

# DISPOSABLE UNDERGROUND

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ONE OF THE STALWARTS of the grindcore scene, California's Phobia has completed and released only the lastest of their several full length albums, *Cruel*. Here original member Shane McLaughlan speaks of his group, starting with covering a change within the ranks, that of long standing bassist Bruce Reeves exiting Phobia and his replacement.

"Yeah, we have someone playing bass right now and he will be doing shows with us," says Shane, adding that the band also has a new drummer. "But things are going great as of now and even working on a split at this moment with Pig Destroyer."

As Shane admits, this isn't the first time Phobia has had to deal with a personnel issue.

"Oh yeah. Every band has their problems and with us it's always been a drummer. I don't think the bass position is that difficult because I have played bass on the last three recordings we have done, which were *Get Up And Kill*, the split with Skrupel that's coming out, and will probably be out by time this hits, and three cover tracks for the *Unreality* compilation on Deep Six, and I played for more than half of the new record. Steve [Burda, guitar] played the other half. So the bass player we have now actually writes and is way more productive as a member. And he is only helping us out at this point, so it's no real big loss. As a friend and long time Phobia member it is, though!"

Moving back to the drum position, Shane explains that new guy Danny Walker will be in the band for the long haul, "as long as there is time he is 100 percent down, but he has another band that he has and that is taking off really well, so things may slow down. But that's okay. We have done a lot and proud of it and will make time to make some noise!"

*Cruel* is an improvement compared to Phobia's past releases according to Shane.

"I think in production wise definitely 100 percent. We went to a bad ass studio, we have a kick ass producer named Scott Hull."

As the vocalist Shane is trying his hand at somewhat of a different tack with the



SHANE McLACHLAN PHOTOS COURTESY WWW.JELLOBUNG.COM/PHOBIA

lyrical content on the new album.

"But I'm also touching issues such as vivisection and songs like that which I have voiced on in years. I think my lyrics are more simple and I like that more—straight to the point. So I don't look at it as an improvement or anything; just look it as the way it is, and it works."

We'll be able to see how things work on *Cruel* since the Willow Tip label has released the album. Shane comments, "Things are going good at this point. We have ran into some problems getting this record done, over budget and shit like that, but it's all worked out. If we are going to work together these trials will show if there is going to be compromises and communication, you know? We have a decent relationship as of now and I'm cool with that."

Considering all of Phobia's releases it's safe to assume that *Cruel* will be recognized as a grindcore album.

"I guess it's a grind record; maybe it's a punk record. We're punks, so we play punk rock. I really don't give a shit what it's suppose to be. It's a new Phobia record. It will smash you!"

Whatever the style, Phobia is holding on to it and striving to improve within it, as Shane explains:

"You can play many different types of blast beats; with a good drummer you can do many things while playing fast, and you will hear this on the new record. I believe, don't fix what isn't broken, so there will be fast beats for sure. You can count on that!"

And finally, by way of demonstrating part of Phobia's global view, although you'll find Phobia's web site information at the end of this piece, "we need a PO box. Still have lots of fans around the world in third world countries, or other places stricken with poverty that don't have use of a computer—or do they not count?"

Contact Phobia at [www.jellobung.com/phobia](http://www.jellobung.com/phobia) and watch for the new album at [www.willowtip.com](http://www.willowtip.com). ■

MARJOLEIN KOOIJMAN is the latest member of *The Gathering*, a band out of The Netherlands who has been tearing shit up the world over with their live shows and albums that have gone from gothic death metal styles to semi-acoustic approaches over the years. One one of the stops on their East Coast trek in advance of their new album, *Home*, bassist Marjolein brings us up to speed on the band's activities. Taryn Wilkinson contributed to the interview.

On their brief tour of the Americas in March, after hitting South America for a short time, *The Gathering* played in Mexico before moving on to the famous South By Southwest musical extravaganza in Texas ("That's turned out pretty nice, actually") and up the aforementioned East Coast, finally for two shows in Canada.

Their show in Virginia where we talked with Marjolein happened after the band drove 30 hours straight, starting at five a.m. the previous morning.

"North America is still, I think, something we have to, you know, discover, how you say it? It's really first promotion and it's pretty heavy also because of the long distances, and in Europe we know we can get a good, how do you say, a fee, so we go rent a big nightliner, and here it's not ..." Marjolein searches for the words in English. "It's different. There's so many bands. Everyone wants to play. I heard that some bands even pay money to the venue just to play, and in Europe it's the other way around. You don't have to pay; you get a little money."

The venue for the Virginia show is one where the pay to play practice is common, and on this show as is often the case the bill featured a large number of bands.

"They should change it, you know? Two support acts is more, far more, than enough, and here sometimes you have five, four bands. 'Cause I think we're gonna play a shorter set, because of, we know people are full. You can't get their attention."

Independent of the planned cutting of the set, the band doesn't like to feature just their latest release live.

"No, we do everything. This time, it's ..." pauses Marjolein, "we know there's some people that really like the old stuff, from *Mandy lion*. But of course, that's a long time ago, so we like to play the new things, of course," she continues, "and of course songs from the DVD [the award winning *A Sound Relief*], but we don't really think about promoting that thing especially. We just wanna make a nice show with a good dynamic thing. And of course, sometimes we think about

it, but there's also a CD out from Century—Century Mercury—Century Media," Marjolein laughs, trying to remember the name of the label, "with the B-Sides [Accessories], and we could some stuff which is on that, but..."

Continuing on the subject of set lists, Marjolein talks of the song selection on the live DVD.

"We had the *Sleepy Buildings* tour, which is acoustic, and it went very good, and we said, 'OK, we wanna put this on a DVD, but maybe a little more electric songs,' and the idea is to make another DVD which is the opposite ... Like, this one is the more quiet, acoustic—it's not really acoustic, but semi-acoustic songs, of *The Gathering*, and maybe next year, or whenever we

all know the time is right, we wanna record another DVD with more heavy songs."

The Gathering put their decision making process into *Home* as well.

"I dunno how to describe it," begins Marjolein. "It's not like changing directions back, but we thought *Souvenirs* [the last album], especially all the others, because I was not in the concert, when I hear them talking about it, it's really like, 'Oh, there's so much thought about it, you know? We have this idea and every time we wanted to make it perfect, more perfect, more perfect.' And when you do that, then in a certain moment you don't know what you're doing anymore. So they sometimes felt they lost that [original seed] of the idea, and they were busy too far, too long, and too deep on little things. And I really love that album with all that, so layered."

"But this time they said like, 'Okay, we don't wanna work on the album for a year. Let's take one month, and we put our ideas in it, and we make the best out of it, and then that's it. That's most pure.' We put on a [pad of paper], we wrote down all kinds of words, and the word 'pure' was the most important one. Every time it came up, like, 'Okay, what's this song about with the lyrics, put in they mind, and okay, what you want to play them? You wanna play it loud or you wanna play it softly?' Really, we were talking about all things together, and to me, it really opened my mind, because I never had done recording session, and this guy, our producer, Attie Bauw, he's really great. He's

really inspiring to talk with him. And it's not like, we sometimes say, 'Oh, that death band is like competition of music making. They only want to make complex things, you know?' This is really, cut it all away, and keep the raw form like how it is. So

there's some guitar ideas on the album which was said on the DVD [in the interview extras], like we want a bit more guitars on it and not only keyboards and the guitar in the back. But it has all things: it has some *Souvenirs* kind of songs, and it also has songs that remind you of *Mandy lion* times, maybe. It has everything. Like, Anneke [van Giersbergen, vocals] said it's a wild bouquet of flowers. It has a lot. If you listen to it, you really have to listen to it a couple of times. 'Cause the first time, even for me, was like 'Wow! I don't know what to think.' It has to grow."

Again in the *A Sound Relief* interviews, the band noted that in South America their fame level is comparable to The Beatles' stature.

"It's bizarre. I heard the record sales were like really low, so the booker said, 'Well, you don't have to go there, because you know, you don't sell anything over there.' Somehow on our guestbook and on the forum there's a lot of *Español*," she laughs, "so when we were in here in 2004, someone rang and was like, 'Oh, the CD show is sold out.' We were like, 'Huh?' The CD was the first time that we went there. And they booked another date because the fly tickets were like, we had one day off and then go home. So we did two shows and they were both sold out. Three hundred people screaming."

"I was so surprised because my bass amp, I couldn't hear anything. They were screaming, they were screaming; I said, 'Oh, maybe it's still on standby.' You know, you have the power and the standby. So I went to the back to check and it was on. But then I saw Anneke and René doing this [performing as loud as they can], and like, 'Oh, okay, I can do this.' They were screaming so loud, it was crazy. Also, last time that we play a sad song like 'Saturnine,' and normally you get really into the lyrics and the feel of the song and you feel so [heartfelt], but then I was looking around; everyone was screaming loud with the lyrics. I couldn't help but smile ... it was really funny. The people over there are so passionate, and also very nice. It's crazy. We love to go back."

Marjolein describes how she came to be in the band.

"Well, I live in Oss, and they all used to live in Oss, and the rehearsal room's there, and there's some cafés there where they played in the beginning. So I could see them a lot of times and I really liked the show. I was always amazed, especially Anneke: a little girl, she opens her voice, her mouth; its like 'Wow'!"

She continues, "One of my best friends from high school, she dated René for a while, and René, he knew I played guitar and I worked in a musical instrument store. And so he said, 'Yeah, come along and then you can pass the guitars along when I have to change one, or maybe change the strings.' So I knew them a little bit, but I was very excited at that time that I could go see the bus of *The Gathering* and do the strings. That was pretty nice."

"So yeah, when I was interviewing René for my school about a assignment about major labels and very small independent labels, when it was done, he was like, 'Ah, I have a question for you,' and he started so seriously; I was a bit surprised, like, 'Oh, maybe it's about his girl we both knew, like ex-girlfriend, or I don't know.' But then he said, like, 'Hugo, he wants to quit the band,' and I was really like, 'Oh my god, what are you gonna do?' Said, 'Yeah, maybe you wanna try.' I was really like [in disbelief]. So the train back home, I called my parents, like, 'Oh, you never believe it! By next Friday I'll be rehearsing with *The Gathering*, and if they don't want me, I don't care! I just rehearse with *The Gathering*. That's great.' But it went really good, and here I am."

And the band is just as strong for it.

Check up on the band's activites at [www.sandandmercury.com](http://www.sandandmercury.com). Home will be released in mid April on *Sanctuary* and *The End* in the States. ■



ANNEKE &  
MARJOLEIN  
LIVE IN VIRGINIA



MARJOLEIN  
BEFORE THE  
VIRGINIA GIG

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FROM THEIR HUMBLE BEGINNINGS in Loimaa, Finland, Demigod (first interviewed for these pages in D.U. #5) grew to become one of the most striking death metal bands of their time with the release of their first album, *Slumber Of Sullen Eyes*, and their next album, *Shadow Mechanics*, which showed the band's compositional growth over a decade. Here, vocalist Tuomas Ala-Nissilä and founding member and guitarist Tero Laitinen both look back and ahead for Demigod.

The big news in the Demigod camp, firstly, is the recording of their as yet untitled third album, and the band is already making plans for a fourth album even before the third one is completed, which they expect will happen in June 2006.

"To me the new material sounds thrasher than *Shadow Mechanics*. There won't be hardly any 'clean' vocals this time, but the third album won't be a return to the good ol' death metal style either," begins Tuomas.

"Yep, you could say that we've found our style finally," agrees Tero. "The new stuff is more focused and sounds like one band. As *Shadow Mechanics* had all kinds of experimentations in, this time it won't happen. New song are more straight forward and maybe thrasher as Tuomas mentioned."

Demigod's lyrics, Tero says, "deal more about what's going on in this sick world, I guess. We aren't taking any political stand in our lyrics; I'd say more observing type of side. There are a different topic dealt in every lyrics. I think the style of writing hasn't changed that much, because the newer lyrics are still quite obscure when you read them. To make it short there are my favorite topics of human mind, such as insanity, fear, rage and all those happy sides related to it, and something about the unstable situations of people in some parts of the planet and Earth and life dying in general."

Demigod has gone through several periods of inactivity and even breakups, and as Tuomas explains, something keeps these guys coming back to the band.

"Friendship is one of the key word here, I guess. Demigod was formed in a very small town, so everyone knew everyone beforehand. Many years later, after the recording session of *Shadow Mechanics*, the band was once again splitting up, but the right fellows appeared and everyone took the training seriously. In my opinion you have to enjoy the rehearsing more than anything in this case. Otherwise there won't be any gigs, albums, et cetera. So after sixteen years the love to the music we play and the atmosphere at the rehearsals keep us going on."

Two of the band members, Esa Linden and Seppo Taatila, left around the *Shadow Mechanics* album's recording and release in 2002, Tuomas recalls, "but they both appeared in the audience at our 'comeback' gig, which happened in Tuska Festival in the summer of 2002 ... I guess that nowadays we have finally caught the death/thrash spirit that has been the musical goal for Demigod since 1993 or so. After *Slumber Of Sullen Eyes* the band felt that there has to be some kind of musical changes. So there was some musical experiences in late '90s, which can also be heard on *Shadow Mechanics*. Some of the tunes on *Shadow Mechanics* are far from the death metal style that we represented on *Slumber Of Sullen Eyes*, but it was an album which just had to be made."

Many, at that point past and present, members of Demigod contributed to the recording sessions of *Shadow Mechanics*, and as Tuomas reveals, "There was a certain lineup problem during those days. The album was almost ready; only the vocalist was missing. So the guys asked Ali Leiniö to sing for them. First he refused and they called me. So I came straight to studio and the guys liked my singing style. Then Ali decided that he would still like to try it out and he did few songs. Mika Haapasalo, who had also played guitar in Demigod a long time ago, was the owner of the recording studio we were abusing, so he was available anytime. His had done vocals to some of our the musical experiences I mentioned earlier and we felt that some of the slower, melodic songs would sound boring with the brutal death style vocals only. So we tried many kinds of vocal arrangements and chose the best ones for the album."

Tuomas expands more about the music of *Shadow Mechanics*: "If you think about it in a restricted way you may thought that 'Gates Of Lamentation' is the

only tune that remains you of the old Demigod: fast and brutal death metal. But if you listen it carefully you'll find it contains certain Demigod trademarks here and there. I mean there's some catchy riffs, melodies or moods that create the so-called 'typical' Demigod sound. Some tunes like 'Trail Of Guilt' or 'Crimson Tears' represent the experimental side of our music. The tracks are good, but they don't sound like typical Demigod songs. The combination of some death and thrash metal mixed with some acoustic guitars and three different vocalists makes the result quite unique. That wasn't the purpose when we were in the studio. I guess *Shadow Mechanics* was supposed to be like a testament for Demigod. But then one thing let to another and the band didn't split up. And that's why the album has its place in this saga."

"It all starts with a good riff," Tuomas goes on. "Jussi Kiiski [guitar] is nowadays the main composer of Demigod. So he writes a lot of material from which he chooses the best parts. Then he makes some instrumental demos with Sami Vesanto [bass]. Together they record some demo guitars and basses with a computer. After that they introduce the new tracks to the rest of us. Then we check if anyone has done any lyrics that could be used with our new material. So we do some vocal arrangements with the new lyrics and try to record the demo vocals too."

And through the whole process there's five critics in the band that are trying to make the songs sound as good as possible."

2006 should see the return of the band to the live stage as well as the studio, as Tuomas explains.

"Right now we are not doing any gigs at all, because of our recording schedules, but there is a plan to do a mini-tour in Spain and Portugal later this year. That

would be a first time for us to play shows in those countries, and why not. The response there has been good. We have reached quite a lot of mail, especially from Spain, so if the tour happens, it probably shall turn out in a good way I suppose."

Besides favorites from *Slumber Of Sullen Eyes*, Tuomas continues, "We like to play live some of the heaviest stuff from the *Shadow Mechanics* album, too. We have also played some unreleased material from the upcoming album too, so the setlist is always a great mixture of old and new Demigod tunes."

Another exciting aspect of the band's activities is that the first album has been reissued. Tuomas: "The album is remastered by old Demigod guitarist Mika Haapasalo. He did a great job. The re-release contains also our very first studio demo, *Unholy Domain* [from 1991], which is now available on CD for the first time."

There was a planned celebration for the re-release amongst past and present Demigod members, but as Tuomas admits with a laugh, "Ehm, the celebration has now been cancelled twice due to some personal reasons. But we will have a celebration for the re-release of the first album with our ex-members Esa and Seppo some day in April 2006. So let's see what will happen. Maybe you'll get a scandal report of it into your next issue!"

The *Slumber Of Sullen Eyes* re-release is available through [www.xreemmusic.com](http://www.xreemmusic.com). The band has some t-shirts left as well as mp3 samples from their past releases and additional info at [www.demigod.tv](http://www.demigod.tv).



DEMIGOD PHOTOS BY HANNA MAUNUKSELA

TERO LIVE IN 2003



# BAND LOGOS are the FRONT OF THE HOUSE

LOGOS ARE IMPORTANT for a band for several reasons, maybe as important as the band name itself. They help identify something about a band: their sound, their attitude, their level of originality, their level of maturity. One person who has designed logos for some high profile bands as well as underground ones is Christophe Szpajdel.

"I got a terrific demand for logos, so the inspiration comes from people around me, some movies scenes, some states of wrath I or people around are getting through," says Christophe as he launches into scanning logos for bands that are "gagging for them sooo badly!" after coming back into town in Devon in the UK. He continues, "What is exciting is that I get the best logos done when I am utterly angry or obsessed by death, like it has been the case when I've drawn the new Dark Horizon logo. It happened right after I got a serious hand-to-hand fight with one of my Russian housemates at the place I was previously living. This bastard fueled so much hate in my veins that he allowed me, by upsetting me, to create the best logos I ever could do. Mysteriously I haven't ended up dismembered, landing in the hospital or the nearby graveyard. What a miracle!"

Besides the states of mind Christophe describes that bring him results, in some cases he also gets some instruction from the bands for whom he designs.

"It depends but generally both are confluent. The band gives me some ideas but my angry state or my piss-off mood brings me utter inspiration. It is like volcanic lava uniting forces with boiling water in a crater lake. So generally these two parameters are undissociable. The band comes up with some ideas, submits me some art directions; then I need to pick up the right state of mood: angry, infuriated or depressive or annoyed or excited. Then the fluid runs through my veins and I complete the logo. It takes me quite some days to get a logo completed, up to six weeks if I run out of inspiration."

Besides his passion for his own work Christophe also admires what others have done in this area, logos such as "Mayhem, Sodom, Possessed, Celtic Frost, while my absolute favorite is the one I've done for Pit Fiends, a great pit-zombie band from Chico, California."

Christophe adds further, "I can't say I have logo drawing idols but I like very much the works of Tompa Lindberg. For example Darkthrone is one of his finest art. Then I really follow my own instinct. You need to know I am so utterly busy with logos that I run 666 mph to shift between my three part time jobs and my logos."

Having said all that Christophe has admittedly run into situations where he couldn't come up with anything upon which he and the band in question agreed.

"Recently I had a band called Eithel Fuin from Italy, Deus Ex Daemone,

As CHRISTOPHE POINTS OUT logos are a visual concept of course, and some bands look at logos as artwork while others see it as simply modifying text, to make their band name look cool. Luc Lemay of the Canadian band Gorguts redesigned their logo from the version that appeared on their demo for a specific reason:

"Cause it was too hard to read it," he laughed during an interview to promote their first album, *Considered Dead* (see D.U. #3) "Yeah, we had to do it. We're pleased with the new logo; I think it's better than the demo one, yeah. 'Cause in zines sometimes you get bands and it's only like a load of shit, I don't know, it's like a ink splash, you know what I mean? It's hard to read sometimes."

Autopsy was an interesting case. The only one of their albums and EPs that had the same logo with which they started was their second LP, *Mental Funeral*. On their two EPs they cleverly incorporated their logo into the cover artwork, instead of laying the logo on top of a painting for instance.

"It changes with everything we do," guitarist Eric Cutler explained at a one-off gig to promote *Severed Survival*, the first album. "Autopsy will always have a new logo. This is the way we like it. We don't like to stick with one logo."

Some bands have had their logos modified from their early days. Vio-Lence's logo started out looking like it was coming out of a wall, made of brick. Edward J. Repka redesigned the logo for the release of the band's first album, *Eternal Nightmare*.

"He made it chrome or look like a fork or whatever," explained Phil Demmel, guitarist for Vio-Lence, speaking while on tour for their second

still need to get into it. Eithel Fuin tries to combine some dark gothic with grim black metal but they wanted something looking like Borknagar. I drew them a nice logo as they wanted; then they told me the logo does not correspond to what they want. Same with a band from Yugoslavia called Daggerspawn and a Greek band called Acrimonious. I got a mail from their manager who wanted a logo like more doom gothic oriented, then did a logo like that. A month later I got a nasty mail from one of the band members, Bill Magafas, who has been absolutely rude and nasty, telling me that the logo does not match the band. I mailed him, 'What's the matter?' but he never, ever answered further, not even a thank you or whatever. I also worked for a band called Murder Rape and it took me eight years before they pick up the right logo. A lot of hassle, lot of time wasted."

Concerning the subject of the wrong logo for the right band, Christophe has more to say.

"On that question, there are lots of excellent bands I'd like to redesign the logo, like for Breath Of Sorrows, Engorge, who got nice logos already but they will stick to their old ones. By the way, you can see an Engorge logo which will remain unused by the band, but have a look on what I redesigned for Engorge [on my MySpace page]."

Finally Christophe explains that logos go beyond just a piece of artwork.

"For me, the symmetry and the readability of a logo are essential. The logo can be very complicated like the one I did for Evil God or Black Witchery or Sorghegard for example, but

still needs to be readable and extremely efficient ... A logo is the band's 'Front-Of-The-House' so it must be absolutely readable at first sight. I truly mean it."

record, *Oppressing The Masses*. Vio-Lence had a situation where on the second album, the cover featured yet another, totally different logo design. "That was Megaforce Records fucking up. We hate the new logo," continued Demmel. "We can't stand it. But that's basically the way record companies are. If they don't wanna do something they'll find some way to subtly keep it their way."

The same thing happened to Sepultura, although with different results. Their *Schizophrenia* album was the last to feature their original logo, as Max Cavalera revealed while touring for the following record, *Beneath The Remains*:

"Record label says that people can't read, and at the time we didn't have any power through Roadrunner because we're just another new band. So we say we like old logo, and they say, 'I know you like the old logo but we wanna use this one because people have to read, people have to know that you are Sepultura and you're from Brazil and all that shit.' Is like, if you wanna keep fighting for the old logo they gonna say, 'Okay, so go find another record label.' They got more power at that time to do anything they want. We gonna have the old logo back, now that we show them that we sell, and we show them that everybody likes the old logo better." As time revealed Sepultura never did end up going back to their old design, and on recent albums even changed their logo to a different design again.

Visibility is also a factor in some cases. It used to be that you could spot an Overkill shirt from a hundred paces because of the neon green they've employed. Of course, all logos should jump out at you, no?

Check out Christophe's work at [www.myspace.com/christopheszpajdel](http://www.myspace.com/christopheszpajdel). Some material for this piece originally appeared in Curious Goods zine. ■

THE MAN HIMSELF  
FROM HIS WEBPAGE



# C-Rex The Rex Erection

HAVING CUT HIS TEETH ON METAL AND PUNK, C-Rex has been writing and recording and delighting his friends and (justifiably) elicits a "thumbs down" from his critics in the hip-hop community, if any he has. C-Rex took a break from playing gigs with his iPod to enlighten us on what it is he does.

"I don't know shit about hip hop, but I think it's hilarious. I don't pay attention to it, but like any American, it's constantly being crammed down my throat. I love it for its comedic value, but I hate the big name rappers today for failing to take advantage of the incredible exposure they are getting. In theory, most of these guys are rhyming about the illest, most disgusting sexual shit, which is what C-Rex is all about, but if they are going to be that ridiculous, they might as well be a lot funnier than they typically are. Not only are they talking about sick shit, but the most unsuspecting people of all ages and races eat it up. And then for some asinine reason these MCs feel the need to undercut the beauty of their opportunity to spit nasty shit at America and instead insist on discussing how many cars and necklaces they have. Who gives a shit? Life is about booty and prescription drugs. The big hip hop names who are all relentlessly claiming to be 'so real' are total bullshit. And most of these motherfuckers don't even have skills! They just put 'yeah' or 'nigga' at the end of every line, like that shit rhymes. I went to high school, man. Point being, I am above hip hop. C-Rex started dropping the ill shit when he realized that he was the only pervert on the block who was willing to own up to it. So I made my thoughts rhyme, started telling stories of the girls and drugs I experimented with on the weekends in high school. I don't use silly code words for the filthy shit that I want to say and I don't hold anything back. And every syllable rhymes. Just the fact that some of these absurdly rich MCs today are rapping over whack beats, talking about boring shit, and can't even rhyme. I don't know anything about rap, but I figured if I was gonna take a stab, I wasn't gonna be a pussy about it. And look at me now: I am coming back with *The Rex Erection* and I already have all the rhymes written for my 3rd LP, *Rex 2 Riches*."



C-REX BEFORE ONE OF HIS LIVE SETS

"C-rex speaks to all shapes, races, and persuasions of bitches. Yet suckerpunks want to turn a deaf ear to the nasty tracks 'cause their moms can't feel it. I pity such busters. As result of this cowardly negligence, C-Rex entertains mostly shitheads and losers."

"What sort of fanbase do I have? Perverts who can't admit that they are perverted because they have jobs and moms and girlfriends. Haters who think I can't rap just because I look like a broke ass fool. Those suckers love to watch C-Rex expose the truth. To be honest, most of my fans are frat boys and most of the shows I play are at frats. They book me because they hate themselves and I play the shows so that I can get drunk, high, paid, and laid. Simple as that. I have very little respect for my fans."

"When I'm bakin' beats or scribblin' rhymes or whatever, the only thing I listen to is my heart. I pay respect to Snoop Dogg for spitting 'eat a dick' before Rex did, but not for a damn thing otherwise. I stay focused on the booty. From the cradle to the grave C-Rex stays true to his influences: painkillers & grain alcohol. It's all real. But Tony Yayo is tight."

"Let's get real. Strip the Rex out of the track and you're left with a hit. Biblical basslines. Blasphemous beats. It's sonic sex. I have no money, but I make fresh beats and write sick rhymes. And it's really all about the rhymes. I think of the suckers and bitches who pump my tracks as the congregation to whom I preach of the trials and tribulations that make up the struggle that is the life of C-Rex. I'm not like other MCs. I'm not a thug. C-Rex doesn't care about money, cars, jewelry, or clothes. I'm about interracial sex, the West Coast heady nugs, shattering backboards, oxycontin, a future without pants, and the concept of an eternal spring break. And beer. People don't want to accept that this shit is real. Dust busters won't admit it, but America needs C-Rex. They need to buy *The Rex Erection*."

Contact C-Rex at [www.myspace.com/rexoffender](http://www.myspace.com/rexoffender). You can watch his video for the song "All You Thugs" at [www.indieupload.com](http://www.indieupload.com). ■



melodic instrumentals and intense lyrics. We try to space you out and scare you at the same time."

So says David Krepinevich, one half of the daring duo in Coaxial from sunny California. He's hit the nail right on the head, and his band delivers on what they set out to do. He continues, "I would say [we're] experimental, because that is what we are doing. When it's time to work on a song we don't try to make it sound like something that already exists. Instead we are constantly experimenting with sounds, the structure of the songs, and recording."

How Coaxial formed is a straight forward story.

"My friend gave Chris [the vocalist] one of my CDs, and he liked it. We then contacted each other and figured out how we were going to start working together. That's when I decided to move to Long Beach." Soon after the two set to the business of recording and releasing a CD EP.

"*The Phantom Syndrome* is the first project we ever worked on together. We were still getting used to working with each other. Now I feel that we are a more developed as a unit."

One of the aims of David's move from the east coast to the west was the playing of gigs.

"We like to mix it up a bit when we play out, introducing live elements such as bass, guitar, synthesizer, and record scratching. I also like to remix the songs a little, making them flow into each other. We feel that our live shows should offer something new instead of performing as it is on the recordings."

Fair enough. But David still has more to offer in the way of a description of *The Phantom Syndrome*.

"Our sound over all is heavy and dark, keeping things dynamic with

"You could say it's a mix of genres. I don't think I would just slap the hip-hop label on it, but there is parts of that in the music. We try to evoke some sort of emotion out of the listener; what that emotion is up to you."

Coaxial has recorded for a self titled full album to be released in June on the same label as before, Gold Standard Labs. In the meantime, David will be enjoying the weather, working on the songs with Chris, and partaking in one of his favorite pasttimes, smoking bongs.

"I prefer the bong; blunts fuck my shit up too much."

Look up Coaxial at [www.coaxial.cc](http://www.coaxial.cc). ■



COAXIAL TEARING IT UP LIVE.

COURTESY DAVID K.

# DISPOSABLE MUSIC REVIEWS

## Akercocke Words That Go Unspoken, Deeds That Go Undone

ELITIST/EARACHE

I'd like to take this opportunity to suggest a new musical direction for Akercocke, or at least a reshuffling. Capitalizing on their strengths and minimizing their weaknesses, they should drop the death metal and black metal music and just concentrate on the progressive rock and gothic pop areas of their sound. In other words, if they took all of their records into ProTools and edited all of these sections together, adding some bits and pieces to bridge the gaps, they'd have an incredible record. When I listen to Akercocke, I basically sit through their metal parts in anticipation of their next clean vocal section. Drop the middle man, boys, and do at what you're best!

## Battletorn Evil Chains

MEGABLADE/TROUBLEMAN

Eighteen tracks with each one clocking in at around or well under a minute. Nine tenths of the tempos are d-beats. Each song has about three riffs. To sum this all up, IT ROCKS! Even the lyrics are a treat, philosophical amongst the visuals invoked. At first listen you'd be forgiven for thinking the vocals are monochromatic, but actually they are tailored to what's going on inside each song, whether it be fast or (much less often) midpaced, or what have you. There aren't many options left that Battletorn employs, because it is a purposefully primitive, straight up, in your face hardcore band with a metal attitude. Pick this record up or die trying.

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

## Battletorn Burn Fast UK Tour CD

A collection of tracks from two different Battle-sources, this quickie features the sound of the band's new lineup, which simply has been paired down to a two piece as the singer was unceremoniously bounced and the guitarist took over the damn vocals. It's a lot more raw and unforgiving than the proper release above. Again, a must have. But move fast! This shit is limited to 100.

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

## Blessing The Hogs The 12 Gauge Solution

GOODFELLOW

I have heard some bad band names lately, and this ranks high on the list. Blessing the Hogs? Oh, now that's evil and scary for sure. As far as production, it's a great job; the group is fronted by a well known and respected producer, who has done really great work in the past. Musically, however, there is nothing of substance to be found here. Nothing but endless downtuned riffage, double bass drumming, and hardcore yells that all goes nowhere. This CD is just more pollution against our environment. Just imagine the thousands of shitty CDs manufactured each day; it could fill landfills the size of Alaska. Stop the madness. Just 'cause your fans care, doesn't mean the other 99.9% of the world's population has to endure the ill effects of an over-saturated CD market. Do not buy this by any means, or support an industry trying to snatch your hard earned dollar in exchange for mediocrity digitally pressed onto shiny plastic circles. (by Adam)

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

## Circulus The Lick On The Tip Of An Envelope Yet To Be Sent

RISE ABOVE

Wow, this is some sort of pagan rock celebration record. I hear the evil lurking behind the happy melodies created by flutes, mandolins, oboes and other unidentifiable instruments. Visions of a human sacrifice for the god of the high plains come forth as this absolutely wicked disc spins round and round. This could be a great soundtrack to a remake of the classic Christopher Lee film *The Wicker Man*. Not that it should be remade. However, Circulus are very good at creating an atmosphere of being somewhere in rural England, where the folk have stuck to the old ways of worshipping the sunrise, the sunset, and whatever else the pagans worshipped way back in the day. But all in all, these atavistic hippies probably wouldn't stand much of a chance against the musicians that existed in the days they wish to return to. A lack of really strong riffs, or songs for that matter, hinders the album. They're on to something though. Put these guys in a time machine back to 500 a.d. and let them fare with the competition of the day; it would undoubtedly make them a stronger band, worthy of releasing a second album. (by Adam)

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

## Coaxial The Phantom Syndrome

GOLD STANDARD LABORATORIES

First off, Coaxial fucking rules. Now that that's out of the way, I'll back up my statement. There's five tracks on this EP, each one with spacey, drug-influenced beats and soundscapes, with a rapper with a harsh edge rhyming over the top. An important aspect of the recording is the production, which ties it all together. I'm not an expert at this style of material but I can say that I've not heard anything quite like it.

GLS, PO Box 65091, Los Angeles CA 90065, USA

# Musical Darwinism with JR Hayes

We played JR and guest columnist Blake Midgette (ex-pg.99) some records. Here are their first impressions of each.

## Decapitated Organic Hallucinations

EARACHE

JR: These riffs are really dissonant. Sound like Rorschach riffs.

BLAKE: Or Discordance Axis riffs. Sounds like a drum machine.

JR: All the European death metal bands; their drummers all sound like drum machines. Irritating.

BLAKE: Technical, but doesn't really have any feel at all.

JR: It's aggressive, it's death metal, it pummels. Right there—

BLAKE: That's pretty fucking sick.

Disposable Underground 35

**JR:** That's a good death metal riff.

**BLAKE:** That honestly sounds like something I'd write if I was in a death metal band.

**JR:** The singer is nothing special. The drums, like I was saying, most European death metal albums, it just sounds fake and triggered, which is frustrating. But you can't argue with brutal riffs. I mean, you can try to argue with them, but you're not gonna win.

**BLAKE:** No, you can't win an argument with a guitar riff.

**JR:** No, you can't. I mean, if the riff is brutal, then it's brutal. If a death metal album's got brutal riffs, then it's probably gonna be a good death metal album. End of story. It's what it's all about.

### **Earthride** *Vampire Circus* SOUTHERN LORD

**BLAKE:** This sounds a lot like Clutch.

**JR:** I just hate it when you get exactly what you think you're gonna get. As soon as I looked at this record, I coulda told you what it sounded like.

**BLAKE:** Wah-wah fuzz pedal. The singer just went "Uh."

**JR:** I mean, there's just a market for this type of shit.

**BLAKE:** These guys probably all look like Mitch Hedberg, and they have tight jeans on, and I can see the singer just like, microphone stand, head going back and forth next to it.

**JR:** That's a nice little riff there, though. I like that riff. You gotta give credit where credit is due. This is pretty cool for the style.

**BLAKE:** I don't really like this kind of music. I've had enough of it. They don't do it as well as some of the other people.

**JR:** Somebody who does it well is somebody like Boris, 'cause they change it up. They're like The Melvins; they do weird shit. This is playing to a style. This is playing to a formula. It's not terrible; whatever. I've definitely heard worse.

**BLAKE:** I definitely like the fact that the singer sounds like Mötörhead. That's the best thing I can say about it.

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

### **Gridlok** Demo

**JR:** This is thug thrash, dude. It's all it is. Listen to it! These guys are obviously, either have their shirts off or are wearing wife beaters when they're doing it.

**BLAKE:** And they're all bent over and they probably have System Of A Down makeup on. Yeah, this is bad. Oh, that's a bad riff. And that sounds like Korn. That sounds a lot like Korn!

**JR:** Why don't you just cut my balls right off, Jesus.

**BLAKE:** And you know, the lyrics are probably like, "You're such a fake bitch, you slut. You ripped my heart out and peed on it."

**JR:** Well, the thing is, is that the [sleeve] says, "If you like Pantera and Slipknot then you'll probably like this," and most dumb rednecks who like that sort of thing probably would like this.

**BLAKE:** This is really not good. I mean, it doesn't—the recording isn't that band, and I guess they're pretty good for rednecks.

**JR:** You know, it exists, and that's sad. We can never take it out of existence.

**BLAKE:** No, but we can make fun of it.

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

### **Jilted/Beyond Description** split CD FOREST

**BLAKE:** [Jilted] sounds like it shoulda come out of Richmond. Like been on Vermiform or something.

**JR:** They're from Italy, this band.

**BLAKE:** Total circle pit.

**JR:** It's just crust, like punk, street hardcore, playin' at Stalag 13 type of thing. It sounds good. The riffs are basic three chord street punk.

**BLAKE:** It's pissed off, strapped with energy.

**JR:** Wow, [Beyond Description's tracks] sounds like their old shit. Come on, I need a mosh part. Dude, this song rules.

**BLAKE:** This is pretty awesome.

**JR:** I don't know if it was their last record, but I bought one of their records at Reptilian. It was like, more mid-paced, but if you play fast like [on this split], I'm gonna love it.

**BLAKE:** I really love the fact that they thank a band on

here called Pile Of Trash.

**JR:** That's a sweet name for a band.

**BLAKE:** I love that guy's vocals.

**JR:** Yeah, his vocals are pretty awesome.

**BLAKE:** Sounds like a lot of the vocalists that you hear on Prank.

**JR:** Like His Hero Is Gone type shit?

**BLAKE:** Yeah, exactly. It sounds like it's fuckin' throat bleeding power.

**JR:** That's what it's all about. His Hero Is Gone, to me, is like the most evolved type of that kind of hardcore. It's hard and it's pummeling. I mean, that's like state of the art thrash. But these guys are Japanese. The Japanese always know how to do it right, you know what I'm saying? You never see shitty musicianship out of a Japanese dude ever. Like, we played with 324 in Japan, and Disgust, and both of those bands—the music's really simple, but they play it right. They play it fucking dead on.  
[okahaha@pop02.odn.ne.jp](mailto:okahaha@pop02.odn.ne.jp)

### **Pan For Punks** *A Steelpan Tribute To The Ramones*

**BLAKE:** You know what this reminds me of? When you go to Disney World and you go into one of those rooms, and you realize that they're actually playing a real song, not just at the Polynesian luau, you know? And it's like, whoa, this is the Ramones being played by a guy in a grass skirt.

**JR:** Well, the thing about the Ramones is like, it's just great pop music. It's not even punk, you know what I mean? The songs are perfect songs; you can do them a million different ways. I'm sure you could do reggae versions and they would fuckin' rule. I feel like I could drive a bumper car to this.

**BLAKE:** I'll say one thing: I'm pretty impressed. Do you know anyone who can play those drums anyway?

**JR:** It's a dude doing Ramones covers with a steel drum. I mean, if that has any interest for anybody—

**BLAKE:** I'll go ahead and say that guy probably has no friends, and as much as I thought that was funny and interesting, it was funny and interesting.

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

### **Severe Torture** *Fall Of The Despised* EARACHE

**JR:** I mean, this is like meat and potatoes death metal, straight up.

**BLAKE:** Yeah! That vocalist has got a set of nuts on him. It's real repetitive, but it works.

**JR:** It's by the book, and it's on Earache. This coulda come out any year on Earache between 1988 and now. This style's already been defined, but it's good.

**BLAKE:** The production is a little muffled.

**JR:** You know, if you're gonna do death metal, you have to be mean, and they're pretty mean. At least they're not boring, or at least it's not boring so far.

**BLAKE:** Do they have any axes or spikes or anything?

**JR:** No, but they're definitely European. Just look at them.

**BLAKE:** Yeah, dude, they look like fuckin' Vikings.

**JR:** They're not from Detroit. Their guitar player's name is Marvin. That's pretty fucking cool.

**BLAKE:** I'm actually pretty into this. This is good.

**JR:** It's good death metal. They were awesome live. They did a fucking cover of this Pestilence song off *Testimony Of The Ancients*. It was fucking awesome. Dude was like, "We're going to do some old death metal!" And everybody's like, "Argh!" He's like, "This is by Pestilence!" They're like, "Argh!" They tore that shit up. Everybody was goin' fuckin' nuts.

### **Twilight** 2005 Album SOUTHERN LORD

**BLAKE:** This is lame black metal. It doesn't have all the organs and stuff that I normally like.

**JR:** I just like that it sounds like they went to a lot of trouble to make it sound this crappy.

**BLAKE:** Yeah, the production is absolutely terrible.

**JR:** But I like it. It's so bad that I like it, 'cause it just makes everything, I dunno ... it gives it kind of a creepy, you know, that creepy underground vibe that black metal is associated with?

**BLAKE:** I think the whole reason this group is a band is because the singer has wanted to sound like a tyrannosaurus rex since he was a child.

**JR:** This isn't my type of music, but if I was really into black metal, this is the kind of shit that I would like. You know what I mean?

**BLAKE:** They're going to be scary and dirty sounding, but it's not either. I dunno. It doesn't scare me very much.

**JR:** Maybe I just really like the artwork and I wanna like it really bad. I think the artwork's pretty fuckin' cool. This is why I don't like black metal, though. [We] call these pirate riffs.

**BLAKE:** Like epic *Braveheart* gladiator style.

**JR:** Yeah, I hate those kind of riffs. They piss me off.

**BLAKE:** I really hate that band.

**JR:** Eh. Whatever.

### Various Artists *Back Against The Wall*

#### PURPLE PYRAMID/CLEOPATRA

**BLAKE:** Oh, so this is all these people from these different bands doing Pink Floyd stuff.

**JR:** Or, this is them doing the entire *Wall* album. Lame. But it says it's "The ultimate Pink Floyd experience." How can it be more ultimate than actual Pink Floyd? I mean, don't you think that that's not really possible? This is giving me hives.

**BLAKE:** What this is, is a bunch of guys whose music careers are over, trying to live vicariously through Roger Waters' old balls.

**JR:** I mean, why do you ... I don't know. I'm sure it was fun for these guys, but nobody wants to hear these people play Pink Floyd, you know what I'm saying? Why do you want to hear somebody try to play David Gilmour that's not David Gilmour? It's pointless. It's done well, but I mean ... I don't get it. I guess it's just for people who have heard the originals too many times, and they need to shake it up a little bit. That's the only reason this could possibly exist. Take it out. It's fucking awful.

### Why Are You Laugh Ultra Dolphins ROBOTIC EMPIRE

**BLAKE:** I think the art rules, and this music is kinda charming in a way, but it ... it's too much like the Blood Brothers to me.

**JR:** Well, at least the vocals aren't horribly out of key.

**BLAKE:** I definitely think anybody who's into the stuff Robotic Empire puts out would definitely love this.

**JR:** The artwork is fuckin' sweet, though. I dunno—what would you even call this? Are you talkin' the Daughters type of shit? That kind of metrosexual pg.99 type of thing?

**BLAKE:** We weren't metro. Fuck you.

**JR:** No, but I'm saying pg.99 is the dirty Sterling real thing. I'm talking about, like Blood Brothers—

**BLAKE:** This is whatever hardcore has evolved into. The new arty hardcore, it's just a mishmash of a thousand different styles.

**JR:** It's arty, but you know, there's a lot of arty little fucking kids out there right now.

**BLAKE:** I know. That's what I'm saying. This should be hugely popular. It's better than Blood Brothers.

**JR:** Well, dude, what's not better than Blood Brothers?

**BLAKE:** So is me taking a shit on my own bed.

**JR:** I'm surprised that their songs are this long. I think this would be a lot more interesting with cleaner vocals.

**BLAKE:** Actually, honestly, I think I could probably get into this.

**JR:** It's good music. It's like Dismemberment Plan, weird—I mean, they could be from DC. Total DC sound, which is weird to say, but this is pretty cool stuff. Andy was definitely onto somethin' putting it out.

**BLAKE:** It's interesting as all hell.

**JR:** With the arrangements of the songs, I'm not convinced that they know where they're going with them. The songs just don't really ...

**BLAKE:** I think that's what kind of charming about it, though. It seems like ... It feels pretty honest; it feels pretty young.

**JR:** Well, you know Andy Low's not gonna put out a band with a bunch of fuckin' chumps. I mean, I could listen to it and it could grow on me, but will I allow it to do that? Not when I have *Deadboy And The Elephantmen* to listen to, and the new Placebo album.

**BLAKE:** Right. I definitely don't think I'd like to go see them play. I think their fans would be annoying. ■

# DISPOSABLE LOCAL REVIEWS

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

## Haram 2006 album

LOVITT

Well, once again I'm crushed by Haram. The brand-spanking new album contains two songs from their demo, previously reviewed in *D.U.*, and nine more tracks of head-caving-in music, which is powerful and emotive without being emo, and complicated and intricate without being a bunch of technical bullshit. The band trekked up to Massachusetts to record this mother, and the music scene is better for it. Tweaked out, melancholy and yet rocking melodies, and more confidence, just more Haram, basically, is what you'll hear if you well-advisedly score this record. I conducted an interview with these mammoths of music for the *Loudoun Times-Mirror* which you can read by going here: [www.timescommunity.com - archives - byline/writer richard johnson - exact phrase - articles from 2005 and choosing the July 22, 2005 entry](http://www.timescommunity.com/archives/byline/writer/richard_johnson/exact_phrase/articles_from_2005_and_chosing_the_July_22,_2005_entry).

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

## Hex Machine Condor Hour

Richmond, VA's Hex Machine is a very unusual band. When you throw the demo into your iTunes, it says it's playing *Love Again* by Asuka. At some point you realize what it is you're supposed to be listening to. Bass/guitar/drums/vocals. In a way the band is a little silly, possibly the influence of the bass player who was in such odd bands as Gnob (see archived *D.U.* interview online), and Experimental Farm and Hortus. In other words based on his case history at some point he really needs to seek out some professional help. There's somewhat of a Melvins influence in the riffs, and dare I say there's a pinch of Moth Macabre in their music. There's no fucking way these guys are influenced by Moth Macabre, though—way too obscure. I found about Moth Macabre through *D.U.* alum Mason, and I found their CD in a bargain bin for a dollar. Anyway, I'm getting off topic. Hex Machine's music is loud, obnoxious, and atonal, but considering who's in this band, kind of restrained. The guitar is noisy and discordant, the vocals are trippy and drony, and the drums also take a front seat. The bass is holding it down and also adding to the riffs. The thing that doesn't quite fit, that's not so much in the pocket, is the purposefully sloppy guitar, which is part of the sound. The bass and drums are a lot more together by comparison. It's like a tight band with a loose guitar, which doesn't mesh as well as it could if all three instruments had the same general vibe. The other thing that needs pointing out is the aforementioned vocal style, that's fine in itself and distinctive, but some of what Hex Machine does is heavy and powerful, and it's counter productive to have these kinds of vocals over the top, even though that would be counter to the kind of mood the band is trying to create. In any case, I'm not suggesting you don't buy this demo. Hex Machine assuredly warrants further investigation.

[thehexmachine@hotmail.com](mailto:thehexmachine@hotmail.com)

## Swords Manifest Destiny

BATTLE MODE

Nice to see when a band has some taste with samples. They've a sense of humor, not only with the ridiculous lyrics, but with the out of hand songs they play and they raving mad way they execute them—it's a lot of fun, and it's clear Swords doesn't care what anybody thinks. There's even some blasts. The record put a smile on my face.

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

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: JR Hayes, Blake Midgette, Adam Perry.

A new feature at the website allows you to find in which interview with a

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



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--Amy Goodman



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particular band appears. All the back issues of the zine are up on the website.

With little fanfare, issue 35 marks the 15th anniversary of Disposable Underground. Thank you to all of you who have been reading the zine since the first issue, or are even reading it for the first time with this one. It is most appreciated. Here's to another fifteen years!

—Richard, editor