

RACKET

The background of the cover is a dark, textured illustration. In the center, a man with brown hair and a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression of shock or awe is shown from the chest up. He is holding a dark-colored electric guitar. Behind him, a large Van de Graaff generator with a tall central column and a series of orange, glowing circular rings at the top is visible. Several jagged, yellow lightning bolts are depicted, some striking the generator and others branching out across the dark sky. In the background, silhouettes of palm trees are visible against the dark backdrop.

THE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE WITH NO LIFE

SPECIAL FIRST ISSUE

COACHELLA 2010

RACKET'S PICKS, REUNIONS,
& FESTIVAL TIPS

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

STRIKE ANYWHERE

PLUS

ADVENTURE TIME
SHITTY BEER
E-READERS

artist

CHRISTINE
CURRY



Fine Art ~ Murals ~ Portraits

ChristineCurry.com
909.754.8911

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
AFFORDABLE VINTAGE

HOBOS VINTAGE

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY
FOR DISCERNING PEOPLE

127 CAJON ST. REDLANDS, CA 92373 - 1 HOUR EAST OF L.A.

1910's thru 1960's Fashion Show
May 2, Redlands Fox Theater

Janet Klein, Ian Whitcomb
and Hobo Jazz to appear

REDLANDS - Glamorous and impeccable, the fashions of the decades between 1910 and the 1960's are worth revisiting.

Sunday, May 2nd will be a wonderful evening of elegant vintage fashion conceived by **Nicole Howell of Hobo's Vintage in Downtown Redlands**. A showcase of amazing pieces of clothing culled from private collections that will be for sale in a silent auction! A special treat for vintage fashion enthusiasts will be the inclusion of lovingly designed recreations by **Lauren Maringola of Wearing History**.

World famous ukelele chanteuse **Janet Klein** will be on hand with selections from her repertoire of lovely and naughty songs as well as co-hosting and possibly modeling a dress or two! **Ian Whitcomb**, one time chart topping 1960's British Invader, will also be singing songs in his own inimitably stylish fashion as well as co-hosting with Janet. The house band of the evening will be local and otherwise favorites, **Hobo Jazz**.

more information at
HOBOSVINTAGE.COM



Flapper Flock Puts
Flirty Fashion
At Fingertips

flapperflock.etsy.com
is where its at!



FROM 'Fancy Feet' to 'Crowning Glories', **Flapper Flock** will have you ladies covered in a decidedly pre-war way. Jazzed up lingerie, flappy frocks and all the proper accouterments will keep any stylish woman is smiles all year around.

Lovingly kept by **Nicole Howell of Hobo's Vintage**, **Flapper Flock** aims to get 1910's, 1920's & 1930's fashions to the smart ladies that will appreciate them most.

See what delightful treasures await you at **flapperflock.etsy.com**

HOBOS VINTAGE
REDLANDS, CALIF.

- Low Prices - **909-792-3961** - Great Items -

HOBOS JAZZ

L.A.'s Darlings Of Dust Bowl Jive

HEAR THE SOUNDS!
SATISFIES ALL AGES
HOBOSJAZZ.COM



LETTER FROM THE EMPEROR

Hello there!

My name's The Emperor, and I'm supposed to welcome you to Racket but as I'm a terrible host, just help yourself, look around, poke your nose into our closets and go through our underwear drawers. Hopefully you're enticed rather than terrified.

Still here? Good. I wanted to get rid of the prudes, and hopefully they're gone so now we can cut the shit and get down to business. Racket business. For five years now we have been sucking up valuable space on the Internet to make room for our own brand of irreverent artist interviews and sometimes deplorable journalistic integrity. If you've ever wanted to hear political punks tell an offensive joke or a TV personality threaten the writer, you've come to the right place.

We're not the next big thing in media, so don't go getting your hopes up, but we are hear to try to make with the funny. Welcome to Racket, the lifestyle magazine for those with no life.

-Jonathan "The Emperor" Yost

RACKET MAGAZINE STAFF

Jonathan Yost – Emperor-In Chief
Caitlin Elgin – Managing Editor

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Erik Garcia, Kateri Lirio, Laura Gaddy, Gail Navarro,
Luke Toney, Madison Heying, Jack Winn, Jeff Curtis

DESIGN TEAM

Van K. Ho, Tom Lu, Marc Marquez, Karen Bardsley

COVERT ART

Christine Curry

EVENTS

Veronica Amador, Karlo Arenas

SPECIAL THANKS

Adam Amar, Brandon Anderson, Roya Butler, Matt Corbett, Casey Curry, Christine Curry, Wendy Day, Adam Galay, Abraham Gastelum, Jordan Golladay, Ryan Greer, Michael Gunther, Aaron Hale, Shannon Haslinger, Rick Hermansen, Damara Kautz, Brandon Kelly, Anastasia Krotova, Sean Lear, Cortney Long, Micah Mann, Patrick Mason, Wesley Miller, Akiko Moritake, Andrew Norcross, Akira Peck, Sean Pullin, Jenn Ryan, Julie Trieu, Kristen Waldeck, Sarah Why, Kim Worpek, Rex Worth and anyone else who has made these last 5 years possible.

CONTACT
Racket Magazine
626 Cypress Circle Redlands, CA 92373
Info RacketMag.com

THE CONTENTS SPRING 2010

FEATURES

- 07 KIDS CAN EAT A BAG OF DICKS**
RacketJeff discusses A Wilhelm Scream's return.
- 16 BEST OF THE WORST**
The least shitty of shitty beers
- 20 TOP 10 SOLO ARTISTS**
Notice how none of these are the bass players?
- 23 COMICS**
- 24 GLOBAL INHERTIANCE**
Being "green" doesn't have to be tedious
- 26 STRIKE ANYWHERE**
Too punk for their own good
- 40 THE FAT OF THE LAND**
How is someone so lazy so successful?

COACHELLA

- 30 FESTIVAL DO'S AND DONT'S**
How to avoid chaffing, sunburns and blisters
- 33 REUNITED AND IT FEELS SO GOOD**
Well, well, look who's back
- 34 WHO TO WATCH**
Racket's writers pick their favs to watch
- 42 THEN & NOW**
These Coachella vets are still going strong

REVIEWS

- 08 MUSIC**
- 10 E-READERS**
- 11 SYNTHS**
- 12 MOVIES & TV**
- 15 BOOKS**



26 INTERVIEW WITH STRIKE ANYWHERE



Outspoken, sarcastic, and/or bored
out of your mind?

Join the Racket Magazine team!

Racket is looking for capable, detail-oriented writers, photographers, designers, interns, and nacho-getters. Potential Racketeers should have interest in one or more of the following: music, pop culture, movies, games, and literature. Nacho-getters must love to handle hot cheese. No experience necessary. Just wit.

Drop us a line if you want to
give it a whirl:

Music@RacketMag.com



VELVET IS: PORTRAITS
 VELVET IS: LOVE
 VELVET IS: EVENTS
 VELVET IS: ATHLETIC
 VELVET IS: PHOTOGRAPHY
 VELVET IS: LIFE
 VELVET IS: MUSIC
 VELVET IS: FASHION

WWW.VELVETISPHOTOGRAPHY.COM
 714.699.4076
 ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



ENTICE

"Let the Fire Come" available now at:






www.myspace.com/enticetheband

THE KIDS CAN EAT A BAG OF DICKS...

A WILHELM SCREAM FEEDS THE MASSES WITH RIGHTEOUS JAMS.

"HOLY SHIT!" Those were the words that came out of my mouth the very first time I saw A WILHELM SCREAM live. This was also the very first time I had heard them period. The loud swirling dual guitar riffage coming from the stage, along with Nuno Pereira's vocals gave my ears an immediate music boner. The energy filled the small room and ignited mass hysteria over the crowd. Even when half the band had walking pneumonia, they put on a show that would most bands out there to shame.

Mute Print (the band's first Nitro release) was a staple in my record collection, and for many of my friends as well. Songs like "The Rip" and "Anchor End" were so energetic, yet complex. Trevor Reilly really knows how to shred on his axe, and write some sweet tunes as well. Their second Nitro release, Ruiner took what they started in Mute Print

and turned it up 20 notches. "Killing It," "The Kids Can Eat A Bag Of Dicks," and "Me Vs. Morrissey In The Pretentiousness Contest (The Ladder Match)" were great songs to sing along to, but also aggressive and powerful as well. After the release of their final Nitro release *Career Suicide*, they were in search of a new label.

Upstart label Paper Plastick (founded by Vinnie Fiorello of Less Than Jake) would find themselves as the new home for the band, and soon release the self titled five-song EP. Now there are many different ways to listen to a record, and I like to try every single one of them. To fully experience an album, you must hear it sober, drunk, high, and even both. I tried all these with this album, and I will say that this band can never do wrong.

Jeff Curtis



The Passports



FOR BOOKING INFO EMAIL US AT:
 THEPASSPORTS@GMAIL.COM
 VISIT US ONLINE

AT WWW.THEPASSPORTSMUSIC.COM



MUSIC



BLACK ROBOT
SELF-TITLED
Rocket Science
Ventures

2/10

With an anime-inspired little CGI mascot-looking fella on the cover, I was expecting some form of electronica, but what I got was, well, crap. Pure crap. I think someone didn't want to let go of the drug-laden late 80's Sunset Strip scene. That someone, well, someones, are Jonathan "JB" Brightman (clever nickname, duder) and front man Huck Johns. With song titles like "Badass," "Cocaine," and "Girls Kissing Girls," I have no doubt that my dad would LOVE this record. Then again, my dad also referred to White Snake as the "gods of metal."



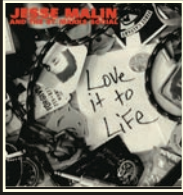
DANGERRMAKER
DANGERRMAKER
Unsigned

8/10

With any good music, the immediacy of the vibe and groove of the song is of the utmost importance in connecting with any listener. Lengthy introductions, endless instrumental passages, and pretentious noodling are surefire ways to alienate the average listener from your music. Dangermaker, one of the freshest new bands on the Bay Area scene is the antithesis of the aforementioned statement above. Summed up in one word, this band is groovy. Listening to the introductory bass notes on the song "Delirious", one can't help but want to go to his nearest bar, kick back a double shot of Jack, and shoot pool till last call. If their recent success is any indication of what's to come, these guys are going places fast.

Rick Hermansen

Rick Hermansen



JESSE MALIN
LOVE IT TO LIFE
Side One Dummy

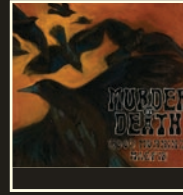
7/10

Malin is hip enough to be ahead of the game a bit...fronting a hardcore band as a teen during the '80s, when it wasn't really profitable to do so, but it was definitely trendy within the right social set...like in the underground scene of NYC, where Malin calls home. Then, surprise, surprise, during the '90s he fronts the wishy-washy punk outfit D Generation. D Generation were written off as copycats of Johnny Thunders and the Heartbreakers, but to their credit, seriously, who else was "ripping off" Johnny Thunders in the '90s? Well, no one, really. Not until the late '90s at least, which is when D Generation called it quits. If anything, that puts the band years ahead of the curve.

Sure, there was the whole Crypt/Gearhead/Man's Ruin/etc. scene throughout the '90s, but while it's unlikely any of those associated acts would deny the impact of the Heartbreakers, few of them were getting compared to the band. So while it doesn't particularly mean much, especially since D Generation wasn't very good, they were sort of in a league of their own. Plus, they got signed to a major, so they must have had something going on, right?

This album is Malin's fourth proper solo effort, preceded by three studio albums, an all-covers album and a live album. He's actually quite a talented songwriter, even if the end results are regularly of arguable quality. The first two tracks, "Burning the Bowery" and "All the Way from Moscow," are particularly good. "Burn the Bridge" is another keeper. He's got fans - talented ones: Ryan Adams, Springsteen, the Dresden Dolls and Billie Joe Armstrong, to name a few. He is doing something right, but for every great song on the album, there's a sleeper. Love it to Life is at least 25% filler. That's more than one can say for most albums. Be that as it may, he comes off as a bit of an opportunist, floating by on the outskirts of the mainstream, making the most of his rolodex. This is a solid effort from a guy with friends in all the right places.

Luke Toney



MURDER BY DEATH
GOOD MORNING,
MAGPIE
Vagrant Records

9/10

Man, Adam Turla has got to be one of the manliest men in music today. Two weeks of camping out in the Appalachian Mountains and he comes back with most of Good Morning, Maggie, an album filled with tales of love, darkness and...whiskey. This is the work of a goddamned American man, delivered with bravado and soul. Hottie bandmate Sarah Balliet's haunting cello work doesn't hurt. The rhythm section is no less integral, with Dagan Thogerson's drumming ensuring that every beat counts and Matt Armstrong's bass as dedicated to the cause.

The only problem I have with this album is trying to pick a favorite song. One day it will be "As Long As There Is Whiskey In The World," a great jam dedicated to my favorite form of liquid courage. Then there's "You Don't Miss Twice," another song made of manliness, decreeing the dangers of shaving with a knife. Fucking. Manly. "The Day" has one of my favorite intros with a solid drumbeat courtesy of Thogerson, creepy keys by way of Balliet and the passion of Turla's voice rivaling a Baptist preacher. In a man's world being invaded by lame skinny jeans and fucking flatirons, it's good to see someone who is unequivocally all-American.

Jonathan Yost



THE LIARS
SISTERWORLD
Mute Records

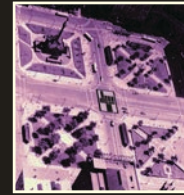
9/10

This shit's freaking me out, maaaaang. In five LPs and multiple EPs, The Liars have had one consistency: they are inconsistent. Not in the way that they don't always deliver, but in the way that keeps you from pigeon-holing them. Is it post-punk? Is it ambient noise-rock? Is it...uhh, Himalayan dick smashing? Who cares about what it is versus what it DOES, and that is kicks ass.

Eleven tracks that take you along a path of what could quite possibly be aural insanity, weaving

melodies around ethereal harmonies and raging rhythms. Frontman Angus Andrew leads the trio (Aaron Hemphill, synth/guitars and Julian Gross, percussion) through the madness. While I am rocking this like nobody's business, I know that if you thought *At The Drive In* was too chaotic, stay the fuck away from this, you couldn't handle it.

Jonathan Yost



THIS MOMENT IN
BLACK HISTORY
PUBLIC SQUARE
Smog Veil Records

11/10

I am ashamed I haven't previously heard of these guys. They've been around for nearly a decade now. They are from Cleveland, a mere two hours north of here. They made their name, it appears, in the scene surrounding the Beachland Ballroom, a place with which I am all too familiar. Members have ties to the Bassholes and Cheater Slicks, Columbus bands both (hey, we adopted the Slicks), whom I have seen countless times since the late '90s. Ashamed.

Alas, I never leave my house and spend all my time sitting in the dark doing nothing until I notice I can't see anything and finally turn on a light. So really, it should come as no surprise that they eluded me for so long. Nonetheless, it's a disappointment. How many times did they play Cbus while I was none the wiser? Thank heavenly deities this sorry scenario will be corrected by press time (thank you, Carabar).

Let's just get this out of the way: Best album of 2010. The last time I said something similar in a review was last year, regarding Nobunny's Love Visions. It was May and I meant it. December 2009? No serious contenders. Take that into consideration when you read this: No better album will be released this year. Grimy, dirty, primitive; this is the fucking real McCoy. Don't let the visceral sound fool you; these guys are fucking geniuses. Anyone that thinks the Black Keys have a "blues edge" should give this a listen. I'm blown away. This is probably the only truly punk album to come out in at least the last five years.

Luke Toney



A NOOK ABOVE THE REST

E-READERS ARE THE MUST-HAVE GADGET OF 2010. THERE ARE THE ESTABLISHED BRANDS LIKE AMAZON'S KINDLE AND THE SONY READER, AS WELL AS MORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS BARNES & NOBLE'S NOOK AND THE APPLE IPAD. WITH ALL THESE OPTIONS AVAILABLE, HOW DO YOU KNOW WHICH ARE ACTUALLY WORTH SHELLING OUT OVER \$200 FOR?

The Sony Reader should be the first to cross off your list. There may be three models and they come in different colors, but they pale in comparison to their competitors. First, it only holds 350 books. Second, it does not have access to the internet. Lastly, the standard Reader is almost \$50 more than the Nook or Kindle— you pay more for an inferior product.

With the iPad Apple introduced a whole new genus of gadgetry to the world. If you are looking for a gadget with capabilities above and beyond an e-reader, the iPad is for you. However, based strictly on its e-reader capabilities it may not be up to par with the Nook and Kindle. Information is not currently available as far as how many books it will be able to store, how much they will cost, whether or not they will be lendable, etc. Apple is setting up an iBook store that will supposedly be like iTunes for books.

The competition for e-readers really comes down to the Nook and Kindle. They both have many similar

features that include holding 1500 books, E Ink electronic paper, wireless Internet and some newspaper and magazine subscriptions. However, the differences between them are significant enough to definitively say that the Nook is the better of the two. Here's why: There are recent developments with Amazon and the publisher Macmillan over ebook prices. Due to this, some of the prices of ebooks for the Kindle are being raised from \$9.99 to \$14.99. This blow is bound to hurt Kindle sales.

Also, two of the best things about Nook are its color touch-screen (Kindle only has a keyboard) and its lending capabilities— ebooks can be lent from any Nook to another. Nook is also notable for its memory expansion (can hold over 17,000 titles!!). There are over 500,000 free ebooks available at BN.com and it has a replaceable battery (with the Kindle, if the battery breaks you have to replace the whole Kindle). Suffice it to say, if you are willing to invest in an e-reader, the Nook is your best bet.

Madison Haying

FUTURE OF THE SYNTH

THIS PORTABLE SYNTHESIZER AND CONTROLLER BRING TAPE, AND SEXY, BACK.

Teenage Engineering's Operator-1 is the illegitimate grandchild of Bob Moog and Don Buchla. Newer name brands like Access and Nord have made their mark in the synthesizer world, but the Swedish-assembled product is really turning heads. With beta testing in the works, it hasn't even been put into production yet! The multi-functioning portable synthesizer has created a buzz amongst bona fide synth sluts since NAMM 2010 in January, and it continues to build anticipation of its release over various electronic music media outlets daily. It's essentially technological porn.

Not only is the OP-1 eye candy with its color-coded knobs and its sleek graphical user interface and mobility, it is a godsend for those that like to travel light. (Did I mention that it is battery powered?) Besides the oscillator portion of the product, the OP-1 also contains a built-in microphone, effects processor, MIDI controller, sampler, mixer, sequencer, FM Radio, and tape recorder. In layman's terms—a whole lot of cool shit.

There has never been a more visually enticing and neatly packaged synth. The OP-1's display makes your Korg Triton's digital screen look archaic. Using the same display technology as your mobile phone,



the sleek look flaunts beauty and functionality. The feature that is getting anticipators even more excited is the built-in tape recorder, which mimics a traditional analog tape deck minus the pitch variance when speeding and slowing down the tape. And if you're wondering about compatibility between your computer and the OP-1, new drivers and software are not necessary as it interfaces over USB. It's almost too good to be true.

Moog and Buchla have undeniably led the forefront of synthesizer development since the 1960s and as a result, have helped inspire other developers to follow in their footsteps. It appears that the progressive work of Teenage Engineering will be monumental in furthering a happy marriage between digital and analog in one convenient contraption.

Kateri Lirio

Visit www.teenageengineer.com to learn more about the Operator-1.





THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE WEIRD

This rollicking big budget South Korean Western trades in the tried and true tumble weeds for the scorched plains of the 1930's Manchurian desert. It's spaghetti with a side of kimchi, from Director Kim Jee-Woon. Three men, one map, and nothing will stand in their way to getting to what's on it, if they can figure it out.

The title is a nod to Sergio Leone's classic, but that is only the start- this film is pure distilled genre grit spiked with style and re-envisioned with a uniquely Korean twist, machine-gunned back out again at full speed.

The action is outlandish, wild, and branded with flare. The classic Mexican stand-off turns into a three-way as epic train capers and frothing chases across the dust churned horizon with three armies in hot-heeled pursuit thunder across the screen. It's frantic blast to watch. Everything is turned up, sleeked down, and full-tilt in this hyper stylistic fun-fest.

After its massive success during its local release back in 2008 and making rounds as a festival hit, it's finally hitting theaters across the US on April 23rd.

Laura Gaddy

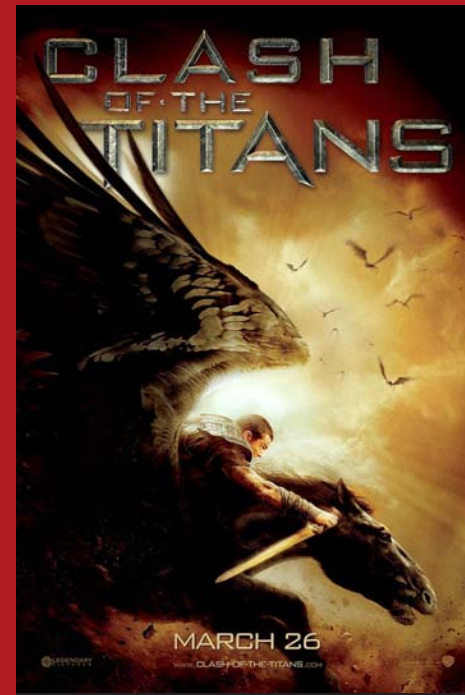


MOVIE PREVIEWS



IRON MAN 2- Paramount Pictures (May 7th)
Robert Downey Jr. is back with swagger as super-star Tony Stark, as the government tries to lay hands on the technology behind his fame. Stark teams up with War Machine (Don Cheadle) and must also deal with a new foe, Whiplash (Mickey Rourke), right as he finds problems of his own to contend with in this highly anticipated sequel to the Marvel Blockbuster hit.

Laura Gaddy



CLASH OF THE TITANS - Warner Brothers (March 26th)
The son of a god defies his destiny as he embarks upon an epic quest filled with bad-ass giant scorpions, creepy one-eyed witches, Medusas, and the dreaded Kraken. All to save his family from Hades and possess the woman he loves. Remake of the cult classic 80's version.

Laura Gaddy



MACGRUBER- Broadway Video (April 23rd)
Based off the SNL MacGruber sketch parodies of McGyver, where a paper clip and some quick thinking can mean the difference between life and death. This time the bombs are bigger, the stakes are higher, the clock is ticking, and Val Kilmer is a super villain bent on destroying the most American thing we have- our Capitol! So get your wire cutters ready, this may get messy...

Laura Gaddy



ADVENTURE TIME WITH FINN & JAKE

Following the success of Pendleton Ward's cult-hit short back in 2006 and the ensuing Random!TV spots on Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network will be debuting their new show Adventure Time with Finn & Jake, one of the most hotly anticipated new cartoons of the year. Finn and Jake are a young boy and an adult dog who are buddies that live in a world where kidnapped princesses and wizards are as common as connecting to the internet with your mind, and where around every corner awaits strange and colorful fun, adventure, and awesome.

Ward, a man with perfectly round glasses and an enormous beard, is a familiar face at Cartoon Network, having worked closely with the equally

majestically bearded Thurop Van Orman on the Emmy-winning series The Marvelous Misadventures of Flapjack. Now Ward will be getting his own show to be produced through Frederator Studios, which has already been slated for two full seasons worth of episodes. Adventure Time is a surreal stream of consciousness steeped in a hefty dose of magical realism and high-five worthy attitude. Characters have a child-fueled logic to them and look, move, and think like they are inside a dream. They warp and change size with a mere thought and jaunt through their world with intensity and positive swagger. They use slang like "Algebraic!" and "Rhombus!" and have an infectious energy and enthusiasm that is hard to resist. Even the TV teasers the network has been running are pure awesome. Everything about it tells you that this will be something to keep an eager eye on.

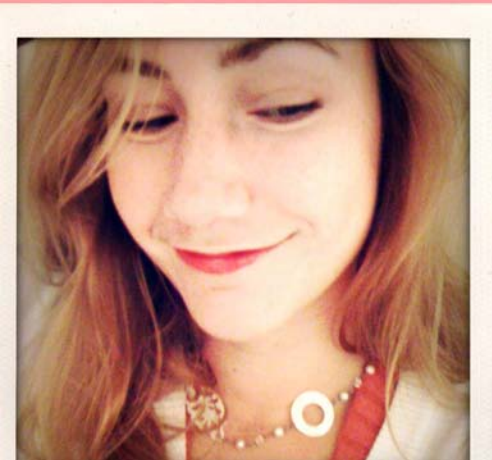
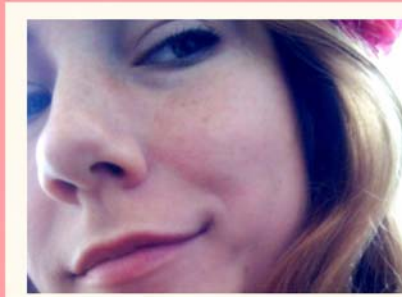
Laura Gaddy

Check out the show's site at:

www.frederatorblogs.com/adventure_time/

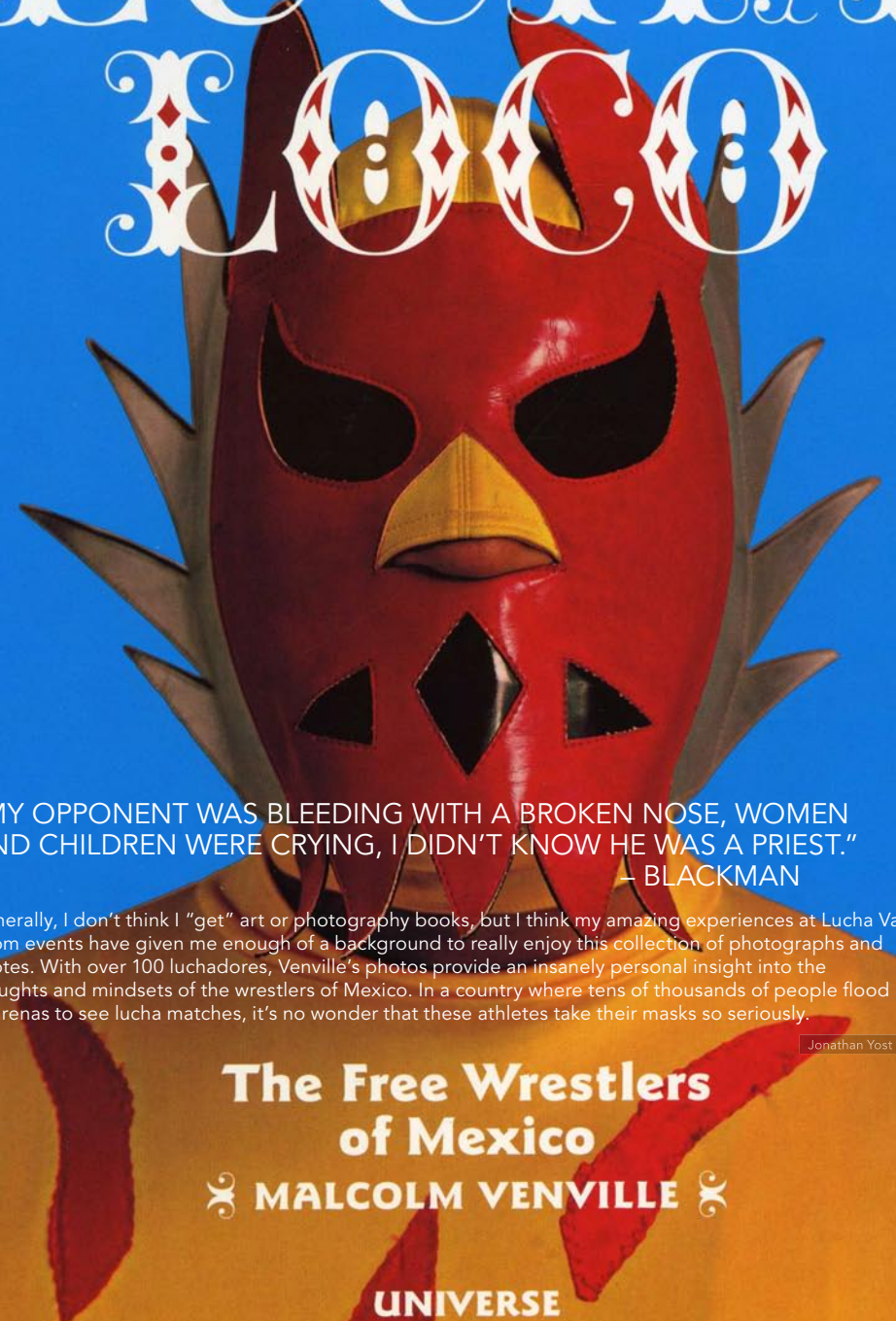


*Don't Worry, I'm
Older Than I Look*



ValancyJane.com

LUCHA



"MY OPPONENT WAS BLEEDING WITH A BROKEN NOSE, WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE CRYING, I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS A PRIEST."

— BLACKMAN

Generally, I don't think I "get" art or photography books, but I think my amazing experiences at Lucha Va Voom events have given me enough of a background to really enjoy this collection of photographs and quotes. With over 100 luchadores, Venville's photos provide an insanely personal insight into the thoughts and mindsets of the wrestlers of Mexico. In a country where tens of thousands of people flood to arenas to see lucha matches, it's no wonder that these athletes take their masks so seriously.

Jonathan Yost

**The Free Wrestlers
of Mexico**

✧ MALCOLM VENVILLE ✧

UNIVERSE

THE BEST OF THE WORST

A DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO CRAPPY BEER

Regrettably, this appreciation of brands that, admittedly, date back hundreds of years and have plenty of history, often doesn't coincide with an actual knowledge of anything to do with brewing or what constitutes a real, good beer. Most of these beers are finished within minutes of being opened, the greatest insight into their quality being that they "go down easy."

For this reason, hipsters, punks, indie kids and others will go on and on about how much they love Pabst Blue Ribbon while attempting to attribute some of this "love" for the brand to the beer itself, and not the fact that PBR has done a phenomenal job of positioning itself in the hearts of "cool kids" everywhere. It hasn't hurt that it is still under \$5 per 6-pack, either.

Now, while the average hipster hangout will always have draft or canned PBR being drank in large numbers by clueless twenty-somethings wearing scarves in August, many a dive bar has begun to offer a wider array of the beer world's discount deals. It's no longer a rarity to find Stroh's or Blatz on the board at a local watering hole or trendy restaurant. What is still somewhat rare is actually seeing someone ordering one of these off-brands. To that end, Racket asked that I sort through some of the pack for you and report my findings.

THE CONTENDERS

A note about the selected brews – the cheap beer family is a close-knit one, and nearly all of these brands have their start in or around Milwaukee and have either been owned, operated, brewed, acquired, etc., by one another at some point during their hundred year (or longer) histories.

BLATZ A once proud brew, first produced in the 1850s, the beer, like many of these brands, was wildly popular from the late 1800s right up through the 1970s, when competition from piss-water beers (primarily Anheuser-Busch brands) caused many of them to fold under, merge, and/or rework their production methods in order to keep up.

MILLER HIGH LIFE Considered one of America's premium beers for much of the last century, High Life is Miller's oldest beer and has always carried the slogan "The Champagne of Beers" or a variation thereof. Somewhere along the line, it became more of a cheap beer, although it maintains its distinctive champagne-like bottle and fizz.

PABST BLUE RIBBON This is the brand responsible for the cheap beer revival. Initially rising in popularity within the underground because of its price (I can recall \$1 cans of PBR at dives in the mid to late 90s), PBR capitalized on its association with the punk and underground music scene through targeted advertising campaigns, concert and venue sponsorships and more. The result? You think you are cool because you drink Pabst.

SCHLITZ Schlitz, possibly more so than any of the above, enjoyed a very thriving following for years. Up until the '70s it was the most popular beer in the world. It suffered the same decline in popularity as the rest of our contenders.

STROH'S Standing alone as a Detroit-based beer, Stroh's has a story not unlike the others: souring popularity from the mid 19th century to the late 20th, then a rapid decline at the hands of the mega-brewers that lead to its eventual acquisition by Miller.

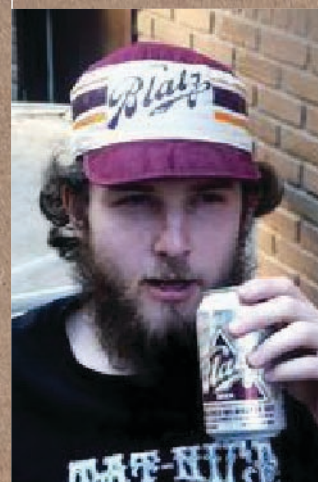
THE METHOD / PRECONCEPTIONS

Having earned less than \$12,000 for most of my 15 years spent in the workforce, I have a considerable history with the above brands. There is not a one that I have not drunk with regularity at some point in time since I started drinking in 1996. Miller High Life and Schlitz have had the longest runs in terms of actual amount drank (by my friends and I) – both were go-to brands in my high school years. A thirty-pack of High Life was \$10 in the mid-to-late '90s. That's 33 cents per beer. Do the math. I could purchase four beers for the price of a 20 oz. soda. There is something wrong with that picture.

I have a heartfelt love for Blatz, stemming from a 30+ year old, one of a kind hat I inherited from my now-deceased father a decade ago. The hat was stolen over the summer and I'll never stop looking for it in dives around town.

I think Pabst is terrible compared to other cheap options. I shun the hipsters who drink it. I wanted it to lose (despite all this, I much prefer it to Budweiser or most popular American domestics). I am clearly biased. I don't really dislike any of these beers, but I certainly like some more than others. It was necessary that a blind taste test be conducted so my bias could not affect the outcome.

Samples of each beer were poured into the pint glasses that were marked by my lovely test assistant Tara. The pint glasses would allow the beer to breathe, enhance its aroma, and bring out the best it had to offer. All of this was done with me sequestered in a separate room. I assigned each glass a number, sampling, and taking notes based on the numbers rather than brand.



THE RESULTS

1 SCHLITZ The clear winner in the contest, Schlitz had more hop flavor, a more distinct character and the best aroma (which is important). More so than any of the other contenders, Schlitz tasted like it could hold its own against beers that cost several dollars more per sixer.

There is a factor here that has to be mentioned, as it no doubt plays a role. Schlitz recently underwent a brand re-launch, including a restoration to its original recipe that made it so popular throughout most of the 20th century. The re-launch includes a marketing plan that is clearly trying to set it apart from its cheap beer brethren.

In fact, I could not even find Schlitz in a can, which, I assure you, is how I drank it during the Great Schlitzing of 1998. So much better was it that I guessed glass no. 2 must contain Schlitz just based on the knowledge that they were claiming a "classic 1960s formula" on their packaging. Be that as it may, it still had competition.

2 STROH'S I'm not surprised that Stroh's came in second. My friend Blair and I drank the beer often because of its great taste-to-price ratio. The more of the sample I tried, the more its grainy, hop character shone. It had the weakest aroma of them all, but came back to capture my taste buds in the long run.

3 HIGH LIFE The Emperor's personal favorite, the Champagne of Beers did not disappoint with a strong third place finish. By far the most light-bodied of the bunch (although all five were startlingly indistinguishable in their glasses), High Life had a definite fruity, citrus flavor with a crisp, fizzy finish. I guarantee you these finer flavor notes are overlooked when chugged in rapid succession, but when sniffed, sipped and mulled over, it's actually got a very nice taste.

4 PABST BLUE RIBBON My notes on this blind selection read exactly as follows: "floral hint, medium-bodied, very average." I had to try it over and over just searching for something more to say about it. I couldn't. It tasted so plain the entire duration of the test that Pabst nearly took last place. Further proof its power is in its presentation.

5 BLATZ When revealing the identities of the brews, all I could say was "Poor Blatz." My sentimental brand ultimately did not stand up to its competitors. After just a sip it was actually ranked 2nd, but the more I sampled, the worse it got. The beer has a smooth taste and was quite crisp, but suffers from a stale aroma. When it came time to pick a worst of the bunch, I had to have a taste-off between glasses no. 1 and no. 4 (Blatz and PBR) to determine which was less enjoyable. The more I imbibed, the worse Blatz got, while PBR stayed its incredibly plain self. Ultimately, plain throughout is better than crisp and smooth at first, but hard to swallow next.

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps the biggest conclusion is that portrayal plays a *gigantic* role in the consumer's perception of a brand. All of the above brands save Miller High Life are currently owned by the Pabst Brewing Company. At least one is still brewed under license by Miller. While each has its own recipe, this means a few things. For one, these are not microbrews. Chances are all of these beers have high fructose corn syrup or other corn and rice ingredients in them – none of which are needed to brew beer. While none are bad, they are the best of the worst.

Luke Toney



CASEY CURRY PHOTOGRAPHY

WWW.CASEYCURRY.COM

SKA IN THE PARK

FISHBONE **BIG D AND THE KIDS TABLE**
MUSTARD RUG **CHRIS MURRAY COMBO**
ASSORTED JELLY BEANS **LA BANDA** **SEE SPOT**
SKA LAVERA

21\$
ADVANCE TICKETS

AVAILABLE AT:
ELECTRIC CHAIR 410 MAIN STREET HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92648
LOU'S RECORDS 434 NORTH COAST HIGHWAY 903 ENCINITAS, CA 92024
CROOKS SKATE SHOP 8408 MAGNOLIA AVENUE RIVERSIDE, CA 92503
GLASSHOUSE RECORD STORE 200 WEST 2ND STREET POMONA, CA 91766

SATURDAY JUNE 26TH @ FOX THEATRE POMONA
301 S. GAREY AVE. • POMONA • CA • 91766
PARAGON BOOKING ♦ MYSAPCE.COM/SKAINTHEPARK

ALSO STARRING:
THE B FOUNDATION • WARSAW POLAND BROS • POLICE & THEIVES
SLAGERIJ • THE NUCKLE BROTHERS • HALF PAST TWO • BUDDHA BOMB
INHALE • THE A OK'S • THE B SHARPS • EASTERN TURKISH • THE EMPIRE ALL STARS
THE BASHMENTS • RUDE KING • THE BOSS BEATS • KAPTIAN KRUNCH & THE CEREAL KILLERS
MAXWELL SMART • THE MAYORS OF SEXY TOWN • THE REMEDIES • NOT A CHANCE
2 TONE LIZARD KINGS • SKAMIKAZI • RED STORE BUMS • LA INFINITA
DEFUNKO • THE BOHUNKS • BACK ALLEY ECHO • SELF MADE MEN • DR. SKAVIA
NINZOMBIE • SAVE THE SWIM TEAM • PILOT TOWHILL • SELL YOURSELF
RUDO MOVIMIENTOS • DRIM LOCK • JONES FOR TELLING • ODD FOUND • FIGHTING CHANCE
OF THE LAMELESS ONE • DU SISTA MICHELLE • DU KING DAVID FROM THE ANARCHY LIBRARY • DU MAND FROM THE REBORNERS



TOP 10 SOLO ARTISTS

BANDS ROCK, BUT IT'S THE FRONT MAN THAT, WELL, MAKES THEM TICK. WITHOUT THESE TRENDSETTING TROUBADOURS OR DICTATORS, TAKE YOUR PICK, WHO WOULD BE THERE TO KEEP THE OTHERS IN LINE AND SET THE STYLE AND TONE OF MUSIC HISTORY? WE'VE COMPILED A LIST OF TEN OF THE BEST FRONT MEN WHO WENT THEIR OWN PATH.



SUNDOWNER

10 SUNDOWNER (AKA Chris McCaughan from the Lawrence Arms) One of the reigning champions of punk,

McCaughan shared song-writing duties with Brendan Kelly, and helped give birth to some of the group's most memorable albums, including *Apathy* and *Exhaustion* and *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. Yet he was growing restless. Adopting the persona Sundowner, he released a solo album backed up by The Lawrence Arm's drummer Neil Hennessy and Jenny Choi of Sanawon. Four One Five Two, released in 2007, is a blend of original tunes as well as The Lawrence Arm's classics such as "Boatless Booze Cruise" and "One Hundred Resolutions."

9 JULIAN CASABLANCAS - The Strokes lead singer (and now solo artist in his own right) has managed to fashion one of the signature sounds of the previous decade. Almost single-handedly, Casablancas meticulously crafted the band's recognizable melodic sound, transcribing notes from keyboard to guitar. But very little is known about the man himself.

A run-in with alcohol got him sent to New York's Phoenix House, followed by a brief stint at Switzerland's Institut Le Rosey. There he met Albert Hammond Jr., son of musician Albert Hammond. Another stint, this time at the exclusive Dwight School in New York, led him to meet Nick Valensi and Fabrizio Moretti (the other Stroke, Nikolai Fraiture, was befriended in 1997). Casablancas released his first solo album *Phrazes for the Young* in 2009.

8 LES CLAYPOOL - The jam band leader/author/producer/filmmaker/everything else is perhaps one of the most prolific artists ever. Besides headlining the surrealist group Primus (and writing songs like "My Name is Mud"), the 46 year-old has spawned a half dozen other acts as well, including *Blind Illusion* and *Sausage*. But he's also a fairly prolific artist outside the band as well. During a seven year period stretching from 1994 to 2001,

Claypool performed with a variety of jam bands, including *Oysterhead* (featuring Stewart Copeland of the Police) and *The Frog Brigade*. Altogether, he has recorded three albums with various non-Primus related bands, including *Frog Brigade's Purple Onion*, *CB23's The Big Eyeball in the Sky*, and *Oysterhead's The Grand Pecking Order*.



LES CLAYPOOL

7 TOM GABEL - Perhaps one of the more underrated musicians on this list, Gabel is not to be underestimated. The lead singer of punk group *Against Me!* is no slouch. In addition to his work with the band, the sometimes-blogger has also pitched in for bands such as *The Lawrence Arms* and *My Chemical Romance*. He known to be very outspoken, as 2007's *New Wave* demonstrates.

TOM GABEL



In addition to his duties with *Against Me!*, he's also a solo artist as well. 2008's *Heart Burns*, a mix of the personal and political, saw him collaborate with *Alkaline Trio's* Matt Skiba and legendary music producer Butch Vig. Not bad for an Army brat.

6 DALLAS GREEN - Often confused with the Major League Baseball pitcher of the same name, this Canadian is anything but a jock. He does make good music, though. Between his work with *Alexisonfire*, the folksy *City and Colour*, and various collaborations with other bands, the self described "alternative country" artist has slugged at least 18 albums since he started performing, including *City and Colour's* CASBY award winning *Bring Me Your Love*.



BEN WEASEL

5 BEN WEASEL The punk rock impresario and co-host of *Weasel Radio* practically dominated the punk-rock scene during the 1990s. *Screeching Weasel* wouldn't exist without him. But Weasel (real name: Benjamin Charles Foster III) also does the solo artist gig. Throughout the 2000s he released a trio of albums, including the mystical *Fidatevi*, and *These Ones Are Bitter*, featuring *Alkaline Trio's* Dan Andriano and two members of the *All-American Rejects*.

4 CHUCK RAGAN - Before setting off to produce folk albums like 2009's *Gold*

Country, the *Hot Water Music* vocalist, along with Chris Wollard, helped popularize the band's rough around the edges sound. Hailing from Gainesville (like fellow gruff voiced front man Tom Gabel and the rest of *Against Me!*), Ragan has epitomized the "Gainesville sound" that *No Idea Records'* founder Var Thelin swears doesn't exist. Ragan's raspy voice and the band's duel vocals helped build the band's name outside the city.

But that wasn't enough for Ragan. Desiring to travel in new musical directions, he split amicably with the band, performing in the folk side project *Rumbleseat* as well as several one off projects for *No Idea Records*, the *7-Inch Club*.



CHUCK RAGAN



MURS

3 MURS - The artist better known as Nick Carter to any soul who has seen him on *Current* is the most talented name that people have never heard. Aside from his hosting duties, MURS has had his hands in a lot of pots,

collaborating with 3MG, Living Legends, and with Slug from Atmosphere created Felt. Yet he's also made a name for himself as the thinking man's rapper. Having co-presented the Paid Dues festival, Murs is now known to have his ear to the ground when it comes to the next big thing.



THOM YORKE

2 **THOM YORKE**
The brains behind "Creep" may helm one of the top alternative bands of the last twenty years, but life wasn't always cheery for the boy from Oxfordshire, England. Early on, the precocious Yorke gravitated

towards music- by age eleven he'd already formed a rock band, but it was his friendship with Ed O'Brien, Phil Selway and the Greenwood brothers Colin and Tommy that would prove to be a lasting influence in his life.

By the time the foursome graduated in the early '90s, the band that would later become Radiohead was already on its way to rock stardom. By his own account, the fame made him "hit the self-destruct button early," as he turned to alcohol. He sobered up though, and out of that the emotionally raw sound that came to be the band's signature style was born. Fast forward 20 years, and Yorke and Co. are still going strong, having released numerous albums and Yorke's solo album.

1 **MICHAEL JACKSON** Love him or hate him, his music pretty much defined the 1980s pop scene. While he was controversial in life, he also recorded a body of solo work that is just having its surface scratched. From the precocious *Forever*, Michael to trendsetting albums such as *Off The Wall* and *Thriller*, he created a signature sound that was uniquely...Michael. Tracks such as "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough" and "Rock With You" became the anthems, if not the soundtracks to many late blooming Baby Boomers' and Gen Xers' lives.



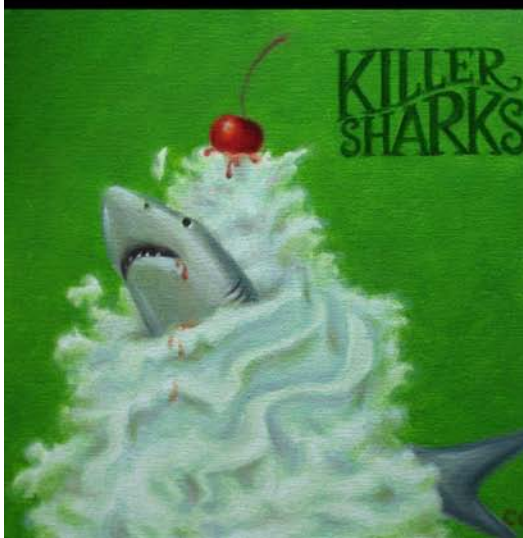
Jack Winn



Killer Sharks -

The MP3 download series from Racket Magazine featuring tracks from Pennywise, The Bronx, The Soft Pack, AM Taxi, The Whigs, Spanish Gamble, Dear Landlord, Friends of Friends, White Rabbits, Electric Owls and more!

Available now at RacketMag.com



©2010 JIMMY PURCELL



GLOBAL INHERITANCE

It seems now more than ever the biggest buzz in the media is the future- with 7 billion people and counting, what's it going to be like? Catastrophic? Bright and shiny? Time-traveling DeLoreans?

Only time can really tell what the future will be like, but organizations like Global Inheritance definitely spread hope for one that's better and brighter. Founded in 2002, Global Inheritance uses art, technology, and good old human interaction to create awareness for environmental and social issues.

Founder Eric Ritz created the nonprofit as a way to unite and inspire, hoping that people will use their ideas to create a positive change in the world.

"I started working with NGOs [non-governmental organizations] in college and then helped launch the TRUTH campaign, which I was a part of for several years. I felt that a similar approach of adapting messages to fit different types of audiences was important to initiate change. Most of the NGO's I worked with couldn't communicate with people outside of a certain demographic, so I decided to launch Fashion Peace (later to become Global Inheritance) to inspire people of every walk of life and to almost become an NGO advertising agency for mother nature and the improvement mankind," Ritz said in an email interview.

Global Inheritance runs 25-30 programs a year, ranging from DJ spinning contests to alternative fuel RC racing. Each program focuses on raising awareness towards being more socially and environmentally minded. GI runs events all over the country, featuring booths, art contests, and prizes for people who want to participate at concerts, festivals, and even some award shows, like the Teen Choice Awards and the ESPYs.

Ritz focuses on creating human connections through art, music, and fun, rather than preying on financial gain. "Green" is definitely the word of the moment, and it's easy to see how companies have capitalized on the movement. This is not the case with Ritz. "Music and art historically are probably the two best mediums in regards to inspiring people. Tapping into people's emotions is paramount because change can't be based purely on financial gain. It's the biggest reason why we avoid the word 'green.' Everyone needs to look at the world differently and play a role in improving the current conditions. This isn't done by labels or celebrities, but through the desire to do good and create a better world for everyone."

With such high regards for music and art, it seems like Ritz is an artist himself- again, not the case. "I can't draw a straight line and I believe I'm tone deaf," he said. But Ritz still understands the power of creativity in getting people involved.

One great way to see Global Inheritance in action is at Coachella, running April 15-18th, 2010. GI teamed up with the mega festival and has a couple fun ways to earn VIP tickets and spread the word. Several programs will be featured at the event, such as Carpool Coachella, where ride sharing enters you in a chance to win tickets, a 10 for 1 water

bottle recycling program, where ten empties gets you one clean bottle of water, and the Energy FACTory Sweatshop mixer.

The Sweatshop mixer will feature a set list of local DJs, each who were picked out of a waiting list and will have a chance to spin a 30-minute set at Coachella- but with one catch. Each DJ will have to bring a pool of friends and family to pedal bikes and hamster wheels to power their equipment- all in the name of alternative energy.

Another great program you can see at Coachella- and across the country- is GI's TRASHed- The Art of Recycling displays. The TRASHed campaign displays artistically redesigned bins in hopes of promoting recycling- bins are either painted on site or submitted by artists. Thousands of artists have participated, and bins created by Hunter S. Thompson, Fugazi, Blink-182, and Bob Burnquist, to name a few, have been showcased at numerous events.

Global Inheritance's key goal is getting people interested in the issues at hand.

"We are set up as a bridge between individuals and the issues," Eric Ritz said. "Global Inheritance is a great first step for everyone to get involved. Once we get people hooked, there's tons of great NGOs or ways that you personally can create change. Our job is to get as many people interested in the key issues as possible. Global change is a numbers game. Everyone has to be invited to the party to really make a difference."

After Coachella you can find Global Inheritance at the Summer X Games and Outside Lands- Ritz assures me that the exhibits will be "REALLY COOL." Environmentaland- GI's mini environmental theme park- will be moving up north to Portland, OR, along with the Sweatshop mixer, so be on the lookout for "great shows and sweaty fans."

As for readers looking to make a difference outside of participating at events, Ritz has one piece of advice: "Visit this place called the world wide web. It's brilliant, can be catered to your taste, and is a great way to communicate with like-minded people all around the world."

The future's outcome may be sketchy, but one thing is certain- whatever happens today, our young people will be left with the results. We can always hope that we'll grow up and live in a world of jetpacks and clear skies to fly in, but the truth remains that it's up to us, the youth of today, to make that happen.

Why? Just ask Eric- "If we don't straighten out the world, they are going to be left with the tab."

Continued

Advertise with

RACKET

THE LIFE STYLE MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE WITH NO LIFE

Email The Emperor for a media kit!

Jonathan@RacketMag.com



Don't make us beg.

Keep in touch with Racket!

racketmag.com
twitter.com/racketmagazine
myspace.com/racketmagazine
And of course, come be our friend on Facebook:

You know what, that link is long. Just search for us.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH STRIKE ANYWHERE

IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW, I LOVE ME SOME STEREOTYPES. BAD CHINESE WOMEN DRIVERS, UPPER MIDDLE CLASS WHITES WHO TRY THEIR DAMNEDEST NOT TO BE RACIST, JERSEY SHORE, I LOVE 'EM ALL. WHEN I WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVIEW THOMAS FROM STRIKE ANYWHERE AGAIN (CATCH THE FIRST ONE ON RACKETMAG.COM), I WAS PUMPED. WHEN WE LAST SPOKE, I GOT STEREOTYPICAL PUNK GEMS LIKE "CULTURAL BAGGAGE" AND TIRADES ABOUT CORPORATIONS. NOW, THOMAS DEFINITELY MAKES SOME SERIOUS POINTS, BUT WHEN THE MAN IN FRONT OF YOU IS A DREADED, PATCH-RIDDEN, PASTY PUNK KID, THERE ARE FEWER THINGS MORE EXCITING FOR ME.



So I was helping my friend move today and now that you are in the process of moving, how much does moving suck?

Oh, not only did I move three thousand miles to Norfolk, Va. on the Atlantic coast in the middle of winter, I have a bunch of rescued animals, rescued dogs and cats, like pit bulls and abused animals and feral cats and stuff. With our former guitarist Matt Sherwood, he flew out here New Year's Eve to help me move all of our animals to Norfolk, to get them resettled and comfortable in our new house and all that. And Mark, our guitar player, he moved from San Francisco to Richmond, but he got dropped off by his ex-girlfriend and his dog at the first show of this tour in Nashville, Tenn. and we went back west, so he's still moving on this tour, not quite getting back to Virginia. So we are totally in that, so, how much does it suck? And we are both doing moves that are from California back to Virginia.

Now, do you only have two or three animals, or do you have a zoo?

We have a zoo; we have seven cats and four dogs.

I just have my one cat and then my parents currently have seven dogs- well, four of them are puppies- and a parrot and a cockatiel. I never thought about how much I disliked an animal before, until I met this parrot.

Parrots should live in the rainforest.

Parrots should live not in a cage in a house, yeah. I'm not that pro pet; I'm just pro animal rescue. And I'm really pro passionate-euthanasia for an unbelievably suffering gigantic urban and rural feral pet population. Like dogs living on chains and like puppies being born into soil contaminated with parvo. We've dealt face to face with these issues. Some of my band mates as well, like Garth, has rescued a bunch of pit bulls and re-socialized them, got them medical care and made them into good pets. These are pit bulls that have spent two years in captivity after being rescued from Katrina in New Orleans.

So what reality TV shows do you watch?

Kind of an embarrassing amount when I get a chance.

Really?

Yeah, but I don't have much time to watch too much TV, cause we tour a lot.

Are you a big Project Runway fan?

No, no, no... I mean, I don't hate it, but PETA2 is on this tour and it is awesome to have them, and other animal rescue and rights groups have been a presence in our lives touring with us for a long time and like the cove project, to expose the dolphin kills in Japan and get like a huge public outcry... Is that a fruit basket?!!!! [A member of another band brings in a giant fruit basket]

It's Edible Arrangements, dude.

I love it. Um is a huge part of what we do and yeah, just all of the animal rights, that consciousness that has been a part of hardcore since before we were a band. It is something we care about a great deal.

Ok, we'll steer clear of that cause ah, I get uppity with PETA... sometimes.

No, they're a controversial organization; they are quite radical. They have their hands in every aspect of life, like pop-culture, celebrity culture and then what they call the "dirty work" that society doesn't want to think about having to do. There are shelters and animal pounds in parts of eastern North Carolina and rural Virginia that don't even properly kill the animals they are supposed to euthanize; they leave them half dead in piles, rotting in the sun. There is one of these shelters in Richmond that did the same thing. So there is this sense of unbelievable suffering; ending animal suffering is extremely important to me.

Got it. With the Bush administration out of the office, which is something that has changed since the last time we chatted, do you think that punk has their source material has sort of dried up?

No, I think everything was kind of safer and easier when we had kind of a one-dimensional villain, and you could rally around a certain thing, but no one was really talking about other solutions. I think punk, when it started, was pretty anti-politics. It wasn't about apathy but it was about the larger questions, the systemic structures of everyday life. Like we're just sold into this duality, like democrats, republicans, liberals, conservatives, like that is some meaningless bullshit. You know, and it roams the world. It is a projection of America. It's not really how we can better organize ourselves, or have an equitable civilization. So, rocking against Bush was cool, but getting deeper is important, and now we have an opportunity to do that. And when our video comes out next week, you will see that we are doing that.

Now I hear a lot of people are like, "Oh, America is all jacked up" and this and that. What country do you think is the most fucked up? In terms of how it treats its citizens.

Oh Jesus. I mean, it depends on where the citizens are at. Like how you would define the borders of a nation-state?

I mean, what country would you least want to be a citizen of?

Um, things are pretty bad in Somalia.

But then you could be a pirate.

If you're in Somaliland, which is the autonomous zone north of Somalia. But no, I'm sure there are lots of people escaping to Somalia to become pirates. There's a lot of repressive regimes. We managed to get into Belarus and play a show in Minsk, it is a locked-down, state-controlled, surveillance-run,

totalitarian dictatorship. It doesn't get a lot of press cause it doesn't have nukes like North Korea, but it is like North Korea. It's in Europe, Belarus. So those kids, they're all like 19, 20, they've all been arrested for democratic protest, for just being punks, on the one summer day in the squares. And you know, they have engineering degrees, they could be scientists, they could be, you know, poets and artists, and they just can't leave, they can't travel. So that's a pretty rough place that we've been to. I would not like to be a citizen, but I would love to go back and play a show for those kids. They presented us a book that they had downloaded and printed pictures and written our lyrics, in English, to make a story to thank us for coming. It's pictures of us and pictures of them, the kids from Belarus, being punk rockers, living their lives. It was so sweet. It's not a particular beef with like, "I'm resentful that I'm an American." Nation-states are fucked. It's the illusion of like having independence inside of a country. You know, we are run by trans-national corporate wealth that doesn't give a fuck about America, Australia, Germany, whatever the nationalities of those people are: greed is their master. So you know, that's a huge part of the trap that we're in right now; it's that we're not living up to our human promises, our actual morality. I think that's going to take, not just politics as usual within the borders of a country, but something outside of that; something bigger. Like a movement of consciousness. That is always what we have been plugged into and writing songs about and trying to live up.

Are any of you papas? Have any of you brought in babies into this greed-ridden world?

No, no and there are some vasectomies in the Strike Anywhere camp. Not to say that we wouldn't, that some of us wouldn't procreate, but we're just as excited about fostering or adopting or just being good childless citizens of a community.

Alright, what is your favorite jam from the 1990's? I was going to say 90's but then I got the "I love the 80's" but the 1980's CD

Man, what is that shit like?

It's like all Brahms.

Yeah, Brahms was running that shit. He was the Jay-Z of the 1880's. Hey Mark, what's your favorite song from the 1990's? Like a radio song?

Yeah, Yeah.

I wasn't listening to much radio in the 1990's; I was collecting vinyl.

I think it's the only time I did listen to the radio.

I like that, love song, that one that was popular. Do you know, do you know that band? Um, I can't remember the name of it, that's not gonna help. Everclear? No. No. Wait! It's... I liked "Tennessee" by Arrested Development.

Ok, good jam. Between that and "Mr. Wendel," man, they had locked down. I was like "This band rules!"

I love Arrested Development. That shit is, I still have the cassette tape of that.

Any time someone says "Tennessee," I just start repeating it...

"Mr. Wendel" was a good jam, too.

Yeah, but there's a street in San Diego that I used to live off of called Genesee, so I'd repeat that, too.

Also we just played the first show in Nashville. Which was pretty fun, we have a song that name-checks the state of Tennessee, so of course we started with that and the kids were like, "Yeah, Tennessee" and of course you know all our songs are about like, fucking nuclear devastation and industrial military complex and like birth defects, and like childhood traumas and like, you know, anti-war songs, cheery topics. So when we talk about Tennessee, we are talking about some bad shit happened in Tennessee and Oakridge, look it up, your shit is fucked, and the kids are just like "YEAH! TENNESSEE! YEAH!" You know, that's how we roll.

Now do you think that corporations by just being a corporation is evil or do you think it's something bigger than that?

Corporations are given legal rights of a person without any of the responsibilities to answer for their crimes. They are empowered in a way which is a huge perversion of the free market individualism philosophy of America. It actually subverts individual creativity and it puts shackles on people's ability to control their fate, and to control the fate of resources in their communities. Um, yeah, I think philosophically the nature of a legally protected corporate entity means that there is no individual responsibility for running roughshod over the planet in the name of some kind of deep hyper perverted, perversion; it's a perverted perversion.

I like it: double perversion. Pervy squared.

Of a fairly idealistic naïve entrepreneurially impulse that pundits right now, billionaires screaming at you on AM radio, telling working class people that are trying to care for their families is betraying America.

And trying to organize for their rights is betraying America... So I mean, you can take patriotism and jack up any evil, immoral idea that you want. I mean that's why nation-states are the enemy: nation-states protecting corporate wealth is right now the furthest exponent of this idea.

A problem I have with both the left wing and the right wing and anywhere around that, is a seeming lack of balance in where people get their information. Where it's like, let's just take your stereotypical republican, where it's Fox News or nothing at all. Where do you get your information and how do you find a balance?

That's a good question. It's really hard. I mean trying to read newspapers that you think are neutral or even trying to read and understand; it's better to go into something understanding the biases than to go into something than going into something expecting information from a neutral source. Whether it's ZNET, or you know, whether it's like the typical extremely literate compassionately international left wing essays and websites like John Pilcher and Howard Zinn (RIP) and things like that. You do understand those biases as well. But getting an international perspective on news is really important. So like, reading your local paper, and if you're in Virginia, you get some wild shit like "Tobacco: What's really wrong with it?" You know, or like front page questioning of Obama's citizenship, like those non-ideas are selling insane amounts of papers in the southeast. Like, being comforted by ignorance and all that is a huge part of media and so moving past that and just trying to be brave with what you read and trying to understand other cultural ideas. Looking at nationalism, not from the idea of being a super-power but from indigenous communities that are trying to free themselves from an oppressive majority. You know, maybe that's an acceptable nationalism in this particular moment. You have to look at it in these waves. I think there is way too much duality. I think you can read it in the press, I mean there's comic books and cartoons, there's fan sites and websites, that have a lot more intellectually responsible content than most major newspapers and news sources. When I see the intro to the Steven Colbert Report, the new intro with the eagle that's painted red white and blue, I'm like, this is supposed to be parody but the rest of the world, the serious news has caught up to this and this just looks like everything else looks. Billboards, MSNBC, FOX News, you know, I think being driven into left wing-right wing camps is also an aspect of this dehumanizing retardation that has happened to us.

Oderus from GWAR was on Fox Redeye last night.

How was he? I grew up with him.

It's like the 7th time he's been on it and it's just

ridiculous. He just talks so much trash and like hits on the anchors and shit...

He's a brilliant man.

But just watching Fox News for a half an hour just irritates me, because it's not a problem to be exposed to the super conservative ideas, what pisses me off is... They did a poll where more people trust Fox News than MSNBC, and then they run this weird computer graphic, like freshman level computer graphics, where it's like them making fun of MSNBC, and talking about how much better they are, and I'm like, "This is supposed to be news?" I'm supposed to get information from this? It just lost me completely. I mean, I don't watch news, and that just really solidified it. But GWAR...

GWAR's first show I saw, before they had a budget and they were making their own masks, roller-skates, foam battle-axes, loin cloths; I saw a free show. It was like, they were just crazy art student punk rockers from the mid 80's, and in 1987, it was my first show, and we had a two-story grainery in the country outside my hometown, in Richmond, and we had them come play a show. We had like stolen power and we didn't know that we were doing like a DIY show space, cause that nomenclature hadn't been developed yet, so we just did this thing, and had these shows and it was really fun and GWAR came and they were also invested in like tons of warehouses and art spaces and practice spaces for all the bands and stuff. Growing up in GWAR's shadow was like pretty awesome. Occasionally you would have to wipe off slime.

Yeah, my friend today, you could tell, like the pants and shoes he had still had the red and green specks from the GWAR show we went to in November.

No doubt. That's awesome.

It was good. Just after I saw their show in November- November 23rd- went home, and my mom's dog was in the house, normally just chilling in the backyard. I come into the house and I'm like "Hey puppy!" and it just up and bites me in the face. And all I could think, was "This is how GWAR ends: having my nostril torn from the inside by a fang."

Sorry.

No, I mean it was all right, like it wasn't terrible. Like I wasn't upset, I was just like "Oh, real blood mixed with the fake blood." All right man, I think that's about it.

I hope you can pull some good quotes, you know, like the Jay-Z thing.

Oh, the Jay-Z thing is so good.

Yours in GWAR, The Emperor.

FESTIVAL DO'S AND DON'TS

A GUIDE TO MAKING THE MOST OF YO' FESTIVAL TIX



GOLD BOND

Medicated powder Warped Tour, Sasquatch, Bamboozle Left, Coachella, even OzzFest, I've been to my fair share of festivals, and NO piece of advice I have ever received was to give my crotch a quick blast of "Ball Powder." As a young concert goer, I found out first hand what chaffing was, and you know what it was? It was TERRIBLE. One day, while up in Seattle for the Sasquatch Festival (like Coachella, but green and cool, not brown and hot as hell,) I was offered a yellow bottle and from then on, my festival life has been 80% more awesome. Also appropriate for ass cracks.



TISSUES

Ladies, this is mostly for you, as most men are on a drip dry system when we hit the port-o-potties. There is inevitably some asshole that somehow destroys the entire supply of toilet paper, leaving you wanting. Now, fellas, while the port-o-johns are not as big of a stigma for us as it is the ladies, sometimes the combination of warm Bud Light and the "Chinese" food catches up to us, so keep a little batch of tissues with you, too. Go in on a multipack with some friends to maximize your cash.



SUNSCREEN

I have no idea why people always forget this but it never fails, there is ALWAYS some short dude with his tank-top-tan-line looking pissed off because the bastard's got third degree burns. What you need to know is that a 99 cent bottle from the travel section of your local Target will suffice. Don't get the wussy SPF 15, go with 45, which means that you'll be protected 3x better in the sun. And for God's sake, RE-APPLY it through out the day, I go with about every 2-3 hours. Make sure you don't forget your ears, back of the neck and any chest/arms/legs that are exposed.

SHOES

Look, I understand that festivals attract dreadlocked, drug-addled hippies, but really, you're more than likely going to be on your feet for eight hours, so don't bring your Birkenstocks. If it's a summer festival, i.e. Coachella, go with a good pair of already broken in walking/running shoes. If it's a bit cooler, I recommend some light hiking boots. Remember, if

your feet hurt after two hours of wearing them, imagine what you'll feel like after eight hours. If you didn't know this, sporting goods stores like Sport Chalet and REI have exceptionally knowledgeable employees. Go in, have a chat with them, try on some shoes, and then go online and get that shit on the cheap. If you're worried about keeping your hipster cred, go for a pair of New Balance.

HAT/BANDANA/ SUNGLASSES

Most festivals are in the middle of nowhere, allowing the sun to assault you for the entire day. Chances are the stage is going to be facing away from the sun, as the artists have a whole lot more sway than you do. Do yourself a favor and bring a hat and/or sunglasses to block the sun, should it be shining in your eyes as you're trying to get a glimpse of whatever your favorite artist is this week.

MEDICATION:

Asthma spray, antibiotics, birth control. If you need to take it at a certain time of day, make sure to bring it.



Festivals are filled with sick people making everyone else sick. Don't add to it by forgetting to aid your disease-riddled immune system. If it's something that needs to be refrigerated, the on-site paramedics will be able to help you out. Don't expect your "medical marijuana" to be as easily accepted, however. Keep that in



your secret pouch of your back pack. NOTE: Some medications need to be checked in by security, take a gander at the promoter's website for details before you go.

ENERGIZER ENERGI TO GO

If your cell phone is like mine, your battery won't be lasting more than a day, and don't act like you'll turn it off during the day, either. Keep your phone on AND charged with battery-powered chargers, which you can find anywhere that sells electronics. It'll also

work for your iPod, should you be one of THOSE people that pay exorbitant amounts of money for a festival, only to listen to your music collection



surrounded by people. And don't forget the damned batteries. Comes in multiple forms, charging a single phone, a phone and an iPod, or they even have a mothaefffin' solar powered ones for you uber-hippies

BOOTLEGGING

For the advanced concert-goer, there's always bootlegging the show. For personal use only, of course. While some try to simply bring in a tape recorder, security knows what those look like and will send you back to your car. I have recently discovered the Mikey, a microphone from Blue that plugs into your iPod, turning it into a multi-gig recording device. With three gain settings, you can record your boyfriend's



acoustic set at open mic night and the headliner at the noisiest of rock shows with equal ease. The main downfall of the Mikey is that it will suck a battery dry in an hour, so make sure you have that battery-powered charger handy.

Jonathan Yost





OMEGA comics
presents

Get yours: www.popgoestheicon.com

REUNITED AND IT FEELS SO GOOD

PLAYING IN FRONT OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. AN EPIC WORD OF MOUTH BUZZ. CASH MONEY. THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS THAT COACHELLA HAS TO OFFER BANDS TO REUNITE. WHATEVER THE REASONS, HERE'S SOME SWEET BANDS THAT ARE REUNITING FOR THE 2010 COACHELLA MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL.



FAITH NO MORE

Faith No More officially reunited about a year ago, but have only recently begun to announce US tour dates. The band has a lifetime that spans all of the '80s and most of the '90s. Their unique take on heavy metal awarded them a devout following that carried them through multiple phases of popular metal, outlasting even some bands who may never have existed without their contributions, until their eventual breakup in 1998. Over a decade later their influence is still felt, their relevance still present. Seeing any of Mike Patton's many acts would be worth most of the price of admission, but Faith No More... Well, that presents one of those rare opportunities to see a band whose influence is immeasurable, something Coachella has become known for over the years.



SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE

Emo pioneers Sunny Day Real Estate disbanded in 1995 when two of its members heard opportunity knocking at their door. By "opportunity," I mean Dave Grohl, and by "knocking," I mean forming the Foo Fighters. The band regrouped for a brief period from 1997 to 2001, although without bassist Nate Mendel, who remained with the Foo Fighters. Nearly a decade later and Sunny Day Real Estate is back, doing the festival circuit with a stop at this year's Coachella Music Festival. This time Mendel has joined in and fans can rejoice, thanks to news that an album of new material is coming down the pike.



PAVEMENT

Critically acclaimed, reasonably popular, Pavement made big waves in a small pond throughout the '90s as one of the indie underground's most beloved acts. Their live performances have a history of...eccentricities, to say the least. Pavement last performed at Coachella during the festival's inaugural year in 1999. The performance, during which front man Stephen Malkmus memorably refused to sing, was one of Pavement's last before the band called it quits. Whatever surprises await festival-goers this year, theirs is a set not to be missed.

Luke Toney

COACHELLA 2010

WHO TO WATCH



PORCUPINE TREE

PORCUPINE TREE - As much as we love Maynard James Keenan, move over, Tool.

If there is a band that has been left under the mainstream radar for far too long, it is England-originated act, Porcupine Tree. Formed and led by self-taught producer and songwriter, Steven Wilson pushes artistry and the enigmatic Porcupine Tree concept to a psychedelic level comparable to krautrock...but not German and therefore, less motorik.

Like their records, Porcupine Tree's live performances are known for being dark, both musically and visually. Coupled with masterful artistry by photographer and filmmaker Lasse Hoile, the Porcupine Tree experience is the perfect blend of beauty and melancholy—something not to be missed. Hoile creates a short-film representing a visual concept for each song, which is projected on a screen while the band plays. The result—heavy '70s music meets silent films at a rock concert. Badass.

Porcupine Tree may never be the typically dubbed "commercial" band that their fans dream of, but their pseudo-fame in the progressive rock world makes them a sonic secret. They are still in a good position, however, selling out shows all over the

world and standing behind traditional album making. Wilson still believes in the record as a piece of art and not a commercial, consumerist product. The music, along with the packaging, DOES matter. That is something that both Porcupine Tree and Tool respect.

Their tenth and most recent record, *The Incident*, is influenced by '70s rock music. According to Wilson, "[the '70s] was the greatest era for album-based music." Porcupine Tree's *The Incident* is available now worldwide. <http://www.porcupinetreec.com>.

Kateri Lirio

THOM YORKE - Since their Pablo Honey debut in 1993, Radiohead has done nothing but push the boundaries of music as far as they possibly can and won over the general public and critics at the same time. They are one of the most talented bands with some of the most dedicated fans in the world. Some may argue U2, but I said talented so they are eliminated from this debate immediately. Their front man and principal songwriter, Thom Yorke, is one of the most respected figures within the music industry. If you need more proof as to the influence Yorke and his bandmates have had on others, observe how many attendees of Coachella have Radiohead tattoos.



THOM YORKE

Since Radiohead's 2004 Coachella performance, Thom Yorke has released a solo album and will hit the Coachella stage once again this year, this time without his bandmates. There has been some speculation that someone will join Yorke on stage because the lineup released on the Coachella website has Thom Yorke posted. Many people feel it will be the project he has been collaborating on with Flea from Red Hot Chili Peppers, Joey Waronker of R.E.M. and Beck, Mauro Refosco of Forro in the Dark, and producer Nigel Goodrich. This "super" group has only performed twice, both sold-out shows at the Orpheum Theater in Los Angeles this past October. Although there is much mystery as to who will play with Yorke, if anyone, one thing will be abundantly clear: People will be given the treasured opportunity to see one of the greatest artists of our generation.

Erik Garcia

YEASAYER - If there is a band that should write a book on how to go from relative obscurity to quickly rising stars, that band would be Yeasayer. These art rockers from Brooklyn have been moving at full speed since they played SXSW in 2007. The trio is comprised of vocalist/guitarist Chris Keating, bassist Ira Wolf Tuton, and drummer Anand Wilder, and they have been touring wildly since that inception in Austin.



YEASAYER



WHITE RABBITS

They have been on tours supporting MGMT and Beck. Their resume also includes spots on famous music festivals such as Lollapalooza, the Roskilde Festival, Reading/Leeds Festival, the Pitchfork Media Festival, and Bonnaroo. Blurring the lines between indie rock and world music, fans have grown to love the band's dedication to production and experimentation on their records and in their live performances. Among their kinsmen are groups Animal Collective, Grizzly Bear, and TV on the Radio, but where the previously mentioned acts rely more on ritualistic drumming, Yeasayer incorporates an interesting and beautiful Middle Eastern sound to their music, which leads to enjoyable and provocative listening experiences. Listen to "Sunrise," the first track off their debut LP *All Hour Cymbals*, and you will get the picture.

Somewhere between all of that touring on support tours and music festivals, Yeasayer managed to find some time to write and record their follow-up album, *Odd Blood*, released on February 9. Like I said, these guys need to write that damn book now. Young men and women living in their parents' upper middle-class homes with no desire to find a real job depend on it. Help them out Yeasayer! Do it for your country.

Erik Garcia



MATT AND KIM

MATT AND KIM - Matt and Kim are the cutest things to happen to music since Sonny and Cher. Well, they weren't really cute, but Matt and Kim most definitely are. Honestly, watching them interact on stage is probably reason enough to watch their set at Coachella this year. You'd be hard pressed to find two people who show more love and appreciation for what they are doing and each other. Few acts make it clearer that none of this could ever happen without you, the fan. That's an amazing thing to be able to keep in perspective amidst the success Matt and Kim are experiencing. Their set promises to be one of the most enjoyable of the festival.

But make no mistake, stage presence aside, Matt and Kim also write some catchy songs. They've got two albums full of pop gems now. My personal favorite, "Yea Yeah," and other fan favorites like "It's a Fact" and "5k" from their first, self-titled album still feature prominently alongside new tracks from their Billboard charting Grand, like "Lessons Learned" and the single that broke them to the masses, "Daylight." There will be hands wavin' and booties shakin'. If you're lucky, Kim's among them.

Luke Toney

WHITE RABBITS - It will never make sense to me, but if you want to add to your credibility as an indie



LUCERO

rock band, you relocate to Brooklyn. It is the Seattle of today, and young musicians are moving there in waves to cram five people into a studio apartment that costs double what a two-bedroom apartment would cost in their hometown. Enter White Rabbits, a band from Columbia, Missouri that originated at the University of Missouri where frontmen Greg Roberts and Stephen Patterson met in 2004. White Rabbits also contains in its lineup bassist Brian Betancourt, percussionist Matt Clark, guitarist Alex Even, and drummer Jamie Levinson.

This six-piece indie rock group released their debut, *Fort Nightly*, in 2007 and has gained both commercial and critical success since then. One listen to any song of White Rabbits explains how they manage to pull that balancing act off. Start with quasi-folk, country-tinged indie rock, throw in minimal yet noticeable experimental rock, and add constant catchy choruses and the recipe is a hit. Listen to "The Plot" off of their debut and the description makes complete sense. Think of a less-ambitious Spoon and the light bulb goes off. They just write really good songs that could have them opening for the Foo Fighters or for the previously-mentioned Spoon. Ironically, they have indeed opened for Spoon, the Kaiser Chiefs, and The Walkmen. Britt Daniels, lead singer of Spoon, also produced their second album, *It's Frightening*,



LOCAL NATIVES

which was released in 2009. His skills only enhanced that balancing act of theirs, and it can be seen in the fact that they played the KROQ Almost Acoustic Christmas show this past December.

These savvy rockers are playing day one of Coachella this year, and their performance is not one to be missed. They are simply a dust cloud of energy that can be missed if you blink either eyelid. They break many guitar strings and drum heads and use many different instruments on stage. It really is a good time, and they almost always play a cover song at every show in their own interpretation. Keep in mind that they admit to being huge fans of both Bob Dylan and The Specials, and the array of cover songs they can play becomes immense. Make sure you check them out. If you get the chance to meet them, please convince them to move back to Missouri. They are just too good to be another band living in Brooklyn. That city belongs to Jay-Z. Columbia, Missouri belongs to White Rabbits.

Erik Garcia

LUCERO - With 7 albums and god knows how many tour dates under their belt it's about time that they have gotten the chance to present themselves to the masses. Fronted by gravel-voiced troubadour Ben Nichols, the Memphis band has been described as honky-tonk, alt-country, bar rock and more. The

band is equally comfortable in country bars and punk dives, providing plenty of fodder for the debate on which genre they actually fall in. What I do know is that whether it's at the bar with a Jameson or up front screaming along, Lucero's show is the shit.

Recently adding a horn section to their already frenetic lineup, Lucero somehow manages to make their show even more intense than it already was. On their recent album, *1372 Overton Park*, Nichols and Co. have been shown the way by Jim Spake, a stalwart of the Stax era, so you know it's got to be good.

But the genre doesn't matter, what matters is the songs, which range in content from heartbroken youth to the effects of war to romantic intentions to... more songs about heartbreak. To those who say they listen to "everything but rap and country," go listen to Lucero. While you're at it, check out P.O.S. and change your Facebook profile to "I listen to EVERYTHING."

Jonathan Yost

LOCAL NATIVES - It's no secret that Silver Lake is a hipster heaven. The LA area has been called home by many musicians, from Pavement to Rilo Kiley to even Tom Waits. Though not originally from the area, Local Natives have also made their dwelling in



Silver Lake, and they are by no means a slight on the name.

Since playing at SXSW in 2009, Local Natives have been in high demand. The SoCal music scene is buzzing with excitement about the band, and their newly released album *Gorilla Manor* has been highly anticipated.

I had the privilege of seeing Local Natives perform in Hollywood on a homecoming night, coming off a national tour- the place had a line wrapped around the entire block, full of hipsters in their scene jeans and headbands. The fans around me practically vibrated with excitement to see the six guys in the band all decked out in their varying degrees of mustaches. It seems I was lucky to even get in to such a small venue to see them- the band is booked for the next year, launching a tour in support of *Gorilla Manor*, as well as playing Coachella, Bonnaroo, Sasquatch, and hitting the stage at SXSW again.

It's easy to see the attraction to the guys. Local Natives' music has an interesting variance to it, ranging from low, soft melodies wavering through your stereo, to heavy drumbeats and danceable rhythms. The harmonies are incredible; the vocals complicated, sliding around the notes, intertwining with each other, at times overpowering the instrumentals.

By the end of a Local Natives set, the music will take over. The songs build with intensity; the steady, complex rhythms of the drums seduce the crowd. You'll dance, like I did, until the set was over and everyone is out of breath and dripping with sweat.

Local Natives won me over, not with the talent of their playing or the range in their vocals. The passion with which they played captivated me, and it's plain to see that the buzz surrounding the band is happening for a reason. Local Natives plays a damn good show. Caitlin Elgin

PHOENIX - There aren't many things that people dislike about Phoenix. They hail from Versailles,

France so they have that accent most women find attractive. Oh yeah, they're also good-looking guys that could have chosen to become male models instead of musicians. Actually, now that I am compiling this list, I realize I am just creating reasons for guys to hate this band and I think I am beginning to hate this band too. Why do I like these then if they're just the indie scene's answer to the Jonas Brothers? Now I remember, they make really, really good music.

Playing a type of indie rock that can definitely be characterized as dance music, these French lads have been recording albums and touring the world since 1996. Think Air with less sampling and more guitars. This description of their music is appropriate when one is alerted to the fact that they were the backing band for a remix of Air's "Kelly Watch the Stars" single.

In an effort to give them more street cred and to push them farther away from the image of the Jonas Brothers that I regrettably alluded to earlier, it's also interesting to note that the band named themselves Phoenix after guitarist Laurent Brancowitz joined the group. He had previously been in a band called Darlin' that also had Thomas Bengalter and Guy-Manuel de Homen-Cristo as members. Yep, it is true. He was in a band with the two gentlemen who would go on to become Daft Punk.

Their debut album *United* had a small amount of success in the States mostly because their single "Too Young" was on the original soundtrack for the movie *Shallow Hal* (in case you don't recall, it's the song Jack Black dances to in the scene at the club where he believes he is dancing with gorgeous women that are really ugly). Watch it again, that's Phoenix. Since *United*, they have gone on to release three more albums, including 2006's *It's Never Been Like That*. It was at Coachella in 2006 that Phoenix hit the stage in support of this record. Performing in the Gobi tent, they hit the crowd with their danceable indie rock and gained many new fans that day.

Since rocking Coachella, their popularity has risen insurmountably. In 2009, they released *Wolfgang Amadeus Phoenix* and have become a mainstay on many rock radio stations. They also have won a Grammy for Best Alternative Music Album. To top it all off, they will rock Coachella again to what is certain to be a much bigger audience. It is success that they have worked for and certainly deserve, and I guess I really don't hate the fact that they are really good-looking guys with French accents after all. Erik Garcia



THE NOISE ACADEMY

Audience, meet artist. Artist, this is audience.

booking | promotions | production | artist development

WWW.THENOISEACADEMY.COM



THE FAT OF THE LAND

20 YEARS OF FAT WRECK CHORDS

MY FIRST INTRODUCTION TO FAT WRECK CHORDS WAS IN 1994, THE YEAR PUNK BROKE...AGAIN. AT THE TIME, CHEAP COMPILATIONS WERE THE RAGE. FORK OVER FOUR OR FIVE BUCKS AND YOU COULD SAMPLE A LABEL'S ENTIRE CATALOG. MAYBE THIS WASN'T THE CASE NATIONWIDE, BUT IT WAS IN PODUNK, WV. THESE SAMPLERS WERE OUR GATEWAY TO NEW MUSIC. LET ME ASSURE YOU, THESE BANDS WERE NOT STOPPING THROUGH ON TOUR.

By 1994, Fat had already been around for four years. Granted, the label didn't put out a lot of albums in those early years, existing basically as a place for NOFX to release 7"s until records from the likes of Lagwagon, Snuff and Propagandi (still one of my personal faves) began rolling off the presses. From these humble beginnings, Fat Wreck has grown into a sizable independent label, sporting a whopping eight employees! Okay, so they still aren't gigantic and have the feel of a small label. Those are good things. But their reputation and influence have increased exponentially over the years.

The label is now a launching ground for some of today's most successful punk acts. Whether or not that's a good thing is up for debate. The fact remains, future major label darlings such as Rise Against, Anti-Flag, Against Me! and Dillinger Four...uh, wait...okay, not D4. Anyway, those other three bands were all on Fat before making the "I care more about exposure and money than anything I sing or write about, but at least, we don't contract with the Army. So hey! We're not Godsmack. That counts for something, right?" jump to a major. I mean, it would be one thing if the bands making the jump were goof-off acts like D4, who claim only to enjoy getting wasted and fucking around, but all those bands sing about an anti-corporate agenda! I mean, come on, man! But I digress...

Where was I? Oh yeah, so major labels look at what Fat is doing and who they are signing, then take advantage of their lauded "one album per

contract" policy. This policy is awesome in that it gives bands the freedom to explore other options, release records on friends' labels, sell out, what have you. Whether intentional or not, this is also good for Fat because when the 16-year-old hears Against Me! on a Clear Channel-owned radio station and runs to the store to buy the album. Right behind the major label release is an album on Fat Wreck, distributed by a Sony subsidiary and, therefore, with only slightly less prominence in a retail store than an actual major.

Holy shit, this is not what this article is supposed to be about! This article is about Fat Wreck and all the good it's done; great things like the PunkVoter.com campaign, which was started by Fat Wreck founder Fat Mike to bring out the youth/punk vote in a valiant attempt to legally overthrow the Bush Regime. Unfortunately, the Regime didn't play by those rules and the effort was squashed via the disenfranchisement of the black and poor vote in my state of Ohio. That didn't dismay Fat Wreck though; they still put out charity releases, have charity events and tours, and generally give back more than the more fortunate. It's almost as if Fat Mike embodies and does the things that his former label-mates only sing about. No, no, my bad. It's exactly like that!

In addition to its growing influence on the punk scene and not-for-profit activities, Fat also puts out some damn good music. Despite what the above might give off, I actually like Against Me! and their albums on Fat were among the best



punk had to offer in those years. Anti-Flag was good, too. "Turncoat" is an amazing song. "The Decline," I truly believe, is the greatest punk song ever written. Do you remember how Green Day capitalized on the idea with their politically charged concept album? Remember how critics applauded it as such a creative thing to do? The Decline outright puts that album to shame.

And good Lord, Me First and the Gimme Gimmes; what can you say about a band like that? A punk rock super group, featuring members of NOFX, Foo Fighters via No Use for a Name, Lagwagon, and a dude who originally worked in the mail order department at Fat Wreck belting out punk rock versions of songs that were never meant to be played at that

speed. If that wasn't enough, these guys will literally play your wedding. Best cover band of all time. Add to that two of the best live albums ever, Ruin Johnny's Bar Mitzvah by the aforementioned Gimme Gimmes and I Heard They Suck Live, NOFX's live disc from 15 years ago, plus their addition to Short Music for Short People, A Fat release featuring 800 or so bands doing super short songs. These guys know how to make one helluvan entertaining record.

So what does a label with a long-standing tradition such as this do to celebrate its 20th Anniversary? Release the compilation to end all compilations, of course. Fat's Wrecktrospective is a damn three-disc affair with over an hour's worth of music on each of the discs to commemorate the occasion. The set was released in Dec. 2009 and is available for \$15. Disc one is a jolly walk down memory lane, featuring the label's greatest hits, including cuts from the acts that got Fat started. Great songs that I haven't heard in a decade populate the 33 songs on disc one. Disc two is all unreleased and rare shit. Good, but with less nostalgia. Disc three is the entire Fat Club 7" series. The first disc is the standout for an old coot like me (How old is he? Maybe we should just go with old-school fan), with disc three coming in second. Unreleased material usually wasn't released for a reason. Disc two isn't bad, but definitely the lesser of the bunch.

I've seen a lot of Fat bands lately, including NOFX at Riotfest in early Oct. 2009. Like any band that has been playing for nearly 30 years (almost 20 with the same lineup), the guys are tight as fuck. The bands these guys influenced-the teenagers getting signed straight to majors-might sound good on album, but go watch them fall apart live and you'll come to appreciate good punk rock when you see it. Teenage Bottlerocket signed with Fat for their latest record. It's probably their best to date and they were the standout act at Riotfest. The Emperor and I had a fucking blast and had the bruises to prove it. [Emperor's note: When seeing TBR yet again at Chain Reaction a month later, I seriously threw my fucking back out. Awesome.] Banner Pilot, another new act for the label, reminds me a lot of None More Black and bands of that ilk. Their album is a good listen. American Steel... now those guys have talent. Some of the best songwriting going on right now, I'd say. Fat Mike can sure pick'em. All of this suggests that there is no end in sight for Fat Wreck's dominance, which also means continued years of good fortune for all of us.

THEN & NOW

IT SEEMS THAT IN THE SKY OF COACHELLA'S STARS, A LOT HAVE BURNED OUT WHILE A FEW HAVE CONTINUED TO GO STRONG. HERE'S THE LOW-DOWN ON SOME OF THE VETERANS AND WHAT THEY'VE BEEN UP TO.



THE LIKE

THE LIKE - Formed in 2001, Los Angeles-based ladies The Like rocked 2006 Coachella in support of their 2005 release *Are You Thinking What I'm Thinking?* The LA Indie-Pop scene was flourishing with fellow locals Phantom Planet, Rilo Kiley and Rooney leading the way. While bassist Charlotte Froom has since parted ways, Singer Z Berg and drummer Tennessee Thomas have added Froom doppelganger Laena Geronimo on bass and Annie Monroe on organ. Their latest single "Fair Game" can be downloaded at ILikeTheLike.com. Expect a full-length sometime this year.

Jonathan Yost

SHARON JONES AND THE DAP-KINGS - Proving that a style or genre is not limited to a distinct time period, Sharon Jones and The Dap Kings are the new professors of Soul. While its market is not exactly what it used to be, Jones and her phenomenal band's performance in '08 sent kids scrambling to their parents' record collections to re-learn what their parents had tried to pass on before. With a resurgence in vinyl and Soul never losing its cool, that record collection better get a second look from you, too. Unless it's MY parent's record collection, which is 80% Jethro Tull. Look for the fourth full length from Sharon Jones and The Dap Kings, *I Learned the Hard Way*, out this May on Daptone Records.

Jonathan Yost



SHARON JONES AND THE DAP-KINGS



THE KILLERS



GNARLS BARKLEY

GNARLS BARKLEY - Made up of producer Danger Mouse (Brian Burton) and vocalist Cee-Lo Green (Thomas Callaway), this duo met on tour in 2003. As a result, they started producing songs together that would soon make up their first album *St. Elsewhere* in 2006. A month prior to the album's release, they performed an hour-long set at Coachella in April. Since then, the eclectic, soul-inspired group received praise for the single, "Crazy." It voted 1 on the 100 Best Songs of the Decade by *Rolling Stone* magazine last year. The follow-up album, *The Odd Couple* came out in March 2008 with singles, "Going On" and "Who's Gonna Save My Soul." Currently, Danger Mouse is collaborating with James Mercer in a band called *Broken Bells*. They just released an album with

exclusive material on March 9, 2010. Visit www.brokenbells.com for more information.

Gail Navarro

THE KILLERS - This 80's-inspired alternative rock group played in the smallest tent at Coachella 04' two weeks after their single "Somebody Told Me" began to circulate on the playlists of radio stations across the country. Playing to a half-filled tent, partly because no one knew who they were and partly because some who did already viewed them as a commercial gimmick band, The Killers performed as a band trying to earn some respect. With that work ethic and the rousing success of *Hot Fuss*, their debut album, filling tents would never be a problem again.

Three more albums, millions of records sold, and countless fans later, The Killers went on to headline night two of Coachella 2009. Since hitting the radio waves in 2004, The Killers have toured relentlessly all over the world with no breaks between the endless cycle of recording albums and touring in support of them. After finishing up some February touring dates in Australia, the band has announced that they will in fact go on hiatus. The duration of that hiatus is unclear, but drummer Ronnie Vanucci does not expect his band to be completely absent from 2010. They have already begun working on their follow-up to 2008's *Day and Age*, and fans surely hope that this hiatus ends sooner rather than later.

Erik Garcia

EISLEY - Formed in 1997, this family band has been winning hearts all over the United States after gaining buzz in their native Texas. Comprised of four siblings (three sisters and one brother) and a cousin, these indie darlings play catchy indie-pop tunes that are hard to not get stuck in your head. They played at Coachella in 2003 right after signing to Warner Brothers in promotion of their first EP, *Laughing City*. Definitely a buzz band to watch after



Conor Oberst and released his first solo album, *Hustler's Son*, in January 2010. Madison Heying

GRIZZLY BEAR - Grizzly Bear began as the solo project of singer/songwriter Edward Droste. His first album under the name Grizzly Bear was the lo-fi, dark, *Horns of Plenty* in 2004. Yellow House, released two years later, was Grizzly Bear's first album as a quartet; it had a similar sound to *Horns of Plenty* and put them on the map. They performed at Coachella in 2007 with songs from *Yellow House*. Their latest album, *Veckatimest*, strayed from their previous dark, haunting sound, yet the group seems to have found cohesion that distinguishes their work as a group from Droste's solo work. *Veckatimest* reached 8 on the Billboard charts in 2009 and has catapulted them from their status as an indie band to a must-see show. Erik Garcia

that performance, their popularity was helped even more by the fact that every member of the band is good-looking. Look up Sherri Dupree boys! Girls, take a gander at Gander Dupree.

Since gracing the Coachella stage with their infectiously catchy pop music, Easley has gone on to release two albums and six EPs, their most recent release being the *Fire Kite* EP in October 2009. The band plans to release a new album in the first half of 2010, but recording indie gems isn't the only thing keeping these relatives busy. Chauntelle Dupree will be marrying Todd D'Agostino after being previously engaged to Taking Back Sunday's Adam Lazarra. Sherri Dupree was married in 2009 to Say Anything's Max Bemis. I know guys, I know. Some things are just too hard to swallow. Erik Garcia

RILO KILEY - Rilo Kiley first graced the Coachella stage in 2005 promoting their album *More Adventurous*. They returned in 2008 with songs from their latest album, *Under the Blacklight*. *More Adventurous* featured folky pop hits that epitomized the indie sound of their former labels Barsuk and Saddle Creek. In 2008 however, they joined Warner Bros. Records after they finished production on *More Adventurous*. This switch was evident on the over-produced *Under the Blacklight*, the content of which did not cover the same depths of their previous endeavors. They also abandoned their down-to-earth apparel; at Coachella in 2008 Rilo Kiley was clad in matching pseudo-tuxedos. The band however, played a tight, relatively flawless set that included hits like "Silver Lining" and "Portions for Foxes." All four members of Rilo Kiley have since pursued side projects. Jenny Lewis crossed into the mainstream with her latest solo album *Acid Tongue* and played Coachella in 2009. Blake Sennett's *The Elected* gained notoriety with their 2006 album *Sun, Sun, Sun*. Jason Boesel teamed up with

PEDRO THE LION - Pedro the Lion was formed in 1995 by front man and creative force David Bazan. They played Coachella in 2001 after their release of the EP *Winners Never Quit* and during the production of their 2002 LP, *Control*. Pedro the Lion split in 2005 due to Bazan's notoriously controlling nature which, despite much collaboration with artists such as Ben Gibbard, TW Walsh, and members of Fleet Foxes, and also having played almost every instrument on Pedro the Lion's recordings. After the split, Bazan pursued a solo career. He released *Fewer Moving Pieces* in 2006 in which he addressed the break up of Pedro the Lion and his controlling nature with the lyric "should I reconsider my reasons for going solo...I still run the show." Bazan's latest effort, *Curse Your Branches*, was released in September 2009 and received widespread acclaim. It was considered by *Under the Radar* to be one of the best records of 2009. Madison Heying



GUERRILLA UNION
PRESENTS

HOSTED BY B-REAL



EXCLUSIVE LIVE PERFORMANCES

METHODMAN
REDMAN

Kottonmouth Kings
PERFORMING SONGS
OFF THEIR NEW ALBUM
"LONG LIVE THE KINGS"

Rebelution

FISHBONE (had)p.e.

SUPERNATURAL

PLUS SURPRISE PERFORMANCES

SATURDAY MAY 8TH, 2010

NOS EVENTS CENTER | SAN BERNARDINO, CA

FOR INFO AND UPDATES GO TO:
SPRINGGATHERING.COM

THE ONES OVER LOOKED

EP IN
STORES
NOW!



booking: veronica@thenoiseacademy.com

www.mcprototype.com

ERNE BALL® BATTLE OF THE BANDS 14

ATTENTION UNSIGNED BANDS!
PLAY LIVE ON THE



SIGN YOUR BAND UP FOR THE
ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY AT
BATTLEOFTHEBANDS.COM

