

INSIDE TIPS ON NAVIGATING THE INDUSTRY

# IT'S CALLED THE MUSIC BUSINESS

THIS MONTH: **THE QUEERS' JOE QUEER** ON NOT GETTING BURNED BY CLUB OWNERS.

Unfortunately, a lot of club owners and promoters are just in the business to make a quick buck, and they'll rip the teeth out of your skull if there's a buck in it for them. Back in the day, we were at the mercy of club owners. It was a nightmare. We *did* meet some great ones, but we also met a lot of jerks. We had signed contracts which weren't worth the paper they were written on. You have to do your homework and ask other bands about clubs and promoters. Don't think you will be the one band that some crappy promoter with a bad history won't rip off. But there are some things you can do to watch yourself:

## 1 I'VE GOT THE DOCUMENTATION RIGHT HERE

Always have signed contracts with you in case there's any question about anything. Your ass will be covered, although some people will still try to rip you off. I once showed a signed contract to a promoter and when it came time to settle up, they'd crossed out the original figure for our pay and (surprise, surprise) written a much lower one. They eventually paid up, but there isn't much you can do when this stuff happens—except beat the crap out of someone. However, as satisfying as that may be, I don't recommend it.

## 2 KEEP THEIR HEADS COUNTIN'

Incorrect headcounts are one way that you can get ripped off. Have someone do a headcount at the door along with the club's doorman. If you don't want to be conspicuous, have a roadie or a fan do it for you, and the club won't even know who the hell it is—later you can make up a story about it being the drummer's cousin or something. Doing your own headcount keeps everyone honest and helps avoid a lot of confusion down the road. It also shows the promoter that you're keeping an eye

on business—which is something you have to do at whatever level you're at, or you won't be able to keep playing.

## 3 ...AND MINUS THE \$346 YOU SPENT ON PBR...

Always ask about the deal on drinks. I have gone to settle up and had to pay a hundred bucks because one of my bandmates was drinking all night and buying rounds for his pals thinking it was on the house and it wasn't. Find out exactly what the deal is on drinks and you won't find yourself short at the end of the night.

## 4 THERE'S NO "I" IN "BAND," BUT THERE IS IN "I'M A TOOL"

Show up on time and don't be an asshole! One thing club owners complain about is when bands come in and act like jerks to everyone in the club from the sound guy to the doorman to the bartenders. If you walk in and start throwing your weight around, it's going to make for a long night. I learned the hard way not to piss off the sound guy because he can make you sound like shit really easily. Know your set times and stick to them. The first time we opened for the Ramones, Joey Ramone told me just to play our best 22 minutes and get the fuck offstage because no one wants to hear the opening band half the time anyway. I found this to be great advice. It pisses off everyone if you stay onstage all night and other bands have to wait. Don't wait for beer bottles to start hitting the stage to get out of Dodge. So what if you have towels in the contract and they aren't there? Just suck it up and don't sweat the small stuff. *alt*

Follow the Queers through live performances from 1993 to 2005 in their new DVD *The Queers Are Here* out Feb. 20 on MVD Visual.

“Keeping an eye on business is something you have to do at whatever level you're at, **OR YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP PLAYING.**” —JOE QUEER

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