

# DISPOSABLE UNDERGROUND

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 42

FREE

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## DISPOSABLE LOCAL REVIEWS

*A grouping of the local bands (from Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC) for this issue*

### Condemn the Infected Demo

This three-song CD-R delivers the death metal goods. Want guttural and raspy vocals? Want technical guitars and artificial harmonics? Want fusion bass chords? Tons of riffs per song? How about blast beats and double bass? You got all that here. There's a bit of Suffocation, a bit of Morbid Angel, and various other proper death metal bands to draw influence from. The third track, "Passages to Perdition," has a neat drum intro, and the rest of the music on this demo is similarly impressive. It's how they do in Maryland.

[www.myspace.com/condemnthetheinfected](http://www.myspace.com/condemnthetheinfected)

### Druglord 2010 demo

Their Facebook info tab reads, "3 old punks from back in the day (early 80s) playing loud, slow, bass drenched metal." The band isn't bass drenched so much, but it's certainly doom. And with a name as awesome as Druglord, you'd better be good at it. Fortunately, Druglord is. The three-song demo is packaged like many these days: a CD-R written on with a marker ("toke") and a folded sleeve with almost no information. *D.U.* hears a St. Vitus influence, although that isn't one of the bands they list as inspirations. Either way, they sound nice and old school, and we can tell we are going to play the demo again in the very near future. They have a MySpace page, but as of this writing haven't logged into it in two months. But who can blame them?

[druglordva@gmail.com](mailto:druglordva@gmail.com)

### Misery Index *Pulling Out The Nails*

ANARCHOS

Like many folks, this reviewer first heard recorded Misery Index with the first full-length, *Retaliate*. That makes this collection of non-album material interesting, because we can hear how death metal-influenced the band used to be on the old stuff—Morbid Angel, Suffocation, maybe some *Fear*, *Emptiness*, *Despair*-era Napalm. As we often

point out, *D.U.* classes Misery Index as a grindcore band. Look at the covers appearing here as evidence: Disrupt, Minor Threat, Napalm Death, Terrorizer. And there's more to look at with this release: all of the lyrics from the EPs and splits, a gig list through 2009 (when they put this baby out), and live tracks. Essential for any Misery Index fan, and it's damn good for anybody into intelligent death grind, if you want to call it that.

[www.miseryindex.com](http://www.miseryindex.com)

### Permafrost *Demo 2011*

If these guys are death metal, then they're "blackened" death metal, which if we're correct means DM with a BM influence. Death metal vocals mingle with blast beats, black metal-esque riffs, and shaky production values, but there's some interesting ideas on *Demo 2011*, for example the slow, crunchy riff on top of a blast on "Shiva." And while Virginia's Permafrost is low on presentation on their four-song demo, they're high on positive mental attitude. With their insert list of local bands they urge the listener to check out or their suggestion to get in touch "just to say what's up," they can almost be called posi-metal. That's certainly sets them apart from the herd, which is always a good thing.

[www.myspace.com/permafrostdm](http://www.myspace.com/permafrostdm)

### The Velvet Ants *Lunatic Frame*

T!LT / ZEPTUNE

The first thing that comes to mind is Queens of the Stone Age and a little Soundgarden, but more melodic and breathy in the vocal and less raunchy in the riff. There's also a general indie rock influence. It sounds like this three piece is using a drum machine, but that's OK. *D.U.* is in no position to have beef with that, and they get the job done with it. Several songs have beats that lead with the snare and get close to, it might be called power pop territory. A few others are mellower. In any case, look these Virginians up!

[www.myspace.com/tiltrecords](http://www.myspace.com/tiltrecords) | [www.myspace.com/zeptunerecords](http://www.myspace.com/zeptunerecords) ■

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*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, in 2011.*

*Disclaimer: D.U.'s editor has or had releases on Relapse and Selfmadegod.*

*Contributors this issue: JR Hayes, Lenny Likas, Mason.*

—Richard Johnson, editor

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# Musical Darwinism

with JR Hayes from  
Pig Destroyer

D.U. played JR some records. Here are his first impressions of each.

## Linea 77 Available for Propaganda

EARACHE

There's kind of a Helmet groove to this song a little bit. This isn't as bad as I was expecting it to be ... Alright, now they lost me. I dunno. It sounds like they're going for pop punk harmonies or something. This is like some fuckin' broke-ass Faith No More. I mean, where do you even begin? I don't know if I can overcome my prejudice for this band, 'cause I didn't like this band before I heard this, so maybe I just really wanna hate on it or something. It's really sad that I've heard worse than this, you know what I mean? This reminds me of that whole '90s Blink 182—OK, Earache needs to have their asses whipped for putting this out, first of all. If that's not a Blink 182 breakdown, then I don't know what is. I don't know how old these guys are, but they're pretending like they're 14, and we need to turn this off.

[www.earache.com](http://www.earache.com)

## The Handshake Murders Usurper

GOODFELLOW

This is pretty cool. Sounds like ... the first thing that came to my mind was old Coalesce, but, I mean, there's a million other bands that have the same kind of vibe. They prob'ly like Meshuggah. Got that stop-start, chugga-chugga hardcore, pinched harmonics, burly vocals. Doesn't really stand out as being unique. Kind of like middle-of-the-road, technical, metallic hardcore. Maybe if you like Converge or something like that, you could get down with this, I guess. I like when bands write really technical hardcore that just sounds dumb, you know, when they just sound like a bunch of apes. It's alright. It's been done. Decent band, decent recording. I could get down with it. Prob'ly fun live. That's all I've got to say about this band.

[www.goodfellowrecords.com](http://www.goodfellowrecords.com)

## Rabid Rabbit 2009 album

INTERLOPER

Alright, this sounds like a band warming up. This is the point in a record where I start wondering if there's ever going to be a singer, you know? It gets this far into the first song, and then I'm like, "OK, maybe there's no singer," which kind of worries me sometimes, 'cause I'm not really that into instrumental stuff a lot of times. This kind of reminds me of some of the extended intros like Shellac would do. Sometimes one of their songs goes on for a while before the vocals come in. I dunno. We're at the halfway point of the song now, and I'm not really convinced that this song's gone anywhere yet. I like the beat, but if they stopped here and then they just went into a completely different thing—but if it's just two more minutes of this ... See, the drums and the bass are locked down, and sounds like something that I would like normally, but he's just off doing this real abstract kind of Greg Ginn solo guitar, and I'm just waitin' for the guitar to lock down and do a riff, you know what I mean? But it's just not happenin'. The guitar's all loose and noisy, and it's kind of a jam, I guess. I'm kind of torn, because I like that it's noisy and that it's abstract, 'cause I like some noisy, abstract stuff, but this doesn't feel like it's going anywhere to me. I mean, if I gotta put up with nine more minutes of this shit, then these guys are not going to survive *Musical Darwinism*. Some of it reminds me of Steel Pole Bath tub, which is a band I really like, but even the old noise rock bands had real solid songs. These guys have good bass riffs and a drummer who likes toms a lot, but I hate it when it sounds like a dude's learnin' how to play guitar on a record. Maybe he thinks he's the dude from The Jesus Lizard, but he's not. Nobody's that cool. The rhythm section needs to find something else to do. I like the rhythm section. I thought I heard a singer; is he off getting something out of the Coke machine right now? What is he doin' while all this is goin' on?

[www.interloperrecords.net](http://www.interloperrecords.net)

## Guilty As Sin Led To the Slaughter

So what we have here is some really bush league-sounding drums—kick drums just sound terrible, all artificial and shit—you've got some stale thrash guitar goin' on, standard intro where you start wonderin', "Is this band the new Metallica?" and then you realize, no, they're not. But where's the vocalist again? Is he at the Coke machine again? Is he getting a Ginger Ale? I mean, what the fuck is this shit? Where the fuck is their singer? Who the fuck starts a goddamn thrash band without a singer? So, what do they have, a mute singer? Just run around on stage with a mic? This is fucking stupid. I wanna go on record as saying this record is fucking stupid. Who the fuck wants a bunch of stale-ass thrash riffs with no singer on it? This is dumb. I wanna know who these people are.

D.U.: They're Guilty As Sin.

JR: You're goddamn right they are!

[www.myspace.com/guiltymusic2008](http://www.myspace.com/guiltymusic2008)

## Amputee 2010 demo

I might be biased towards them, 'cause I actually think Chainsaw to the Face [with whom they share members] is pretty cool. Kinda like goregrind without the slop, you know what I mean? It's not super sloppy. Nothing really in the music for me. Guitar tone is kinda muddy, like "blah." Kinda reminds me of Last Days of Humanity. This isn't bad; it's not doing anything for me. I don't wanna take a shit on 'em.

[www.myspace.com/amputized](http://www.myspace.com/amputized)

## Minsk The Ritual Fires of Abandonment

RELAPSE

I've heard this album before. I'm sure these guys are nice dudes, but, OK, you know how *Enemy of the Sun* is, epic and shit? Well, when other bands try to do that, it just sounds longwinded. It doesn't sound heavy. I've heard at least two of these guys' albums, and I'm not sure how many they have now, but they're a good band and they're recorded really well, and they got the atmospheric thing, you know, but when it comes time to deliver the big, monolithic riffs, it's not there. I love Neurosis as much as anybody does, but I never really got off on most of the bands that try to do what they do, you know? And maybe I'm pigeonholing these guys, but I've never gotten Isis; they've never really made any sense to me. It's not my thing.

[www.relapse.com](http://www.relapse.com)

## Phantom Glue 2010 album

TEENAGE DISCO BLOODBATH

All right, I'll drink a little bit of this Kool-Aid. Got a little bit of that Unsane vibe goin' on, you know. I dig this band.

[www.tdbrecords.com](http://www.tdbrecords.com)

## Resurrecturis Non Voglio Morire

CASKET PRODUCTIONS

Definitely black metal-type riffs, but then they mix it in with some dirty, crusty riffs, but most importantly, it sounds pissed as fuck. It's pretty cool. ... I hope they don't bust in with some really lame vocals. That would bum me out so hard. Like the dude from Creed, "with arms wide open." Is that a talk box? You know, the Peter Dinklage—wow. I don't know how you go from death grind to this, but now are they gonna go back to the grindcore again? What the hell is going on? Well, they went into this little Halloween piano breakdown. The vocals kind of remind me of Mille from Kreator a little bit, you know what I'm saying? I dunno if this band works for me or not, but I'm definitely intrigued by them. Like, I'd want to check it out again. Maybe this [song] is their "Fade to Black." I mean, I don't know what my expectations were for whatever the fuck this band's name is, but I guess I was wrong. Do you remember how on the Nembrionic record, *Psycho 100*, they just kind of do it all? They got the song that sounds like Motörhead, and then they got the grindcore, and then they got the melodic instrumental? Maybe that's how this band is rollin', cause, I mean, honestly, if you had skipped those songs and not told me it was the same band, I could've told you it was two different bands. It's either ambitious or it's incredibly stupid. You know what I mean? This is the sort of thing where either people think it's the greatest thing ever, or it falls flat on its face; people just don't get it at all. They're trying to make everybody happy ...

Alright, never mind. Everything I said about this band. No. There is no excuse for a metal band to have vocals—I mean, what the fuck was that? This is where me and this band, we kiss and we part ways forever. You know what? Fuck this band. Honestly, if I owned this album, and I knew that those vocals were in my record collection, I would never be able to sleep at night. See, they had me for a minute, but now I went soft. I'm flaccid. As soon as I hear those "aaaah" vocals—I don't know. It's the sort of thing that might even work in the right context, but you're not heavy anymore when that sort of shit starts happening on your album. All of a sudden you've turned really, really lame, and I don't care how many showers you take, you can't get the lame off you. They're ambitious, but they need to be ambitious somewhere away from me.

[www.resurrecturis.com](http://www.resurrecturis.com) ■

# SUBHUMANS REISSUE ROUND-UP

*From the Cradle to the Grave, The Day the Country Died, Worlds Apart, EP-LP, 29:29 Split Vision, Time Flies + Rats*

If you're a young American, you'll likely have seen the name of Subhumans banded about on the backs of a motley lot of trendy street punk cunts. But what do you really know about this band? Maybe you think this stuff is so old school it's nursery school. Or maybe, like me, you'd spy some little Subhumans fans on the lane and think, "What a bunch of mall rat wankers, with their black and white striped long johns and stupid coloured hair." I never knew much about the Subhumans, always assuming them pure shite based on my scorn for the fashion slags who always seemed to be championing their apparel. Funny, then, considering how much I like Discharge, Crass and other U.K. punks, to have missed out on one of the most esteemed (in some circles) of the lot. Well,

come 2011, and I finally get the entire fookin' disco all to meself for a pissstake. Thanks due to that Right Honourable sod of a chap, old man Johnson. This is fun stuff. Not a total dross at all. I like the prominence of the bass guitar. The lyrics are stereotypical, angry punk musings as expected. But dig into this stuff a bit and you'll find some gems. Well, if for some reason you actually like listening to old punk albums instead of sweet Dragonforce mp3s, you should give these fine Wiltshire lads a whirl. **(by Lenny)**  
*Per the labels: All are re-mastered from the original analog tapes and include poster inserts and improved versions of the original cover artwork.*  
[www.subhumans.co.uk](http://www.subhumans.co.uk) | [www.southernlord.com](http://www.southernlord.com) ■

## DISPOSABLE MUSIC REVIEWS

### *Anata The Conductor's Departure*

EARACHE / WICKED WORLD

**T**he *Conductor's Departure* has been out for a long while now, and as of press time Sweden's Anata is in the studio working on their fifth (?) full-length record. There's plenty of blast beats here, with plenty of guitar layering and acrobatics (although now there's just one guitarist in the three-piece group). They pack a lot into these songs—most of them pass the five-minute mark. One can hear Swedishisms in the riffs and drum beats to be sure, and there's plenty of energy in the songs, and the vocals, guttural in style but the singer is enunciating the lyrics. But there's also slow, bending songs ("I Would Dream of Blood"). Once in a while, Anata throws a curveball, like "Children's Laughter" or the middle section of "Better Grieved Than Fooled." And some of the verse riffs of "The Great Juggler" are kind of catchy—with a clean vocal style, it would almost sound like a heavy rock song. It's good to make sure the audience is listening.

[www.earache.com](http://www.earache.com)

### *Ape Machine This House Has Been Condemned*

TRANSMEDIA RECORDS

The bio that accompanied this CD had me worried that I was about to be subjected to a Wolfmother-style diarrheafest brimming with atrocious faux-'70s fetishism and remedial-at-best musicianship, so, needless to say, I was absolutely goddamn thrilled to be proven wrong from the very moment I popped the CD in. Ape Machine clearly know their '70s blues rock, as evidenced by song after song crammed with thoughtfully constructed Randy Holden-era Blue Cheer-inspired riffs, Paul Kossoff-worthy solos, a genuinely bludgeoning rhythm section and vocals that vacillate between libidinous Plant-esque wailing and Steve Marriott swagger. Unlike the hordes of shitty poseur "retro" bands content to rehash the same dumbed-down Iommi and Mark Farner riffs ad nauseam, Ape Machine has the rare distinction of knowing how to write an actual fucking song. Even rarer, this album remains solid from beginning to end. Hell, one of my favorite tracks is buried seven songs in—"Dodging Bright Lights," which, to the band's credit, could've been right at home on Trapeze's *Medusa* album. To indulge my inner guitar dork for a moment, let me also say that it's really fucking nice to hear a lead guitarist that understands the importance of a good, tasty vibrato—someone's clearly been listening to his Robin Trower and Free records. I unabashedly love this fucking album, and can't wait to hear more from this band. The only negative thing I'll say is that "Monte Malady" lifts the riff from Grand Funk's "Sin's A Good Man's Brother" pretty much verbatim, but I at least give 'em credit for having good taste in riffs. Ape Machine fucking rules. **(by Mason)**  
[www.myspace.com/apemachinemusic](http://www.myspace.com/apemachinemusic)

"Ape Machine has the rare distinction of knowing how to write an actual fucking song"

### *Chainsaw to the Face/Backslider split 7"*

BLASTCAT

If you like feedback, guttural vocals, and blast beats, Chainsaw to the Face are for you. They don't leave a whole lot of room in their sound for anything besides blasting, and that's what a proper grindcore band should do. Oh sure, they've got a slow song, like "Deprivation," but that's just one out of 10 songs on their side of this split (on splatter vinyl, mind you). A blurry sound, but they're tight. Lyrically it goes from being subjected to a guilt trip to brains infected by maggots. It's good to have diversity.

As for Backslider, they are dyed in the wool powerviolence and they're really good at it. There's so many starts and stops that, if you're unfamiliar with them, on vinyl it's impossible to tell when one song ends and another one begins, and that also means that since some of the songs don't have lyrics printed, you can't follow along either. But

that's cool. Backslider is critical of many facets of society and the lame way that people act, as any reasonable person would be.

[www.myspace.com/chainsawtotheface](http://www.myspace.com/chainsawtotheface)

### *Dark Mass Medium*

This band bears a close similarity in MySpace presentation to Extreme Neuron Noise (reviewed below). Both bands employ a drum machine, although Dark Mass has a live sticksman. In fact both CDs came in the same envelope from Ukraine. But a big difference between the two is Dark Mass plays what it calls progressive symphonic hypermetal, which is instrumental through the 10 tracks here. There's plenty of metal guitar chops on display, as well as some keyboards, and acoustic interludes on tracks such as "Blazing Sides of Insanity" and clean-guitar passages on the first minute of "Guyee Shoomliat." The latter song is one of many that show a lot of range, stretching the boundaries of metal. One song sounds bears a resemblance to old Motörhead and even kicks off with bluegrass-inspired guitar. Now, *D.U.* contributor JR would give this band a thumbs down just on principle since it doesn't have a singer, but the songs are quite good. Even though there's just a single front-and-back sleeve for packaging in this slimline CD case, *Medium* is recommended!

[www.myspace.com/darkmassdark](http://www.myspace.com/darkmassdark)

### *Devil Magister Mundi Xum*

UNBORN PRODUCTIONS

I'm not telling you anything you don't know, but for the sake of this review, I'll say it anyway: The Ozzy-era Sabbath released a total of 8 studio albums, of which the first 4 are arguably flawless, with the first having been released 41 years ago. Think about that for a second—it's really kind of mind blowing, if for no reason because there are countless new bands who are still using a handful of records released nearly half a century ago as blueprints for music made in 2011. The great irony being that Sabbath were incredibly original when they first appeared back in the late 1960s, scaring the bejesus out of a lot of people with their blown-out satanic blues rock, but the same most definitely cannot be said for the legions of imitators they've since spawned, literally to the point where some of their imitators have imitators (Pentagram, Witchfinder General, St. Vitus). Norway's Devil falls into this latter category, vacillating between slavish Sabbath worship and Witchfinder General-inspired flourishes. It's an entirely pointless entry into the doom metal canon, odiously retro-minded with no ambitions beyond apeing the same Iommi-isms already hardwired into your average hesh's skull. The guitarists can play, sure, but who gives a shit, really? For all of the (well-deserved) abuse that retro-thrashers take for being trendy, I'm sort of dumbfounded as to how SO many bands get away with pulling the Sabbath worship nonsense without being called out for being without any merit whatsoever. Pointless. **(by Mason)**  
<http://unbornprod.shore-of-nothingness.com>

### *Disgod Sanguine Scales*

POSSESSION

Death metal has made its way all the way to Belarus. Disgod has been rocking in Minsk, Belarus since 2003, and they have the riffs to show for it. They're technical but not too much, they use blast beats but not too much, and they play fast a lot, but not too much. Disgod employs variety (but not too much) to keep things moving on their debut album: there's "regular" blasts and death metal blasts, raspy vocals (a little Patrick Mamelí here?) that show emotion, some double-bass action, and old-school production: not real nice and polished, not 100% tight, but a breath of fresh air in today's sterile, immaculate sound. Lyrically, it's hard to say exactly what these guys are going on about, but it reads interesting. *D.U.* recommends *Sanguine Scales!*  
[www.possession.ru](http://www.possession.ru)

### *Dusted Angel 7" EP*

CORRUPTION RECORDINGS

Hailing from sunny California, Dusted Angel is a five-piece playing doom rock with

some crunch and some groove. The first track, "The Thorn," starts off quiet and takes its time building up, but it pays off. There's assuredly some old-school influences here, like some Sabbath and Vitus, for example. The two songs on the flip side of the wax are heavy like the first side. The drummer shows his stuff on "Valium 5," and there's some peaks and valleys in this song. "Purple Jesus" is an instrumental and more of a rocker. This three-song 7" is limited, so get it while it's hot.  
[www.myspace.com/corruptionrecordings](http://www.myspace.com/corruptionrecordings)

## Extreme Neuron Noise 2010 EP

There's very little information out there on this drum machine band which *D.U.* assumes is from Ukraine. Parts goregrind, parts death metal, parts catchy grooves, Extreme Neuron Noise employs lead parts with odd effects and unintelligible vocal growls to give the five songs (sample title: "Peals of Post-apocalyptic Dissonances") an otherworldly feel. Definitely ambitious in the composition department.  
[www.myspace.com/extremeneuronnoise](http://www.myspace.com/extremeneuronnoise)

## Forensics *You Don't Have to Win, But You Have to Fight* MAGIC BULLET

Forensics has been at it for a long time, and even these days it seems that Magic Bullet gives attention to packaging. This 10" comes on see-through red vinyl and the insert is a nice poster. The music is a stripe of hard indie rock, and the 10,000 foot view of the lyrical subject matter is about "you and me." Forensics plays with emotion and energy, and while some may be able to peg their influences *D.U.* isn't picking them out right away. Recommended! As with any good vinyl release these days, there's a download code included.  
[www.magicbulletrecords.com](http://www.magicbulletrecords.com)

## Glenn Hughes *Music for the Divine* AGONIA

Deep Purple and Red Hot Chili Peppers fans have a reason to meet in the middle: Glenn Hughes and Chad Smith produced this record together, with a little guitar from John Frusciante. It's a rock record with some poppiness and lots of funkiness. There's even some string instruments in there. It sounds great, although it's better on the rock side than on the ballady side with tracks like "This House" or "Frail." But on balance it's a well-executed work.  
[www.demolitionrecords.com](http://www.demolitionrecords.com)

## Impiety / Surrender of Divinity *Two Majesties* UNHOLY HORDE

*Two Majesties* is a gatefold double 7" split, which means each band on the split gets a full 7". They're on some 180 gram vinyl shit, too, and even the insert is on heavy weight paper. Very nice. Before we get into the music, the stage names these two bands use are almost worth the price of admission: "Insulter of Gods," "Unmerciful Atomic Firepower," "Mary-sodomizing Vomits," "Christ-barraging Commander." Very nice.

Impiety from Singapore has good production and well-placed explosion samples, so when they go into a blast beat, as they often do, it's so extreme that something in the studio explodes or some firearm goes off by itself—maybe it's their bullet belts (although Surrender of Divinity has more of them). Impiety even has a skit on their 7", after their Destruction cover. I've never heard a black metal band put a skit on their record before (called "Outronomicon"). Lyrically, it's black metal. Destroy the Christian church, Satan's administration will be reinstated by force, et cetera. Sample lyric: "Anus of goats not spared in ritual." Very nice.

Surrender of Divinity, hailing (sorry) from Thailand, is on the tinny side of black metal, blasting all the way, except for some double bass parts. They also turn in a cover, but it's Bathory this time. It sounds like they didn't use ProTools to clean up their drums, which is a good thing in *D.U.*'s book. On the lyric front it's more interesting, going from hurling personal insults at Jesus to comparing God's reign to what Satan's is going to be like: God's been bullshitting mankind for 2000 years, see, and Satan is going to put an end to all that.

Impiety gets the nod on this split for being more meaty and more obnoxious. But the package is a whole is well worth ordering, if it can still be found: it's limited to 696 copies and has been out for quite a long time.  
[www.unholylhorde.com](http://www.unholylhorde.com)

## Indian Slights & Abuse / The Syncophant SEVENTH RULE RECORDINGS

I'm truly puzzled. I keep seeing the doom metal tag thrown around in relation to these guys, and I don't really get that at all. Indian sound like a less-ambitious AmRep-era Today Is The Day spliced with the more bludgeoning elements of *Souls At Zero*-era Neurosis, and maybe toss in some Big Business noise-skronk with a bit of Asbestos Death-style rudimentary sludgy punk. It's a great blend of ingredients, and they pull it off well, but the songs get samey pretty quickly as they trot out the formula repeatedly with little variation, although to Indian's credit they stay consistently heavy as fuck and the production sounds terrific. Hopefully they'll step up their songwriting with their Relapse debut. (by Mason)  
[www.seventhrule.com](http://www.seventhrule.com)

## Infernal Stronghold update

The boys from Philadelphia have a few releases under their belts, mostly in the form of

demos. But before we get to a few of the official releases, Infernal Stronghold is a kind of a five-piece black metal band with plenty of passion live and on album. But live they come off more like a thrash band with lots of blasts and a few Celtic Frost gallops. They don't dress like a black metal band at all, which is nice, but most of their releases' layouts say "we are a BM band." They also say, "We aren't concerned with giving you information in a coherent way on our albums. Check out our MySpace page if you want any of that."

The first full-length (Onslaught Records), *Excommunicated*, has a *Schizophrenia*-era Sepultura influence—not a bad place to draw influence from! The production is clear for the genre. The band re-recorded some demo tracks as a bonus.

The split 7" with Gatt (Bullshit Propaganda / Metal War) is a lovingly packaged EP, with colored vinyl, a strange layout as far as the art direction goes, and a patch for each band. Gatt is a downtuned, mid-paced band with some blast beats that come out of nowhere. Not Earth-shattering, but definitely heavy. Infernal Stronghold's side is more, well, infernal than the first CD. More chaotic in the production department and more aggressive in the performance department.

*Godless Noise* (KVN) is the current full-length on LP and CD, and Infernal Stronghold definitely brings the noise on this one. Again, performance and production wise, this is much more black metal, but not so typical. The lyrics clearly show that these guys have no time for organized religion at all. No time whatsoever.  
[www.infernalstronghold.com](http://www.infernalstronghold.com)

## Khlyst *Chaos Is My Name*

SEVENTH RULE RECORDINGS

Ever wondered what it'd sound like if Sonny Sharrock jammed with Deutsch Nepal? No? Yeah, me neither, but this is one of those albums that, much like Sunn O))), I can absolutely see people going apeshit over—it has all of the key elements a certain type of metal fan will eagerly jizz all over, from its members' flawless pedigrees (namely James Plotkin and the hot chick from Thorr's Hammer), dodgy black metal aesthetics, Neubaten-in-a-haunted-house ambient soundscapes, and Hydra Head seal of approval. Nice credentials aside, it's a frequently interesting listening experience, and Khlyst have an authentic ability to convey a real sense of tension and dread. That said, it truly does sound like cleaned-up Abruptum. Ultimately, pretty much anything James Plotkin does seems to be worth checking out, and Khlyst is ultimately no exception, even if it isn't quite capable of bearing the weight of the hyperbole your favorite metal hipster scribes will undoubtedly heap upon it. (by Mason)  
[www.hydrahead.com](http://www.hydrahead.com)

## Killing Joke update

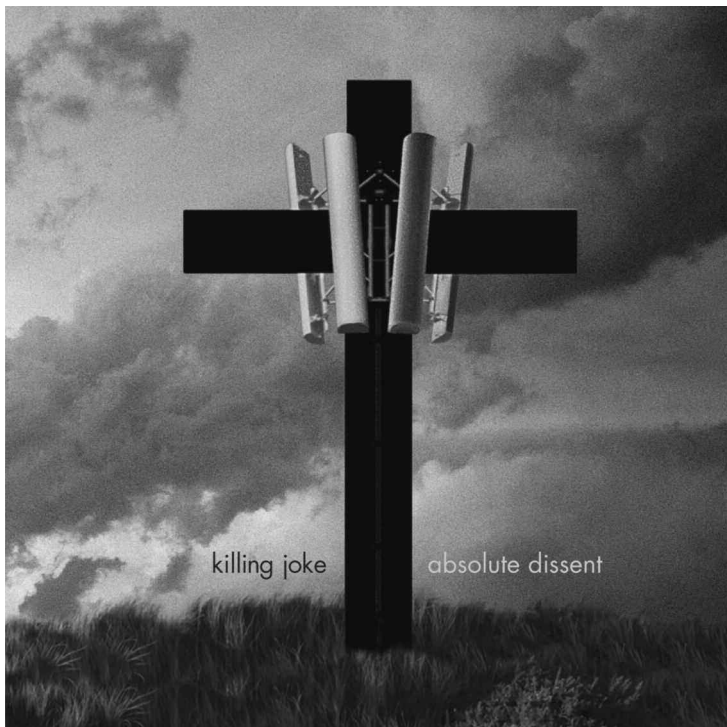
It's been the case for a while now that the original lineup of Killing Joke, which formed back in 1979, has been working together. They were reacquainted, as the story goes, at Killing Joke's former bassist (Raven)'s funeral. That apparently led to the residencies international tour they did in 2008 (two days in each city visited with alternating live sets on each pair of dates). This meant they parted ways with Benny, who took over the drums after the "2003 album" tour; how they went about this we can't say.



## KILLING JOKE JAZ COLEMAN • GEORDIE WALKER • YOUTH • PAUL FERGUSON

But now we have an EP of new Killing Joke material with this original lineup, on the Spinefarm label. *In Excelsis* has five tracks, three of which are taken from the new full-length album which we'll come to momentarily. *D.U.* stumbled upon the song "Endgame," one of the album and EP tracks, on YouTube before the release of the EP and has been playing it constantly. It hasn't gotten old; nor has the rest of the tracks.

*Absolute Dissent* (Spinefarm) is a 12-song mother of a full album, and right off the bat let's put this out there: Killing Joke still has it. There's a wide range here, from the primitive, raw and plodding "This World Hell" to "Honour the Fire," which has a verse reminiscent of old Lush, strangely enough. Singer Jaz Coleman growls like it's Killing Joke 2003 again and also sings melodically, reminiscent of the album *Democracy*. In



fact, much of the album recalls *Democracy* and *Hosannas From the Basements of Hell*. There's also much more than a pinch of *Night Time*, back when Killing Joke made a splash in the dance scene, and will anybody complain about that? *D.U.* doesn't think so. There's an excellent track-by-track interview on the new album with Jaz up at thequietus.com, by the way.

The special edition of *Absolute Dissent* comes with a bonus disc collection of Killing Joke covers called *Absolute Respect*. Everybody from Helmet to Foo Fighters to Metallica appears on it. (You ever tried to explain to a Metallica fan who Killing Joke is by explaining that "The Wait" is a Killing Joke song? The fan goes, "Oh, OK." But we digress.)

And the band doesn't show signs of slowing down any time soon. They are touring in support of the album, and another single, *European Super State* (the title track, taken from the full-length, is a full-on dance song) features exclusive tracks just as *In Excelsis* does, and like its predecessor is also available as a download and on vinyl.

To see exclusive live pictures of Killing Joke's NYC performance in 2008, go to [www.disposableunderground.com](http://www.disposableunderground.com).

[www.killingjoke.com](http://www.killingjoke.com) | [www.spinefarm.fi](http://www.spinefarm.fi)

## Krallice *Dimensional Bleedthrough*

### PROFOUND LORE

I have to admit that I've never been able to sustain interest in any of guitarist Mick Barr's other projects (Orthrelm, Octis, Crom-Tech, etc.) as I've found that listening to his output elicits the exact same reaction every time: I spend the first four or five minutes sitting slack-jawed in awe at the man's formidable skills, gradually replaced by a strange compulsion to sell all of my guitar gear on Craigslist, which quickly leads to scanning through "Casual Encounters" ads while ignoring the angry wasp noises coming out of my CD player long enough to pleasure myself with shitty pics of BBWs. When I read the bio sheet accompanying the Krallice CD, I was not at all encouraged. The only thing I like less than 25 minute guitar solos disguised as albums is American black metal, which more and more commonly seems to be played by dudes who, up until last month, were listening to Sebadoh and pretending to understand David Foster Wallace novels. Well, I'm happy to say that my cynicism was completely unfounded this time. While the word "epic" is thrown around a lot when discussing metal, more often than not, it's retard-code for bands (often German) who abuse the "Estonian male choir" setting on their synths while bashing away at timpanis and reciting poetry about dragons or some other fruity shit. Krallice, on the other hand, can genuinely be described as EPIC. Whereas Barr's picking-hand-of-steel can grate on the nerves when he's doing his Albert Ayler shtick in Crom-Tech, his skills fit perfectly into a black metal context. In addition to his inhuman playing capability, he has a keen sense of melody that makes Krallice as enjoyable as they are. Colin Marston is the other guitarist here, and strikingly, he is just as furiously capable as Barr. Given the velocity, intricacy, and length of the tracks here, it is truly phenomenal that these guys play as tightly as they do. Rounded out by an insanely adept rhythm section (uh, audible bass? on a black metal record??), Krallice lay down the gauntlet for American black metal with this one. Truly awe-inspiring shit. (by Mason)

[www.profoundlorerecords.com](http://www.profoundlorerecords.com)

## Maegashira *The Stark Arctic*

### SPARE CHANGE

Strange how the first instrumental song creates a mellow, drawn out mood that is

displaced by the second song. On the second the Jersey band pulls out the wah pedals and the stoner rock beats and growled/yelled vocals. The third track is slower and has more texture, getting louder and softer. (These sections of the record are more interesting than the more straight-up ones that have been described as their Eyehategod-influenced material.) And so it goes on this album: not easy to slot into a "stoner rock" category that implies one dimension. Between each track is atmospheric connecting tissue that attempts to tie it all together. *The Stark Arctic* doesn't flow like old Cathedral, nor like Sleep.

[www.sparechangerecords.com](http://www.sparechangerecords.com)

## Neuropathia 13

### SELFMADEGOD

The first thing that jumps to mind is "Entombed rock," and there ain't nothin' wrong with that. The next thing that comes to mind is "Blood Duster rock," and that's fine too. 13 is a five-song EP for this six-piece Polish band with thick guitar tones, high/low vocals, and plenty of mid-paced d-beatness. An enjoyable package.

[www.selfmadegod.com](http://www.selfmadegod.com)

## Requiem Aeternam *Destiny-Man*

### ICORP / CENTURY MEDIA

Sitting through this entire CD was a genuinely painful experience. I was literally angry when I finished listening to it; it left me wondering what would compel someone to record this shit. I can appreciate good musicianship as well as anyone, and I genuinely enjoy the occasional self-indulgent display of instrumental prowess, but Requiem Aeternam quickly squander any goodwill as it becomes evident from the first song that they have zero interest in songwriting and simply intend to dick around on their instruments for the entire duration of *Destiny-Man*. I was actually intrigued for the first five minutes or so, until I realized that they weren't planning on reining in the guitar-noodling bullshit and getting to business. I'm not exaggerating when I say that this entire CD contained not one memorable riff, and if there's any reliable bit of criteria that you can always use to dismiss a metal band as being objectively shitty, I'm pretty sure that going 40-plus fucking minutes without coming up with a single memorable riff is it. I don't care how talented these guys are, or however many classical composers they can namecheck in their embarrassingly pretentious press sheet, they've managed to create an absurdly boring display of technical wizardry lacking any substance whatsoever, and I can honestly say without a trace of exaggeration that my favorite part about this CD was snapping it in half and throwing it out the car window after it was over. (by Mason)

[www.centurymedia.com](http://www.centurymedia.com)

## Suicidal Tendencies *No Mercy Fool!/The Suicidal Family*

### SUICIDAL RECORDS

A listen to the latest ST disc has me worried that Mike Muir's bandana might be wrapped a little too tightly. There's really no other rational explanation as to why he would further tarnish his band's legacy by taking songs from two certifiable crossover classics (*Join The Army* and *No Mercy*) and re-recording new versions ruined by an unrelenting wave of funk bass lines and uber-shitty guitar solos. Putting aside the fact that these tracks didn't need to be remade, let alone "produced" and "enhanced," it's mind boggling to think that Muir ostensibly considers this to be an improvement upon the source material. All of the excitement, fury and adolescent spleen-venting of the originals are nowhere to be found here; instead, you get a slickly produced funk-metal abomination that sounds like a bunch of Mordred B-sides somebody found in a dumpster. And seriously, I'm not exaggerating when I tell you that the bass player on this record is totally out of control—the non-stop popping and slapping on this record sounds like Ike Turner at a feminist rally. If Bootsy Collins grew four extra arms and snorted a dump truck full of cocaine, he'd still have nothing on this dude. If that weren't bad enough, apparently Rocky George quit ST to join Fishbone. Good rule of thumb: if anyone in your band quits to join Fishbone, it's probably time that you and your remaining bandmates kill yourselves immediately. It quickly becomes apparent that the new guitarist is unfit to don the Pirates cap, as he constantly noodles throughout the songs and abuses a DigiTech Whammy pedal so violently that he actually makes Steve Vai sound sorta tasteful. I'll spare you a song-by-song breakdown: suffice to say, it all blends together to make a steaming, heaping shit potpourri. Bottom line: a total disgrace! (by Mason)

[www.suicidaltendencies.com](http://www.suicidaltendencies.com)

## Xasthur *Subliminal Genocide*

### HYDRA HEAD

The American one-man black metal band's *Subliminal Genocide* is only one of many full-lengths, EPs, double LPs, and compilation appearances. This is a low-fidelity drone record, with a drum machine and copious amounts of keyboards and lonely, distorted guitar riffs. The vocals scrape along the songs that often pass the six-minute mark. Some songs are instrumentals, such as "Pyramid of Skulls," "Loss and Inner Distortion," and the intro "Disharmonic Convergence," that help set a mood in addition to the setting that the rest of the tracks provide. The high-end guitar and shrieking vocals clue one in to the black metal here, but there are no blast beats on *Subliminal Genocide*, just plodding beats, and long sections with no percussion. *D.U.* will say one thing for Xasthur: it creates a dark atmosphere that you can cut with a knife.

[www.hydrahead.com](http://www.hydrahead.com) ■



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