

TIM BARRY

By Lauren Napier / Photography By Todd Fixler

Words are sometimes more than words. And songs are sometimes more than songs. Interviews turn into conversations and conversations turn into inspiration. After watching Tim Barry's set at the Revival Tour, I waited on the sidelines until Tim was ready for the interview. Nothing was rushed: a cigarette was shared and an interest in existence was pondered. We picked apart my questions and talked about what made them good questions and what made them worthwhile. It is a lovely thing to interact with an individual, as actual human beings, rather than as two parasites hoping to gain something from the others' existence. The music industry can be sadly two-faced and false, but the Revival Tour brought back some of the honesty: musically, personally, and emotionally.

After being ushered onto Tim's bus, a temporary home on wheels while bringing music to the masses, the questioning began. I am quickly put at ease and made comfortable in my surroundings, though a little cold in the Seattle night. The songs that you find on Tim's records, both Rivanna Junction and Manchester, were not written so much as they took residence rattling their melodies inside the musician's head. They were created while Tim walked his dog Emma and "about twice a week something shows up...there's a cadence to your walk depending on the day...[the songs] are almost like journal entries or a therapy session."; a rather serendipitous birth to the songs that Tim brings to the stage. The song "Dog Bumped" with the opening lines "one quick minute got me twenty eight long years" hit him "like a hollow point bullet right in the fucking brain...it was done before it was even started." Technically, a fairly simple process. But they compliment the






you.
Love on
me and
I'll love on
you. That's
just what's
up. I will
sing you
everything
I got and I
don't have
much
else." So
take it.
And find
a peace
of mind
or the
pieces...

whatever is left.

Living day by day is, in itself, a great achievement. And living as Tim does and "keeping everyone in consideration" is an even greater achievement. One of his closest friends and his mentor is Weasel, a man whose values mirror those of Tim's. "Living simply" in his early seventies, Weasel "takes care of his own. He's caring. He's giving. Anyone who needs anything he's the first one there. Anyone that wants to throwdown a fight he's the first one to back them. Anyone who just

wants to get drunk and rowdy he's the first person that's throwing down." No matter the situation, Weasel arrives with a solution and that's Tim's mentor, the kind of person he looks up to: "those that are seventy-two years old and vegan and showing [him] pictures of his wife and children getting arrested at anti-war protests...those that don't have a ton of money but still live simply." Simply. But profoundly.

Aside from music, Tim leads a real life. He doesn't preach the same lines about music being his life and all that matters to him. And he lists what makes up his sense of self and the man that he is: his family, the river, his house, a couple close friends, riding freight trains, painting, aerosol art, marking freight trains. And then he stops: "You think I'm crazy don't you?" And I don't! I don't in the least. 

simplistic lifestyle that Tim has adopted living "in a little shed with no running water and no air-conditioning." He refuses to listen to the people that say he is "stupid and crazy" because it is where he finds himself to be "most comfortable and most focused."

But being comfortable behind an acoustic guitar wasn't always the case. It was in 2003 when a left-wing magazine based in Asheville, North Carolina asked Tim, first having inquired as to the possibility of Avail playing, to come down and play a benefit show to keep the magazine on its feet. He acquiesced to the request with ten songs under his belt that he could play. And he took the stage and "the challenge was real...[he] was shaking while playing the guitar." "At thirty seven years old, it's nice to be scared." Through the nerves and the apprehension, Tim decided that being frightened felt good and so he went to

Europe "to figure out how to do this in front of the Germans because it's easier than doing it in front of friends." After the tour dates in Europe, the stage with just him and his acoustic guitar wasn't so daunting, even though he "was still a terrible guitar player." It was all about being comfortable with the challenge and sitting down and saying "oh word, I'm going to pick up an acoustic guitar." Facing challenges head-on leaves you with no regrets and nothing to be reconsidered repeatedly. And Tim has "no regrets as a person. Period."

To have the connection between punk music and folk music, "the same fucking three chords", be directly met in the music of Tim Barry is "pretty simple." During Avail shows Tim says he feels like "some machismo craphead and kind of empty in the end, but with [the acoustic] shows I feel challenged...this is all I got. I'm going to tell you straight up: fuck with me and I'll fight