, Post-Hardcore, Punk, Death Metal, Prog



Norillag

"The Union of Death"

(April 2024, Virtues) | norillag.bandcamp.com

Natalia Hatzi-Blaak is a Canadian drummer and industrial percussionist who has played in many Metal/Crust bands such as Barren Soil, HORRID, and Sporus.

Norillag is her creative spearhead, her brainchild, where she's been fusing elements of Jazz, EU/UK Industrial, and NY No Wave since 2018. On her latest LP, "The Union of Death", Natalia shows off a new full band configuration of Norillag. Together, they have proved themselves to be a seismic force to be reckoned with.

Side A:

"Corpus" expertly displays all of the metal machine music that groups like Einstürzende Neubauten or Test Dept are known for, with jittery no wave saxophone & forceful screams layered on top.

"Norilstroy's Delirium" militarily hammers along to vocals that are reminiscent of early Laibach. You can almost see the swinging sledges pounding percussively.

"Eschatos (Part One - Iron Noir)" lives up to its name and shifts the dynamics toward a more ambient film noir, brass and piano vibe with eerie metallic percussion looming in the background. Smoke and fog become palpable as the record side ends.

Side B:

"Eschatos (Part Two - Might of Loss)" continues the vibe of its predecessor, but this time leans more into tension, paranoia, and dread. Think the instrumentals on side two of Bowie's "Low".

"Mechanical Temples" kicks up the tempo. It has this great bass groove, and the drum/percussive elements get the blood flowing. If the band allows, I can see this getting all kinds of remix attention.

"The Decree of Organs", the closing track, fades in similarly to Coil's "How To Destroy Angels", with reverb washed cymbal crashes and droning atmospherics. It then whirls and builds up ambient metalworkings before unleashing some high pitched grinding metallics, and then gently drifting off into some absolute elsewhere.

If you love "true" industrial music, cinematic atmospherics, and analog experimentation this album is 100% for you. The performances are top notch, the production quality is excellent, the artwork is spot on... we're gonna see this end up on a lot of "Best of 2024" lists, guaranteed.

You can order yourself a copy of the LP, or grab a download, from the Virtues label or the artist's Bandcamp.

Tags: Experimental, Industrial



Chuck Steak "Grey-Neithyr"

(April 2024, Mutual Aid) | mutualaidrecords.bandcamp.com

On the latest from Chuck Steak, we're treated to something more than noise, more than metal... maybe Blackened Power Electronics (BPE)? Tracks like "To See How Dark The Night Gets" present complex black metal arrangements, but they've been burned almost beyond recognition and covered in cinders. Still, if you can withstand the heat and dig through the burning coals, there's plenty to be rewarded with. "Deathmarch into Neithyr"; however, is a full on wall of impenetrable electronics so dense it steamrolls into the next track, "Osreras", before finally getting smashed apart and revealing some of its underbelly. Closing out the album is "HeadHunter"; a 16 minute epic that reminds me of Knees And Bones era Controlled Bleeding; layers and layers of sound collage in a constant state of flux until the plug is finally pulled. BRVTAL. Limited Black CD-Rs available while supplies last.

Tags: Power Electronics, Noise, HNW, Metal

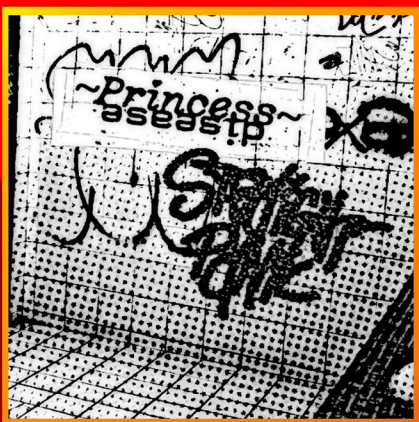


Pain Chain / smr.tni "Pain Chain / smr.tni"

(March 2024, Silken Heart / Mutual Aid) | mutualaidrecords.bandcamp.com

Pain Chain and smr.tni have more in common than their love of experimental music; they both live with chronic pain. This split is the shared experience of that pain and the anger toward the many medical professionals who have failed to offer any respite. Pain Chain asks "Where do we go from here?" over and over again on the dark ambient meets PE track "Nerves Speak". What do you do when you're dealing with a chronic illness and you can't find support? smr.tni may have an answer with "A Deathwish", which grinds and burns and seems to foreshadow a dark future. Is life in agony worth living? This split is very heavy, both in sonics and in subject matter. If you fetishize the pain of others, please fuck off and stay away from this release and the artists that made it. If you're dealing with chronic pain, you may find some sense of relief in hearing you aren't alone, and you aren't the only one struggling, and there are others who understand what you're going through. The limited edition cassettes from Silken Heart have sold out, but the CD-R edition (with some interesting pack-ins) is still available from Mutual Aid.

Tags: Dark Ambient, Drone, Power Electronics



Princess Disease / Straight Panic

"Princess Disease / Straight Panic"

(February 2024, Black Ring Rituals) | blackringrituals.bandcamp.com

Two tracks, two artists, one limited edition C10. Princess Disease's track is "Amphetamine Induced Gender Dysphoria". Through screams that would make Philip Best proud, Princess Disease takes us on a PE journey into uncomfortable territory. Imagine you've been drugged out for days, barely knowing where you are; paranoia creeps in, you question yourself, and you question everything around you. Soon, down becomes up, right becomes wrong, and the way through is lost. It's a tough listen, although no doubt cathartic for the artist. Straight Panic provides "A.A.S.B.". Layered porno samples lead us into pounding kicks, high static, and heavily distorted vocals. The pounding gives way to sounds reminiscent of blow torches and steam exhaust vents, rising and falling, before coming to a head in a screeching drone and quickly disappearing. Could this be the noise equivalent of a random encounter at a bath house? Maybe. A solid split, all around.

Tags: Noise, Power Electronics

Threshold: Body Hammer

"Watching In Silence As A Piece Of You Dies: Live 1.1.24"

(April 2024, Self Released) | myentirefuckinglifeisafight.bandcamp.com



The five members of the greater collective known as Threshold joined together to manifest Threshold: Body Hammer and deliver what they consider to be their definitive document (and the end of an era). This is a red hot live room recording from their performance at The Firehouse for Noise Brunch 2024.

Things get started with a blistering rendition of "It's Your World. Choose" (you can find the studio recording on Queer Noise Terror Vol. 1). This version is very HNW fueled. Searing.

"...And Tomorrow Is Today's Dream" continues the noise assault, but breaks at times for some light drone and guitar work. "We Made You. How Can You Let Me Down Every Day?" kicks up the heat. This thing sizzles the whole way through, with dense crackling and burned-out vocals.

"I Can't Remember When The Laughter Turned To Silence" rhythmically pulses with harsh noise and booming crashes. Metallic stabs flash in to pierce the thick atmosphere.

"A Place Where Nothing Will Hurt And You Are Truly Happy" is filled to the brim with drones (guitar drones, noise drones, etc.). Saw-like synths buzz beneath relentless feedback and distortion.

"I Believed You." layers on the walls of sound, while vocals peek through the distortion long enough to convey a sense of disappointment. Metal squealing pierces the ears, while alarm-like guitars noodle under beds of abrasive electronics before all goes to hell in a whirl of grinding machinery and ends with high frequency drones.

This is a mind frying experience. The recording is raw, the performances are raw... you can feel the sweat in the room. Now that we've experienced their definitive document, what does the future have in store for the members of Threshold? Who's to tell?

Tags: Queercore, Harsh Noise, Power Electronics, Experimental

[Editor's Note: There have recently been abuse allegations against Alyxx of Threshold from their former spouse and band mate. This review was written before these allegations came to light. While everyone is presumed innocent until proven guilty, I felt it was irresponsible to ignore the allegations. The review was almost removed, but it would be wrong to punish the other former members of Threshold for Alyxx's alleged actions. They gave it their all, and deserve to be acknowledged for their performances.]

FANE does NOT condone abuse or harbor abusers. Do not misconstrue the positive music review presented here for an endorsement of, or indifference to, abuse.]



In Cascades "In Cascades"

(February 2024, Heathen Fawn) | heathenfawnrecordings.bandcamp.com

In Cascades is the dark ambient solo project of death metal musician Dylan Benedict. This is the first in a series of limited edition cassette releases. Side A is filled entirely by one track. "Tipping Point" features analog sound sources with tide-like swells and feedback drones. Crystalline shimmers ping at their own will. String picking, similar to Iommi from Black Sabbath on their eponymous track, brings in a melody to anchor to, while dissonance continues to build and swarm. Patterns of silence and booming electronics emulate air strikes. Side B gives us two more offerings. "Under Dead Stars" carries a distorted Loren Connors vibe with lots of gently shifting atmospherics crumbling, beeping, and sparking in the background. The little life left after the tipping point. "A Profit Of Ruin" drones realizations over surveyed damage. The cost of war is high, but who's collecting the cheques? Does it even matter? If you're lucky, you can snatch up one of the tapes before they're gone forever. Looking forward to the next release in the series.

Tags: Dark Ambient, Drone, Metal



Hidden Gateways "Penial Stargates"

(February 2024, Heathen Fawn) | heathenfawnrecordings.bandcamp.com

Hidden Gateways is the industrial project of Matt Lincoln. On "Penial Stargates", *Hidden Gateways* show that the rivet-heads are alive and well. Tracks like "Gun-demic" and "Splintered Fragments" show off electronic rhythms pounding paths through beds of static and thrash; guttural vocals akin to "Blind" era Numb howl over the mix. Acoustic guitars feel oddly right at home on tracks like "Kalilah", which still pack quite a punch. "Temples of Saturn" shows off a more dreamlike state, similar to prog-era Controlled Bleeding, with soaring guitars and orchestral ambience. Scattered throughout are short instrumentals featuring bursts of noise, like "Slow-Burn" and "Radiation (Lesson 3)", or dark ambient vibes like "Biofeedback (Lesson 2)". "Buried Under the Altar of a False God" has suffocating drones that would make Lustmord smile, with Gridlock like noises and machine patterns. This album is a love letter to all things 90's/00's industrial, and I am 100% here for it. If you want a cassette, haul ass as they're almost gone!

Tags: Industrial, Doomgaze, Dark Ambient



Cranial Key / CZ / Nudeconsumer

"Only Noise Is Real"

(May 2024, Heathen Fawn) | heathenfawnrecordings.bandcamp.com

Rounding out this Heathen Fawn trilogy of reviews, we have the upcoming 3-way split from HNW artists Cranial Key, CZ, and Nudeconsumer, "Only Noise Is Real". This is ~60 minutes of almost unrelenting harsh noise walls (Cranial Key does break for a few Lobotomy medical instruction samples, though). The overall feel is a very crackling, oppressive, dry heat. Everything is pushed far into the red. If you can withstand the assault, you can find a world of layered textures that takes patience and concentration to decipher. Not for the feint of heart. You can have your ears assaulted and mind fried when this cassette drops in May.

Tags: Noise, Harsh Noise Walls, Extreme

The Anxiety Riddled Life of



MR. DISEMBODED EYE

by
Robert
Ferent

ADHD, DEPRESSION, AND ANXIETY ARE CONSIDERED "CO-MORBIDITIES".



THAT MEANS THEY LIKE TO HANG OUT TOGETHER AS A GROUP AND CAUSE A RIOT.



I WISH THEY'D LET ME HANG OUT WITH MY FRIENDS SOMETIME...



THE HOARSE MOTIVATOR

OPINIONS, REMINDERS, AND AFFIRMATIONS

FROM A QUEER SURROGATE PARENT

NO SINGLE ENTITY OWNS MORALITY

You are not an abomination, you are not going to hell, and you do not need to repent for simply existing. Do not let the opinions of decaying pedophile enablers with ridiculous outfits and imaginary friends dictate your life.

YOU ARE NOT DEFINED BY YOUR GENITALIA

Anyone who judges you based on your “junk” doesn’t deserve your attention.

LOVE YOURSELF (YOU ARE DESERVING)

Sometimes that little inner voice tells us we’re broken, ugly, and unlovable. That’s complete hogwash. We’re survivors, with true beauty, worthy of the love and respect of others (and ourselves).

SEX WORK IS VALID

If you, as an adult, choose a career in pornography, start an Only Fans, or anything of the like, your choice is valid. Your body is yours to do with what you want. You are not less of a person for choosing this kind of work, nor are you deserving of objectification, harassment, or assault.

YOU ARE NOT THE SUM OF YOUR MISTAKES

Everybody fucks up. Sometimes we say or do things that we regret, and sometimes forgiveness isn’t given. That doesn’t mean we’re forever marred. Own your mistakes, learn from them, forgive yourself for them, and then put your mistakes behind you.

THERE IS NO SHAME IN ASKING FOR HELP

Maybe you need a shoulder to cry on, or a sympathetic ear to listen to you vent your frustrations. Maybe that isn’t enough. If you find yourself struggling, ask for help. There are more therapeutic options available today than ever before, and there’s nothing wrong with “working your shit out” with a therapist, social worker, etc.

TRAUMA IS NOT A COMPETITIVE SPORT

Do not compare your traumas “value” to others. Trauma is trauma. Everyone is different. One person’s experience doesn’t invalidate your own.

PETS ARE AWESOME

SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE EVERYTHING SUCKS. HERE'S SOMEONE'S AWESOME PET(S) TO HELP CHEER YOU UP. I DUNNO ABOUT YOU, BUT SEEING SOMEONE'S PETS HAS NEVER MADE MY DAY ANY WORSE, ONLY BETTER. LOVE ON SOME PETS.



Name: Poptart & Rapunzel / Type: Miniature Pinscher & Chihuahua / Age: ~10 years / Owner: Robert Ferent

WANNA SHOW OFF YOUR PET(S)? SEND US AN EMAIL AT FANEMAG@GMAIL.COM WITH A PICTURE OF YOUR PET(S) (PNG OR JPG, 10MB MAX) AND SOME INFO LIKE YOU SEE ABOVE. WE WILL RANDOMLY PICK ONE SUBMISSION TO CLOSE OUT EVERY FUTURE ISSUE AND END ON A HIGH NOTE.

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FANE Issue No. 2

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"The Inspiration of Derek Jarman"

Written by: Daniel Land
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"Remembering Derek Jarman"

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"Four Poems"

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"The Anxiety Riddled Life of Mr. Disembodied Eye"

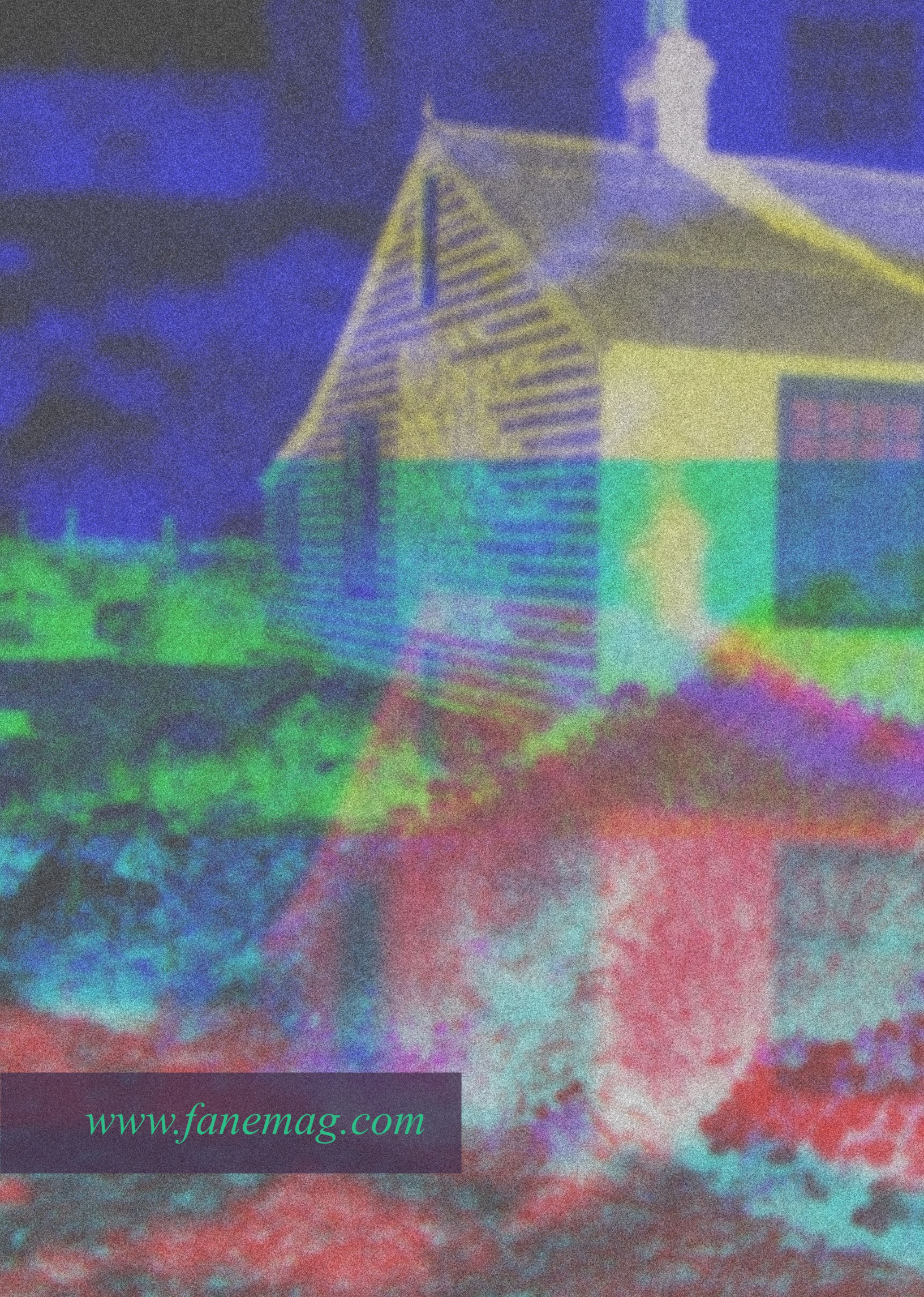
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"The Hoarse Motivator"

Design/Layout: R. Ferent
Written by: A Parent That Cares

"Pets Are Awesome"

Design/Layout: R. Ferent
Photo by: R. Ferent



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