

# DISPOSABLE UNDERGROUND

Issue 33

Championing the musically jaded for over a decade

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AFZAAL NASIRUDDIEN is one of the guitar players for Crisis. Backstage sitting on a couch while the opening band for the "Killith Fair" tour was playing at the tour's stop in Baltimore, Maryland, he discusses how the headliner's crowd, that of M.O.D., is treating the middle band of the package, Crisis.

"Surprisingly well. I dunno. The real knucklehead part of the M.O.D. crowd, of course, doesn't get it and will never understand us, but on the whole, even some of the knuckleheads that are into Karyn just cause she's pretty or whatever—who knows, man? Trying to get into their head is sort of difficult. But they've been very responsive. No negative experiences, really, so far. It's been fine."

Crisis has two videos for their album they are supporting, *Like Sheep Led To Slaughter*. Listeners sometimes buy albums after seeing a band's videos and have an impression of what their album will sound like based on that, but then have a different reaction once they listen to the record. Afzaal considers whether that is happening with Crisis fans.

"I don't know what the reality of that situation is; I'm not sure, but I don't really look at things that way. I don't really know what the kids are about, you know? I mean, I'm so much older that I don't understand them anyway, you know what I mean? I really don't know what they're into. I know, like, they're into MySpace and they're into all these different aspects of what they consider to be their music scene. It's almost like a virtual music scene, you know? It's so different from the way I grew up in the music thing. I don't really know whether they're buying the record just for the video; I'm sure a lot of the kids are. And I don't know what their reaction is after they hear the rest of the record. I really don't know."

Afzaal expands on his concept of a virtual scene.



GUITAR AND BASS FOR CRISIS, BALTIMORE.

"Well, it's almost like everybody listens to bands by checking them out on the internet now. I mean, that's really the way the majority of kids are checking out music. In fact, the opening

band that's on tour with us, this band Jackknife, a couple of the guys were telling me they also do that. They literally go on to Purevolume or mp3.com or whatever and they'll check out a band; once they like a band, they have on the website, on the page of the band they like, it says, 'Well, if you're into this band, check out this band and this band and this band and this band and this band.' And so they go in and check out all the other bands that sound like that."

A marketing ploy today used by distributors and labels in ads in magazines is to suggest, "This band sounds like three other bands," almost a backhanded compliment.

"It's a way of selling it. It's bandwagon-ism, you know? It's the way to get yourself heard. Unfortunately there's so many bands that sound similar now, originality doesn't count for much, so what can you do?" says Afzaal.

Crisis has an original sound and have had their own way of conducting their band for years, and are still trying to fit in. Or maybe they don't care about fitting in.

"Honestly, at this point, we'd be insane to want to fit in," Afzaal comments. "I mean, we don't even know how to. You can't teach an old dog new tricks. We went

to L.A. to really find out how the music industry works and unfortunately what we found out is exactly what we were in fear of, which is that the music industry just really doesn't really give a damn about the music. It's just not about the music."



AFZAAL NASIRUDDIEN IN BALTIMORE, MD

In its history Crisis moved from New York in Los Angeles. Afzaal reveals why they couldn't learn what they needed in New York.

"Well, see, the thing is there was a difference. In New York at a time when we started and when we were making waves, the music industry didn't exist or pay attention to what we were doing anyway. We didn't really meet the real movers and shakers in New York. Because in New York the scene was more like an alternative scene, an indie scene, and all was much bigger. There was no metal scene in New York City. There was a hardcore scene but it was more like New York hardcore; emo hadn't begun. The scene really didn't exist. Newer bands like Shadows Fall and Hatebreed, they increased their fan base to such a massive size in the underground that the industry had to look at it because of the numbers, the sheer volume of fans. I don't think that anybody at Universal, the record company, really knows what the hell Hatebreed's about or what they stand for, but they're selling a lot of records, so that's why it makes sense for them to be signed to a major label. 'Cause they're selling more than a lot of pop artists, so why wouldn't they want to make money off it, you know? If not only that, if they sign a band like Hatebreed, they're making more money than the band's making, so that's why metal bands finally are getting signed to major labels. I mean, Mastodon just got signed to a major label, which is unreal! But it's amazing. That's actually an original band. I'm even shocked that they even got signed. I wouldn't want it to happen to a better person than them. So that's, like, a very pleasant surprise, actually, for me. That's the first band that I'm really happy is getting that form of notoriety."

Crisis has also reissued their first album, *8 Convulsions*, with expanded packaging, about which you can find out more at their website. Check up on the band and be surprised at the quality of their music at [www.crisisite.com](http://www.crisisite.com). ■

# DISPOSABLE CONCERT REVIEW

## Maryland Death Fest, May 2005

by Lenny

I'VE BEEN ATTENDING Maryland's international death metal extravaganza ever since its earliest incarnation of evil. Each year, I call my asshole friends to see who's going. This year, no one. Typical. So with only myself to abuse, I launched my gas-guzzling hotrod in a tire frying haze north to the new venue of this year's fest, the House of Rock in White Marsh, Maryland. Not sure what to expect of the location, but not wanting to be too disappointed, I had loaded down my vehicle with a cooler of microbrews and several tweeds of modest girth.

After a brief bout of directional confusion, I finally rolled past the club to witness a horde of enemy policemen prowling around like angry ants. It was like a scene from Waco. Actually, it wasn't as bad as that sounds. But the heat was definitely on, so I concealed my stash of spliffs and slipped in through the backside. Found a parking space in the middle of a swamp, then strutted toward the front door. I was surprised to see no meathead fuckface collecting money or checking IDs, so without further ado I walked right in and enjoyed a night of free mediocre deathgrind. Hells yeah!

I got there right after locals Pig Destroyer had played. I deduced this upon seeing grind impresario Scott Hull receiving congratulations in a puddle of his own sweat. First stop: the vendors' hive, where anonymous scenesters grovel and the robber barons lick their blood-stained lips at the sight of an open wallet. Yes, there was alot of money to be spent here, let me tell you. I chatted it up with some cronies; some merch table folks asked me who I was because they thought they recognized me. I told them I had no idea what they were talking about. But I did buy an old Hiatus LP from the guy from Hater of God Records. I talked to Craig Pillard, ex-Incarnation. He's got a really slow new group called Methadrone and they're releasing an exotic DVD with Swans covers or something. I talked to my my friend EricT from Torture Garden Picture Company who had set up shop on the down low. I think he said he was doing a tribute that covers the entire *Scum* album. Cool stuff. Finally I headed back inside.

It was late in the day and I could see that already many of the attendees were hurting, sick, and drunk. There was puke, trash, and blood everywhere. In the distance, probably on the stage, Aborted was playing and they had the clicky digital death sound down to a T. I think I remember yawning a few times. At another point during the fest I remember standing near the pit and seeing people slipping and falling on spilled beer and broken bottles. Then I saw a few people helping out the staff by crouching down and scooping up shards of glass.

The next band I remember was Gronibard from France, and I liked their style: a bunch of skinny French dudes wearing women's undergarments and playing completely unexceptional grind. The dutiful bouncers became confused when fans started jumping up to freak the fanciful Frenchmen. Unsure of exactly whom to throw around, the fat help just stood centerstage appearing dumbfounded as more and more Francophiles jumped up to dance like fops before tripping over PA monitors and crashing back into the crowd. Yes, a gay time was had by all.

Then the moment I had been waiting for—San Francisco's goddess Abscess polluted

the stage. According to the band, this was their first show outside of California since the band's inception over 11 years ago. I was beyond stoked! And when they opened with a personal favorite, "Speed Freak," a hallucinative coma of feces, vomit, and dirty hypodermic needles descended over the crowd. The ripping d-beat action was kicking my ass, but when I looked around to see who else was thrashing I was surprised to see the rest of the crowd in an apparent daze. The band dropped into some really heavy psychedelic grooves, and guitarist Danny Coralles erupted into his trademark solos like a terminal psychotic.

Next up was Regurgitate from Sweden, who seemed way professional. Their set was really blasting, controlled, and abrasive. I was impressed with their tightness and competent grasp of textbook grindcore rudiments and song structures, which they used extensively to pulpify and scour the now re-energized crowd. Before Cryptopsy, boasting the return of original vocalist Lord Vurm, could even mount the stage, I ducked out to blaze one and the rest is already a forgotten memory.

Day Two was much better even though I had to pay to get in this time. Knowing what to expect after the first day, I sparked my doobie early into my last chance power drive and had it in tweezers by the time I rolled into the parking lot. Fewer pigs today, I noted with a mischievous grin. At the entrance, some neo-crustbags loitered, and I asked who was playing. "Rotten Sound is about to go on," came the reply, so I hastily parked my wheels, pounded a few ice cold brewskies, and headed inside for what would be a real blast. I had seen Rotten Sound a few times before, but this day they were on fire like a fully loaded B-52 crashing on takeoff. I have to say it: their drummer plays at the absolute extremes of human possibility. His mastery and endurance seemed unattainable except by only the top one percent of practice-obsessed drum nerds. Awesome set.

Then came my fun loving favorites, Birdflesh from Sweden. If you haven't heard this trio, they play super catchy grind with super moshy breakdowns, and have a completely absurd persona. The guitarist/vocalist was dressed like a mentally challenged '80s amateur wrestler, and the bassist wore a woman's house dress and a long haired skeleton mask. They bounced around the stage through one grinding anthem after another much to the delight of the crowd. I noticed there were alot more punkers inside for these guys.

The real highlight of the night, though, was General Surgery, also from Sweden, who were fucking beyond deadly. They raged through their set of old school Carcass tributes with mountains of energy and enthusiasm. I was completely slayed. The band, draped in bloodstained dentist's frocks, butcher's aprons, and black ties, drew a huge response from the crowd at every pause. My fingertips began to feel sliced and bloody just watching the relentless six stringed carnage. Savageness!

The end of the night would see legends Immolation take the stage, a band who never fail to impress me with their signature dark and twisted riffage. They played a bunch of really catchy songs from the new album, *Harnessing Ruin*, which, if you haven't heard it, is really quite good. Excellent, intelligent lyrics, too, with bassist/vocalist Ross Dolan's voice sounding as fucking heavy as ever. But I wondered at what hellish fate might have befallen long time drummer Alex Hernandez, notably absent. The new basher was good, but Hernandez was really great, especially on that *Disassociate* album. All in all, a solid rockin' time, and I look forward to increasing variety and more international acts for fests to come.

Find info on next year's fest at [www.marylanddeathfest.com](http://www.marylanddeathfest.com). ■

NEKHEI NAATZA was an Israeli political hardcore band that existed from 1990 to 1997, the first of that kind to have a vinyl release in that country, namely the *Renounce Judaism* EP in 1994 (Beer City Records). The members took two other band names and combined them to make Nekhei Naatza: Nekhei Tzahal describes crippled Israeli soldiers and Naatza Israel means Israel blasphemy. "Put the two together and you get crippled blasphemy," Etay Levy, the drummer, explains. They also released an LP in 1997 called *Hail The New Regime* [pictured] and in 2002 the *A Blue & White Carthage* EP (Malinke Records).

"Press was always bad," towards the band, recalls Etay. "They saw us as an anti-Semitic threat. They almost got us sued, they got us in trouble with the fascist religious leaders, and they probably gave our names to the Israeli secret service [Mussad]."

While Etay did not personally get involved with any civilian protest actions, the rest of the band certainly did, participating in animal rights, environmental, and political protests, and those individual members still do so today. "In fact, a few were deported from other countries for their antics," he reveals.

Included in *Hail The New Regime's* lyric sheet are further explanations of the song lyrics on the album. For the song "Reconciliation with Hamas," the band writes, "The media, intellectuals, politicians, and common public place terrorist attacks on civilians and soldiers as Israel's most serious problem, when clearly the economic policy of ever growing divisions between the classes, unemployment, and poverty is a much more alarming problem. The stranglehold of nationalism and Zionist heritage makes it impossible for us to focus our attention on economic exploitation rather than on Arab terrorism."

Etay notes that the number of suicide bombings that occur every year in Israel is so high that the press no longer bothers to report on it. "The press here in the US probably reports on a very small proportion of the attacks. But that is typical of US press. Even the more moderate coverage can't keep up."

Etay served in the Israeli army beginning in March of 1994 to April of 1997. It should be noted, especially in Etay's case, that military service in Israel is mandatory. His position as he describes it was "A trained puppet for the racist regime!" But in



the end he remains unaffected by his service and dismisses it as a waste of time. "My stint in the military just reinforced my belief that Israel is headed straight for the toilet." Ultimately Etay was honorably discharged from the military which he describes as unfortunate, explaining, "It is incredibly difficult to be dishonorably discharged," which he strived to achieve.

Etay spent time in a military prison in Israel during his time in the army. "After training for almost a year, I was sent to the Gaza strip along with two friends. We were 'asked' to serve in Gaza for two months. I refused"—in fact he told his commanding officer to go fuck himself—"and was charged with insubordination and sentenced to one month," he recalls.

He did see some action during his tenure in the force, however. "First year was full on combat training. You know: shooting all sorts of guns and blowing shit up all with live fire, riding on tanks, urban warfare training, navigating by foot in the dark without a map—we almost jumped out of a plane but those bastards cut our budget—and lots of other various wholesome activities."

After completing a year of basic training, Etay says, "My personal mission was to drive my psychiatric evaluation into the ground. This evaluation determined your eligibility for various activities and as I was adamantly opposed to military operations of any sort, this would be my most difficult mission to date. I spent weeks preparing and upon completion of my self-imposed mission, I was no longer 'fit' to serve in combat. I was encouraged to return home each evening to distress from the daily activities. Coincidentally, everyone else in the band received the same encouragement so we were able to play regularly during this time."

Israel is both a police state and a military state according to Etay. "Realistically, it is the people who embraced their military experience and/or police employment who are brainwashed. These people do not think for themselves; instead they fall victim to the propaganda excreted by the racist regime. This is a time of turmoil, and hence changes, but unless the youth decide for themselves which cause is worth killing and dying for, Israel is hopeless." ■

## **Bane** *The Note* (Equal Vision)

Bane returns with their fourth full length. While there's plenty of shout along choruses and moshy breakdowns, the record leaves me a little flat. The production is crisp and clear, but it seems that engineer Brian McTernan was more concerned with making a slicker sounding Bane than capturing the anger and the fury that he did on *Give Blood*. Singer Aaron Bedard is just as angry as ever, but the guitars of Zach Jordan and Aaron Dalbec don't really move this time, and seem more of an afterthought than the rails on which Bedard's fury rides. The album's opener, "Woulda Coulda Shoulda," gives the listener a view into the past, but most of the album's other songs are mid tempo, and one song, "Pot Committed," even features a piano breakdown reminiscent of Verbal Assault's "Never Stop" from the *Trial* record. The album even features a hardcore standby with a song ("My Therapy") about how much hardcore means to them. All and all *The Note* isn't a bad record, but falls a little short when stacked up against Bane's previous efforts. **(by Blake)**

## **Biomechanical** *The Empires Of The World* (Earache)

Here's one of those bands whose songs are just grotesque collisions of styles. They'll go from big fat Pantera grooves into some stuttering, off time guitar heroics into subtle acoustic passages. Kind of an "everything but the kitchen sink" philosophy. Sometimes it works; often it doesn't. The vocalist switches up quite a bit. There's a few of those Phil Anselmo "Medicine Man" vocals, and a lot of power metal wailing that reminds me of old Queensrÿche or Savatage. The musicianship is top notch, I can't slag on that, but the schizophrenic arrangements kind of keep the album from establishing any kind of mood or flow. If you dig shit like Watchtower or Atheist, this might make you cum all over yourself, but I'm not down with this at all. **(by JR)**

## **Bleed For Me** *Composition* (Sin Klub)

More hardcore/metal stuff, but with bongos! A professional sounding production job glosses over the whole record. Whoa, the last song is twelve minutes long. This band seems destined to have a video premiere on *Headbanger's Ball* and sell a few thousand albums. More power to you, fellas. Visit [www.bleedforme.com](http://www.bleedforme.com) for an awesome picture of a dog passed out with a lighter, a bowl and a sack of weed. **(by Adam)**

## **Blood Red Throne** *Altered Genesis* (Earache)

This is black/death metal delivered with that stiff, clinical execution so prevalent in European bands. The drums sound too triggered, almost industrial, and the vocals are muddy and monotonous. The riffs are pretty mean, but the guitars are just too mild in the mix. These guys are aggressive as shit, though, and for that I give them respect. I just think this record would have been much better served by some really gritty, sloppy underproduction. **(by JR)**

## **Esgarial** *Inheritance* (Crash)

These Poles have something pretty good going for themselves with this death metal album. They have a strong sense of melody with the choruses, the lead guitarist or guitarists have a big Joe Satriani influence, not a bad thing by any stretch, and their blast riffs are refreshing. The record is a little stiff in the performance department, some would say a little cheesy in the riff department in a few places, but I don't have any major beef with this release at all. You can hear that Esgarial has passion for the music they are playing and that's important. They're trying to come up with the best songs they can and I hope that on their next album they will only improve.

## **Flotsam And Jetsam** *Dreams Of Death* (Crash)

Honestly, I didn't know what to think when I opened the package and spied a new album from Flotsam and Jetsam. I think I actually remember saying "What the shit?" Yes, Flotsam and Jetsam is an old metal group, having been around since the mid '80s. Only a band that lived it the first time around could write an album that sounds like this. Their ambitious songwriting is musical, blending somewhat technical late '80s thrash metal with melodic hooks and '80s arena rock-style heavily chorused clean passages. Said parts are deliberately pushed into Queensrÿche territory through the addition of voice samples and the odd keyboard part. The "dark" song concepts and lyrics—which are intoned with crystal clarity—are amusingly cheesy, though unintentionally so. Flotsam and Jetsam is working hard, and I respect that. Who would've guessed? **(by Lenny)**

## **Gemini Five** *Babylon Rockets* (Deadline)

Man, I really wanted to like this record, too. Shit. The sticker on the front makes the comparison to the mighty Hanoi Rocks, which got my attention. Hanoi's strength was in their looseness, their dirty, Rolling Stones-like swagger. This stuff is really closer to older Bon Jovi, which isn't to say that it's terrible, just lacking in rock 'n' roll attitude. When they're at their most poppy and playful, this record can be a lot of fun, but when they try to get moody and serious it sounds like Linkin Park without the shitty MC. Disappointing. **(by JR)**  
[www.cleorecs.com](http://www.cleorecs.com)

## **Grand Magus** *Wolf's Return* (Rise Above/Candlelight)

First of all, before I even listen to this one, the back cover pic of three dirt-caked and bloody clasped fists replete with studded gauntlets and tattoos looks raw as fuck. So I'm fucking stoked now. Plus, I see this is from Lee Dorian's Rise Above label so I'm beginning to take appropriate care not to completely shit myself. Right off the bat, this sounds Swedish. Heavy rockin' old school metal with an overdriven bass and hairy, power metal singing. This trio's epic doomier metallicus is dynamic and melodic, featuring meaty riffs, soaring vocals, classic guitar solos, and absorbing arrangements. Yeah, that's a real nut-crunching riff. If leather and denim had never been invented, these dudes would probably be walking around naked. Features vocalist J.B. of Mike Amott's Spiritual Beggars. **(by Lenny)**

## **Hate Eternal** *I, Monarch* (Wicked World)

So with a new Hate Eternal album you pretty much know what to expect. This can be good or bad depending on what you like. Personally, I am tired of most modern death metal bands trying to make a name for themselves by blending in aspects of hardcore or

assuming that because what they play is "complex" it has value. Hence I have always liked Hate Eternal. This may sound like I am saying I like simple low brow death metal, but in all honesty what death metal isn't is low brow. That is why we like it, right? The faster the better, and the more abrasive and harsh the more response it will get from me! Hate Eternal understands these simple facts that keep mongoloids like myself interested and I am assuming they are mongoloids as well. So this record is a good match.

Similar to their past two records except with a warmer all over sound, this record is speed through and through! Drummer Derek Roddy holds the reigns and leads the band through nine tracks, all of which are wonderfully fast and precise, only letting up for a few groove oriented parts that the band has employed for the first time on this record. These parts add some diversity to the flow but do not detract from the conviction and intensity of the rest of the album. *I, Monarch*'s riffs are multifaceted, but, like death metal of old, never complex enough to cause lack of interest. It is this fact that I think truly sets Hate Eternal apart. They write riffs! That is why I keep linking them to older death metal like Kreator or Morbid Angel. They are not riffs to sing along with or guitar parts created to win you over. These are just solid, sinister, and fast, just the way they should be with a name like Hate Eternal.

On a whole this record is an extension of the first two albums but the members have progressed as musicians. They added a few auxiliary percussion instruments, but they tastefully left them slightly low in the mix so they do not detract from the metal. I was worried that they might cause the listener to think of un-metal things like Jamaica or Sheila E, but fear not! Hate Eternal creates true metal for the sake of metal, and *I, Monarch* is no exception, even if they do own a maraca. **(by Jake)**

## **Havochate** *Cycle Of Pain* (Indecent Media)

An interesting sound from Havochate. They sort of have an old school California metal approach with the vocal styles and the mid paced melodic riffs. They play with conviction and emotion which you can hear with every guitar crunch and vocal note which is commendable. With the record Havochate is trying to create a downer mood, especially with the lyrics, with song titles such as "Cycle Of Pain," "Alone," "Wicked," and "Buried In Lies." The themes have to do with souls, tragedies, lies, pain, and so on. What I found amusing is that the old bass player from Testament who's in this band parenthetically added God to the end of his thanks list as an afterthought, thanking the big G for keeping him alive. I have to wonder, if one of his family members died would he have needed to add "but no thanks for killing my wife"?

## **Hirax** *The New Age Of Terror* (Masoleum)

Who says that time travel isn't possible? Hirax has returned to take you waaaaay back to the old school. Back to a time when bands like the Mentors and DRI walked the earth, a time when you could talk about Megadeth and Metallica without wanting to cry, a time when Hirax released their last album, which I believe was *Hate, Fear, and Power*. (Hey, like I said, it's been a long time.) Anyway, this album is a glorious return for Hirax. I would say it's at least as good, if not better than, anything I've ever heard by them. It's got tons of meaty thrash riffs, catchy, concise songwriting, and of course the soaring vocals of Katon De Pena, but most importantly, it's got a fucking dump truck full of heavy metal attitude, and that's something that's sorely missed nowadays. A true lesson in violence. Amen. **(by JR)**

## **Jesu** 2004 album (Hydra Head)

I was not disappointed in hearing the album but not completely enthralled, not because this is bad material by any means but because it just was not exactly what I expected. The sound of this record is very similar to early Godflesh with thick bass and simple processed sounding percussion, while the guitars swirl around the minimal song structures set by the rhythm section. The drums are handled by none other than Ted Parsons (Prong, Swans), but they were obviously tweaked quite liberally in the studio to sound choked and precise. The bass tone is great through the entire CD, bubbling and crackling through all eight tracks. The guitar as I said earlier is somewhat of an afterthought but sounding great, adding feedback and moans around the consistent bass lines.

What was surprising is what these instruments did together with added keyboards and synth tracks. On their own the rhythm section would sound almost exactly like a slower *Streetcleaner*, drudging through long and crushing seven minute songs, but on top the keyboards played melancholy melodies. Occasionally these parts wandered into new ground, which I cannot call poppy or happy but they were not necessarily cheerless and gutted. They were emotive! That is what surprised me. This album was far more emotionally charged then anticipated. Although, don't worry, they were heavy as hell, but what came to mind was as if a melodic expressive band broke into Godflesh's practice space and jammed on their stuff, although it did not sound exactly as detached as that because all the while Justin Broderick was singing on top of these tracks with the melodies. Not singing and whistling but with the aid of effects and programming following the melody. Although on the seventh track he turns off the effects and melodies, to bark out some vokills. This is a treat and to remind the listener that he is still able to play something negative.

Listening to this record you know it's heavy; it's just a different kind of heavy. It is an almost soothing, relaxing heavy. This is a very well done record and laudable for many reasons; it's just a new experience. **(by Jake)**

## **Mouth Of The Architect** *Time And Withering* (Translation Loss)

A slow, dreamy album; nothing too punishing here. It sounds almost "soft," even with the singer screaming his head off. This could be intentional I suppose, but I don't really like it. This type of sludge really needs a clear, hard-hitting production value or it just bores itself into the ground pretty quick. The CD features four songs, three of which are over ten minutes long, to give you a further idea. Steer clear of this one unless you have money to blow on a really cool looking beer coaster with a psychedelic pattern on it. **(by Adam)**

## **Josh Small** 2005 album (Pop Faction)

Basically what you get here is a collection of lo-fi banjo ditties accompanied by melancholy vocals. He also breaks out the mandolin for two songs. The album's highlight for me is the sixth song, where Small switches to playing slide guitar for a fuller, richer sound. It seems to suit the mid-pace tempo of the music better than the banjo, an instrument that sounds best at faster-than-lightning speeds. *Deliverance*, people! **(by Adam)**

## Raging Speedhorn *How The Great Have Fallen* (SPV/Steamhammer)

Wow, this UK band's screamer sounds fucking hostile, like he's got a mouth for war or something. I guess this band is pretty raging in a basic heavy rock kind of way, but the heap of hype touting how jaw droppingly brutal they are just doesn't add up. All the riffs are the same Sabbath rock riffs that everyone plays and the tempos are more often mid-paced to slower. They hold water, but there's nothing here that's new or especially thrilling. But don't let that turn you off completely—if you dig shit like Cable or Alabama Thunderpussy you will surely rock to this. And the secret track—a Richard Pryor-style prank call to a wanker who placed an ad for a “black” metal band—is muthafuckin' laughalicious. **(by Lenny)**

## Scum Of The Earth *Blah...Blah...Blah...Love Songs for the New Millennium* (Eclipse)

Sorry, no grindcore for you. This is some shrink-wrapped, barcode sportin' bullshit for teeny boppers. Aesthetically, this is a celebration of American trash culture adorned with the Rob Zombie/Rat Fink/comics/tattoo parlor flash visual touch. Musically this is pathetic electronic dance rock with beats that remind me of ZZ Top's synth-powered classics (no disrespect to the Reverend). A typical lyric: “white trash devil girl ... get your dead on.” A fetid pile of misogynistic bullshit in the Rob Zombie style from Rob Zombie

crone Riggs and some dork from Powerman 5000. This disc also purports to contain bonus material that supposedly allows the listener to download software to adjust the sound and add effects or something—fuckin' yawn. Yup, that's more than enough words. **(by Lenny)**

## Thine Eyes Bleed *In The Wake Of Separation* (The End)

This is perfectly acceptable death metal, striking a good balance between the technicality and the brutality. Similar to the way Vader comes at you: disciplined, intensely focused. The production is adequate, albeit unspectacular, and unfortunately I feel like I could use that comment to describe the rest of the album. Of course there's a killer riff here, a scorching solo there, but this album overall just gives me feelings of “been there, done that.” You know, the way you felt after Unleashed put out that same album for the tenth time. **(by JR)**

## Unsanse *Blood Run* (Relapse)

After an extended period of inactivity, NYC's Unsanse come roaring back with not just a return to form, but possibly the finest album of their career. Absolutely huge bass grooves, rock solid, bare-bones drumming, and of course Chris Spencer's signature bullhorn vocals and scraping/gouging guitar work. There's no crass experimentation or self-indulgence to be found here; just savage, straight to the point noise rock delivered by masters at the top of their game. Brilliant. **(by JR)** ■

## —LOCAL REVIEWS A grouping of the local bands (from Maryland, Virginia, and Washington DC) for this issue—

### Monarch *Tragedy Holds The Hand Of Hope* (Pop Faction)

A metal/hardcore hybrid with a high pitched screeching singer. I should really just cut and paste the press release as it would make a fine review, but instead, here are some excerpts. Monarch is “an extreme metal band, hailing from Richmond, VA.” They hopped in a van and did “a well received southeastern tour with Blacksburg, Virginia's Accursed Dawn.” They plan to shit out “a full length album by Summer 2005.” If that's not a strong enough sell, the press sheet goes so far to compare them to a certain, legendary grind/metal band from Liverpool, England. Oh, I just snapped the CD in half; sorry. **(by Adam)**

### Off Transmission *Demo*

This is really well done rock. You can hear The Cure and maybe The Sundays, maybe Joy Division in the music, but Off Transmission is comprised of strong and talented musicians who know how to write a good, solid song and you can hear that. I must make the observation, because I've seen them play so many times, that they perform their songs much better now than they were able when they recorded, so keep an eye on these guys. [www.offtransmission.com](http://www.offtransmission.com)

### Sail 2004 Demo

Sail is an unusual bunch in that the music they play falls between the pigeonholes but they consider themselves punks. They play twisted, lo fi stuff with interesting, noisy approaches, most notably in the vocal department. They go from plodding to rocking but they always give whatever tempos they employ the Sail treatment. The band must have put in the hours coming up with these weird tunes. And there's eight of them, so you'll get your money's worth! [www.myspace.com/sailon](http://www.myspace.com/sailon)

### Suzukiton *Service • Repair Handbook* (Crucial Blast)

I'm pretty sure Suzukiton is a talented heavy instrumental rock band from Richmond, VA, but they might just be a small displacement Japanese motorcycle in disguise. Their songs seem to go nowhere in usually about three minutes, but that's not to say you won't enjoy the rocking ride. Their tones are good and the material ain't bad by any stretch but I'm definitely not floored. The Fucking Champs and Dysrhythmia are a convenient reference point. Go see them live for yourself, as I'm sure that's where they'll really impress. **(by Lenny)**

### Tradition Dies Here *Time To Turn The Tables* (Amor Y Lucha)

Well, they certainly have passion. The band keeps things moving with song structures and riffs that aren't groundbreaking by any stretch but that when played the way Tradition Dies Here

(TDH) plays them, their music is convincing. The manner in which the vocalist yells the lyrics at the rooftops adds to this effect. They sound like they mean it. I suppose the rough edge of the production helps the record pack its punch too. While TDH's high voltage rock doesn't lend any versatility to the vocals, there is dynamic in the moods established by the instruments. The band isn't afraid to take things down several notches and cut off the distortion when they feel it's called for. I have to say that more than a few times I felt compelled to raise my fist and shout along with the band in front of my stereo (I didn't actually do it), but pick up the record and see if you do. [www.amorylucha.org](http://www.amorylucha.org)

### Trephine 2005 album (Public Guilt)

This is obviously quite an accomplished band. They definitely get bonus points for not having a singer; singers are way overated these days. We get assaulted here with metallic math rock for about 40 minutes. The problem with this record is a lack of hooks, or really stand-out riffs. But that's not the point with math rock, is it? You want to be dazzled by the “math” of it all. Whoa, hey now, they just switched into a 7/8 time signature from 4/4 time! Wow, they were just playing metal; now it sounds like polka music! Alright nerds, go on and buy the album. You know you want it ... **(by Adam)**

### Valkyrie *Sunlight Shines*

This is interesting. The first song's got a bit of that driving Iron Maiden gallop to it, but kind of primitive, like the *Killers* album or something. This is metal of the soaring guitar harmony variety, as opposed to the aggressive, cave-your-head-in variety, so consequently this isn't really my cup of tea. But these are strong, well written tunes and the vocalist is melodic and soulful without becoming operatic or cheesy, and that's a tough line to walk with this type of stuff. **(by JR)** [www.thevalkyrierides.com](http://www.thevalkyrierides.com)

### Vog 3 Song Demo

This is kind of like Sleep's *Holy Mountain* with some of Acid Bath's crooning and screamy vocal pile-ons. The tones of the instruments are nice and thick, which to me is the most important element of any doom/stoner rock type band. The 22 minute closer “The Colors Of The Infiniti” feels more like a jam or a medley than a self-contained song, which isn't really a good thing or a bad thing. I just wonder whether that's accidental or by design. The production is excellent, especially for a demo. Really, the only thing that's missing here is some good artwork and presentation. Musically Vog are pretty on point. Have to try to catch 'em live; this kind of thing is almost always better in person. **(by JR)** [www.whereisvog.com](http://www.whereisvog.com) ■

## CLAVIUS PRODUCTIONS AND DETOURNEMENT PRODUCTIONS

are two entities that book and promote shows. In a talk with them, they discuss the ins and outs of working in the Washington DC Metro area.

“Being involved in a DIY community and scene as a teenager inspired me to be active in regards to helping out independent bands and creating new musical experiences,” begins Scott Nussman of Detournement. “My first show was with the help of Wade and Ryan Fletcher, two people who have had a very active role in the DIY/punk/activist community for a long time. They brought shows back to the Wilson Center [in DC] and started up [the] awesome Brian McKenzie Infoshop. Seeing them operate at a very DIY level, not for profit, made me want to help out.”

As for Scott Verrastro of Clavius, “I got into booking when I was looking for a place to book the amazing free jazz duo Flaherty/Corsano. When I couldn't find a venue, I decided to host them at my house, and it went so well that I decided to continue doing house shows. I was really tired of traveling to Baltimore and Philly for every great psych/noise/experimental show, and thought it was a shame that these bands could not find a place to play in DC, and I wanted to change that.”

Both have had their hands in doing sound for gigs,

although, “I sold my rig this year because I was sick of having my mics, cords, and stands broken and never being compensated for that ... To some degree I wish I still had my rig because I still go to DIY shows these days occasionally where the sound is shit,” Nussman admits, adding, “I always thought running sound was one of the funnest jobs I ever had. However, once things ended up getting broken, it became much more of a pain in the ass.”

On the subject of getting paid (or not), benefit gigs are promoted by both men.

“Benefit shows go over well with bands and audiences because they are usually in agreement with the cause and have no problem supporting it,” explains Verrastro, while Nussman adds, “Causes are worth sacrificing for, and if it means going without gas money, that's what it means.”

They're not above spending their own money when necessary to pull of a gig either.

“I dip into my pocket for maybe one in every five shows. Once again though, I look at doing shows as a passion I'm willing to sacrifice for. I have no regrets in terms of having to give money to bands out of pocket because I agreed to a guarantee that they didn't draw enough people out to carry.”

The guys book gigs not only in the city but in the

suburbs as well.

“Doing shows out in the ‘burbs is a hell of a lot harder because people's ideas of independent music aren't always the most accepting ... If I didn't have places like the Greenhouse, a house that did shows, close to me while I was growing up, my view of music right now would probably be a lot narrower,” reveals Nussman. “I've always viewed taking a place and doing a show in it as a way of liberating that space into an arts and cultural zone. More is being accomplished by liberating a space in a conservative, white collar area then doing so in an urban, hip area where there's already venues for those kinds of performances.”

Wrapping up the whole show booking experience, Verrastro states, “To book a good show and ensure that people come out to it and the bands get paid decently takes a lot of work ... Getting paid well doesn't mean anything to a lot of bands if the atmosphere is downright miserable.”

Nussman concludes by saying, “It's a lot of work that can create stress, but you do it for the sake of doing it and you always smile when you look back.”

Find out what these gents have in the works by visiting [www.detournement.com](http://www.detournement.com) and <http://claviusproductions.alkem.org/>. ■

If you didn't see your release reviewed in this issue, it's because a) I didn't want to review it, or b) it didn't make it this issue and will (hopefully) appear next time. Thank you for your patience. “Disposable Underground” by Richard Johnson unless otherwise noted. 2006. Contributors this issue: Jake Cregger, Blake Harrison, JR Hayes, Lenny Likas, Adam Perry. Also I forgot to mention last issue that #32 was the second music review catch up issue. The first one of that kind was #16.

Please check the website for a gallery of live photos and free downloads of back issues at [www.disposableunderground.com](http://www.disposableunderground.com). ■