

## Out Now

### The Damned

#### *Don't You Wish That We Were Dead*

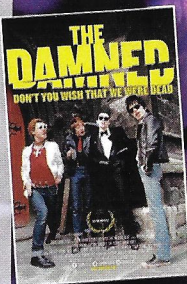
There's a moment during *Don't You Wish That We Were Dead*, the Wes Orshoski-directed documentary about the seminal British punk band the Damned that's now available on home video, when original drummer **Rat Scabies** is describing the point at which he knew he had to leave the pioneering group. The incendiary and influential Scabies visibly fights back tears as he describes one fateful band rehearsal. "We picked up our instruments, I sat behind the kit, and nobody knew what to play. We had everything we ever dreamed of, but the one thing we didn't have was the will to play." It's an uncharacteristic show of emotion from a member of a group that, as the Clash's Mick Jones recounts with great understatement, "had a bit of a reputation for having a good time."

Indeed, the Damned's hijinks are the stuff of rock legend. But the band members' well-earned reputation and occasional bouts of self-destruction didn't always help people understand their true value. "They were better musicians than the other bands," offers the Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde, who was a fleeting member of a pre-Damned lineup. "Musicianship was not a dirty word to them." Indeed, **Andrew "Pinch" Pinching**, the former walloper for the leading metal/punk practitioners English Dogs and Janus Stark, who has long occupied the Damned's drum stool, reckons that the group's founding members Dave Vanian (vocals) and Captain Sensible (guitar) are "the Lennon and McCartney of punk."

While the public at large has remained ignorant to the Damned's true status—*Rolling Stone* magazine recently failed to include the group in a survey of top punk albums—the new documentary should go far to rectify the public perception of the first British punk band to release a single, put out a full-length album, and tour the States. Numerous live events throughout this year and into next, including the group's first-ever show at the Royal Albert Hall, should support the message. "Ultimately," Pinch says, "the Damned know what they achieved. Perhaps the most important legacy has been to influence the influencers."

Adam Budofsky

Andrew "Pinch" Pinching



### More New Releases

**Dave Douglas** Dark Territory (Shigeto, Mark Guiliana) /// **Anderson/Stolt** Invention of Knowledge (Felix Lehmann) /// **Saliva** Love, Lies, & Therapy (Paul Crosby) /// **The Avett Brothers** True Sadness (Mike Marsh) /// **Volbeat** Seal the Deal & Let's Boogie (Jon Larsen) /// **Swans** The Glowing Man (Phil Puleo, Thor Harris, Bill Rieflin) /// **Branford Marsalis Quartet** Upward Spiral (Justin Faulkner) /// **Steve Porcaro** Someday/Somehow (Jeff Porcaro, Shannon Forrest, Lenny Castro) /// **Fitz and the Tantrums** Fitz and the Tantrums (John Wicks)

### Moon Hooch

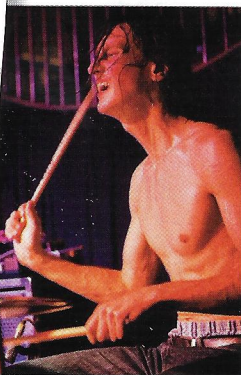
#### *Red Sky*

With *Red Sky*, jazz-meets-house trio Moon Hooch expands its danceable sonic palette while maintaining a spirit of improvisation. The group, which is composed of saxophonists Wenzl McGowen and Mike Wilbur and drummer **James Muschler**, cultivated its unique sound—and cult following—in the New York City subways. "There was no preconceived concept for the instrumentation," Muschler says, "because Moon Hooch was an accidental project. We were just playing down in the subway with our instruments so we could pay rent. After doing this for a while, we built up a repertoire and fans. However, there was an initial concept behind the music, which was based around house-music drumming, with a bass line played by a saxophone and melody or harmony played by another saxophone. We performed for years in subways with this concept and instrumentation. The saxophone has a lot of overtones, so two saxophones together can cover a large sonic spectrum. The drums produce sounds that are very low to very high, and because the sound of the subway is so reverberant, this stripped-down setup of two saxophones and a drumset was quite massive."

"Once we moved to performing in venues," Muschler continues, "we



Kenneth Kearney



were playing in a totally different acoustic setting with no natural reverb and with big sound systems. So exploring the possibilities for this new setting became important. We've steadily been adding a lot of instruments, including the clarinet, contrabass clarinet, bass saxophone, soprano saxophone, flute, electric wind instrument, bass synthesizer, tabla, and vocals. So there's a lot of freedom with this setup.

The group utilizes mic processing to replicate its recorded sound live. "We play the entire show to a metronome," Muschler explains, "because every microphone on stage is processed by Ableton, and automations have been designed to occur at specific times. The dynamics need to be

consistent, because mics have been mixed according to the way the set has been recorded. So it's a rigid structure. However, within that rigid structure, there is much spontaneity. At a live show, there's an energy feedback loop happening between the three of us and the audience, which results in a more integrated experience and thus the potential for a more powerful and profound one." **Willie Rose**

For more with Andrew Pinching and James Muschler, visit [moderndrummer.com](http://moderndrummer.com).