

# NEW NOISE

M A G A Z I N E



## COMMON ENEMY

written by:  
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Interview with Matt - vocals,  
Justin - guitars, and Tank - drums

**D**Y or die: it's a demanding ethic for even the most stoic soul. Most musicians take the do-it-yourself route for at least a portion of their career by proxy of simply forming a band, and where some give up, give in or sell-out, others swear by it as a way of life. Common Enemy is of the latter breed, thrashing against all adversity for fifteen years in the name of crossover, pizza, parties, and beer. Stronger than ever, their *Braindead* EP is poised for release and they'll be hitting the road with the 'Southern Hospital(ity)' tour—and with titles like that there's surely a spot of

self-reference at play?

"Yeah it's the whole reason pretty much," agrees vocalist Matt. "Scott, from S.N.A.F.U. [Michigan thrash punks and tour buddies] thought of that little gem for the name of the tour and it was perfect. I had two seizures last time we headed to Texas so we owed them to come back and make it up and bring our good friends along. The EP itself was written in a matter of days, I had some lyrics I was sitting on and wrote some new ones after we cancelled tour, so we planned a weekend to write new stuff and it just flowed. We're really happy with how it came out." Tank, drums, testifies to both the shock and camaraderie following Matt's seizures tragically cutting short their previous tour, "It scared the crap out of us. We all did act like a family though; we came together and helped our brother

out. Long nights in the hospital—there were some pretty nurses, too [laughs]. I can't wait for this tour and release. I think it's one of my favorites that we have done, there's so much energy!"

Hospital-prone, maybe, but tiredness and fatigue can't halt these relentless road dogs. Matt explains their modus vivendi with a dose of reason, "Hell yeah you get tired, and smelly and cranky, but you leave it off the stage, I have nothing but energy once we start playing. Honestly, we hardly argue, but if we do it's squashed after a killer set anyway. We all get along pretty well. Monster energy drinks and coffee keep me going, and then when we get to the venue the excitement starts amping us up. We have a lot of fun."

And as bastions of the DIY ethic how do Common Enemy retain both their physical and psychological health cooped up in a van for hours, even days on end—is there a hidden Zen in beer and pizza? Matt offers wise words, "Just keep your distance when attitudes start flaring up, people get pissy and tired, but play a good show and have fun on stage and it's all good. Always take someone up on a place to crash, and free food is the best, we'll take it all, thank you." Guitarist Justin follows, "It's extremely hard sometimes, but I love to play music. I'm a lifer! I try to get healthier than anyone in the band, in fact they make fun of me all the time for it, but I don't like to feel like shit. My junk food days are over."

Notwithstanding their healthy attitude to life on the road, excursions either

side of the Atlantic—and the inevitable partying—must have allowed for a few amusing anecdotes they'd like to share? Justin spills the beans, "In Holland Matt blew out the bottom of an empty beer bottle and smashed it over the back of his head. Mikey [bass] in a drunken stupor thought this was the greatest thing in the world and decided to try it himself. He finished his beer and blew out the bottom of his beer bottle. He then went to break the remaining bottle over his head, but instead of the back of his head he smashed it straight across the forehead cutting himself with the shattered glass and bleeding everywhere. We took him to the emergency room in Holland, and after getting the stitches removed a week later in Germany he now has a permanent scar that looks like the signal bars on a cell phone...hence the nickname Mikey Signal!"

Almost Spinal Tap in nature and pro-veterans in nurture, both the chaos and passion shows in Common Enemy's trademark upbeat aggression. It's music for skating, drinking and moshing, and perhaps most importantly—for Justin at least—the endless consumption of pizza. "More good times and a pizza party!" he proclaims when asked what's next on their hectic schedule. Tank agrees, suggesting a hint of things to come, "I LOVE PIZZA! Definitely the West Coast this year and definitely Europe. We miss all our friends there!"

The 'Braindead' EP will be released this late this summer on Overdose On Records (US), SBS Records (US), and Horror Biz Records (Europe).

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75



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