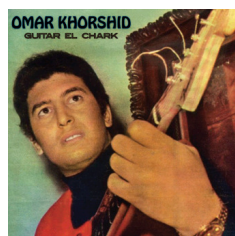


# REVIEWS & RANTS

The critical, opinionated, and judgmental ravings of an angry, old soul.



## OMAR KHORSHID - Guitar El Chark DOUBLE 12" LP ([Sublime Frequencies](#)) I

I hear that this sucker is already sold out, and I can understand why. *Guitar El Chark*, which translates to 'Guitar of the Orient', is a collection of singles, and album cuts that spawn the Lebanese years of Omar Khorshid's musical career. The Egyptian Khorshid began playing guitar in the early 60s, and soon formed Le Petit Chats, who were modeled after The Beatles. Later he would join Abdel Halim Hafez and Baligh Hamdi in their orchestra, and that was when his fame began to spread throughout the Middle East. In the early 1970s he moved to Beirut, Lebanon, and recorded several solo LPs from 1973 to 1977. This later solo work is where the songs on *Guitar El Chark* come from. This release, and Omar's later work, consist of a blend of surf guitar, traditional Arab music, Flamenco, and psychedelic keyboards that form an instrumental, almost early-Bollywood sound. Seventeen tracks, and one promotional radio spot, adding up to over eighty minutes of awesome. I cannot express how wonderful it is to finally get my hands on some of his work. Well, neither can thousands of others, as this limited edition, gatefold, double slab of 12" wax has apparently flown off the racks. Hopefully, Seattle's Sublime Frequencies Records will reissue this in CD format for the newly schooled masses. Otherwise, check eBay quick! (July 20, 2010)

**YEAR OF NO LIGHT - Ausserwelt CD ([Conspiracy](#))** When it comes to certain records, I'm speechless. I mean, some of them are just so powerful, so god damned good, that I'm somehow left with very few words to say. Well, needless to say, this is one of those records. I was introduced to Year of No Light via their LP, *Nord*, in 2006, and they still maintain one of the top spots in my 'favorite current bands' list. Since then, and for this recording vocalist Julien Perez has left the band, and Shiran Kaidine (of French doom monsters Monarch) has joined in on guitars. Admittedly this has not improved their sound, but it certainly hasn't diminished it either. Different, yet somewhat similar and familiar. The sound is fuller, and more, um... dramatic and booming, but it does lack the quieter or more electronic parts that were on *Nord*. Still, it is an amazing and beautiful record. Four tracks (clocking in at a near 50 minutes) of shoegazer-inspired, atmospheric doom metal that punishes, as well as delights. There is also a double 12" edition of this behemoth, released by Music Fear Satan Records. Imagine the deep, rich tones they're getting when placing only one song per each of the four sides. Sometimes, it's great to review records - like when I got the first YoNL album, and I was blown away by their never-heard-before sound. Other times, it stops just short of feeling teased, almost cheated. I'm going out to get this on vinyl as soon as I possibly can. (July 20, 2010)

**JATUN - Blanket of Ash 12" LP ([Other Electricities](#))** Jatun formed around 2004 in Portland, OR, and now only Scott Worley mans the helm, as Alan Grosvenor has left the project. Sad, yes, but some mud had to be slung their way, as from the very beginning Jatun had an almost 'too good of a thing' going for them since companies such as Nike, and as far away as Norway used their music in commercials and promo spots. I didn't let that bug me, because the music was, and is, just great. If you are not familiar with Jatun, the sound is a sort of laptop shoegazer. Haunting dream-pop effused by dub elements, and either upbeat synths or depressing guitars. They released a self-titled, thirteen song CD (also on Other Electricities Records) in 2005, and then became a darling of the indie scene. Can't blame anyone that loves this because I hear a lot of my favorites here: Cocteau Twins, My Bloody Valentine, and *Disintegration*-era The Cure. I can envision Jesu, and M83. All of it without sounding like a rip-off of any of them. *Blanket of Ash* is available in two formats only. You can buy the vinyl, which comes with a download card to obtain the digital version for you iPod-heads, or simply the digital version alone. The 12" slab plus digital is only \$3 more than the digital-only version, so I suggest you shell out those couple of extra bucks, and years from now when the poles shift and all computers are

worthless, you still got your record... which you can trade for food. (July 20, 2010)

## HENRY & GLENN FOREVER - Artists, Igloo Tornado COMIC BOOK ([Microcosm](#) / [Igloo Tornado](#))

While reading this review, keep in mind that I am not into comic books (at all). With that said, I love this little fucking thing. Just so you know, this isn't your typical comic book, as it's not drawn by a single artist, or a group of artist with one running look, and a linear storyline. Igloo Tornado is an art collective, and each member pitched in their sketches, drawings, scribbling and rambling nonsense. The history of this 5" by 5" comic book is almost as precious as the outcome. After a shitload of beers one night, IT member Gin Stevens said, 'There should be a Tom of Finland book, but with Henry Rollins and Glenn Danzig!' The rest agreed. Thus was born what is known as a fan-fiction 'zine, which later became this comic book. The premise here? Henry and Glenn are room mates. Um... very close room mates. Daryl Hall and John Oates are their neighbors, who happen to worship Satan. That's it, and even so, it's unbelievably hilarious. Keep in mind that there is no linear story here, but a collection of art that doesn't so much tell a tale, as give you insight into what the situation might be like. Some of the artwork is great, some of it childish, while other pages doesn't even hold artwork, but handwritten notes. Still, every tiny page is a laugh out loud riot. Get this quick, before the lawsuits start flying! (July 20, 2010)

**ALCEST - Écailles de Lune CD ([Prophecy Productions](#))** I seriously did not expect this at all, but I'm getting ahead of myself. In 1999, a character known simply as Neige began a solo project in Bagnols-sur-Cèze, France. By the time it was ready to be recorded, it was known as Alcest, and it was a trio (though it's basically back to a solo project by Neige). I'm familiar with a lot of Drakkar Records' releases, so I had heard Alcest's 2001 demo disc, *Tristesse Hivernale*, and its follow-up 2005 EP, *Le Secret*. I must admit I had never heard their debut LP (*Souvenirs d'un Autre Monde* on Prophecy Productions from 2007), so I lost track of what was becoming a powerhouse in the atmospheric black metal realm. I'm quite interested to backtrack to that release just to hear where this beauty came from, seeing as *Écailles de Lune* is a mind-blowing record. Shifting between dreamy shoegazer and intense black metal this LP creates an explosion of emotion and sound. The moments of shoegazer last a bit longer than the black metal mayhem, but it proves to be a wonderful balance. The track "Solar Song" has an alt-country flavor, while the tune "Percées de Lumière" is a heart-rending cut of shoegazer mixed with progressive metal, along with black metal vocals - and it works so well. Even the black metal elements are extraordinarily different, as the guitars are often very clean, and though there are blast beats, it almost has an alt-rock feel to it. It's weird to describe, kinda like Slowdive meeting up with Burzum for a jam, or Jesu pounding it out with Gin Blossoms. As is the norm these days (hurray!) there is also a vinyl version available, in blue or standard black. (July 20, 2010)

**SMEGMA - I Am Not Artist: 1973 - 1988 SIX 12" LP + DVD ([Vinyl On Demand](#))** It's about time something like this comes out, as Smegma is a highly influential band (especially to Throbbing Gristle and Nurse With Wound) that many forget. If you are unaware as to who they are, simply put, they're an offshoot of the early 1970s Los Angeles Free Music Society, and are still around today (though now based in Portland, OR). They rely heavily on free improvisation, live and on record. The 'band' uses found sounds and field recordings, standard and homemade instruments, tape loops and records, as well as vocals and vocalizations (improved, of course). This box set collects everything this 'band' released until 1988. There's the *Pigface Chant* and *Flashcards 7"*es from 1978, 1979's debut LP *Glamor Girl 1941*, plus the second album *Pigs for Lepers* (1982), there's also the entire live, double cassette *Spontaneous Sound*, which takes up two and a half of the 12"es, and the last discs of wax has compilation tracks and rarities. Musically, what you find on these LPs is what you might expect from a collective of experimental musicians: flat-out noise, unhinged pop, odd country music twangs, no wave punk rock, and free jazz. The DVD is almost as great. It contains the previously VHS-only release *First Ten Years* (1983), plus a few 'music videos' and short films (such as 1978's *NWAW* and *Clockwork Joe's* from 1980). The box this comes in is top notch, as are the others that Germany's Vinyl On Demand puts out. If you call yourself a fan of experimental, or noise music, and do not have this (or the originals) in your collection, you - my good reader - are no fan at all. (July 20, 2010)



**SABBATH ASSEMBLY - Restored To One CD ([Ajna Offensive](#) / [Feral House](#))** I'm kinda surprised. Surprised that it took this long for something like this to be released. Genesis P-Orridge, Adam Parfrey, Boyd Rice, and John Aes-Nihil have been promoting The Process since the mid-80s. In the early 90s I ran material by The Church of the Final Judgment in the original *Feast of Hate and Fear* fanzine, the Clevo metalcore act Integrity did a

whole EP (*Humanity Is the Devil* on Victory Records) dedicated to the works of Degrimston, and even Skinny Puppy members attempted to restart The Process (including naming a 1996 LP *The Process*). Hell, this website has had about 80% of The Process' work posted since 2001. It's a meme that's been floating around certain scenes for so long that I thought someone would have thought of it sooner. Alas, it hadn't, and I not only congratulate Jex and crew for bringing this to fruition, but congratulate them for an amazing album to boot. *Restored to One* is (lyrically) the hymns of The Process Church of the Final Judgment, while set to the musical compositions of those in Sabbath Assembly. The LP is a mix of early 70s psychedelic, folk, and gospel (Pentecostal, over Baptist). Imagine the gospel antics of Jim Jones' People's Temple Choir, the creepy folk of the 'Manson Family Jams' session, and the psyche-pop splendor of The Poppy Family, all blended to lyrics about Jehovah, Christ, Satan and Lucifer. Wow! So now, this album is great, but the live show blows it away, and I encourage any of those who find this to be their cup of brimstone, to check out SA if they visit your town. Why does it blow it away? Because it's done almost exactly as on the record, but, live, you can watch them work their magic. Plus, they're not just great musicians, but humble and friendly folks, as I found out at a recent Brooklyn show. *Restored to One* is also available as a gold-colored 12" for you who want the full 70s effect. As it is... so be it! (July 20, 2010)

**HOLY WAR - Cthulhu Dawn 7" EP (Beckoning)** This is the weirdest review I think I've ever done. You see this 7" was sent to me in 1995 when *Feast of Hate and Fear* was still a print fanzine, and I somehow, not only forgot to review it, packed it away, and only recently found it. That's what happens when you move almost every year. I not only feel badly because I screwed up in not giving Holy War their due review, but... this 7" is great! No mention of who is a part of this outfit, but what information is available only intrigues me. Released from Quincy, MA, the liner notes claim this was recorded during a ritual in honor of the (Lovecraftian) Ancient Ones in 1992. The cover, liner notes and 7" vinyl slab are all blood red. The music is four tracks of dark and enchanting minimalist synth and moments of Dada-esque Musique-concrète. "Night Tide" is an outstanding track, and I've been playing it over and over lately. Well, Google didn't help me track down any information on the Holy War project, so your best bet is eBay or - who knows - try the address on the sleeve: PO Box 2282 Quincy, MA 02269. Sorry guys (or girls), I royally screwed up on this one. (July 20, 2010)

**CHARLES MANSON - Inner Sanctum 7" EP ([Holy Terror](#) / [ATWA](#))** Charles Manson. If you don't know who he is, chances are you are under 25 years of age. In the early 70s, he was an idol to the left wingers that wanted to smash the state, and off the pigs. In the late 70s and early 80s, he was an ideologue to much of the extreme right who still awaited his 'Helter Skelter' (that's a race war between whites and blacks to you uninitiated). In the late 80s and early 90s he became a mysterious symbol of everything a black-clad youth stood for: equilibrium with a bend towards left-handed spiritualism, a love for the ways of the folk, a return to nature, a deep-rooted hatred of modernism, not to mention society at large. Sadly, he's is no longer a mystery - or even an interest - to the new generation. And while many of his ideas are still in vogue (environmentalism and animal protection), he doesn't get much credit for them. Anyhow, this newest platter of tunes are all new numbers... even to Mansonites, as the recordings were previously unreleased. Two musical, and one spoken word track. "Just Love Someone" (Side B) is standard Manson, as it seems he's doing his usual folksy guitar and vocal improv. Side A though ("Air") is rather unique to the Manson repertoire, as it has a very strong blues influence. The recording - of course - isn't as good as *Lie* or *All the Way Alive* (seeing as those two were demo recordings before his Tate-LaBianca sentencing), but it is much better than *Live at San Quentin* or *One Mind*. Limited to 1000 copies, I say creepy crawl to find this before all the political piggies swipe them up. (July 20, 2010)

**NACHTMYSTIUM - Addicts: Black Meddle Pt. II CD ([Century Media](#))** A lot of folks are upset with Nachtmystium's Blake Judd, and this record in particular. Why? I have no idea. *Instinct:Decay* showed everyone where they were headed, and prepared them all for their mix of black metal meets... well, meets everything. *Assassins: Black Meddle Pt 1* set the record straight, especially in the title, by meddling with black metal, yet keeping its essence, and *Addicts* finds the band fiddling with classic rock-n-roll, psyche rock, new wave, and hardcore. Yes, nothing hurts more than being born, but nothing is more beautiful than birth and creation. Here, Nachtmystium suffer the dark beauty of labor pains. "Nightfall" and "No Funeral" (tracks four and five) are simply awesome songs, made more so by the fact that, even with elements of black metal in them, if either were mixed in with a bunch of 80s new wave tracks no one would know the difference. The title track ("Addicts") has a power metal feel, while "Ruined Life Continuum" reminded me of *Night Time*-era Killing Joke. "Blood Trance Fusion" was a mix of classic black metal and Converge-like metalcore. It's about time Century Media started to get away from their cookie-cutter extreme metal that was so early-90s, and start to release albums that, while might not equal huge duckets in their pockets, are important to people, as well as the metal scene. This new LP is also available on vinyl, or as digital-only downloads. (July 20, 2010)

**SOUVENIR'S YOUNG AMERICA - The Name of the Snake CD ([InIt](#))** 2007 was a great year for me and music. I discovered so many amazing bands and albums. Souvenir's Young America was one of 'em. 2010 is proving to be a good year for me and music again, as I'm getting a hold of a lot of amazing new music, as well as catching new

releases by old favorites. Souvenir's Young America being one of 'em. If you enjoyed *An Ocean Without Water*, then you will love *The Name of the Snake*. This newest outing by Richmond, VA's SYA recaptures all the power, tranquility, emotion and vigor of the first LP, and then gives you a little extra. They still have a penchant for doom, electronics, and alt-country. And, yes, they still use a whole lot of harmonica. I find Souvenir's Young America to be one of the best instrumental post-rock outfits out there today. They are one of the few bands that make truly evocative music. Some of the tunes are even nostalgic for me. Nostalgic to what? I'm not even sure, but the songs sometimes force me to envision past loves, and maybe even lives. There is a vinyl version available as well, but one should know that the 12" only has four tracks, while the CD has seven. (July 20, 2010)

**OCTOBER FALLS - A Collapse of Faith CD ([Debemur Morti](#))** What started out in Finland as the acoustic / ambient solo work of an artist simply known as M. Lehto in 2001, has turned into a black metal behemoth. After three EPs, and three full-length LPs, October Falls offers a three part CD that is as lengthy as many an LP. *A Collapse of Faith* is supposed to be one long track, split into three 'movements', and clocks in at over forty minutes. Forty minutes of haunting, and depressive black metal, through and through. There are quick moments of quiet piano here, lulling acoustic guitar there, or bass guitar noodling about, but it's basically a bleak and punishing blast of black metal. October Falls' newest outpouring is a must for fans of Moonsorrow, Petrychor, Tenhi and especially old Ulver. Some folks are classifying this as folk metal, but in all honesty there is no folk (neo or otherwise) on here. Like I mentioned, there are very short interludes throughout, but it's basically straight up metal from beginning to end. Lastly, Debemur Morti Productions presents *A Collapse of Faith* in a wonderful six-panel digifile, along with an all black disc that is o' so fitting. (July 20, 2010)



**CURRENT 93 - Baalstorm, Sing Omega CD ([Coptic Cat](#))** *Baalstorm, Sing Omega* is the closing of David Tibet's dream / revelation trilogy, which all surround his Christian, mystic visions. As a fan (I have almost everything by Current 93, and have been collecting since 1986) I'm rather surprised that I'm still blown away. Like his other LPs, it actually took me upon the second listen to let me mood capture me. Tibet's voice is still normally done in his dramatic and passionate near-speak and sometimes wail, though a few of the tracks are rather quiet, and in a much deeper tone. Unlike *Black Ships Ate the Sky*, *Baalstorm, Sing Omega* seems more lyrically personal, as there are no guest vocals (minus some children's singing peppered throughout). The music on this newest LP is rather different than C93's previous efforts in the trilogy, where Tibet (musically) returns to much of the 'apocalyptic folk' of his pre-trilogy, near-soft-rock work. Guest musicians include John Contreras, Baby Dee, James Blackshaw, Alex Neilson, and Andrew Liles. The opening track "I Dreamt I Was Aeon" set the bar, and pretty high too. Great musicianship, and a very haunting track indeed. The only song I feel falls flat comes early, being "December 1971", though it's no big dud - it just doesn't compare to the others. "Passenger Aleph in Name" was completely amazing. Rarely have I ever heard a track so somber, yet so uplifting. "Tanks of Flies" hit an almost 70s folk vibe straight off AM radio. The album's closer, "I Dance Narcoleptic" had a 60s psych feel, near to something UK's The Ghost would do. It ends in a noisy crescendo, then minutes of silence until the return of sound... a churning hum of what sounds like crashing waves in a storm. The CD is presented in digipack, and both (the CD and 12") are adorned with a cover painting by David Tibet titled 'She Is Naked as the Water, at the Door'. I hear they are playing the U.S. soon, and I can hardly wait. (July 20, 2010)

**HEWHOCANNOTBENAMED - Sunday School Massacre CD ([MVD Audio](#))** Huh!? I'm a bit puzzled, the last copy of *Maximum Rock and Roll* I picked up read that HeWho was stabbed to death in Philly. You mean it isn't true, and that members of The Dwarves would pull such a nasty prank? Well, it's true - the prank part, I mean. Ah, the early 90s were such a fun time. The first Gulf War, the Clinton election, beating up people for liking 'grunge', and bands getting dumped by their soon-to-be-huge record label for tasteless pranks. Anyhow, fast forward seventeen years, and HeWho's wounds have healed rather nicely. Now, what I'm really surprised at is that The Dwarves have been around since the mid-80s, and only now is HWCNBN releasing his debut solo record. Musically, the record begins with some furious pop punk ("Happy Suicide"), but after that the album traverses a few of rock's subgenera, like power pop ("Medication" and "Superhero"), hard rock ("Duct Tape Love" and "I Hate"), 50s R&B ("Toxine"), heavy metal ("Sinister Sal"), and Dwarves-esque hardcore-punk ("Daddy Is Dead"). HeWhoCanNotBeNamed - who sings, as well as plays guitar and keyboards - is backed by good talent on this disc, including The Spittin' Cobras' Andy Selway, and Nick Oliveri (ex-Queens Of The Stone Age). The record is also packed with guest appearances by such punk rock superstars as Blag Dahlia, Rex Everything, Wholly Smokes, Joe Dean, and... DJ Marz? Okay, so they're not all punk rock royalty. Still,

show HeWho that it's about time he ventured off on his own, just not enough to make him want to leave Blag and crew for good. (July 20, 2010)

**JEX THOTH - Witness CD EP ([I Hate](#))** Jex Thoth (originally, the band was called Totem) is the 2007 brainchild of Wooden Wand's Jessica Toth, and JT play a psychedelic and folky, doom rock in the vein of late 60s / early 70s outfits like The Ghost (UK) and Italy's Jacula. Heavy on the slow riffs, as well as on the trippy keyboards. That same year they debuted to ears with a split EP (also on I Hate Records, and along with the band Pagan Altar). In 2009, I Hate records released their self-titled full length, plus re-released the EP under the Totem name as a Jex Thoth release. *Witness* is their newest EP, and a short one, but it seriously kicks (especially "Slow Rewind"). Two originals, and a Slapp Happy cover, and then you're left wanting more. If you're wondering to yourself, 'Adel, come on, psychedelic and folky doom rock?' Well, yes. Imagine if early Jefferson Airplane kicked it with Black Sabbath, then met up with Comus, and all three later had a hand in forming Heart. With that said, I think you might finally understand what JT are doing with the sound of rock-n-roll. (July 20, 2010)

**ACID EATER - Black Fuzz on Wheels CD ([Time Bomb](#))** Everything Yamazaki Maso (aka Masonna) touches turns to gold. Acid Eater is just another project in a long line of sonic mastery this Japanese deity of music has conjured up. While, I have to say this LP does not hold a candle to their debut, *Virulent Fuzz Punk A.C.I.D.* (2007, also on Time Bomb Records), it still packs a fuckin' wallop. The truth to that may only be because upon listening I knew what to expect, as when I laid down AE's first slab of wax I was knocked on my ass. Anyhow, yes, the needle-in-the-red garage psych-rock has already been done by Mainliner (another Japanese act, featuring Acid Mothers Temple's Makoto Kawabata), such as on 1999's *Solid Stick Attack* LP. Even so, that doesn't mean that A) this isn't original, and B) that we're tired of it. This time around, these three chaps and fine femme deliver what we've come to know from them as The Fleshtones or The Pandoras remixed by YM's Masonna persona. Speaker-cracking bass, scratchy guitar, trippy keyboards, and those Peter-Zaremba-gone-nuts vocals - all distorted, and fuzzed out, with the levels blasting. A handful of original tunes, with a few covers thrown in: Crime, Tidal Wave, The Miracle Workers, plus a soundtrack number off a 60s German documentary on sex. All the songs are new, except for the closing track ("Dirty"), which was released as a 7" in 2008. This is a must for fans of 60s garage R&B, 70s psych fuzz, 90s noise rock, or just plain ol' exciting music. Oh, and don't get the Japanese Time Bomb Records (that put this out) mixed up with that piece of crap Mike Ness of Social Distortion calls a record label. (July 20, 2010)

**BEACHES - s/t 7" EP ([Beaches](#))** A gang of five ladies that are out to lay waste to all that they have previously done. Hailing from Melbourne, Australia, they formed in 2007, and featuring members and exmembers of Panel of Judges, Dirtbag, Spider Vomit (check this band out if you have yet to!), and Love of Diagrams. This two song ("In A While" / "Halve") seven inch is extremely limited, and was available only at their U.S. live shows this past March. But, if you hunt it down online, I'm sure you can scour one up. Sound-wise they're kinda hard to pigeonhole. Amazingly textured psych-pop with a post-punk rock. Hoodoo Gurus jamming with The Open Mind? Close. Late-era Bikini Kill meets Sonic Youth? Maybe. Think Screaming Trees, or Sun Dial (especially with that guitar sound), with buried-deep-in-the-mix, haunting, and dreamy female vocals. Now, if you enjoyed their 2008, self-titled LP, this 7" slab is going to knock you for a loop. It's much more powerful, profound, and playful. If you can't find this disc, they'll hopefully have something new out very soon, or you can get the previously-mentioned, self-titled, debut CD (the vinyl is sold out) on Milestone Records. Otherwise, keep looking. (July 20, 2010)

**DICK DOG - s/t DIGITAL DEMO ([Dick Dog](#))** Dick Dog are from San Ramon, CA, and apart from being contenders for the worst band name in history, they are a male / female duo that play some dreamy garage-pop. The songs are extremely lo-fi recordings (and they're meant to sound that way) of pop-tinged 60s garage rock. The vocals are effect-layered, dual harmonies that are very well done, and add a shoegazer quality to the songs. For some odd reason, or coincidence, all four tracks begin with the letter 'B' ("Blood Bath", "Bat Cave", etc). Each track lasts just under two minutes, so the entire listen is over in a little over five minutes. I'm expecting a lot of comparisons to The Raveonettes, but I hear much more going on here. I hope to hear more soon, but I also hope they opt for a name change too. (July 20, 2010)



**ALTAR OF PLAGUES - Tides CD EP ([Burning World](#))** Two songs that run an epic

thirty-six minutes! Now that's my kind of black metal. Altar of Plagues is an Irish outfit who formed in 2006, and immediately got to work by releasing their first demo (*The First Plague*) the same year. Two self-released EPs (2007's *Through the Cracks of the Earth*, and *Sol* from 2008), and one album later (*White Tomb*, 2009, on Profound Lore Records), they have really found their calling: to make some of the most depressing and dark black metal there exists. That's saying a lot, but it's backed up by these two tracks, which wash over, and drown me in a sea of bleakness, and rightfully so, as the tracks were written with 'the power and energy of the Atlantic Ocean' in mind. This newest work by Altar of Plagues will bring to mind a more saddening *Wolves In The Throneroom*, or a more beautiful and stylistic *Nachtmystium*. The music isn't your typical black metal, though all the earmarks are there (blast beats, buzzsaw guitars, etc). It's much more haunting, orchestrated and, dare I say, operatic, without using any orchestral material. At times the vocals are sung in the normal witchy screech of black metal, but other times I hear a near-Peter Steele (of Type O Negative - rest in peace) yell. I am sincerely blown away by the band's newest outing, and I look forward to their next release with baited breath. Oh yeah, there's also a vinyl version in regular black, as well as a gold wax edition that comes with a photography book by guitarist / vocalist James Kelly. (July 20, 2010)

**INTEGRITY - The Blackest Curse CD ([Deathwish, Inc.](#))** Integrity return from one of their many hiatuses. Well, not much you can do when your frontman lives on another continent, right? While I did enjoy *To Die For*, it was mostly because it got rid of the stench of *Closure*, and I have to say that it was only 'fine' by Integrity standards. Now, *The Blackest Curse* picks up right where *Those Who Fear Tomorrow* left off. My only problem is that it may be too late. Don't get me wrong... *Systems Overload* and *Humanity is the Devil* (even *Seasons In the Size of Days*) are truly amazing records on their own, but *Those Who Fear Tomorrow* they were not. What I mean to say is that the kids today are probably all, 'Integrity? Who're they?' On the other hand, many of those who loved Integrity back in the early-to-mid-90s are probably mostly in their 30s and even 40s, and now listen to adult contemporary, free jazz, or whatever hardcore kids who claim to 'grow up' listen to. Even so, I'm certain there are still a whole bunch of them out there that love this type of metalcore. If so, like me, they are going to be pretty fucking happy when they have a listen to *The Blackest Curse*. It's almost like capturing the moment 20 years ago, while throwing in a touch of the newer sounds. Hell, I'm willing to go back for a bit, so I'll be listening to this disc for a while. If you want to feel real 'old school' while listening, then grab the vinyl (though I don't know if it has as awesome of a booklet as the digi), and have fun feeling like an angry kid again. (July 20, 2010)

**BRAIN FLANNEL - Tape CASSETTE EP ([Statuestory](#))** Brain Flannel are three guys and a gal from Charlotte, NC who just recently (2009) got together to jam. *Tape* is a six song cassette of garage-tinged punk rock that's over too quickly. That's alright, leave 'em wanting more, as it's said. The songs are mostly fronted by the damsel, but at times male vocals back the beauty up. Some songs are standard length and rock out, while tracks like "Dog's Not Dead" is under a minute and almost have an early hardcore-punk flavor. For you ol' schoolers, X may come to mind, or even a more thrashin' Delta 5. You new schoolers may draw comparisons to Japan's Teengenerate or Messthetics from the UK. *Tape* is limited to only 100 copies, on lovely purple cassettes, so hurry, hurry, hurry. They also have a new song ("So Dim") on their [Band Camp](#) page if you want some more. (July 20, 2010)

**MERZBOW - Ouroboros CD ([Soleil Zeuhl](#))** Masami Akita has pretty been busy this year. A split 12" with The Guilt Øf..., the *Marmo* disc (and its Venetian marbled paper), the three CD collection of compilation tracks: *Another Merzbow Records*, plus *13 Japanese Birds, Volume 13* - the thirteenth CD installation to his thirteen month project, and the double LP and 7" (titled *Graft*) limited to 150 copies. Now, this limited edition, eight panel digipack, featuring artwork by Merzbow himself, is one, long (56 minute) piece titled "Ouroboros". The work is named after the symbol of a circular snake with its tail in its mouth, and is composed so as to raise awareness to 'the global depletion of reptilian species.' Sonically, unlike some of what Merzbow's been up to here and there (*Merzbeat*, *Frogs*, etc) this is punishingly old school. Right when your finger hits play, it's a wall of high-pitched feedback. As the 'tune' progresses (from the 30 minute mark until the 45th) it gets a little lighter in the vein of some dark ambient, but it's still the Merzbow we know so well. Static, cut-ups, glitches, hums, drones... mostly electronic, but some of it sounds organic, too. Since this is limited to only 500 copies, act quickly, and help the lizards! (July 20, 2010)

**HOOR-PAAR-KRAAT - Asha Dasha CASSETTE EP ([Acid Casualty](#))** Hoor-Paar-Kraat (named after the negative, or Setian, aspect of the Thelemic Heru-Ra-Ha) is the solo work of native Floridian and current Brooklynite Anthony Mangicapra, who is not only a wonderful knob twisting noisician, but an amazing artist as well. He has set loose upon mankind close to 30 releases containing his lullful, textured drones, and dreamy, yet sometimes creepy, ambient tones (such as 2001's *An Etymological Study of Tahuti*, *In Eros Veritas* [2001], and this year's *The Trunk Remains Unmoved*). *Asha Dasha* is a cassette version re-press of HPK's 2005 CD-R that was limited to only 44 copies (on Goat Eater Arts), and is itself limited to only 100 copies. Along with the six tracks formerly found on that limited gem, is the previously unreleased "Its & It's". If you are into early Coil, The Grey Wolves or Archon Satani then give Hoor-Paar-Kraat

a spin. Then kindly ask Mr. Mangicapra to let you see his occult oil and acrylic pieces, as he can delight the eyes, as much as he can the ears. (July 20, 2010)

**TOUNDRRA - (II) CD ([Aloud](#))** Toundra hail from Madrid, Spain, and were formed in 2007 by exmembers of Ten Minute Man, and Nacen de las Cenizas. (II) is their second album, as (I) was their debut. Toundra's music is near-operatic, almost orchestral, in the sense that it dramatically builds up, ebbing and flowing in sections - allegros, adantes, scherzos and more. If you are unfamiliar with this Spanish post-rock quartet, they are often lumped into the instrumental post-rock genre with the likes of Red Sparowes, or Pelican, but they sincerely manage to have a sound truly all to themselves. Yes, the comparisons fit, but they are certainly no soundalikes. Now, the music is quieter and a bit slower than on (I), but it's still powerful, rather epic, and flat out rocks. Not to mention expressive and emotive without saying a word. This album is also available in a double 12" version for you vinyl hounds, in clear or black wax (put out in tandem by Narshardaa Records and Astoria Records). Also, if (II) isn't enough for you, you can check out their upcoming discography on Criminal Attack Records, which will not only have the songs off (I), but their 2008 7" material, too, as well as some new unreleased tracks. (July 20, 2010)



**NAC/HUT REPORT - 9th Overflowing... Milky Slaughterhouse... Dream of Incubator DIGITAL LP ([Nac/Hut Report](#))** Another release in the realm of digital-only releases. Fine with me. As part anarcho-socialist, I'm all for free music for everybody! Now, don't let the band name throw you off, or the bizarrely insane LP title discourage you. This music is amazingly beautiful. *9th Overflowing...* has a sort of youthful playfulness about it, yet a mature sophistication and seemingly musical elitism. Last year Rotting Chapel Tapes release a split cassette with N/HR and Rauh, and the year previous to that saw an EP, *1000 Double Difference Error* (also a digital-only release). Fans of mid-to-late 80s Einstürzende Neubauten, or early SPK and Test Dept should take note of this act. Part shoegazer dream-pop, part industrial Musique-concrète, Nac/Hut Report are a girl / guy combo (Brigitte Roussel [aka M.A.D.ame Decode] and Li/ese/Li) from Poland - though they currently reside in Italy. The tunes are often quiet and hypnotic, and always peppered with sultry female vocals. Songs like "Not Completely Legal" or "Die Traume, Part 2" bring to mind a more electronic My Bloody Valentine or The Jesus and Mary Chain. Did I mention the words 'dream' and 'pop'? Because those two words are so very adequate. They are dreamy, without putting you to sleep. They are poppy, without being cookie-cutter pop music. Not being the kind who just sit back, and hope that fame (or infamy) finds them, they've even produced a music video for the final track "Butterflies on Bodies". Since this release isn't limited I'm not going to say, 'Run out and get this now,' but you should pick up the pace, as you don't want to be one of those that catches on to everything late. Do you? (July 20, 2010)

**ROT SHIT - You're Welcome 7" EP ([Columbus Discount](#))** Well... this is it, I guess. This is supposed to be the last Rot Shit record, and I have to admit, I caught on late. I didn't hear of them until last year from an online blog, but better late than never. Rot Shit is from Pittsburgh, PA, and they play a noisy and distorted, psychotic hardcore punk ala Angry Samoans, Nip Drivers or something that could have come from Amphetamine Reptile Records. I hear their live shows were as dangerous as they were fun (and that they nearly destroyed WFMU). Anyway, this is their third seven inch disc, as it follows 2006's *The Worst Kids Ever* (on Big Neck Records), and *Have You Scene Rot Shit* (from 2008, on Fashionable Idiots Records). This slab of vinyl has three songs, side B containing two bursts of punk rock fury ("Hipster Grandma" and "Local Band Forever"). Side A has one song ("Dead I"), of which they included a blast of sax on, which brings to mind art-damaged post-hardcore like Minneapolis' Cows. Limited to 500 (with 100 on red wax) discs, including a full-color layout, and lyric sheet insert. After you listen to this, you too'll have wished you had heard of them earlier. (July 20, 2010)

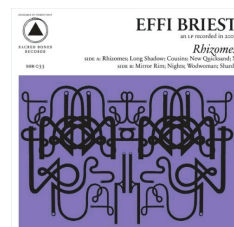
**BURZUM - Belus CD ([Byelobog](#))** Sounds like the guy who once said that metal comes from rock-n-roll, and rock is 'African music' has decided he doesn't mind being associated with black folk. Or he's just trying to cash in on the money some authentic black metal bands are making nowadays. So, it reads in my review policy that I only review music I like. I don't do negative reviews, I just ignore releases that I don't care for. Anyhow, this newest Burzum LP (the seventh) from legendary Norwegian black metal outfit Burzum (solo musician Varg Vikernes) kinda rode the fence. It wasn't bad, but there's nothing outstanding about his most recent work. I actually thought it was going to be more of his shitty neoclassical / ambient music he's been peddling while locked up. Just the fact that it was actual metal, made me like it immediately, but that eleven year break from recording - and seventeen year return to metal from the dark ambient

tunes of his jailhouse works - must have really weakened his skills, especially the vocals. Mind you, this is not a bad album at all. It's just that with bands like Nachtmystium, Altar of Plagues, Wolves in the Throne Room, and October Falls, the old school of black metal seems dull in comparison. Songs like "Kaimadalthas' Nedstigning" and "Belus' Tilbakekomst" were actually great tracks, but two songs does not make an album. Funny note, Mr. Controversy actually backed away from it, as this LP was to be titled *Den Hvite Guden* (Norwegian for 'The White God'), but didn't care for the 'perceived racist nature' of the title. Oh, how the years soften us against a fight, eh? (July 20, 2010)

**AND SO I WATCH YOU FROM AFAR - The Letters CD EP ([Smalltown America](#))** And So I Watch You From Afar is a bit of an enigma to me. Their music brings to mind things that aren't so - illusions if you will. That's good, too, because their music is great. ASIWFYA is a four-piece from Belfast, Ireland who formed in 2005, but for some reason their music brings to mind small college towns across the U.S. (which is, strangely enough, the name of their U.K. record label). When I hear them, I think of Gainesville, FL, or Battle Creek, MI. All that is actually a plus, because that's what you want in instrumental music: invocation. You want the music to take you somewhere, and this post-rock quartet does not disappoint. You'll find this EP has a touch of post-hardcore ("S is for Salamander"), a touch of metal ("B is for Bastard" and "K is for Killing Spree), a touch of the Deep Elm school of emo ("D is for Django the Bastard"), but it's always rocking. I wish this EP was longer, as I wanted to hear a lot more. If you are new to this band you should pick up their 2009 self-titled debut LP (also on Smalltown America Records). The songs on that release are longer, and there's a lot more of them. Then, when you're out looking for more, pick this up. Also, by that time, the new album should be out, and this will make a great segue. (July 20, 2010)

**"..." - Transcendence DIGITAL LP ("...")** Jakob Lindhagen is the man behind "...". He's a Swede that currently resides in the UK. If you're going to search for his project... well, have fun looking it up on Google. Even iTunes fucked that up by listing his tracks not under "...", but under 'Dr. John Ciambotti'. Needless to say, this may be the last release by Mr. Lindhagen under the "..." name. Still, I look forward to more under whatever name he settles on, as what I hear so far is captivating. There is no one particular band I can compare his work to, but to the best of your ability, try to imagine if Cocteau Twins (sans Fraser) did a set with Coil (during their *Hellraiser / Commercial Music* session), and let ambient-era Aphex Twin rework the result. *Transcendence* is thirty minutes of quite drone mixed with lullful dream-pop, very similar to what you would expect for a modern film score, and is available only as a digital download release. No CD, no 12" - just mp3s. If you want more under the "..." name, there are extra tracks on his MySpace page, another number on the *After the Sunset* compilation (on Skeksis86 Netlabel Project), as well as his other affair, Moniker. I think once this project settles on a new name it'll be a name dropped by a lot of folks as a band to look out for. How does a hipster even pronounce "..."? (July 20, 2010)

**WHITE HILLS - s/t CD ([Thrill Jockey](#))** I ain't knocking White Hills, but this record should have been an instrumental. Some of the songs are, but - I think - the entire record should have been. The lyrics, and especially the rhyming scheme are elementary. Try this on for size, "She don't care. They don't care. No one cares." Repeat that phrase close to 100 times, and you have almost all the lyrics to "Three Quarters". Still, when they open up those guitars and jam, they fuckin' jam! Those solos are to die for, and if you can get past the childlike lyrical simplicity, you'll be in for one hell of a sweet ride. Formed in New York around 2005, and featuring drummer extraordinaire Kid Millions of Oneida. I would list the previous three LPs from WH, but they're all out-of-print and unavailable, so if you're late to this bandwagon, you're really late. A few of White Hills' songs have a trippy Screaming Trees or Sun Dial flavor to them, while others are straight up desert rockers in the vein of older outfits like Kyuss, Nebula or Low Rider. The name Hawkwind is thrown around a lot in reviews, and while this is spacey psych rock that owes itself to late 60s / early 70s UK acts, I hear more modern sounds coming from this record. The opener "Dead" was previously released in '09 as a single, but the rest of this release is pretty fresh. The vinyl version and CD version are completely different, as three songs are exclusive to the 5" disc, while two tracks are exclusive to the wax platter. Pick and choose. (July 20, 2010)



**EFFI BRIEST - Rhizomes 12" LP ([Sacred Bones](#))** I made a joke the other day when I posted this band's video on my Facebook wall. I wrote, 'I'm awake way too early. It's probably due to knowing that these six psychedelic beauties live nearby. Yep, they're a female sextet, and I can't seem to stop saying that. Female sextet.' One of the funnier responses was from someone calling me 'sexist' because I fixated on the words 'female sextet'. I thought they would chastise me for calling them 'six psychedelic beauties'. Instead, it turns out they didn't know



sextet means 'a group of six people'. Whether or not this Brooklyn outfit consists of six pretty girls or a dozen disfigured men, the music is what I care about, and I am not disappointed. EB's debut, *Rhizomes*, is a sonic backtrack to the early 80s, when punk was getting old, and bands began to play with, not only rock, but with sound. Echoing, angular guitars. Deep, thick bass lines. Dancey and jangling tambourine. Spaced-out keyboards. Tribal drum beats. Haunting vocals. It all culminates into a wonderful mix of 70s Krautrock and 80s British post-punk. Think of Can or Neu! asking Joy Division or very-early The Cure to rewrite a few of their tracks. "Long Shadow" is an intensely beautiful, hypnotic song, as is its music video. While "Cousins" still holds that early Cure post-punk sound, it also blends in some trippy 60s psychedelia. "Wodwoman" made me realize what the result of giving a few neo-folk bands some speed and a swift kick in the (black military) pants would sound like. Admittedly, two of these tracks ("Long Shadow" and "Mirror Rim") have already surfaced on a few singles (on London's Loog Records), but it's great to hear them bundled here with the rest of their brethren. The 12" comes in a neat leather-pressed sleeve (along with the option to digitally download the tracks), but if you're into plastic, Sacred Bones Records has a CD version for you, too. (July 20, 2010)

**OMON RA II / DIRTY BEACHES - s/t SPLIT CASSETTE ([Campaign for Infinity](#))** This is another very limited release, so you may want to skip the review, and on my word alone just go out and pick one up... right now! Still here, eh? Well, let's get on with it. This split release is limited to only 100 white cassettes, and has five tracks from each band. Both bands are smokingly intense, and utterly mind blowing. I wish I were reviewing separate albums, as I want to hear more from both of these Canadian outfits. Dirty Beaches is from Vancouver, and sound as if Suicide never played with electronics, but instead picked up a guitar and drumset. Their tracks are a lo-fi, minimalist 50s rockabilly that sounds threatening, yet enticing as well. You can also find more through their *True Blue 7"* (on Zoo Music Records) and *Golden Desert Sun 7"* (on Italian Beach Babes Records). Omon Ra II attack your ears from Montreal (the original Omon Ra hailed from Halifax, and were more psych-folk), and blast away at a distorted psych-garage whose needle is way in the red, ala Japan's Acid Eater or Spain's Wau Y Los Arrrgghs!!!. Don't get Omon Ra II confused with doom sludgers Amon Ra. Both are good, but completely different sounds. Glad you stuck around for the rest of this review, but it may now be too late and all the tapes are gone. Let this be a lesson that you should - without question - just do what I say. (July 20, 2010)

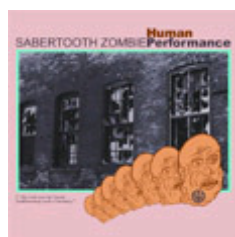
**VEGAS! - Midnight Machine DIGITAL EP ([Vegas!](#))** Some bands are really ticking me off a bit lately. One has to search page after page on the internet for information, because a band refuses to send you a bio, or worse, doesn't even tell you how to obtain their release. When I can't stand the band, it's fine because I don't review shit I don't like. Now, when a band smokes your headphones, I'm in for a ride, because I gotta go on the hunt. Vegas! did this to me. What I did gather is that somewhere in Temse, Belgium four chaps got together in 2004 to bust out some jams that many are comparing to Drive Like Jehu or Unwound - and they're not far off the mark. What I couldn't find - for the life of me - is info on this release. Yes, it's a five song EP, and I think it's freely available for digital download, but I'm not sure. Is it actually free, or does one pay for the mp3s? Is it available on CD, too? Even if I wanted to pay for it, I can't find any links, or anything else to pass on to the reader. What I do know is that you can take a touch of the neo-garage of The Hives, a touch of surf guitar ala The Stingrays, and a bit of frantic post-punk from Fugazi, mix well, and you might get a Vegas! song. Think of At the Drive-In with way better vocals, and you're even closer. Bands have to get on the ball, as folks are getting lazier and lazier. Once someone hits a page or two for info, and they can't find it, you're less than yesterday's news. Good luck finding this, and better luck to Vegas! that people don't get tired of those who play coy quickly. (July 20, 2010)

**ZÜHN - Los Suñeos Lucifer DIGITAL LP ([Zühn](#))** This is a French project that formed last year ('09) in Saint-Maurice, but besides that, plus the fact that most of the music is improvised, and has a Satanic slant, I know close to nothing about Zühn or this release. The band has hardly any info (or friends) on their MySpace page, no official website, or anything else for that matter. How they expect to get anyone interested is beyond me. Oh, this is their second album, which may - or may not - be released by the French digital-only label Los Emes Del Oso. The music is experimental drone, with a touch of Spanish guitar here and there, and some spacey keys throughout, reminiscent of Sun O))) or if middle-era Earth went acoustic. Sometimes the feedback sounds like a cello, or maybe they use one. Who knows? "Les Loups" and "Walpurgisnacht" are great tracks. Perfect soundtrack music, too. Speaking of soundtrack, it almost sounds like Bobby Beausoleil's work for Anger's flick *Lucifer Rising*. It's kind of sad that there is so little out there on this project, because people aren't interested enough nowadays to do research. This band could be right up there with some of the better experimental drone acts, but with so little information around (and thanks to Attention Deficit Disorder), they'll be forgotten in a very short time. (July 20, 2010)

**TALBOT - Eos DIGITAL LP ([Talbot](#))** Talbot is just two guys (Magnus Andre and Jarmo Nuutre) from Estonia who are simply trying to kill you. Yes, they're trying to topple a wall of sound atop of ya, but you'll probably thank 'em when they're done. The opening tracks (the intro "Threshold" and "Cayenne") are pretty straight forward doom numbers, though there is a touch of what you wouldn't expect buried in there. It's upon the third song ("Observer X") that Talbot

truly showcases their originality. Within the sludgy riffs (though no guitar is used!) and ploddingly pounding drums there emerges spacey textured effects and trippy keyboards. The music may have you recall Electric Wizard or slower Church of Misery, but the psychedelics and experimental electro layered within may bring newer outfits to mind such as Nadja or Ufomammut. Both chaps handle vocal duties, as bass player and keyboardist Magnus is the vocalist with the cleaner, sung vocals, while Jarmo, who is the drummer and noise programmer, does well with a deep, near-death metal growl. "Combat Zen Speech" has previously seen the light of day as a self-released CD-R single, which was limited to 200 (along with a live version of "20K Years Underwater"), but it's great to have it here as well. All the songs flow into one another, so it would be great if this was picked up by a label, and pressed onto CD or vinyl - that way you can check it out as one long doom track. If you download it, and burn it onto a disc, do so without pauses between tracks, so you can check out what it would sound like in its full, intended glory. (July 20, 2010)

**FOUR TET - There Is Love In You CD ([Domino](#))** There have been electronic / synth songs throughout my life that I find extremely beautiful. They not only have a sound that simply entrances me, but they often capture a moment. When I was a preteen it was Kraftwerk's "Computer World Pt II". As a teenager, Severed Head's "Dead Eyes Opened". In my twenties it was "Xtal" by Aphex Twin, and then in my thirties it was "Slip" by Autechre. Now, in my... well, let's just say that now it's Four Tet's "Plastic People". UK act Four Tet is actually the solo work of ex-Fridge member Kieran Hebden, who began writing songs as FT in 1998. Upon the release of Four Tet's freshman effort - *Dialogue* (in 1999, on Output Recordings) - the music was labeled 'folktronica', and though a little simplistic, plus the fact that Hebden has matured quite a bit, the tag suits his work. *There Is Love In You* is the fifth LP by FT, and it incorporates IDM, dubstep, post-rock, ambient, glitch, hip-hop, and, yes, the aforementioned folk music. While the tunes are normally dance-driven throughout the record, it is not average throwaway techno. One can hear elements of Richard D. James (Aphex Twin), jazz / house / drum-n-bass pioneer Nobukazu Takemura, house mechanic Moby, and even abstract composers like Steve Reich. Good lord! I think I'm going to loop "Plastic People", and just play it all day. (July 20, 2010)



**SABERTOOTH ZOMBIES - Human Performance 7" EP ([Twelve Gauge](#))** I don't

understand titles for two song 7"es that differ from the name of either song. I'm sure there's something more than I can read into it, but I digress. The two tracks here are "White Love" and "Young Tongues", and both fuckin' shred. A sort of crunching hard rock meets thrash and sludge metal, with a pissed-off whiskey drinker as a vocalist. Imagine Integrity with catchy hooks, plus a 70s rock edge, and you might be close. Motörhead playing louder, faster, with more humor, and without abandon? Eh, good enough image, I guess. When they're not flat out rocking the riffs, they are slamming some speed metal or bringing down the house with a slow doom dirge. There's only 500 of these 7"es pressed (in silver, green with pink splatter, and orange with black splatter). The wax platter comes with a code for digital downloading, in case you simply listen via an mp3 player, and only hold on to vinyl for future eBay nastiness. I'm not going to underscore the greatness of this two-songer, but come on guys! Two songs? I want more, damn it! More! Give this junkie his fix, and release a little something else, will ya? (July 20, 2010)

**THE AMERICAN DOLLAR - Atlas CD ([The American Dollar](#))** This New York City duo has completely knocked my socks off. Imagine mixing ambient downtempo with indie-rock, and you might come close to what The American Dollar is doing. *Atlas* is an album full of sadness and joy, wonder and puzzlement. A breath of fresh air, though I'd swear I've heard this stuff in my dreams a million times already. Musically, it's like Explosions in the Sky giving in to an Aphex Twin remix. Instrumental all the way, with lush and textured keyboards swirling around post-rock guitar, bouncing along to triphop or minimalist synth beats. This music could be easily called 'cinematic', because not only does *Atlas* make for a great soundtrack, I'm certain an entire film could be based around these tunes alone. If this disc makes the listener want more (and it will) you can check out their previous CD releases, including the self-titled debut, *A Memory Stream*, *The Technicolor Sleep*, *Ambient One* and *From the Inland Sea* - all released by the band themselves. The band sells all six CDs and a poster for just \$50! The American Dollar already have a new album out (*Ambient Two*, which is also available directly from the band) that's only limited to 200 copies, and I bet they're all gone. (July 20, 2010)

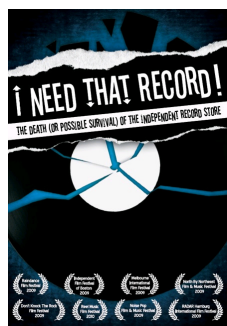
**DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS - D.I.Y. CD ([Spooky](#))** Could there be such a subgenera as minimalist pop-punk? Well, there has to be, because that's what Digger & the Pussycats sound like. Now, I'm not huge on pop-punk. I even specifically ask that it not be sent in for review. It's not that I hate it... it's just that very few bands do it well. Digger & the Pussycats are an exception, as they do it, and do it well. Kind of like a stripped down version of

later-day The Queers, or Dead Milkmen (they even seem to have either band's same sense of humor). Songs like "Chinatown" and "What's It To You?" have a near-garage rock sound, but for the most part, it's still quite poppy. If you're wondering, "How is it 'minimalist'?" Well, that's because the band is just a pair of Melbourne, Australia dudes (who simply go by Sam and Andy). One guitar - no overdubs - and a set of drums. That's it. No actual 'Pussycats', just two Diggers equaling some damn fine minimalist pop-punk. This LP is addictive, but luckily for the addicted they have a few other records out, including *Let's Go To Hospital*, *Watch Yr Back*, plus *Young, Tight and Alright* (all on Spooky Records too). (July 20, 2010)

**ACID TIGER - s/t CD ([Deathwish, Inc.](#))** Acid Tiger are a post-rock / hardcore-punk hybrid from Brooklyn, NY. The band features drummer Ben Koller of Converge, guitarist Lukas Previn of Thursday, and the dumbest band name this side of the Mojave. Pretending I never read that useless moniker, I'll go into the tunes. Do not expect Converge, Thursday or any other of the member's previous acts to find an outlet here. This, folks, is a lot closer to pure stoner rock than any band I just mentioned. At times, it has the riffs of an Orange Goblin, Glasspack, Kyuss or other dessert rock acts ("Dark Hands", "Big Beat", the eleven-minute "Death Wave"). Other times, it holds the crunch and power of later-day Cable or Evertime I Die ("The Claw", "Like Thunder"). Either way, it usually rocks hard, holds my attention throughout, and always keeps the groove flowin'. The vocals are very well done, and they fit nicely, but damn it if it doesn't sound like the guy from alt-rock / neo-garagers Jet. There is also a 12" slab available, so if you're through dealing with the 5" plastic, head that way. (July 20, 2010)

**UFOMAMMUT - Eve CD ([Supernatural Cat](#))** For anyone well versed in doom, there are actually several types of doom. Many who don't have the ear for it will just hear slow, plodding songs, heavy on riffs, much of it in the school of blues. Ufomammut, which is short for UFO and the Italian word for 'mammoth', are a breed apart from your typical doom metal act. Yes, the songs are long. Yes, a bit of it relies on the repetition of a slowly played, single guitar riff. Yes, like many out there lately, they have thrown in the Neurosis / Isis influence. Even so, this record stands very well as a template for a new style of heavy. Mixing the standard blends of doom, they also incorporate psychedelic metal. This Italian trio have really found their niche on their fifth disc. Forming in 1999, they quickly released their debut, *Godlike Snake* (on Beard of Stars Records in 2000), and began to decimate ears from then on. After Ufomammut's 2004 sophomore release, *Snailking*, on The Music Cartel, these guys knew they were on to something and began to press their releases on their own label in concert with art collective Malleus Rock Art Lab, and more power to them for that. Why go through a middleman, when you can make all the dough yourself? Anyhow, their newest LP, *Eve*, is split into five parts, or can be seen as one forty-five-minute-long piece, and it fluctuates between crushing and beautiful, operatic and hypnotic, lullful and powerful. This disc will leave many an old fan thrilled, as well as impress many a new one. There is also a limited - 500 copies on black or clear vinyl - 12" / CD / DVD version. I'm not sure what's on the DVD, but I'm certain it's just as precious as this album. (July 20, 2010)

**SUMA - Ashes CD ([Throne](#))** Suma is a Swedish quartet, from Malmö, to be exact. They play a heavy (and I stress the word 'heavy') doom metal. *Ashes* is their third album, and it won me over from the start (that Divine sample was tops!). Truth is I caught onto these chaps a little late, and I only decided to give them a listen because of the name of their 2006 LP, *Let the Churches Burn* (on Speakerphone Recordings). After which I tracked down the older splits with Unearthly Trance, Bastinado and Maurfah, as well as the *Red Eyes* EP, and their earlier, self-titled LP (all, also on Speakerphone Recordings). If you are unfamiliar with this guitar behemoth, and are a fan of acts like Isis, but want something heavier, this is where you have to take some time out to look at Suma. The *Ashes* CD is five tracks of pounding post-metal sludge the likes of Warhorse giving it hard to Neurosis, and having a baby that grows up to be taught only by his pal, Electric Wizard. This release is a sight to behold, as well as to listen to, as the artwork on the CD is by both, Stephen Kasner and Dr. Jovan, though the vinyl version is only by Kasner. Speaking of which, the 12" is a double LP with amazingly beautiful gatefold layout (100 in white, and 400 in regular black), that comes with extra track ("Wornout...") not found on the five inch plastic disc. (July 20, 2010)



**I NEED THAT RECORD: THE DEATH (OR POSSIBLE SURVIVAL) OF THE**

**INDEPENDENT RECORD STORE DVD ([MVD / See of Sound](#))** Many have described the film, *I Need That Record*, as 'bittersweet' and I must agree. As the title implies, it's a documentary on the music nerd's vanishing nexus, and that's kinda sad. But don't worry there's hope... at least that's what many of those interviewed have. While relying heavily on a narrated voice-over, as well as interview segments, the film also follows two indie stores which closed (Trash American Style and Record Express), and lets you see the before, during and after of what goes on. The main feature, directed by Brendan Toller, runs about an hour and fifteen minutes, which for the subject matter is the perfect runtime, so as not to be too long, or short. To many the topic may seem to sometimes stray, but it's all necessary information. Record label practices, how SoundScan works, big box stores, homogenized radio, music philosophy, the internet and mp3s - it's all info that feeds their explanation (without outright telling you) what's helped knock off many independent record stores. They even cover (though only briefly) douchebag music snobs who work the counter, swearing they know more than you, and that what you're buying is trash. The film, as well as many interviewed, hit plenty of points that anyone who loves music should know; the fact that anyone who makes music for profit is a phony, as music is an art; how CD prices should be capped at \$10 (anything more is gouging the consumer); and that if you love what you do, you should keep doing it. As an extra, the disc includes two hours of continued interviews, including Ian MacKaye, Glenn Branca, Mike Watt, Thurston Moore, Lenny Kaye, Legs McNeil and more. My biggest gripe would be that two of the U.S.'s best, and favorite record stores (Allentown, PA's Double Decker and Radio-Active Records in of South Florida) weren't included, but I dig, every store and store owner couldn't be jammed into this thing (the list of those interviewed is 30+ already). As much of a downer as some of this info is, it's still a pretty uplifting film. So, with all that said, I'd like to close this off with a reminder that if you want to pick up this DVD, I suggest taking a walk to your local independent record store. (July 20, 2010)

**KVELERTAK - s/t CD ([Indie](#))** This going to be a quick review. If it wasn't for the skinny I'm about to unload, it'd be even quicker. Kvelertak is from Norway and they formed in 2007. Within no time they independently released a ten song demo titled, *Westcoast Holocaust*. This disc is their debut, self-titled, ten song LP, and it fuckin' shreds. Imagine a hardcore-hardrock-blackmetal-screamo outfit (can you?), and you might picture what's going on here. It all comes off as if Turbonegro incorporated elements of black metal, and Hank began to sing as if it were a screamo band. I really don't know what else to say. This album is simply a great rockin' metalcore monster. Hunt down the video for "Mjød" on YouTube. Once you've been blown away, you will be tracking this album down. (July 20, 2010)

**EA - Au Ellai CD ([Solitude](#))** Not a lot to say about this 'band'. They are great, they are a huge name in doom circles, and it's all probably due to a mix of music and image. Well, lack of image, more like it. Ea (named after a Sumerian god) is a Russian outfit, and that's all anybody really knows, besides that they play a seriously epic - as in 20-minute songs - funeral doom metal, with a touch of symphonics, and a classical music edge. No band members are ever listed or shown in photographs. No contact address, or information of where they're at - though it has leaked out that they're Russian. They don't even have a website. All anyone else knows is that they released their first LP in 2006 (*Ea Taesse* on Solitude Productions), their second LP in 2009 (*Ea II* also on Solitude) and their newest LP just dropped. Anyhow, if you like your jams slow, crushing, and depressing as all hell, Ea is the band to listen to. By the way, if you wind up slitting your wrists due to the overall bleakness of the tunes, or out of the futility in trying to find out who in G's name plays in the band... you have been warned. (July 20, 2010)

**STEPHEN DAVID HEITKOTTER - Heitkotter 12" LP ([Time Lag / Earmonger](#))** This vinyl disc is almost as awesome due to the backstory as it is for the songs it contains. This is a legitimate re-pressing of a record often spoken of in psychedelia circles, and by outsider-music nerds, but rarely heard. There's a good reason, too. Stephen Heitkotter was the drummer for 60s California outfit The Road Runners. At the beginning of 1970 he began recording a handful of his solo songs at his home studio. In 1971, Stephen had about 25 or so pressed as demonstration copies for radio stations in the San Joaquin area. While waiting around to hear the public's reaction, the pressing plant destroyed the masters due to not being paid for their previous work. SDH was already suffering from drug induced psychosis, and this setback severely put him over the edge. Within months he was committed to an asylum, and the rest is record collector history. Sadly, since he was recording a demo, there aren't a lot of tracks, and the sound quality isn't the greatest (not to mentioned it's pulled off the 'best' vinyl copy found), but it sure is amazing to finally just hear it all. Musically, it's outsider music extraordinaire. It stutters from psychedelic jamming complete with Hendix-y solos to soft rock folk pop to Krautrock experimentalism. Vocally... well, Stephen sounds like Charles Manson - even down to the often improvisational-sounding lyrics. This re-press is on 180 gram wax, with hand-stamped labels (just like the originals), and comes with an insert containing liner notes, as well as doodles from Mr. Heitkotter himself. This is something not to be missed by those who dig in dins for that 'lost gem' you're always hearing about (but never heard). (July 20, 2010)

**CHROME JESUS - Anti Aquarian CASSETTE ([Hospital Productions](#))** It was rumored that this was the solo project of Interpol's original bassist (Carlos D), as well as later members of Nine Inch Nails. Well, it turns out to be Cold Cave's Wes Eisold, and I prefer that since I often wish CC would put out more music. This limited edition tape -

only 200 available - isn't what many might expect after they find out who's behind Chrome Jesus. Yes, a lot of the Cold Cave effects are here: the distortion, the minimalism, the catchy keys, and, most importantly, the pop sensibilities, but it's an entirely different beast. The tape runs one 'song' per side (one five and the other seven minutes), and it sounds like a Brion Gysin creation. Synth-pop cut-ups, similar to some Eastern European 80s synth acts such as Nun, Eurocheque, or The Filmcast. Think of Algebra Suicide being replayed by Vincent Gallo's original outfit Bohack, and you might be close. Experimental noise glitch meets cold wave synthpop. I'm certain all 200 are gone, but look around. With this crowd, what I'm also certain of is that some have killed themselves, and left their copies behind. (July 20, 2010)

**PHANTOM GLUE - s/t CD ([Teenage Disco Bloodbath](#))** There are certain labels that seem to release no wrong. Crucial Blast has always been one, Sublime Frequencies is another. Well, a new one would have to be Teenage Disco Bloodbath Records. The bands and releases on their roster are just top notch: Tides, Ramming Speed, As Long As We're All Living We're All Dying, Perth Express, Engineer, and now, the newly added... Phantom Glue. This Boston, MA foursome began around 2006, and feature exmembers of Hydronaut and 27. I'm certain this is TDB's re-release of PG's 2009 self-released disc, but it matters not, as outside of their home-city it didn't get the distro it deserved, and now it's in disc, wax and digital format to boot. Seven tracks of doom metal dirge with a tinge of hardcore fury and southern rock finesse, recorded by Converge's Ballou at his Godcity Studios. While I can't put it down to one band they resemble most, I can say that a full-blown fist fight on stage between 16, Beaten Back to Pure, and His Hero Is Gone comes pretty close. I'm looking forward to seeing where this fight takes them, almost as much as what the promoter's gonna pull out next. (July 20, 2010)



**ZOLA JESUS - Stridulum CD EP ([Sacred Bones](#))** After two singles in 2008 ("Poor Sons" and "Soeur Sewer") and two albums in 2009 (*Tsar Bomba* [on Troubleman Unlimited Records] and *The Spoils* [also on Sacred Bones]), US singer / songwriter Nika Roza Danilova - better known as Zola Jesus - returns with a brand new EP of hauntingly dark goth-pop. These six songs are beautifully written dream-pop meets shoegazer-y gothrock, and the singing is an ear-pleasing, near-operatic, scorchin' jazz, femme growl. Imagine if Siouxsie Sioux sang during *Seventeen Seconds* -era The Cure's slower material and you have this EP pegged. If that leaves you scratching your head then you probably shouldn't even be at this website, but my next example will certainly not at all help you envision the sound Zola Jesus evokes - a sort of militaristic Cocteau Twins. "I Can't Stand" almost brought a tear to my eye, and I'm sure Ms. Danilova revels in the fact that she almost broke me. *Stridulum* is available in the previously mentioned CD format, or in a 12" slab of black wax. This EP will hold anyone over well enough until her newest LP, which will not crawl out from a cave until 2011. Hmm. That cover makes me want chocolate. (July 20, 2010)

**D.O.A. - Talk - Action = 0 CD ([Sudden Death](#))** There are bands that have a certain sound, and you say to yourself, 'Alight, give me something new already.' There are bands that switch it up as they get older, and it works for them. Then there are bands that change their sound, and you wish they'd go back to what they did in their youth. DOA is one of the latter. This seminal Vancouver, Canada band release two classic LPs back in the first few years of the 80s (*Something Better Change* and *Hardcore '81*). Sadly, 1985's *Let's Wreck The Party* showed the band straying from their roots, and getting their guitar picks busy on hockey rock, and covering fellow countrymen Bachman-Turner Overdrive. Say it ain't so, Joey! Well, it was so, and for a few more years (and releases) after that, too. Luckily, for whatever reason it may be, they're back on track, and their 13th album proves punks don't die after the age of thirty... or forty... or even fifty! On a side note, early this millennium, Sudden Death Records re-released the two aforementioned classics with extra tracks. Start there, and if (I write 'if', but it's more like 'when') you dig it, work your way up from there. O' Canada, indeed. (July 20, 2010)

**THE FLIGHT OF SLEIPNIR - Lore CD ([No Colours](#))** Holy smokes! This CD is limited to only 333, hand-numbered copies, so hurry the hell up. Skip this review, and just go out to find this. Gonna just keep on reading, eh? Okay, well... The Flight of Sleipnir is a Colorado duo (David Csicsely and Clayton Cushman), who formed in 2008, and they are exmembers of Acheronian Dirge and Throcult. They released the demo *Wisdom Calls for Sacrifice* in 2008, and later debuted with the 12" LP, *Algiz + Berkanan*, and the *Winter Solstice II* EP in 2009 (all three were released independently, but the freshman album was later re-released by No Colours Records on CD). The music is a doomy, hard rock and folk metal blend which is hard to peg for influences, though the Norse saga themes have been done to death in black metal. I do envision this band digging Sleep and Mastodon, some Ulver and Enslaved, even Rush and King

Crimson. The songs are raging headbangers, that only let up to do a slight acoustic or trippy atmospheric interlude here and there. Some of the vocals are sung, and have a slight echo-effect that is rather haunting, while at other times the vocals are done in a near-yelling black metal screech (except for the closing track, "Let US Drink Till We Die", which has guest female vocals by Heather Rodgers). I don't get why this band (or their label) limits the number of copies per release to such a low number (the 2009 EP was limited to only 30!). I guess it's best to leave people wanting. Okay, review over, and you've lost precious time. Start your hunt now. (July 20, 2010)

**DRUMCUNT - Fags 3" CD EP ([Bunkland](#) / [DrumCunt](#))** DrumCunt is what the name implies = some cunt who love drums. He / she / it / them is an anonymous outfit from London, and they release tracks of furious pounding. Besides a few bleeps and bloops here and there, the tracks are highly centered around beats: electronic casio beats, sampled drum loops, etc. I can totally see this coming out of London too, as it has a serious Jungle vibe going - not to mention some seriously heavy and distorted bass. It's like dub for the insane. True illbient. A few of the songs bring to mind Strangulated Beatoffs meeting up with Can to have their mash-up tweeked by Alec Empire or Carl Crack. Maybe Einstürzende Neubauten being remixed by Aphex Twin. This EP is limited to only 65, hand-numbered copies, with psychedelically-perverted artwork by Sheffield illustrator Anjan Sarkar, and the sleeve is printed on recycled paper. How nice... they're cunts that care. Once you've hunted this down, try to find their previous effort, *Superlucky*. You'll be super lucky if you do. (July 20, 2010)

**MINKS - Funeral Song 7" EP ([Captured Tracks](#))** When I put this on, I actually said, 'Oh my god!' "Funeral Song" hit me with a wave of nostalgia. I mean, I actually grew up in the 1980s, and found a lot of this music as it was being released, yet this song (probably written only last year) took me back a ways. I felt like a stupid teenager, discovering new music... all over again. The title track is almost completely early-80s The Cure, ala *Japanese Whispers* or *Seventeen Seconds*, that one could hardly call it homage. Now, I'm not calling anyone a rip-off, but - damn! - that sound is so close. Side B, "Drunk Punks", was still along the same lines, but more like a mash-up of The Cure and Joy Division. Now, keep in mind that I believe nothing I've written is negative or a strike against the band, especially since The Cure pretty much sucks nowadays. I can't wait to simply walk down the street from my apartment in Brooklyn to the nearest dive bar, and see this local band take me back to my club days. (July 20, 2010)

**NITROMINDS - Kill Emo All CD ([Nitrominds](#))** I'm not going to bullshit anyone. I have never heard of this Brazilian act, but I'm so glad this LP is my first introduction to 'em. I'm not that big on metallic, NOFX-ish, skate punk, but this record smokes! *Kill Emo All* is all cover songs, and awesome ones too. They do their own version of songs from bands I grew up on like Bad Religion, 7 Seconds, Agent Orange, D.R.I., S.O.D., Nuclear Assault, Sacred Reich, Hüsker Dü, The Police, and Excel. They even do a few tracks from Bambix, Terrorgruppe, and NRA that I wasn't familiar with. As a highlight they do their take on Brazil's legendary Ratos de Porão with a guest spot by Jão from PdR. Nitrominds really do these songs justice, and while keeping to the original spirit they throw in a little of their flavoring in. This album is 1000 times better than Slayer's cover record, *Undisputed Attitude*. You can buy *Kill Emo All* as a CD disc, or go hunting for the free LP download the band offers. Now, I won't give the link to that here, as I'd like as many folks as possible to throw these guys as many dollars as they can get. (July 20, 2010)



### **ILBELTZ - Auskan Gabiltz Olatun Gainian [1598 Potrobizargorri I] DIGITAL LP**

**([Ilbeltz](#))** Ilbeltz is a band from Spain, though many couldn't tell by the vocals, as they are sung in Basque. The Basque are a people who have no connection to modern day Spain, and their language is believed to be one of the oldest in Europe, possibly being of Neolithic origin... but, I digress. Ilbeltz is an interesting outfit unto themselves. They began in 1995 as a duo, but after 2000 the act has been the vehicle for sole member Ibai Mendinueta. Ilbeltz released two songs - and an intro - on the *Triarchy of Vasconia: War is Imminent* triple-split 12" with two other Basque bands, Adhur and Aiumeen Basoa, in 2000. They haven't released anything since. *Auskan Gabiltz Olatun Gainian* - which translates to 'We're struggling on the waves' - is their debut LP, as well as first recording in over a decade. Seriously though, it's been worth the wait. This LP is five tracks, none running under ten minutes, of extreme metal meeting traditional folk music. Every song is a mix of black metal, classic heavy metal and metalcore amazingly segueing into neoclassical Irish, Celtic and Basque folk music of the Renaissance era. It's violins, accordions, oboe and flutes in a quiet battle with guitars, and the clash makes the most beautiful sound. It's as if Iron Maiden, Mayhem, Dead Can Dance, and Amber Asylum got together in a concert hall, and went at it in a Bacchanalic orgy of music-making. All the songs are centered around the

sea, and the music on Ilbeltz's LP tells a tale based on the lead singer and founder's Basque-language novel *Xenda bi ez duk Lizentzi* about a ship's captain and a doomed voyage. A translation of the lyrics are provided in English, so one can follow the story told in these songs. A highlight besides the awesome tunes on the album would have to be that it's all for free. You just contact the band (via their MySpace page or email: [ilbeltzhr@hotmail.com](mailto:ilbeltzhr@hotmail.com)), and they send you a link to download it. I suggest you get on the ball, and hit the band up for your copy now. Your ears will not regret it. (July 20, 2010)

**E-MEN - Eye CD ([Still Alive](#))** I haven't heard of E-Men since I reviewed their previous outing (the self-released *Maithuna* from 2002), and I always wondered, 'Why?', because I thought this Chilean project was well worth a listen. E-Men began in 1999 from the ashes of the psychedelic, electronic rock outfit Liebermen Has Jumped. So, on this round E-Men are still a duo, Rod Sáez and Daniel Cartez, though there are also quite a few guest musicians which help out here and there, such as Portuguese artist Maria de Medeiros with her sultry vocals on "Fogo Preso", and Industrial Company Inc's Devil1390 laying down some sequencing. Plus, the album features artwork by astrophysicist Sven Geier, PhD. Though the music on *Eye* was recorded in the Summer of 2005, it was not mastered and properly produced until 2008, and even then wasn't released until this year. In between *Maithuna* and *Eye* was the remix EP *Aria* in 2006, the *November Versions* EP from 2007, and a live compilation of material in '08, titled *Musique Retrouvee*. Their debut LP, *Maithuna*, centered around sexual magic, as well as the works of Carl Jung and Miguel Serrano, while *Eye* has a more widened scope, and is lyrically focused on human nature in general. If you are unfamiliar with the work of this duo from the southern hemisphere, and are a fan of electro ambient or lullful downtempo, you best find out what's going on south of the equator. Some songs have a surreal Aphex Twin or IDM quality, while others are an almost illbient triphop, and then there are those that are just pure industrial ambient. The album fluctuates between the three, stitching an aural net that will ensnare the listener. I really enjoyed the Depeche Mode cover ("Enjoy the Silence"), too, as E-Men really made it their own. *Eye* is available in disc format, but if you don't want to pay overseas prices, and are looking for instant gratification, their mp3s can be downloaded from any major digital distributor: Amazon, iTunes or Napster. (July 20, 2010)

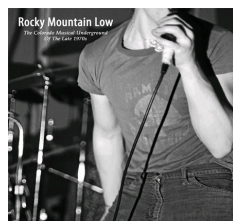
**TOP SURPRISE - Everything Must Go DIGITAL EP ([Pug](#))** Another Brazilian band has come across my desk, and I'm thrilled to give them a listen. Top Surprise are three lads, and one lady that slam the six-strings to what many are calling 'shitgaze'. Huh? Well, it's a mix of lo-fi (or poorly recorded on purpose) shoegazer-esque indie rock ala Screaming Trees, Dinosaur Jr., or Yo La Tengo. Now while the levels are tweaked to sound a bit low here or too high there, and TS's debut EP was recorded in two days at member's home, it sounds just as good as anything released by any of the aforementioned acts. The music is... well, shitgazer. Sort of poppy alternative rock mixed to give it a 'straight out of the garage' sound. The vocals are in the same vein, but what I like most is that they often sing in their native Portuguese, though English is used almost as much. "More Than Cool" reminds me a lot of Weezer - musically, not vocally. "Home" brought to mind The Pixies. If you dig any of the bands I threw around in this review, you're a fan of 90s college rock, midwest post-punk, or some of the poppier acts on Amphetamine Reptile Records, then you might really dig these chaps. While there is a free download of *Everything Must Go* at Pug Records, you can also pick it up in either a cassette or CD-R version. (July 20, 2010)

**INTERFERENCE - s/t DOUBLE 12" LP ([The Social Registry](#))** I don't understand why Interference isn't better known. I admit that a lot of the bands of the 1980s NYC downtown scene are pretty unknown, but they should be one of the better known ones, I think. I like them better than DNA, but alas DNA was one of the first. They certain are much better than anything Lydia Lunch has done, but just like Arto Lindsay's outfit, Lunch (Teenage Jesus) and the Jerks were around way before Interference. It seems that when it came to 'no wave' they were literally a day late, as founding members were busy with other acts. Anne Demaranis was strutting around with Thurston Moore in an early incarnation of Sonic Youth, as well as helping curate the first Noisefest. David Linton spent his early years paling around with Lee Renaldo, and three of those years playing with Rhys Chatham. So, it wasn't until 1981 that Interference got together, and 1982 until they recorded this masterpiece of New York noise. Theoretical Girl's Glenn Branca was going to release this on his Neutral Records imprint, but - unbelievably - it has never seen the light of day... until now! If you like the first Sonic Youth album, you will be head-over-heels in love with this LP. "She Said Destroy" is as exciting as any no wave band's output. "Number Four" is pure punk rock fury with an arty wink to post-punk. Guest musicians on the original recording include Sue Hanel (of Swans) and Elliot Sharp. Now, before you think it's all sweet smelling roses, half of this release (the second 12" slab) is new remixes by current electronic artists such as David Last, Toshio Kajiwara (of Phenomena), Bubblyfish and Glomag. While they aren't bad, they are also nothing to write home - or a review - about. Even so, this is an amazing document that needed, though almost 30 years too late, to be heard. If you're asking, 'Where's the CD version?' The best TSR can do is give you an option to download the tracks after you purchase the wax. Otherwise, keep moving, loser. (July 20, 2010)

**MUGSTAR - ...Sun, Broken... CD ([Important](#))** Damn it! This disc is too short. It's a great near-forty minutes, but when it's done, you're left wanting more. Mugstar is a UK quintet, which formed in 2003. In 2004 they got the

semi-dubious honor of being the last act to record a *Peel Session* from John Peel. By 2006 they released a self-titled full length (on Sea Records), then it was the *Born to Go* split 7" with Mudhoney, an etched 10" in 2008 (titled *Tam Lin*, released on Somerset Records), and they have also released about another six 7"es. Still not familiar with 'em? Mugstar is space rock for the new millennium. 70s Krautrock dragged kicking and screaming into the modern age. Imagine if Yeti or Tarantula Hawk had a jam session with White Hills or Oneida. Heavy, hooky riffs, with progged-out keyboards. "Today Is the Wrong Shape" and "Furklausundbo" are somehow 100% Neu!, yet they sound like Mugstar. There are certainly elements of Can and Amon Düül, but there is also a hint of Mogwai and even Sonic Youth. A fun modern cycle through forty years of rock subcultures (minus punk). I've read that they are currently making a film, as well as recording the soundtrack for another. So, if you weren't familiar with them, you certainly are now, or will be soon enough. (July 20, 2010)

**JUNIOR BRUCE - s/t CD-R DEMO ([Junior Bruce](#))** Just outside of Orlando, FL, in 2007, some exmembers of Bloodlet (vocalist Scott Angelacos and bassist Tom Crowther) got a few fellas together, and got busy with the 70s hard rock revival. Not to mention, possibly trying to form a challenger to Acid Tiger or Dick Dog for silliest band name. This demo is three songs, so I can't go on and on about it, but right off the bat... it rocks. Musically, it's right up there with Unida, Kyuss, or other stoner / desert rock bands, with just a hint of metalcore on some tracks ("Church Burner"). Vocally, well, it's Scott from Bloodlet. If you're familiar with Bloodlet then you should know what to expect - a more melodic Dwid (of Integrity) would be the best example for those that don't know. I'm sure big things are headed JB's way, as they had an opening slot for Pentagram. If that doesn't get them some needed notice outside of Orlando, all is lost. (July 20, 2010)



**VARIOUS ARTISTS - Rocky Mountain Low DOUBLE 12" LP + CD ([Rocky Mountain Low](#))** This is some document! *Rocky Mountain Low* is a compilation of late 70s Colorado underground rock music. It's a mix of punk, power pop, and new wave from all over that square state. Seventeen bands smashing you with thirty-two tracks of all nearly-unreleased tunes. Some of the highlights include The Cells, The Instants and The Profalactics with some brash punk, the psychotic swirl of Joey Vain & Scissors, the powerful power pop of Jonny III, the hard rock riffs of Dirty Dogs, the Los-Angeles-era-X meets new-wave quartet, The Transistors, and the closing track by The Ravers doing their best Lou Reed impression. But, let's face it... almost everyone who buys this will probably be after the tracks from one band, and that's The Healers, which features Eric Boucher on vocals, who is better known by the stage name he chose when he moved away to San Francisco, Jello Biafra (of the Dead Kennedys). Now I wrote: double 12" + CD, and that's what it is. Not a vinyl or plastic version, but both. You get two 12" slabs of wax (with an extra track of the pre-DK version of "California Über Alles"), an amazing color-covered, 24 paged booklet, and a CD - all for under \$30! The booklet is great, too. It's so detailed, as it not only fills you in on Colorado's music of the time, as well as individual band history, it even lists what format type the bands recorded in. If you're a fan of punk there are more than a dozen reasons to buy this compilation, so get to it before it's gone. (April 5, 2010)

**FLOOR - Below & Beyond TEN 12" LP + EIGHT CD + 7" BOXSET ([Robotic Empire](#))** This is unbelievably massive! Let me begin by saying that while I wrote this is available on ten vinyl records, that's just one of the ways to snatch this up. There are three versions of this boxset. You can get the deluxe, and definitive set, which is limited to only 700 copies. That sucker is a box of ten 12" LPs, one 7", eight CDs, and a 12" by 12" thirty-two page booklet with photos, lyrics, artwork and more. Nearly every record is a different color: lime green, dark blue, baby blue, grey, yellow, white, and pink! The second version is the eight CDs by themselves, which isn't too bad either, as it's still a boatload of tunes. And third is for the iPod crowd, which is everything via digital download. Everything Floor ever recorded is here. Every album, every 7" EP, even stuff you've never heard before - such as live material and studio outtakes. Now, if you don't know who Floor is I can probably understand, seeing the under-appreciation that this musical behemoth received. Not to mention the isolated musical island that is south Florida. Anyhow, Floor was a Miami, FL outfit who began in 1992 and decided to part ways in 2003, when singer / guitarist, Steve Brooks formed Torche. The music varies from release to release, but it's mainly riff-heavy, and doom-tinged. Why am I telling you this? By the time those who aren't 'in the know' get their tongues for the taste of music out of their assholes the good stuff'll be gone. Well, there's always the digital downloads for them. (April 5, 2010)

**SWITCHBLADE CHEETAH - Trash Suckin' High Heeled Scum CD ([Switchblade Cheetah](#))** I love when shit like this happens. I've never heard of this band, and I find out about them by getting a few CDs in the mail letting me know how much they dig this site. Well guys, I dig your band. A lot! Switchblade Cheetah is a duo (Brian Pitt



and Gregory Lee) from Tallahassee, FL that take no prisoners in their Turbonegroesque attack. Garage-tinged punk rock with a nasty attitude for half the songs, folky pop-psychedelia with a sense of humor for the other half. Gritty, raw, in yer face rock-n-roll fury meets polished wit and nihilism. Eighteen tracks that will either knock you on your ass, keep your toes tappin', or make you want to pick up a beer, hold it up high and swing back-n-forth singing along. "Hair of the Goat" and "That's OK" (tracks 7 and 10, respectively) had me doing all of it. "John Lawman" (track 16) is a heavy metal blazer that would make Judas Priest very happy. Now, as awesome as *Trash Suckin' High Heeled Scum* is, their first CD from 2007, *The Bone Gospel* (which is a collection of five releases - 29 tracks - on one disc) is just as great. You can get either LP for \$5, straight from the band, and they're totally worth it. I have no clue how this powerhouse of purgative pomp passed me by, but I'm glad I caught up with it. (April 5, 2010)

**THE MOON MISTRESS - s/t CD-R ([The Moon Mistress](#))** This demo knocked me senseless upon first listen. I really thought this trio was from somewhere in the southwest of the US. My mind was blown when I find out they're from Moscow, Russia. This self-titled demo EP is four tracks of groovy, slightly doom-inspired, headbanging stoner rock with all the right tweaks. Just under mid-pace, but not nearing sludge territory, these three comrades rock hard in a Sleep meets Kyuss way, or as if Electric Wizard jammed with Melvins. Now, these bands may sound somewhat similar, but they really don't, and if your ear knows the difference, you'll understand how The Moon Mistress' sound falls somewhere in between 'em. The vocals are well sung, and have a slight Dave Wyndorf (Monster Magnet) quality, probably after downing a bunch of Quaaludes. The guitar solos are very spacey, and are often quiet and ethereal. When The Moon Mistress are not bashing away with catchy and hooky riffs, they can be quite lullful and dreamy (check the track "Metropolis" for evidence). Guitarist Garish really knows how to use that wah-wah pedal. Don't let the fact that you have to contact someone halfway around the world to get your hands on some soon-to-be classic stoner material. Contact these Ruskies, and let 'em know you wanna love them. (April 5, 2010)



**VARIOUS ARTISTS - The Minimal Wave Tapes: Volume One CD ([Stones Throw](#))**

Next to *Rocky Mountain Low*, this is one of the best compilations I've heard in a few months. Volume 1 of *The Minimal Wave Tapes* series is a collection of synthpop from all over the world, ranging in the timeline of 1980 to 1986. Many of the bands and songs are classics that have popped up in places before (mixes, blogs, and comps), but quite a few of the tracks are ones I have never heard of. There is just so much on here that is pure gold, simple as that. The Flirts-ish, Hi-NRG presented in low energy, Linear Movement. Admittedly, not my favorite Crash Course in Science track here ("Flying Turns"), but it still jams. Tara Cross' dark synth meets early NYC hip-hop. The insanely by-the-numbers synthpop catchiness of Turquoise Days. Madrid's Esplendor Geométrico (who were once part of El Aviador Dro Y Sus Obreros Especializados aka Aviador Dro). The Dutch outfit Das Ding and their bouncy "Reassurance Ritual". It just keeps getting better as it goes along... Martin Dupont, Deux, Somnambulist, Ohama, and the mighty "The Cabinet" by London's Das Kabinette. This disc is a must for synth fans, and I simply cannot wait until Volume 2. I think I'm gonna break into the Stones Throw vaults if it isn't soon enough. (April 5, 2010)

**BLANK GENERATION DVD ([Music Video Distributors](#))** This movie, directed by Ulli Lommel, is not to be confused with Ivan Kral and Amos Poe's 1976 document of the CBGB's punk scene, *The Blank Generation* (which is also available from MVD). This is a feature length film, starring Richard Hell (of Television and Voidoids fame). The story here is very loosely based on Hell's book, *Go Now*. Instead of a roadtrip, it's set in New York City, and centers around Richard's character (Billy) and his relationship with his French, borderline personality-inflicted girlfriend (Nada). It also deals with an artist's fear of fame, as well as issues of presentation and placement in mass media. While panned when originally released, and even Hell himself hates this flick (though likes the way it was shot, and would prefer that the footage be used for something else), it's still a fun watch. If not for the storyline, for shots of NYC in funner days, or just for the Voidoids' performances. The DVD extra is a 45 minute interview with Hell on stories behind the movie, but that's that. I wish the extras contained some Richard Hell, Voidoids, or Television shows, but after listening to the interview, you can understand why there isn't, as he didn't want much else to do with this film. I seriously don't understand why. There are 1000s of feet of celluloid that should have been burned, but instead got released (not to mention praised), and while this isn't the greatest film of the era, it wasn't a bad flick either. Check out the new issue of this movie, and judge for yourself. (April 5, 2010)

**MY SLEEPING KARMA - Tri CD ([Elektrohasch](#))** My Sleeping Karma is a four-piece from Aschaffenburg (Germany), formed from the ashes of The Great Escape. Since day one they've been heavily influenced - as seen in

their layouts, song titles and such - by Eastern philosophy, mainly Hindi and Buddhist. *Tri* is their third LP (*Satya*, and their self titled CD / 12" LP are also available on Elektrohasch). This time around they have matured greatly - blending psychedelic grooves along with spacey hard rock elements. Nine songs, which bring us forty minutes of laid back, trippy jams, where all - but three - are titled after Hindu gods, so that should give you some insight as to what to expect. It's a full instrumental trip that travels between melodic, heavy, dreamy, and powerful, while maintaining either a mid-tempo pace, or sans tempo altogether. They've strayed from using a lot of synths, as on their debut disc. Plus, nixing the use of guitar effects over more guitar effects, and letting their axes speak mostly in their near-natural voice. Think Red Sparowes, Farflung, or even a quieter and Maynard-less Tool as what might come to mind upon listening if you're not familiar. There's two versions of this release available: a six-panel digipak CD, and a 12" vinyl disc for your turntable. Either version you snag up, you'll wind up on your back, listening with joy as your solar plexus ignites, and you stare off into space. (April 5, 2010)

**JUCIFER - Throned in Blood CD ([Nomadic Fortress](#))** In case you haven't heard Jucifer is a husband and wife duo (Gazelle Amber Valentine and Edgar Livengood), who formed in 1993. Though they began in Athens, GA, they soon bought an RV, packed their life into it, and became one of the few bands who could literally say they actually live on the road. Anyway, *Throned in Blood* is their seventh release - not counting the *Lambs* EP - and they aren't about to lighten the mood (or riffs), or start writing fluff because of age. Actually, Mrs. Valentine has almost entirely killed off her sometimes sweet and sultry vocal style for a near-fulltime black metal screeching growl (it reappears on only one track, the folk-country LP closer "Armageddon"). The music is just a tad different, too. It's still their riff heavy, guitar-worshipping rock, but it's a lot slower (except for "Good Provider" which is a grinding hardcore quickie), raw and threatening. More doom and sludge than normal, but that does define the era we live in, right? Not to mention capturing, both, the concept behind the record (war, victory and power), and the time it was recorded (supposedly during a December 2009 snow storm in PA). It's also a sorta back-to-basics for Jucifer, as they wanted to simply capture what they do on stage (drums and guitar) rather than layering the album in synths, samples and wood instruments, nor depending heavily on overdubs. The CD is available via their own imprint (Nomadic Fortress), but those of you who love slabs of wax can grab a 12" version from Alternative Tentacles Records instead. (April 5, 2010)



**DECODER DVD + CD ([Corazón Int.](#) / [Mobilization](#))** I have waited years to watch this movie, and I am not disappointed. Not by the film, nor its presentation. First let me get a bit into the flick. Written by Klaus Maeck, and released in Germany in 1984, it made quite a wave through the underground scenes of Europe at the time, as its underlying message is not only about the possible subversive use of technology, but is quite derisive towards mass media and the corporate state. Basically, without giving too much away, it's about a guy who experiments with sound, and is looking for an "antidote to muzak". He and a gang of post-punk hackers find a sound that induces sickness. When they begin to attack a fast-food franchise with this weapon, the corporation strikes back with secret agents. Civil disobedience and rioting ensue, then... well, you should watch it to find out. Starring FM Einheit (of Abwärts and Einstürzende Neubauten), and featuring cameos by William Burroughs and Genesis P-Orridge, you know it's going to delve into the bizarre. The film is also presented in a new color-rich transfer, with better English subtitles. The DVD extras are great, too. You get the original trailer, an interview with writer Klaus Maeck, excerpts from *Pirate Tape* (where Derek Jarman filmed William Burroughs while on the set of the film), a short documentary on the Italian Decoder Collective (a group of squatter-hackers who formed in '84, creating a magazine, as well as art shows), and a short film (also with FM Einheit) covering the Berlin riots when Ronnie came to visit in the mid-80s. Not only is the DVD packed, this release also comes with a CD, which contains the soundtrack. That disc has music by Soft Cell, Einstürzende Neubauten, Dave Dall with Genesis P-Orridge, The The and more. This combo goes to show that sometimes patience really pays off. (April 5, 2010)

**DYING OF THE LIGHT - s/t DIGITAL EP ([Dying of the Light](#))** Now, I know I say in the review policy that I don't review a release by labels or bands that only send me links to mp3s. Dying of the Light is an exception because there is no other way to get their debut release, other than downloading it. I won't review a CD or 7" via links to it, but what choice do I have when that's the only way to get a release? Well, the choice whether to do it or not would be easy if it sucked, or was really great. Well, my inclusion of this review says a lot about the matter. Dying of the Light are

basically a New Zealand duo (Rangi Powick and Chris Rigby, with help from a few contributors, and a drummer for live sets), who first formed under the name Chapel Of Gristle in the 80s. After a while they went their separate ways, but found one another again around 2006, and reformed under the DotL moniker. Their self-titled, digital release coincides with their first - and only - live show at Stonerfest in December of 2009. The music? Oh yeah, the music. This EP is four tracks of downtuned, industrial-edged doom, with a drum machine that gives one visions of early Godflesh, but there is a lot more going on here. The vocals are way nastier, and menacing, while the music is built around headbanging riffs, and is all-around a bit groovier than Godflesh. The standout tracks would have to be "Hegemony" (with its creepy quiet-loud-quiet sludge), and "Initiation + Sacrifice" (which is an awesome song). You can either get zips of CD quality .wav files [here](#), or the high quality .mp3 files [here](#), and both come with cover art. They've also released a new song, "Hush", that isn't found on this release, and you can check it out via their MySpace page. (April 5, 2010)

**CAR CEMETERY DVD (Cult Epics)** Long considered one of the last 'lost punk films' (I want to see *Terminal City Ricochet* get a legit release already!) this is the fifth film by Fernando Arrabal. 'Who's Arrabal?', you ask. Fernando Arrabal is a writer and director, who was born in Spain and later settled in France. He is best known for his 1970 film *Viva La Muerte*, and for co-founding the Panic Movement in 1962, with infamous director Alejandro Jodorowsky (*The Holy Mountain* and *El Topo*) - so named after the Greek god Pan, and influenced by Luis Buñuel and Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty. Many of the the Panic Movement's movies and plays caused riots in Mexico, Spain and France. In 1981 Arrabal wrote and released *Le Cimetière des Voitures (Car Cemetery)*, which is based around the story of the return of Jesus Christ, set in a post-apocalyptic future's junkyard, and taking place almost exactly as in the gospels. Though seen as a punk movie, I have to say that this flick is more of an early 80s synth-pop movie, as everyone looks like they are going to A Flock of Seagulls' show, not a Sex Pistols gig, and the soundtrack is rather early 80s synth as well. Still, it is a good movie, but not as blasphemous as many claim it to be (definitely not as much as I wanted it to be either). Besides three trailers to other Arrabal classics there are no other extras on this DVD, and with the near-import prices Cult Epics charges for their releases, they should be ashamed. While a good watch, and a movie anyone with a taste for something underground ought see, those interested should rent this, not buy it. (April 5, 2010)

**RED SPAROWES - The Fear is Excruciating, But Therein Lies the Answer CD (Sargent House)**  
 Okay, I'm not going to lie; this album is godly. Awesome, awesome stuff from a band I would expect awesome stuff from. Now, if you don't know them, forget you. I'm tired of writing a band's history for dumb asses that don't know shit. I need the following space for something else, as what I do want to write about are a few gripes. Many readers know that I only review stuff I like, but I will slag a record for certain things, and this is no exception. One listens to a record for musical enjoyment. If you're buying a band's output simply because you like the message, or they're considered cool by music nerds, you are a misguided phony. Now, with that said, I do love the tunes, but what's with the imposing and overblown attitude. I understand Red Sparowes songs are bombastic ethereal instrumentals, but that doesn't mean there can be no sense of humor, no levity, no fun. I think this band take themselves too seriously, and while they fuckin' rock, they're also pretentious. *The Fear is Excruciating, but Therein Lies the Answer?* Wow. Very poignant. Song titles like "Truths Arise", "Giving Birth to Imagined Saviors", and "As Each End Looms and Subsides"? Oh, come on. Yes, yes - in instrumentals you have to say a lot with the titles, but still. The only things that these titles suggest to me is that Red Sparowes try too hard to be intellectual, while attempting to seem keenly spiritual and worldly. My next issue is that this is also available on vinyl, but colored copies are a few dollars more expensive than the standard black 12". So, you're being snobby record collectors too, eh? Whatever. Oh, did I mention this LP is freakin' great? (April 5, 2010)

**NO**  
by Boyd Rice

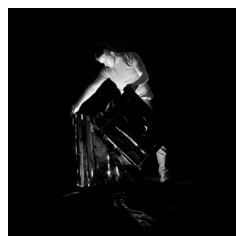
**NO - Author, Boyd Rice BOOK (Heartworm)** For those of you who need a quick study, Boyd Rice, mostly under the name NON, has been a pioneer of experimental and noise music since the mid-70s. In the mid-80s he became friends with Anton LaVey (becoming a member of the Church of Satan), Charles Manson, and began writing on topics that were little known even in the underground (strange music, movies and the like). In the late-80s, he started hanging out with members of the Right, such as James Mason (of American National Socialists, and founder of the Universal Order), as well as Bob Heick (founder of the neo-Nazi skinhead movement American Front).

Soon he began preaching the gospel of Social Darwinism, and has since become the bogeyman of the neofolk and goth music scenes. In my opinion, he was, at one time, a controversial figure, but today is only seen in this light by members of groups like Antifa - who strangely enough are more detrimental to free speech than any black-clad member of the Third Position. Anyhow, Boyd has never claimed to be a part of any group (except the CoS and the Partridge Temple) or ideology (besides Social Darwinism), so it might be this ambiguity that scares most everyone - from the far Left to the extreme Right. What he has claimed to be is a bit of a sociopath, a fan of girl groups and bubblegum pop, a lover of bad cinema, a modern drunkard, and an admirer of good company. Hell, who in their right mind doesn't love wine, women and song (and film)? Anyhow, *NO* is an all new collection of Boyd's observations. Though it has been jokingly called 'the new *Bible*', it's more pragmatism, than dogmatism. Boyd Rice tackles issues and topics ranging in scope... equality, peace, capitalism, rights, the status quo, idealism, fame, information, and meaning; giving the reader his subjective takes on each, and then some. The book is filled with Boyd Rice's dark humor and sarcasm, not to mention his infamous wit. Call him what you will, but the man is not only a good musician, he's one hell of a writer. (Dec 27, 2009)

**MAYHEM - Pure Fucking Mayhem DVD + CD ([Index](#))** Black metal seems to be the new thing to document, as can be seen by the recently released film *Until the Light Takes Us*, as well as the upcoming one based on the book, *Lords of Chaos*. This, on the other hand, doesn't focus on black metal, per say, but on the band that put it on the map, Mayhem, not to mention the man who helped spread its dark gospel, Euronymous. This 80 minute feature interviews every living member, and includes clips from a handful of shows, and a ton of photos. It goes into a lot of what's already known by many - thanks to the controversy - like the suicide of their early vocalist (known as Dead), the church burnings, the murder of Euronymous by Burzum's Varg Vikernes, and the release of the classic 1994 album, *De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas*. I hate to say it, but I thought the story of Mayhem ended there. I didn't get back into black metal until 2001, and even then it was newer bands I got into - like Twilight, Nachtmystium, etc - so I didn't know Mayhem released three LPs since (*Grand Declaration of War* [2000], *Chimera* [2004], and *Ordo Ad Chao* [2007]). It was great to be filled in on what I missed, and it looks like I have a few records I need to pick up. Now, I do have one complaint about the DVD: no extras! An old show would have been nice. Hell, even a new one would have been great. A picture gallery. Full interviews. Something! Well, they do somewhat make up for it by the inclusion of a CD, which contains eight songs of somber and eerie piano tracks that are based on numbers by Mayhem. The packaging is pretty damn good, too. It's a gatefold with a panel for the CD and one for the DVD, and displaying quality art production. Um... what's up with writing 'fucking' on the cover as 'f\*cking'? Trust me, Walmart isn't going to carry this, and the distros that will do not fucking care. Am I right, fuckers? (Dec 27, 2009)

### **LAST / DROWNING THE VIRGIN SILENCE - s/t CASSETTE ([Last](#) / [Drowning the Virgin Silence](#))**

It's rare to come across a cassette nowadays. Still, I do enjoy these plastic compartments of cogs and magnetic tape. The sound quality leaves much to be desired on 'em, but I've always liked how they fit in your pocket - possibly their only endearing quality. Absolutely no information is given in the layout, so I'll have to take guesses on what this release contains, besides the two listed bands. Side A is (what I believe, due to my relative familiarity with DtVS) the project known as Last. It's one track, seemingly recorded live. Last, at least in this recording, are an ear-shattering feedback with distorted, howling vocals the likes of Masonna or a vocaled Merzbow. The recording leaves a lot to be desired, as it's pretty muddy, and the intensity of what should be even more ear-piercing is toned down. Side B is Drowning the Virgin Silence, and this project is about the best experimental band from south Florida (next to early-80s seminal act Slap)! One track; quite and droning, lulling the listener into a dreamlike state. A must for fans of Dadaist compositions, Brian Eno, the softer sides of DJ Spooky, the later works of Ulver, or even Future Sounds of London. I'm not sure, but this release may only be available in limited quantity, so check out either band's page for further info. (Dec 27, 2009)



**ANDUIN - Abandoned In Sleep CD ([SMTG Limited](#))** *Abandoned in Sleep* is the second LP by Richmond, VA's Jonathan Lee (of Souvenir's Young America), and his project Anduin (taken from the name for a river in Tolkien's literary works). His newest outing as a solo artist is a year's worth of work, which contains studio pieces, live performances and collaborations galore. Ten musical structures of dark ambient and atmospheric illbient. Sometimes quite and lulling, sometimes pulsing and driving, but always soft on the ear and playful for the mind. I mean, who would have thought anyone could pull off the use of harmonica ("A Light in the Darkness") in ambient music? The larger part of Anduin's sophomore disc are unreleased tracks, though "Filed Away" was originally used for an art installation in the UK, and the collaboration with Svarte Greiner, "Black River" appeared on a 7" earlier this year (also on

SMTG Limited). Other guest artist this time around include Xela's John Twells, SYA bandmate Noah Saval, Dag Rosenqvist of Jasper TX, Stephen Vitello, Tara Morand and many more. This wonderful slice of electronic soundscapes is also available as a 12". Now, the CD has two extra tracks and extended mixes, but, if you decide to order the vinyl, you get the CD as well - free. (Dec 27, 2009)

**SECRETS OF THE MOON - Privilegium CD ([Lupus Lounge](#))** Secrets of the Moon is a black metal band from Germany, which formed in 1995. After two demos (*Unearthed Arcana* and *Vanitas*, '95 and '97 respectively), they released their first LP in 2001 (*Stronghold of the Inviolables* on Sombre Records). After a slew of split EPs - with Lunar Aurora, Dark Storm, Armagedda and Averse Sefira - came two more albums, 2004's *Carved in Stigmata Wounds* and *Antithesis* in 2006. While no original members are left, the current trio has revamped their sound, and they've given the world a new disc. It's still the blackest of metal, but a little more has been added to the sound to show us all that the 'new and improved' SotM can belt it out better. The drums are crisp, clean, yet have a deep dooming sound. The guitars are much cleaner than one would expect on a black metal release, but I have no problem with that, as the riffs are awesomely punishing. Also, I like that they don't use keyboards to provide atmosphere like a lot of newer bands do. While the disc starts out well enough, it just keeps getting better and better as the tracks go on. "Harvest" and "For They Know Not" (numbers five and six) are amazing songs! The packaging is top notch with it's glossy and slick, black foldout digipak. If you're looking into some epic, guitar-heavy, doom-laden black metal, this is the new album for you. (Dec 27, 2009)

**ACIREMA - American Nightmare CD ([Indianola](#))** North Carolina fans of extreme metal rejoice! You have one of the better acts in that music school right in your own backyard. This quintet formed in the Willmington area around 2003, toured almost nonstop, and self-released their debut LP, *With Deepest Regrets* in 2005. Oh yeah... and please don't confuse them with the neo-Nazi band out of Tucson, AZ with the same name. *American Nightmare* was a total dream come true for me, as I really needed some new metalcore in my life lately. With punishing riffs, a mix of screeching black metal / growling metalcore vocals, and crushing drum play they bring to mind At the Gates, Black Dahlia Murder, Dead to Fall, Darkest Hour, or, if you're a douche that knows nothing except the current trends, Dethkolk (not that I ain't a fan of *Metalocalypse*, but I would hate to know nothing about a genre of music aside from a cartoon band). There are breakdowns, blastbeats, a touch of doom and NWoBHM - all in huge doses. No weak-ass crabcore here, folks. Just plain ol' brutal metalcore - the way the gods intended it to be. (Dec 27, 2009)

**CONFUSED AS EVER - Don't Panic CD EP ([Confused As Ever](#))** Confused As Ever is a south Florida act that began as an acoustic project, formed by Ray Sousa (of Good Life Cycle) and Elana Meair. Within no time they picked up another male / female duo to add bass and drums (Scott Hanzlik and Danielle Galletta, respectively), and started to add a boatload of melodic rock to their sound. *Don't Panic* is a self-produced, six song EP of heavy guitar, pop hooks, and stylish female vocals that is emotionally powerful. With a blend of styles that are hard to peg, I don't have much to compare them to besides Xtian pop-rock outfit Evanescence, or a female-fronted Tool - especially on the closing track, "Septic Federation". While I'm not a huge fan of this type of music, this disc not only held my attention, and kept me interested throughout, it made me want to hear more! I guess, so long as it isn't teenie-bop Top 40, I can get into it, but in all reality, if these guys and gals keep this up, that is where they might be found soon enough. (Dec 27, 2009)



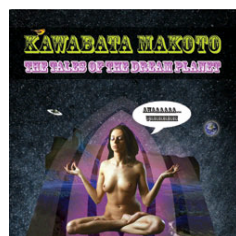
**MICRO BIONIC - Author, Thomas Bey William Bailey BOOK ([Creation](#))** Though there are not many books out there on the subject of noise music, *Micro Bionic* is, hands down, the best book on the subject. Admittedly, the book doesn't cover all of the noise music scene, especially newer acts, but either way, TBW Bailey does offer an encyclopedic knowledge of the genre. The book begins with the modern era of electronic and organic noise with Throbbing Gristle, though the author does cover the the 1920s Futurist Luigi Russolo and other pioneers. Of course, what would a book on noise be complete without an entry on Whitehouse, Coil and Merzbow, so they have chapters all to themselves (which also cover murder, magick, and vegetarianism). Other subjects include the

pop-art samplers Negitivland and their culture jamming activities, the computer music of Mego (not to mention the Vienna Aktionist Movement), and lesser known artists like Sweden's The Kingdoms of Elgaland and Vargaland (and the political party Carl Michael von Hausswolff tried to form out of it), Francisco López, John Duncan and his 'confessional' artwork, The Halfer Trio and their dislike of the de-evolution of sound (via CDs and mp3s), as well as chapters discussing topics like the use of silence in music, the politics of noise, and the use of other forms of media in noise (film, writing, and performance art). While I listed what the book mainly goes into, each chapter also delves into philosophy, sociology, history, the use of instruments and computers and so much more. If you're into this form of music, *Micro Bionic* is a must for your reading pleasure, and especially your book collection. (Aug 21, 2009)

**CASSIE J. SNEIDER - Two Stories CD-R ([Cassie J. Sneider](#))** Cassie J. Sneider is a writer from Ronkonkoma, NY. Her work has appeared in a number of magazines, fanzines and websites, as well as attempting to be the queen of self-publishing (comics, 'zines and other miscellaneous insanity). She has also done videos for The Dwarves - check out their *FEFU* DVD for it, available from Music Video Distributors. Honestly, I'm a huge fan of her work, as her stories of growing up 'white trash' and such has made me roll with laughter, not to mention sympathize (yes, Spaniards like me can be raised quite white trashy). This self-released CD-R is Cassie telling two tales from her youth ("Homegrown" and "Picture Book"), both of which are outright hilarious. When I first received this I had no clue as what the picture on the cover had to do with anything (a monkey with a stick in its hands), but was soon let in upon listening what the hell was going on there. Write to her, ask nicely, and she may just tell you how to obtain this bizarre childhood memory. Just don't tell her I sent you... lord knows what you may get in return. (Aug 21, 2009)

**MALACHI + THE BASTARD NOISE - The Immortals CD ([Hear More!](#) / [Housepig](#) / [200 mg](#))** This isn't a standard split release where you have a group of songs by one band then another, but four tracks where one band is presented, then the other, then back to the first and so on. First up is the Milwaukee quintet Malachi (exmembers of Artimus Pyle, What Happens Next? and Fuck Face) with "Pain Trails", and it's a crusty, doom crusher that goes from punishing riffs to drearily enchanting violins seamlessly. The Bastard Noise (featuring newest member Leila Rauf of Ion Channel and AmberAsylum) are up next with "Post Conflict Dream". Their track is a little less noisy than I expected, as it consisted heavily of field recordings - though not entirely - including insects and birds, but it was beautiful nonetheless, especially the haunting vocals. Malachi return on track four with an instrumental titled "Five" that is much different from their first track, as it's a feedback-drenched droner. The Bastard Noise return to close things off with "Elemental Decay", a piece - similar to their previous track - that is lullful, ambient and hypnotic. *The Immortals* is presented in a three panel fold-out, color-shifting paper sleeve by Thumbprint Press, with various insectoid robots along the layout. I'm not certain if this is limited in quantity (though certainly not in quality), but as many other Housepig Record items are, I wouldn't hold out to pick one up. (Aug 21, 2009)

**JEROME DEPPE AND GENTLEMEN OBSCURA - Showtunes for the Damned CD + BOOK ([Press Subterranean](#))** Jerome Deppe is a Baltimore, MD painter, as well as photographer and songwriter. One of the few people I've found to not only know what cyanotypes are (invented by Sir John Herschel in 1842), but also collects their images - not to mention produces works using the process. He began working in a performance troupe in the late 80s, and in 1999 he started writing music, as *Showtunes for the Damned* is his fourth solo outing. He has since worked with Philadelphia artist David E. Williams, and Christian Death's Rozz Williams. The music on *Showtunes for the Damned* is a near-droning Joy Division, that almost falls into the world of neo-folk, sometimes even goth rock. While the music is great, what is really amazing is the packaging. This disc is presented with a large graphic novel of over 70+ pages. High quality, brightly colored psychedelic artwork with a dark tinge towards our shadow nature, where the quote bubbles contain the LP's lyrics. I'm extremely impressed with both the creativity behind the music and the layout. Guest appearances from Lloyd James (from Naevus), the aforementioned D. E. Williams, Thomas Nola (of Thomas Nola et son Orchestre) and others. I'm not certain if this is a limited release, but I wouldn't wait to find out if I were you. (Aug 21, 2009)



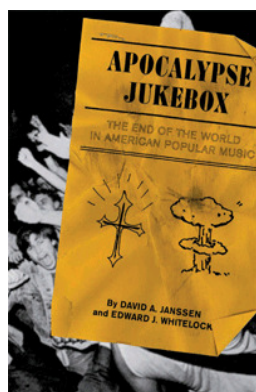
**KAWABATA MAKOTO - The Tales of the Dream Planet CD ([Housepig](#))** Kawabata Makoto is the founding member of Acid Mothers Temple (who formed in 1995), as well as member of close to a dozen other projects. He has been doing solo work since his *Private Tapes* series in 1999. His solo material is quite interesting as it, like his band AMT, fluctuates between genres and music worlds, and he believes he does not create it, but is a

sort of 'radio tuner' that picks up sounds and songs from the ether. This release for Housepig Records is, I believe, his sixth official solo release. *The Tales of the Dream Planet* is two tracks of guitar atmospheric and ambient bliss that run over an hour. Both tracks are done by Makoto himself, and consist of overlapping guitar tracks, which ebb and flow from a lighthearted drone to lush symphonics. How he sometimes gets his guitar to do what it does is beyond me, but I definitely don't mind if he keeps on doing it. It's almost as if there are keyboards involved in "She Came from the Shining Sea", but I doubt KM is bullshitting us by using them uncredited. The second number, "Kiss On the Dream Planet", is more of what Acid Mothers Temple fans may be used to, with its feedback loops, but still a little different. This release is limited to only 500 copies, so get a move on before his ship takes off back to the dream-planet without you. (Aug 21, 2009)

**ELSUPREMO - s/t CD (Elsupremo)** No bio or band info accompanied this disc, so I have to wonder where this outfit is from, and if their name is a reference to a character in C.S. Forester's novel, *The Happy Return*, about Horatio Hornblower. Well, their MySpace page states their from Fargo, ND, but they could be from anywhere (the layout states that these tracks were recorded in Minnesota), so who knows but them and their friends. Anyhow, the band is the brainchild of one Chad Heille, and though he had some help from a trio of guests, you can blame him for the damage caused by your constant head-banging. The music is all instrumental blues doom and stoner-esque dirge rock. The tracks laid down on this self-titled, self-released, seven track CD remind me of a vocal-less Church of Misery, or maybe even early Electric Wizard. Heavy on the fuzz, light on melody (though a touch is there), and wall-to-wall riffage. This is great for fans of Kyuss, Earthride, Lowrider or anything on the old Man's Ruin, Tee Pee or TMC labels. Grab a beer, or a bong, and begin the blasting of your speakers. (Aug 21, 2009)

**ANDUIN + JASPER TX - The Bending of Light CD (SMTG Limited)** I could not be listening to this on a better day. It's raining like hell outside, and the one I want to be near more than anything is 1200 miles away. Will this make my critical ear biased? I doubt it. First some backstory... Anduin is Jonathan Lee of Souvenir's Young America from Richmond, Virginia, while Jasper TX is Gothenburg, Sweden's Dag Rosenqvist. As you may have already guessed, *The Bending of Light* is a collaboration between the two. The music is a vocal-less swirl of ambient electronics and hypnotic guitar tones. Most often than not, this half-hour of instrumentals are heart-wrenching bits of aural sadness that bring to mind the emptiness of space, black hole vortexes that destroy star systems, and galaxies without light. A great listen for a rainy day or Sunday evening to bring a long weekend to a close. Interestingly enough, the six song titles make up a paragraph, quoted from scientist and skeptic Carl Sagan. There is a vinyl version of this disc, but it's been pressed at only 300 copies. Good luck finding any, I'm sure. (Aug 21, 2009)

**SWAMP THING - In Shame CD (6131)** Thirteen tracks in twenty minutes? Yeah! Formed around the middle of this decade in Richmond, VA, this quintet launch themselves into the hardcore-thrash mix with a vengeance. They released a demo in 2006 (which is available to download for free), and later pummeled the world with their debut 7", *The Youth Is Sick* (also available on 6131 Records). The music is often fast-paced 80s hardcore, with a bit of catchy mosh parts thrown in, similar to Outbreak, Down to Nothing, Bracewar, or - to go back a bit - Negative Approach. The vocals are reminiscent of Converge's J. Bannon, and the lyrics deal a negative attitude towards religion and the corporate state... and I'm all for that. Also, the vinyl-freaks don't have to settle for the 5" version as *In Shame* can be obtained in 12" LP format. Fuckin' punk, right?! (Aug 21, 2009)



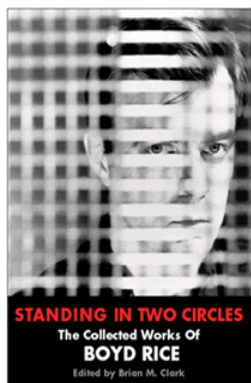
**APOCALYPSE JUKEBOX: THE END OF THE WORLD IN AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC - Authors, David Janssen and Edward Whitelock BOOK (Soft Skull)** I've read a few books on music, *Rip It Up and Start Again* (on the history of post-punk), *Unknown Legends of Rock-N-Roll* (self-explanatory), etc. They're always a good read in that they were concise histories. What writers David Janssen and Edward Whitelock have done in *Apocalypse Jukebox* is throw a bit of info at you, then hit you with the deeper meanings. Separated by chapters on musical artists - some I find interesting (Harry Smith's collection of Americana music, John Coltrane, Leonard Cohen, Love and Devo), there are others I couldn't care for (Green Day, R.E.M., Bob Dylan).

Anyhow, each chapter delves into a particular recording by a certain artist, as well as the band's history, while also going into several fields of psychology, sociology and philosophy. Leonard Cohen's section is not just about his work, but covers religious imagery and sex. Sleater-Kinney's looks into feminist politics in the post-9/11 world. Laurie Anderson's chapter focused on language in our society. Devo's... what else? De-evolution. The underlying theme of the book is that each artist's work was heralding, or rejecting, some version of an end to the world (at least the 'human world'). If you're looking for light reading and lots of pretty pics: go elsewhere. Now, I may not agree with many of the conclusions the authors come to, but I find their work to be thoroughly entertaining and thought-provoking. (Aug 21, 2009)

**SHELTER RED - Strike A Mortal Terror CD ([Sound vs. Silence](#))** I'm surprised... no, shocked that this is a duo. Formed in 2003 in the city of Portland, OR, and releasing their debut, *Masters of the Universe* (also available on Sound vs. Silence Records) in 2007. These two chaps produce a solid array of instrumental and technical metal the likes of Don Caballero or The Fucking Champs, with touches of the Neurosis school of trippy guitar and drum play. In a little over an hour, these seven tracks are exciting from start to finish. Polished and well produced, the punishing riffs rarely end, and when they do take a break it's to show off some guitar wizardry or tribal drum beats that capture the listener, wondering why it takes Pelican or similar bands so many members to do the same. Interesting that a label like At A Loss, or even Relapse Records hasn't picked up these metalheads yet, but the future looks bright. Give these two a little time, and I'm positive you'll be equally impressed. (Aug 21, 2009)

**VENNT - s/t CD ([Housepig](#) / [Hear More!](#))** Housepig Records, a label that's known to me more for noise than doom, threw me for a loop upon this release. First off, I wish I had reviewed this earlier, as being limited to only 400 copies, it may be sold out already. Now, on with the review... Halifax, Nova Scotia's Sandy Saunders of noise project Torso, Divorce Record's Darcy Spidle and Jordan Hines make up this Canadian three piece. Vennt play a duo vocal attack - one high pitched squeal, another deep in growl - over doom-laden drone metal not far off of the likes of The Goslings (without the insane needle-in-the-red histrionics). Now, they change the pace, and challenge the ear by throwing in a bit of power electronic mayhem, which happens to blend in well with all the riffage. The US edition was co-released with Hear More! Records, in a minimalist two-panel poly sleeve, with shiny copper-colored silk-screen artwork, and all are hand-numbered - I got # 212. Hurry folks! (Aug 21, 2009)

**RADIO SILENCE: A SELECTED VISUAL HISTORY OF AMERICAN HARDCORE MUSIC - Authors, Nathan Nedorostek and Anthony Pappalardo BOOK (Mtv)** Fuck big money, culture destroying Mtv Press - that's why there's no link, but seriously this book is worth talking about. While not as good as Steven Blush's *American Hardcore: A Tribal History*, or *Going Underground: American Punk 1979 - 1992* by George Hurchalla, *Radio Silence* is worth a spot on any hardcore fan's bookshelf. Mostly made up of images, it has live and practice-space photos, as well as bands just hanging out, pics of original handwritten lyrics, 7" sleeves, demo tape covers, flyers, and t-shirt designs. You'll find in the back of the book a collection of record covers that will blow your mind. Hell, the collection includes the New Age Records' 7" release of south Florida's Powerhouse. That laugh alone made me want to own this book. Oh, and fuck Mtv Press. (Aug 21, 2009)



**STANDING IN TWO CIRCLES - Author, Boyd Rice / Editor, Brian M. Clark**

**BOOK ([Creation](#))** I've waited a little over a year for this book to come out, and all the waiting was well worth it. This book is a collection of almost every article - 1986 through 2007 - written by Boyd Rice (except for a few missing from *Vessel of God* and *Dagobert's Revenge*), some of which have been previously unpublished. There are also lyrics from his musical output. Plus, the book contains many photos of both Boyd and his artistic works (experimental photography, abstract paintings and fetish pinups). Also, the book opens with a 30+ page bio (by editor Brian M. Clark) for those who want a better look into Boyd Rice's past, present and future. *Standing In Two Circles* (a title taken from something Manson said about Boyd) turned out to be a great read. The pieces all range in topic: pranks, bath soap from the 60s, exotica and outsider music, tiki culture, the sacred bloodline of monarchs, alcohol, ideas for TV sitcoms and movies,



meeting Charles Manson, mondo film, meeting the Church of Satan's Anton LaVey, tales of his journeys (music tours, vacation travels, and the quest to study his genealogy), as well as personal anecdotes from his youth and early career. The lyrics included are mostly for his work as a solo artist in NON, but also included are lyrics to collaborations he's done with Death In June, Current 93, Luftwaffe and others. All in all, it's a fun literary find for the fan, or just for someone looking into something a little under the radar. (March 06, 2009)

**KRAFTWERK AND THE ELECTRONIC REVOLUTION DVD (Sexy Intellectual / MVD)** This DVD is a great watch! Clocking in at three hours, it's almost three documentaries in one. First several musicians (Tangerine Dream's Wolfgang Siedel, Klaus Schulze of Ash Ra Temple, Dieter Moebius from Kluster and others) and journalists (*Sounds'* Diedrich Diederichsen, David Stubbs from *Melody Maker* and more) cover the German rock and psychedelic scene. Next, a worthy look into what is commonly referred to as Krautrock. Lastly, it's all about Kraftwerk - from their days as Organisation (1969) to their Krautrock beginnings (1970 - 1973) and further on (1974 - present) to the electrofunk they coined. Featuring interviews with ex-members, music videos, live performances and rare photos, this doc shows that along the way Kraftwerk inspired thousands - including David Bowie, Afrika Bambaataa, Juan Atkins and a million synthpop acts. *Kraftwerk and the Electronic Revolution* has a few extras as well, so if you're not worn out by the end of the documentary you can continue. The extras include a mini-documentary on the Dusseldorf and Berlin scenes, plus a full interview with ex-Kraftwerk member (1975 - 1991) Karl Bartos. If you're into Kraftwerk, German psychedelia or electronic music, chances are you already have this. If you haven't seen it, it's a great way to check out a lot of bands you may never have heard of, as well as reimmerge yourself in one you should know rather well. (March 06, 2009)

**NICK'S MYTH - He Never Goes Anywhere CD (Somber Atlantic)** Like The Scarecrow Frequency, Nick's Myth is another project off the Somber Atlantic roster that's a solo musician rather than just another band. Nick's Myth is actually San Diego, California songwriter Nicholas Smith, though he's backed on *He Never Goes Anywhere* by several guest artists. The music is a lyricless, dreamy alt-pop, which bears no resemblance to any true genre. The music seems to be tailor made for lazy afternoons or a walk through grassy hills with a set of headphones. Spaced-out, slowed-down surf music? Ambient British indie-rock? Quiet shoegazer doom-dirge? Either way, if you are looking for something hooky and vibrant, yet lullful and somewhat psychedelic, this is the CD to check out. (March 06, 2009)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS - 910 Noise V.3 CD (910 Noise)** I really liked Volume 1. I missed Volume 2. Gladly, Volume 3 found it's way to my mailbox. This is the third of this series that promotes experimental noise projects from the southeast area of North Carolina (area code 910). While there are a few acts that graced the first disc, much of this volume are fresh faces and new sounds. The opener - Jeff Chapple - fits, but this particular track would be better off on an alt-country sampler. Mr. Stonecipher bashes in the head of ambient music with some harsh electronics. Subterrene (a highlight of Volume 1) this time around sound even more like IDM or what one would find on a 'chillout' comp. Baby Daddy provided a scraping of your auditory system. Authorless return with quiet hums of a Tibetan-like ritualness. Somnaphon deliver totally tweaked out electrobabble. Jason Ward's track is a mix of lullful acoustic guitar and scratchy tape loops, while Carl Kruger's "Hard Times for Soft Targets" is a Masonna-like explosion. Mindcrosser return and quiet things for a bit, until Toys R Me Toys R U kick into a drum-n-bass / jungle rhythm. Steph Dig It then bring it back down, and the following collaboration between Mr. Stonecipher and Somnaphon will destroy the speakers. Uva Tena produce an almost classical music piece with "End Theme". The work of Donovan Quixote brought aboriginal music to mind (using whale sounds). U-Gene dreamily plucks and pics, while One Lifeless Eye closes it all out with a live recording of spacey atonal dirge. Once again, 910 has brought the listener another great sample of the area's noise, ambient and experimental artists. (March 06, 2009)



**DAVID E. WILLIAMS - Every Missing Duck Is A Duck Missed CD (Disques De Lapin)** David E. Williams has been challenging musical borders from his Philadelphia studio since the late 80s, with releases such as *Pseudo Erotica* (1986), the *Hello Columbus* EP (1999), *Hope Springs A Turtle* (2004) and now *Every Missing Duck Is A Duck Missed*. As usual, his musical style is hard to describe, ranging from near-neo-folk compositions to synthpop stylings, and sultry duets to singalongs. Without calling his work 'outsider music', his musical output really is out there. While much of the LP's tracks have a witty lyrical nature, darkness is around every lit corner, since much of

the record is based on David's grief, due to his girlfriend Jennifer Bate's death from cancer. "Save A Chair for Jennifer" and "Here Comes the Cold Narrator" are truly heart-tugging pieces, but they're often offset by more upbeat numbers like "Kill Yourself in Cape May" and "Hymn to the Genius of Idi Amin". Even with the emotional back-and-forth, David E. Williams's newest work flows well, and leaves the listener with a little more clearer thoughts on the ebbs and flows of life. A few cover songs let you in on where Mr. Williams is musically coming from, such as Ludwig Uhland and Friedrich Silcher's "Ich Hatt Einen Kameraden", "Lather" from Jefferson Airplane, and "Hello Young Lovers" from the Rogers and Hammerstein musical *The King and I*, though the true gems are the originals which show where DEW is currently at. Since "Summer Wasn't Made for You and Me", you should pick this up now. (March 06, 2009)

**BLACK METAL SATANICA DVD (Music Video Distributors)** A pretty cool documentary here. Eighty minutes of in-depth talk with the newest school of European black metal. Between song segments, live footage and photos, you get interviews with members of Mordichrist, Vreid, Ondslapt, Rimsfrost and others. They cover topics from the beginning of the musical movement, Satanism, the murder of Euronymous, church burnings, the joke that is Xtian black metal, the current state of what's going on in the scene, and my favorite, the segment on Shining which is known as a 'suicide metal band'. The band advocates extreme violence and other acts like suicide. Oh yeah, the singer is all scars, as they slash themselves with razors during live sets. Good job! Though they shouldn't pull stunts like the old 'our lead singer died' just to get publicity, cause The Dwarves did with that the best with HWCBN and *Maximum Rock-N-Roll* a decade ago. Anyhow, if you've already read *The Lords of Chaos* you'll already know a lot of what's said, but it sheds some light on what's still going on in the black metal world. (March 06, 2009)

**SKULLFLOWER - Desire for Holy War CD (Utech)** This will be a quick review for several reasons. A) You should know who and what Skullflower are. B) It's limited to only 750 discs, so it's gone, gone, gone. And C) Oh what the hell... Skullflower was a band that influenced hundreds of industrial metal acts, who later morphed into the solo guitar acrobatics of Matthew Bower. *Desire for Holy War* is seven tracks which were recorded in West Yorkshire from November to December, 2007. The disc is presented with a cover painting by artist Stephen Kasner. Start your eBay search engines! (March 06, 2009)

**THE SCARECROW FREQUENCY - Terminal Eclipse of the American Heart CD (Somber Atlantic)** The Scarecrow Frequency is actually just a single musician John Argetsinger (from Seattle, WA). However, from one man can come many sounds. I've never heard of this artist nor any of his projects, but I'm pretty happy to finally be introduced. The music is a blend of lullful ambient the likes of Ice Cake, and dreamy shoegazer ala My Bloody Valentine, with trippy beats, lush keyboards, and a smooth flow. Most of the tunes are either vocal-less or peppered with samples, though when there is it's provided by John or coconspirator Erica Sherman. Twelve tracks that are best played on the ride home after a black metal show, or the following Sunday evening just before sunset. By the way, if you find that you want more after listening, track down their first CD (also on Somber Atlantic), download their unreleased track, "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter" for free, or check out Argetsinger's other project, Red Dunes... I know I'm going to. (March 06, 2009)



### THE EVOLUTION OF A CRO-MAGNON - Author, Jon Joseph **BOOK**

**(Punkhouse)** Another book I've been waiting about a year for has finally surfaced. Jon Joseph was the singer of 80s New York hardcore legend Cro-Mags. This book isn't just about the band, but about Joseph's entire life until now. Jon starts with a brief family history and the tales of why he was taken from them by state authorities. A large amount of the book covers his early years in foster homes and youth centers - all the while dealing with abuse and getting lost in the cracks of the system. While much of it is quite sad, it's good to see he's come out of it all so well rounded. The book continues with running away, joining the military (navy) and then finding punk rock in the very late 70s. After going AWOL the book centers around his life in punk music, the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and finding his path to the religion of Krishna. I found it great that while he's on the subject of religion, he never tried to convert the reader, other than

occasionally asking that we all try to live a more positive life. It's then off to touring with Bad Brains, leaving Krishna for cocaine, and finding his way back on top from hitting rock bottom. The size of the book is huge, as the stories just seem to pour from his pen, so I can see why it's so thick, but lucky for the reader it was never boring. Jon Joseph is currently coming out with a vegetarian cookbook, and he's also filming a movie he wrote about boxing, so he's definitely still keeping his nose clean. Look out for future projects, but every hardcore kid should pick up a piece of his past. (March 06, 2009)

**THE MEATMEN - The Devil's In the Details Volume 1 DVD ([Music Video Distributors](#))** The Meatmen are sophomoric, sick, juvenile, perverted, childish, morbid, racist and blasphemous - and that's why I love 'em. This newest outing by the newly reformed - er - I mean, reunited band is packed with stuff (three hours worth) , and it's only the first volume! Of course there's footage of the band. Live shows from the early 80s to throughout the 1990s, with songs like "Tooling for Anus", "I'm Glad I'm Not A Girl", and "War of the Superb Bikes". A few covers are tossed about, including The Pagans' "Shit Called Love" and Gang Green's "Alcohol", where GG singer Chris Doherty is brought up on stage for. There are also music videos, like the hilariously cheap (at \$20,000) "Centurions of Rome", which was interrupted by... I mean, which featured a cameo by Courtney Love. In between each musical number is a skit (like the VH1 spoof *Behind the Nonsense*) or an interview with the Dutch Hercules himself, Tesco Vee. Be sure to look for the segment where Tesco is on a public access TV show for board games and reveals where his name comes from. Lastly, the true highlight of this disc is *Way USA*; Tesco Vee's Mtv show, which only aired two episodes (at 2am on Sunday). Here we get the Baltimore episode and it's complete with deleted segments and more. I'm already looking towards Volume 2, just hoping they'll put the Niagara Falls episode on there. Now, in true Meatmen fashion I say, you bet it's time for all you wicked wing-dingers to stop your mindless moronic mayhem and grab an eye-full of visual viscera of those that are the Drum Majors in the Squadron of Doom. Dig it? (March 06, 2009)

**CULT OF YOUTH - A Stick to Bind, A Seed to Grow 12" LP ([Dais](#))** *A Stick to Bind, A Seed to Grow* is the newest release from Brooklyn, NY's Cult of Youth. No CD yet, but this is a limited editioned (500 copies) 12" slab. The music is a mix of neo-folk and darkwave synth, a little similar to Death In June, before Douglas P directed it towards becoming a full neo-folk outfit, and hadn't yet shaken off his Joy Division influences. Some songs are dark and somber (like "Torch of Man" or "Brick By Brick"), while others have a pub singalong feel ("Cold Black Earth" or "A Question of Will"), there are also tracks where I hear moments of British pop-psych (such as on "Loss of Innocence"), and even Dadaist composition ("To the Floor!"). The vocals on the record are a bit different from their live shows, where here, songwriter Sean sings in a raspier basstone, where live he has an higher pitched, uncontrolled rage going on. The packaging is top notch, as the LP comes in a gatefold sleeve, with gold embossed printing and runic imagery. They also have available a self-titled 7" on white vinyl, and there are only 325 made of those, so get going... for both. (March 06, 2009)

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