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Dwarves among bands playing three-day Punk Rock Bowling Festival



One of punk's best and wildest acts, Dwarves are among the many attractions at this year's Punk Rock Bowling festivities.

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LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

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Of course Blag Dahlia's down with Vegas.

"It's been the site of most of my menage a trois," the frontman for all-time-great punks Dwarves says. "I can't say enough good things about it. For me, Vegas is mostly

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about the hilarious people. It's such an amusing cast of wacky characters, and then, everybody's always so loaded that you can just get people to do anything."

There's an obvious affinity between Dwarves and Sin City: Both serve as the skeleton key to the padlock of the id and are as synonymous with lasciviousness as a hooker's "date" invite.

For 25 years now, Dwarves and its steadily rotating lineup of proud, open degenerates, whose only constant is Dahlia and a propensity for public nudity, have been among punk rock's best and most unrepentant acts.

The band's infamous, imperfectly perfect 1990 disc, "Blood, Guts and (Expletive)," is among the most defiantly debauched albums of its kind ever released -- or perhaps unleashed would be a better word to describe its hitting record stores like an escaped convict looking for a home to ransack. It's a barely legal free-for-all of sex, drugs and unprintable song titles that rushed by in 90-second blasts of hooky hedonism as infectious as the venereal diseases the band sings of.

In 15 minutes, it pretty much distills the most puerile and debased essence of punk rock's lowest impulses, and is one of the genre's defining statements, a middle finger extended in just about everyone's direction.

"With a lot of bands, people respond to them because they're wearing the same shorts as them, or because they ride the same skateboard or because they give voice to the same fake ass political platitudes -- that's what I saw a lot in the punk world," says Dahlia, a thoughtful, well-spoken dude who's written a pair of predictably gritty novels. "With the Dwarves, it was always, like, 'Look, we're not your buddies, we're not your friends, just shut up and watch us.' "

Watch 'em and watch out: Dwarves gigs are notorious, anything-goes scrums, riots of flesh, sweat, occasional violence, tunes



Preview

Punk Rock Bowling, with Dwarves and others

3:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday; 2:30 p.m. Monday

Fremont and Sixth streets

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that whizz by like gunfire and lots of hurt feelings.

See for yourself when the band returns to town as part of the three-day Punk Rock Bowling festivities, now in their 13th year. It's one of the best annual parties to hit town every spring in a tornado of neck tattoos, booze and questionable behavior, with dozens of bands playing downtown on Fremont Street this go-round (for a full lineup, go to punkrockbowling.com).

Dwarves last played the event in 2009, strafing the packed house at the El Premier nightclub with a speed-of-sound battery of profane sing-alongs with Dahlia clambering atop the crowd's outstretched arms.

When Dwarves left, so did half the people in attendance, even though another act, The Casualties, had the unenviable task of playing after them.

"Every once in a while the old guys come out and humiliate everyone who tries to play with us," Dahlia chuckles. "I hate to take pleasure in stuff like that, but it's like, gimme a break, dude, why are you trying to headli

Dahlia and Co. are currently supporting their back-to-basics "The Dwarves Are Born Again," their first disc in seven years. On their past several albums, Dwarves have incorporated touches of hip-hop, industrial metal, surf rock, and pop and even folk into their lewd, leering repe

But on "Born Again," the band streamlines its with airtight, straight-for-the-jugular jams as ca combustible.


"People are telling me that the last couple of weird for them, and that this one is just weird. "I've never seen such good reviews for a Dwa feels like the culmination of something pretty big."


"Big" is relative with this bunch: Though they've released a clutch of classic albums, their adults-only subject matter and antics have kept them a cult act.


Still, to their credit, as the years have gone by, this bunch has neither grown up nor, more importantly, ever gotten old.


"With most punk bands, it starts out very exciting and there's sort of a big boom, and then the farther and farther out they get away from the beginning, the more boring they get, the more repetitive they


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get," Dahlia says. "That's the thing that I'm really proud of with this band: We're like the only punk band that just gets better."

Contact reporter Jason Bracelin at jbracelin@reviewjournal.com or 702-383-0476

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