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## [Flipper Celebrate 30 Years of Punk with New Albums and Tour](#)



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If it had not been for the imminent demise of CBGB, the reunion of Flipper may have never happened. For 10 years, the influential San Francisco-based punk band was pretty much inactive, when it got a call in 2005 from the legendary New York City rock club's owner Hilly Kristal (who passed away in 2007).

"He informed me that CB was being evicted," drummer Steve DePace tells Spinner, "and they were mounting some benefit concerts to try to fight the eviction. They picked and chose different bands to invite to come out and play. So that was the impetus for us getting back together again. And we did and kind of carried on."

 Flipper, whose founding members include DePace, bassist/singer Bruce Loose and guitarist Ted Falconi, are celebrating their 30th anniversary this year. The band is releasing not one but two records simultaneously on May 19. One of them, 'Love,' is the group's first new studio album in 16 years; the other release, 'Fight,' is a live record.

'Love' features contributions from former [Nirvana](#) bassist Krist Novoselic, who joined Flipper in 2006 to become the third musician to handle the duties of original bassist/singer Will Shatter, who died in 1987. Work on the album happened at Novoselic's place and was produced by Jack Endino, whose credits included Nirvana's first album, 'Bleach.' "We've always been able to maintain that Flipper sound somehow," says DePace. "It's so interesting that different bass players can come to the band ... and it still sounds like Flipper."

It was announced recently that Novoselic departed from Flipper over his concern about touring. In his place now is Rachel Thoele, formerly of the band Frightwig. "My opinion is that [Krist] just sort of realized that going away for long periods of time wasn't something he wanted to do anymore," says DePace. "The tour grind can wear you out and could be pretty tough."

As part of the San Francisco punk rock scene, the band developed its audience by playing at The Sound of Music, a transvestite strip club that would turn into a punk venue on the weekends. Afterward, Flipper started performing at famed punk club the Mabuhay Gardens. "We had a homecoming show at the Mabuhay," says DePace. "There was a line around the block. The first time that they fed us dinner was like a big deal. 'Wow, we have arrived: They're feeding us.'"

Flipper developed a reputation as, in DePace's words, "the band you love to hate." He continues, "The hardcore kids really loved the mayhem at a Flipper show, but didn't necessarily love the songs. But yet a Flipper show was always fun. It was always mad, crazy and out of control, and the vibe was always great."

The band is most famous for 1982's 'Sex Bomb,' a nearly eight-minute rocker with Shatter singing several times the song's single lyric: "Sex bomb baby, yeah!" DePace recalls a time when a Boston radio station invited listeners to submit their own versions of the song. "They got so many submissions," he says, "that what started as an idea to do a two-hour show ended up being a weekend marathon."

"['Sex Bomb'] was the 'Stairway to Heaven' of our generation," DePace continues. "That was the song that so many kids learned how to play. I read a story about Nirvana having played that song at a house party when they were first starting out. It really did have an impact."

Among many notables, producer [Rick Rubin](#) and [Jane's Addiction](#) bassist Eric Avery are apparently admirers of Flipper, and [R.E.M.](#) have recorded a version of 'Sex Bomb.' "All I can say is that we stood out amongst the crowd," says DePace. "And I guess that's a good lesson for anybody...not to try to fit in, and not to try to sound like every other band."

As of now, Flipper are scheduled to perform several dates in Australia and New Zealand in June, followed by some Warped Tour appearances in California. DePace says he has thought a lot about the band's 30th anniversary: "It's like, 'Here we are. Let's get out and play, and go do things we haven't' done before.'"

We can only imagine what that means.

### [Download Flipper Songs](#)

Posted by [David Chiu](#) on May 14th 2009 12:00PM

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