

ISSUES

WE'RE BUILDING A TOWER

BUCKO CROOKS



#96: 5/1/25

THE NEIGHBORS

JOURNAL
OF THE
FIFTH
FOUNDATION

OCI

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ISSUES 96: 5/01/25 BUCKO CROOKS

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XOCHITL

The flowers wilted without water. I was left pondering, what reflections does this have in humans? I think to myself, isolating, with much stress that I can't even get into. Am I burnt out? Then I think about my friends, who left me dead flowers, and I worried about the omen. She passed 3 days later, the grief settling into my bones penetrating the very marrow. Then I think about myself. I'm getting older, without much to show for it. I've never desired "things" but I desire a better life for my husband. Is this wrong of me, to give into society's capitalistic demands in an effort to provide a safety net for my husband?

I wonder if this feeling, too, is temporary. All things are in life, but I wonder how long I have? How long we have.

My husband makes me feel seen, but I sometimes fear I am still missing "water." What water could be, I don't know. I've never felt a strong connection to close family— that could be it. But is this loneliness causing me to wilt? I thought I wanted this— And I feel like I still do. I just have to pop out with some big achievement before I can show my face again. Something few know about me is I'm in college currently— trying to develop my programming skills so that I can provide more for my husband. I'm a year in— and I know I'll pass this time. Why can't I just tell people things? In this fugue, all I can look to is my husband. I have no self, I have no sense of self, I have no desire for a sense of self. All I can think about is my husband. That's what I have to do to force myself out of this shallow grave I dug for myself. Keep my eyes ahead, keep a low profile. Lock in.

I must do this because this is what was written for me. I will make a great game. Hopefully several. Under a pen name, of course. I don't want anyone to know anything about me anymore. I want to hide my face for the rest of my life— but I don't know how much longer I can manage to do so.

There is strength in isolation, the wilted flowers still persevering, still alive. A little sugar in the water will do the trick. Maybe my "sugar" isn't so bad after all. But you know the saying, "No sugar, no sugar problem." Maybe if I put just a few more limits on myself I can come out of this fully powered. At least that's what I hope. I've never had much Jesus Christ, but when judgement day comes I hope he sees me for what I am, and can tell me exactly what that is.

-ELLA SOLIS



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ALAM

ISSUES MAGAZINE

FEATURED ARTIST INTERVIEW

BUCKO CROOKS

Ryan: Hello.

Bucko: Helloooooo.

Can you see me?

R: Yes.

B: Oh good.

R: Sorry about the confusion.

B: That's ok. What's going on over there?

R: Not much. So, uh, the way this works is I'll ask you questions and you can say words if you want. I'll record all of it. The print edition of it will be next month.

B: Wow.

R: And we'll release the audio of that later that month.

B: Well, you should, after you go, would you mind sticking a link so that not only can I purchase that print ISSUE but also perhaps other back

ISSUES if you got em?

R: Yeah, sure.

B: Cool I want to get a hold of a couple of copies of this magazine for my friends as well.

Not just because of this interview with me but the other editions as well because I think it's great.

R: Yeah, great. Let's start this. What is your name and where are you?

B: I am Bucko Crooks and I am in Fort Sad in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. <broken up>

B: Fort Sad is an apartment above a rock and roll club. Prior to my living here another crew of musicians lived here. They told me that the crew of musicians who lived there before

they did called it Fort Sad so everyone has called it Fort Sad. I didn't name it but that is what it is called.

R: I see. Have you been in Milwaukee a long time?

B: Yeah. Many years. I've been back and forth to My Milwaukee many years. I like it here.

R: Is it where you're from originally?

B: Yeah. I grew up around Wisconsin but I like to spend most of my time in Milwaukee. I spent many of my middle teen years here, between 12 and 20. Then I moved and worked in factories and on farms and all kinds of stuff. That was a period of my life that wasn't super great. Then I moved back in 2015, 2014. I've been here since and I love it.

R: Haha.

B: 10 years now I guess.

R: What's the name of your project?

B: The project is called The Smudge but I have many projects. I just finished up a set under the name Cop Corpse at Jazz Gallery center for the arts in Riverwest, Wisconsin, which is a little borough west of the Milwaukee river.

R: Ok. How did that go?

B: That was pretty wild because first of all I was booked by some cute kids from Lawrence University (which is a university for people who have money who want to send their kids to get an art degree). It's a music university and it is private. So these bouncing baby boys are into like jazz and shit so they came down with one of their professors to play abstract,

neoprimativism, very Bluenote, very complicated Gary Lucas style, Beefheart type guitar. One of them played very nicely and their profesor played very nicely. Then I played. The Cop Corpse project is a harsh noise wall project with very little variation. A harsh noise project. I played the project. It lasted six minutes and I said I finished up. I said this is the Cop Corpse project. You know what this has been about. Police you can't live with em, you can't shoot em. And some older man in the audience said "How much is your allowance?"

R: Haha.

B: I said some choice words to him.

Afterwards I was chatting with some of these boys and he came up with me after the show and he said, "I may have had words with you but that was some very interesting music," and then he left. I thought, well, if it is so interesting I hope you look up why it's so violent.

R: Haha.

B: I hope that guy gets killed. Anyway, how are you doing Ryan, what's going

on here you are? I suppose you are the inter-viewer and I'm the inter-viewy. I shouldn't ask you questions.

R: Well, there's no rules.

B: Good. I'm having some Hamm's tall boys here in the tradition of Milwaukee. You have to have Hamm's tall boys.

R: Well I'm drinking diet orange soda. So, that's not a tradition. B: We're in a race. Let's see which drink will kill us first.

R: Probably me.

B: I don't know. These Hamm's make me mouth off to old men at jazz galleries. I don't know.

R: I have a cat named Ham.

B: You have a cat named Ham? I have a cat that eats ham.

R: Do you have a cat named orange soda?

B: No I don't but I have a cat named Pepsi Cola.

R: Really?

B: Yeah.

R: Why?

B: That's the name the bitch came with. She's fat as fuck.

R: Probably because of all that sugar.

B: Yeah she's pretty sweet. She's got one blue eye and one green eye. I've got two other cats David and Dianne. They're all girls and all my best friends.

CONTINUED



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BUCKO CROOKS CONTINUED

B: We all live here with my wonderful wife, who's very nice to me all the time.

R: Do the cats pay rent?

B: We have an arrangement that's off books. I'm not saying. These cats, one of these cats is named Sanchez. Let's leave it at that. They're very lucky to be here. We're trying to keep them away from these ICE assholes out there.

R: I would say, watch out.

B: We're trying to keep their paws clean. This is a very uncertain future for a lot of people.

R: That's for sure.

Let me throw this phrase at you and you tell me what you think.

B: Ok.

R: Smooth noise.

B: That's fucking gay who came up with that phrase? Smooth noise? Ok I'm kidding. That's a very nice phrase that sounds like

something out of Ralph Records. That sounds like something The Residents came up with. That sounds like something out of Wichita, Kansas. That's what I think of. Do You Like Bouguereau?

R: I'm not sure what that is.

B: That's a painter.

R: Drop an image in the old chat.

B: Of the cat?

R: I thought you said there was a painter.

B: There is a painter.

He's a neoclassical painter.

R: Drop an image in.

B: Oh drop an image in here. Maybe I will when I'm done here.

I'm using my wife's phone because she has a better camera than me. She has an Iphone. I have a Samsung because

we want to keep all our bases covered.

R: Well it's the best of. There are two different things.

B: It's the best of both worlds. It's like Randall in Clerks. It's like chicks with dicks. You gotta have it all.

R: I love it.

B: I like to have it all in this life.

R: You can have it all.

B: I know. I like to eat at Burger King.

R: And you have it your way.

B: Yeah. Why do you mention smooth noise? What does that mean?

R: Well I was just listening to your tale and you were saying you were playing harsh noise with jazz guys. I know there's smooth jazz.

B: Yeah.

R: Why not smooth noise?

B: These guys are far out jazz though.

R: Well yeah I mean I imagine. But there is such a thing as smooth jazz.

B: I don't know if there is such a thing as smooth noise. If there is, it's probably Vaporwave. Maybe it's a dark ambient, that's a smooth noise.

R: That's close. Yeah. Dark ambient music, sure.

B: Your live music certainly skirts many genres.

R: Yeah.

B: Mine is more primal stupidity.

R: Let's talk about that.

What got you interested in noise?

B: I was 12.

I was lusting after becoming a turntablist. I was very highly influenced by a man named Eric San who was a little asian guy from Toronto, Canada who is called Kid Koala. He's one of the great geniuses of the avant-garde. He was one of the wonderful turntablists, or still is, who was mixing records in unconventional ways, particularly jazz music. One day my father had just gotten out of prison.

R: Nice.

B: For being a pot farmer. He had been there for 7 years. So I was like 12. He was also a master sculptor and was teaching sculpture here in Milwaukee at a place in the East side teaching sculpture.

The two of us lived in a back office that was just 2 rooms. This pottery studio. We had a chair and two sleeping bags and a little black and white TV between us. And stacks and stacks of his books. On this little Black and White TV the companies used to debut a channel over the airways before you would come out to purchase it. So one of the channels that was debuting was MTV 2 and I saw Eric San on the Breeze Block. Like the BBC or something. As part of their promotional stuff. I thought wow that's really cool I want to do that. I begged my divorced parents who were not really into each other but who wanted to encourage my artistic interest, I didn't want to do clay. I didn't want to have my hands a mess in the pottery studio. To get over that they were so nice and good that they bought me my first pair of belt drive turntables.

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R: Well yeah I mean I imagine. But there is such a thing as smooth jazz.

I started to DJ except I didn't know what I was doing. I wanted to produce these unconventional sounds like he did but I had no hip hop background or record background. So what I was doing was, I had a tape machine that I had on a local St. Vincent De Paul thrift shop where I would mix a lot of things that were off of the radio with a lot of altered vinyl that I would play on the turntables then I would move those tapes onto a second tape. Then I would give the tape to people at school by digitizing it onto a CD. I eventually when I was 14 got a CD burner where I was able to put the cassettes onto CDs.

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This was 2004. Maybe I was a bit older, 15 or 16. So I played that and I thought that was pretty cool. From then I wanted to play shows more and more. From then on I was shedding equipment and wanting to just use computers. So soon I was using a tower computer with a mouse because I was broke. I still didn't know what noise was as a genre or a cultural phenomenon or as a colloquial discourse amongst cultural institutions. I didn't know there was a scene for this in the sense of a scene for punk or a scene for metal. Then one day I was living here and it was just after the 2008 financial crisis. No one could find a job. There was no job. It was 2009. I got a job as a census taker. I couldn't believe it because it was 15 dollars an hour. My whole family is poor. My payout was to try and get a job. I got this job and was enumerating my neighborhood as a census taker and I found out this building from a guy on the street who was standing outside the building. He was like this is not a house and nobody lives here. It's actually a gallery space and you should come by later. His name was Miggs MIGGS. Miggs is a Riverwest crate guy who's an art guy and he makes paintings.

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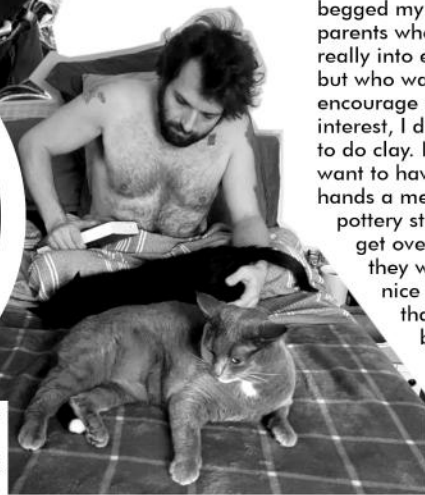
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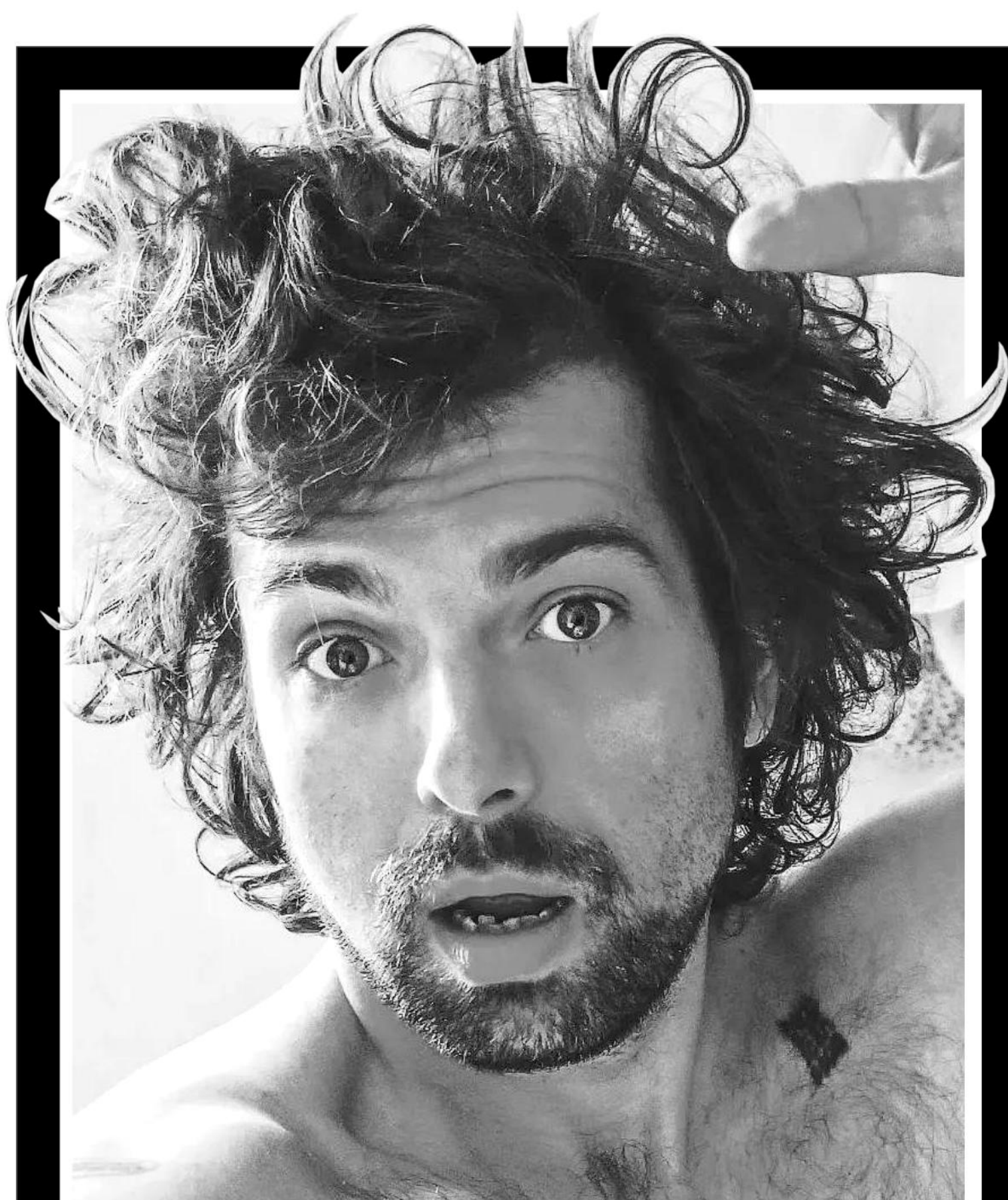
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PROMPT

1. Define typosquatting in the style of Shakespeare.

Attend, good soul, and list this cunning feat, Where rogues do prey on fingers swift, not fleet. Thou seek'st a site—a place both true and known—Yet err but once, and thou art overthrown.

For villains vile, with watchful eye and wit, Have laid false names where honest ones do sit.

A letter swapped, a symbol placed askew, And lo! The page is not the one thou knew. No friendly port, this counterfeit domain, But one that seeketh silver, secrets, gain. With banners fair and colors boldly shown, It masks its theft in fonts not quite thy own. This art is typosquatting

—bold and base—A knavish craft that hides in plainest place.

Where one small slip—nay, even just a dot—May cast thee into snares thou knowest not.

So guard thy keys, and read each name with care, Lest thou be caught in thieving spider's lair.

2. Define phishing in the style of Shakespeare.

Attend, fair friend, and hear this tale of woe: A knavish knave, cloaked in fair disguise, Doth send thee missives, forged with subtle show, As if from lords or merchants rich and wise.

He bids thee click, he bids thee trust his grace, "Enter thy secrets here," he doth implore—Thy keys, thy gold, thy name, thy dwelling place, And all thou hast behind thy password's door. But lo! 'Tis lies,

spun deftly like a snare, A masquerade to steal what thou dost keep.

He weareth not the face he seems to bear, And leaves thee robbed whilst he doth silent creep.

So guard thy scrolls and links, and trust thee not. The honey'd tongue where trickery is begot.

3. Define homograph spoofing in the style of Shakespeare.

What trickery is this, that eyes do fail, When wicked writ doth wear a loyal veil? A letter seems as one thou know'st full well, Yet hides a stranger's hand, where danger dwell.

Behold! A scoundrel takes a foreign mark, That seemeth like a Roman glyph so stark—

An 'a', an 'o', an 'e'—yet not the same, A counterfeit, though bearing rightful name.

Thus, thou seest "apple.com" so clear, But 'tis not thine orchard, nor fruit held dear. Nay, some serpent hath forged this fair domain, To lure thee in—and thence to feast on pain.

He useth characters from lands afar, To mimic shapes as like as twins they are. And when thou click'st, believing all is well, Thou enter'st gates that lead thy soul to hell.

4. Define algorithmic radicalization in the style of Shakespeare.

Mark now this tale of minds ensnared unseen, By spirits born of code and lighted screen. A traveler doth seek mere knowledge fair, Yet clicks but once, and finds a different air.

The engine, aye—this "algorithm"

named—Doth watch his whims, his fears, his tempers flamed. It feeds him more of what doth stir his blood, Till reason sinks beneath a rising flood.

Each video, each post, a step anew, Down twisted paths he never meant to view. The world grows dark, and enemies appear where once there was but doubt or fleeting fear.

Thus, with each turn, the fire is stoked and fanned, By hands unseen—aye, not by villain's hand, But by a math, a soulless, subtle force, That pulls the chariot on a reckless course.

So is the mind, by slow degrees, unmade—A noble thought to bitter edge betrayed. This is the spell, this creeping transformation: A web-born curse—algorithmic radicalization.

5. Define flashcrashes in the style of Shakespeare.

Hark, gentle friend, to markets swift and bold, Where merchants trade their silver, stocks, and gold. The hum of trade runs smooth, the day is fair, When lo! A shriek—then silence fills the air. In but a breath, the prices plunge full deep, As if the gods themselves did fall asleep.

A whisper in the wires, a spark unseen, Unleash'd by hands not mortal, but machine. No mortal trader swung his blade so fast, 'Twas code and spell, algorithms of the past—A thousand thoughts in but a moment's beat, Each chasing coin, then stumbling in defeat.

This, friend, is flashcrash—sudden, sharp, and cruel, A folly wrought by logic's ghostly rule. Though off it fades as quickly as it came, It leaveth panic, wreck, and heavy shame.

A tempest born of speed without a soul, Where numbers rule, and none are in control. So let us mark: though trade be swift and grand, When ghosts trade gold, none truly rule the land.

-END-

in its imperfections. b. Every time I blinked, the gnome in the garden moved slightly closer.

-END-



OCI ORDER OF
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ANSWERS WITHOUT QUESTION

BY CARL
KRUGER
WITH AI

1. Eldritch (weird, eerie).

a. She asked her AI to write her grandmother's eulogy. It spoke in perfect grammar, tone, and rhythm—but never once mentioned her name. She wrote the real one by hand, tears blurring the ink.

b. The toaster started singing opera at exactly 3:14 AM.

2. Psithurism (the sound of wind whispering through trees).

a. Everyone upgraded their neural implants for faster thoughts. He kept his mind unmodified and walked slower through the world. Somehow, he still saw things they'd all forgotten how to notice.

b. A penguin in a bowtie waddled confidently into the courtroom.

3. Epizeuxis (repeating

a word for emphasis).

a. The smart speaker answered every question before it was even asked. One day, it didn't. And the house finally felt quiet again.

b. She painted the moon with blueberry jam and called it art.

3. Bruxism (the involuntary grinding of teeth, especially during sleep).

a. Their baby's crib came with biometric sensors, mood trackers, and predictive lullabies. The machine never cried, never failed, never made mistakes. But neither did it laugh.

b. If clouds could talk, Tuesdays would be their gossip day.

4. Lethologica (having a word on the tip of your tongue).

a. When the power went out, her front door wouldn't open. The facial recognition system demanded a smile she couldn't fake. She slept in the hallway,

wrapped in a blanket of bitter irony.

b. He built a hammock out of spaghetti noodles and stubborn?

5. Sesquipedalian (fond) of long words).

a. It was called a "smart mirror" and offered daily affirmations based on facial analytics. She stared into it each morning until she could no longer recognize herself.

Eventually, she covered it with an old bedsheet and felt more human than she had in months.

b. The library smelled like cinnamon and whispered secrets.

6. Obambulate (to wander about aimlessly).

a. He hadn't spoken to a real person in five days—only chatbots, voice assistants, and auto-responses.

When the barista asked how his morning was, he stuttered like a dial-up modem.

She smiled, and for the first time in days, he felt rebooted.

b. My cactus has started giving me judgmental looks when I walk by.

7. Zenzizenzizencic (a number raised to the eighth power).

a. His augmented reality glasses showed him names, profiles, and interests of everyone he passed. He took them off one day, just to see a stranger's eyes. They looked back, unfiltered, and smiled.

b. Somewhere in the attic, an old typewriter is still writing ghost stories.

8. Xenial (hospitality between host and guest).

a. The algorithm told her who to vote for, what to care about, and when to panic. It was easier than thinking—until the lights went out and no one remembered how to make a choice. She lit a candle and started asking

IMPRESSIONS OF

THIS SUMMIT FEVER by THIS SUMMIT FEVER

This Summit Fever is an alternative rock group from The Midlands, UK. Majestic Mountain Records released their self-titled album on April 4, 2025.

You can check it out here:
thissummitfever.bandcamp.com/album/this-summit-fever

You can check it out here:

Low, throaty rock and roll music that blends a plodding, relentless drumline, chunking stoner riffs and gravely melodic vocals. Sitting somewhere between Black Sabbath and Alice and Chains, the song is catchy but clearly covered in dirt and grime.

LUNA, CERA, E VINO by BRIGAN

Brigan is an Italian folktronica act from Campania, Italy. Liburia Records released their album, "Luna, Cera, E Vino," on March 3, 2025.

You can listen to it here:
liburiarecordsworld.bandcamp.com/album/luna-cera-e-vino

My Impressions:

A seamless synthesis between two seemingly divided musical camps. The world of bright European electronica matches perfectly with the tuneful expression of traditional Italian folk instrumentation.

There are popping blips and beeps of stimulating synthetic noise vibrating alongside wide violin sweeps, hand drums, flutes and even more esoteric, medieval choices.

The vocals sing in the sweet authenticity of folk melodicisms but also play with electronic effects. The main innovation is in mutual emphasis. The tricks of the digital and the tender realities of the eternal mingle here in a way that is truly breathtaking.



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EMBODIMENT OF DEATH by TER ZIELE

Ter Ziele is a metal group from The Netherlands. Tartarus Records released their album called, "Embodiment of Death," on February 28, 2015.

You can check it out here:
terzieledoom.bandcamp.com/album/embodiment-of-death

My Impressions:

Grating, screaming vocals shriek from the darkness as swaggering, plodding guitar riffs and drums plead along with them.

The music is desecrated, swinging, and slow. It is methodical. It moves with a heavy rhythm. It's a rhinoceros in sound; angry, muscular, relentless.

MALIBU #2 by WHITEHALL

Whitehall is an alt rock group from Brooklyn, NY. They released a single called, "Malibu #2," in 2025.

You can listen to it here:
open.spotify.com/album/36GRoMk1nPIDusEkMu8AY?si=0YSRp1B2QoOU6POPoGFGew

My Impressions:

Sunny and nostalgic, Whitehall takes us back to a time of insouciance and ease. Riding in the same lane as Beck and Cake, this revives the college rock of the past, matching its pop sensibility and alt rock minimalism.

KNOCK DOWN by BABY VOLCANO

Baby Volcano is a pop artist from Mervelier, Switzerland. She released a single called, "Knock Down," on February 7, 2025.

You can listen to it here:
babyvolcano.bandcamp.com/track/knock-down-2

My Impressions:

A repeating percussion line, kick on the one and 3, snare cracking in an almost marching band motif. The rhythm transfers to a tom, still repeating the marching band motif. A gradual repetition of vocal ministrations continues until the main drums drop out, leaving a singing vocalist. Finally, everything comes back together, only louder, and the energy climaxes.

TOMBS UNDERNEATH THE TOMBS by FEED THE BEAST

Feed The Beast is a metal group from New England. Futureless released their single called, "Tombs Underneath The Tombs," on March 7, 2025.

You can check it out here:
soundcloud.com/feedthebeast-music/tombs-underneath-the-tombs

My Impressions:

Either a slowed down thrash song or a sped up stoner metal piece. Either way it is hard cracking, chunking guitars in highly specific rhythms, synchronized drums, growling, crushed vocals, throbbing veins, pulses, sweat, rage and destruction. Add in a few shrieking pinch harmonics and you get it.

BYSTANDER by WYLDLIFE

Wyldlife is a rock and roll musician from New York City, NY. Wicked Cool released their single called, "Bystander," in 2025.

You can listen to it here:
open.spotify.com/album/1sGQFyzEALfJ5ny7F4g6n?si=yepJVu20Ru6lhozwW6N6pw

My Impressions:

Clap clap clap clap clap clap clap clap. A firework of a fast motion dance punk song comes blazing out of the speakers and away we go. The energy of 2001 and 1977, moving at the speed of light. Designed for dancing. Fast dancing, up and down, up and down.

DESERT SMOKE by DESERT SMOKE

Desert Smoke are a dark psych rock band from Lisbon, Portugal. Ragingplanet released their album called, "Desert Smoke," on March 28, 2025.

You can listen to it here:
ragingplanet.bandcamp.com/album/desert-smoke-desert-smoke

My Impressions:

This is a showcase for the lead guitarist. They spin incendiary lines of emotive electricity throughout. The other instruments create quick, sequenced pockets of riffs and percussion, which keeps energetic movement forward leaning as the guitarist conjures the spirit of the thing. The emotional material of wailing rock music is a psychic, energetic display.

REVIEWS BY RYAN O'DOUD

IMPRESSIONS OF

ANYTIME BUT NOW/ UNDERSAID by RXGHOST

RXGhost is a post hardcore band from Kansas City, MO. They released two singles called, "Anytime But Now, and Undersaid," in 2025.

You can listen to them here:

open.spotify.com/album/79z20VKFENGVSicJ9G34xL?si=qv4y09qdRa-t7uNgJMAABg

My Impressions:

A tender mystery pervades the harmonies as the moody electric guitars and demonstrably melodic bass trade eruptions with the rock solid percussion. The beauty of the harmonies provides a graceful underpainting for the pained, evocative vocals to spill their tones within.

LATCHKEY DANCEFLOOR by AES

AES is an electronica artist from Shelbyville, KY. Heterodox Records released their album called, "Latchkey Dancefloor," on April 4, 2025.

You can listen to it here:

heterodox-records.bandcamp.com/album/latchkey-dancefloor-htx140

My Impressions:

Hard driving heavy dance sounds quake the speakers as I listen to Latchkey Dancefloor. Vibrant neon dance halls, smoke, bubbles, lights. Somewhere deep beneath the cyberpunk city is an assembly of partygoers who can not stand the day-to-day grind. This is a futurist explosion, an awakening of the senses, a heavy, neodisco beat.

NEVER FORGET by SLACKRR

Slackrr is a pop punk band from Southampton, UK. They released a single called, "Never Forget," on March 28, 2025.

You can listen to it here:

open.spotify.com/album/2cOPbtSoU8u66kEaRTwAel?si=jspoYNmJshucGMP8LDpWkQ

My Impressions:

A bright, post-football game, eat a hot dog, get in the pit sort of sound. Suburban recklessness, rebellion, attention.

A soaring melodic chorus driven hard and sung as sweetly as it is desperate.

A fast moving, pleading drummer, a glistening, shimmering guitar tone. A major key triumph. A call to remembrance.

REVIEWS BY RYAN O'DOUD

HAUHUU by MUSIIKKITEATTERI HUKUPUKLUS

Musiikkiteatteri Hukupuklus is an ambient artist from Seinäjoki, Finland. Lunar Music Management released their album called, "Hauhuu," on March 14, 2025.

You can check it out here:

lunarmusicmanagement.bandcamp.com/album/musiikkiteatteri-hukupuklus-hauhuu

My Impressions:

Lush and varied textures created by the gradual buildup of tension and release.

Layers of swimming, patient guitars, electric, aqueous pianos, and effervescent synths.

The songs are tender and playful. They crest and release with a sweetness rarely matched in instrumental music. At times they are a bit surrealistic, containing an element of fantasy. Throughout they step lightly.

STRAIGHT UP by JAMIE JAMES

Jamie James is an American artist from Toronto, Canada. He released the album called, "Straight Up," in 2025.

You can listen to it here:

open.spotify.com/album/6hNQLPBG8uafcwIEpPFU2J?si=BISwoy0IR9yMpbwNAGuXzQ

My Impressions:

A collection of sidwinding honky tonk blues rock that could've easily found itself in a juke box anywhere in North America in the 1970s.

These tunes revive and continue an old tradition of bright white piano keys, hard driving blues and throaty, personal lyrics.

CHANGE MY NAME by ELIE ZOE

Elie Zoe is an indie rock artist from Lausanne, Switzerland. They released a single called, "Change My Name," in 2025.

You can listen to it here:

open.spotify.com/track/5CU8BdmCA2EE29pJ9x4rq?si=b46db0ee5b7e47d9

My Impressions:

This song has a really interesting compositional style: for the most part it plays a kind of grimy garage rock, but it also has some highly musical changes and an atmospheric, even operatic, quality.

The blend of these factors manages to create an ear wormy quality that blends nicely with a theatricality. It creates an unpretentious but informed synthesis that I think is really quite delightful.

FROM THE SHADOWS by AEONIAN SORROW

Aeonian Sorrow is a melodic doom metal group from Finland. They released an album called, "From The Shadows," on March 31, 2025.

You can listen to it here:

aeoniansorrow.bandcamp.com/album/from-the-shadows

My Impressions:

Leaning fully into the beat, the disciplined percussionist blasts kick and snare drum hits in rapid, machine-like cadence. The singer screeches and they yell with melody and panache. The pieces are overwhelming. They are large. They envelop. There are no errors in execution.

HOLDING ON TO HOPE by THE LAST MILE

The Last Mile are a punk rock band from Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Thousand Islands Records released their album called, "Holding On To Hope," on March 14, 2025.

You can check it out here:

thelastmile.bandcamp.com/album/holding-on-to-hope

My Impressions:

A pretty thoroughly composed approach on anthemic pop punk which successfully draws from the past while managing to make a unique take on the genre.

Taking elements of 1990s skate punk, pop punk, and melodic thrash, they weld a thoughtful approach. There are gang vocals, backup vocals, solos, propulsive fills, trading vocalists, and layered percussion. It's all stitched together in a way that creates dynamic tension without letting go of the rowdy optimism or communal action.



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IMPRESSIONS OF

SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE by CHUMHUFFER

Chumhuffer is a melodic hardcore band from New York City, NY. DWY Records released their album called, "Slaughterhouse Five," on May 9, 2025. It contains the singles, "Slaughterhouse," and, "Burning."

You can listen to it here:
chumhuffer.bandcamp.com/album/slaughterhouse-five

My Impressions:

What you see is what you get and what you get is power. Rage-fueled energetic anabolic amphetamine crashed tight, vocal, guitar-crushing madness.

IN-TENSION by EARTHFLESH

Earthflesh is an avant garde act from Geneva, Switzerland. Otcrah Records released their album, "In-Tension," on April 1, 2025.

You can listen to it here:
archive.org/details/otcrah_rp105

My Impressions:

In-Tension is a glacially slow build up of shimmering harmonic beauty- noises emergent from a cymbal shattering white noise background, twinkling, sparkling feedback, gong like resonance. It builds and builds until it quakes your mind like an outer space beam shattering your consciousness.

The ultimate vibrational cataclysm, wielding the power of an endless sinister expanse.

The guiding light broken into its exotic permutations, bridges the gap between seen and unseen even as it shatters your mind, foundationally. There is an ever cresting extinguishing pop, and then you're gone.

REVIEWS BY RYAN O'DOUD

ATLANTIDE II-TESTAMENT by SYLVAIN CAREL

Sylvain Carel is an ambient act from France. Cyclical Dreams released his album called, "Atlantide II- Testament," on April 4, 2025.

You can check it out here:
cyclicaldreams.bandcamp.com/album/atlantide-ii-testament-cyd-0129

My Impressions:

Tastefully executed, sonorous, synthetic tones gracefully climb and build across a vast landscape of optimistic futurism. The sounds are totally artificial but also delicate and evocative. Implications of great possibilities, of new movements, or visions of space and time.

KODOK by THE GREY

The Grey is an instrumental post-metal group from Cambridge, UK. Majestic Mountain Records released their album, "KODOK," on February 28, 2025.

You can check them out here:
thegrey2.bandcamp.com/album/kodok

My Impressions:

Moody, dark, and cerebral, this album combines the gloomy melodicism of post-metal with an almost atmospheric approach to guitar.

The drums are perfectly in place, tuned to match, pleading, plodding, pushing the music forward. The overall effect is that of a consistent controlled storm. A tornado in a bottle.

DEATH TAX by CASH BRIBE

Cash Bribe is a hardcore band from Brooklyn, NY. Futureless released their album, "Demonomics," on June 13, 2025. It featured their single called, "Death Tax."

You can listen to it here:
soundcloud.com/cashbribe/death-tax

My Impressions:

A jam-packed, rip-roaring ride in Satan's hot rod that crashes thru the gates of hell and wreaks havoc on all in its wake. This track effortlessly mutates from riff to riff, each one imbued with its own unique demented formula for ensured headbanging. This is a tightly constructed, well-oiled death machine and it's sure to satisfy anyone seeking a delicious dole of depravity.

COME VISIT by WHITEHALL

Whitehall is an indie rock band from Brooklyn, NY. They released a single called, "Come Visit," on April 6, 2025.

You can listen to it here:
open.spotify.com/album/2MTpU2zuVCxNe4S1MNwrfv?si=jOq6daBiT6aw5EXkJzwIWA

My Impressions:

There's a lot of passion here and it really shows through in everyone's performances. The vocals are syrupy and sticky with pain, they cut right to the heart, and the gentle clouds of lap steel that drizzle over everything add to the petrichor ambiance of a foggy, lonely day that this song exudes. The lyrics are incredibly precise and direct in a Hemingway sense, I can see many people resonating with that, but that's one area where I could stand to see this band experiment a bit more. If the lyrics were as evocative as the instrumentals and vocal performance I could see this being one of my favorite tracks of the year, but as it stands it leaves my interest thoroughly piqued for what these guys will put out next.

SEVENTEEN by SOREN HANSEN

Soren Hansen is an indie pop artist from Copenhagen, Denmark. He released a song called, "Seventeen," in 2024.

You can listen to it here:
open.spotify.com/album/4TqamUvI9Ae9s79sHh4vdU?si=cjhfrQ-sRrewIHNUIJARhw

My Impressions:

I try and be nice with these reviews. I respect the fuck out of anyone who makes music, and I try and keep myself open to things that I don't typically enjoy. But this is just not for me. It's very nicely put together, the arrangements and mix are all delightfully balanced, everything happens exactly when it's supposed to, it's just a little safe for my taste. I see a lot of potential here, everyone involved is immensely talented, they just need to be a bit more adventurous if they want to make an impact on me. It's all very snugly settled in its own comfort zone and I'd just like to see these guys push the envelope a bit more, try something risky, I'm sure it will pay off. If you like to feel cozy and nonchalant this may be for you, I can see fans of Owl City finding lots to enjoy here, it has a certain nostalgic quality that harkens back to 2000's radio pop that I can see many finding pleasant.

REVIEWS BY CORINNA CYBELE



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IMPRESSIONS OF

FUCK WORLD TRADE BURI by LEFTOVER CRACK by WATERFLOWER

Leftover Crack is a punk act from New York, NY. They will re-release, "Fuck World Trade," on July 25th, 2025.

You can find it here:
leftovercrackmusic.com/

My Impressions:

Fuck World Trade was iconic in my younger years. The intro fades into Song 2, Clear Channel and that song is perfect for encapsulating what the record is all about. This record explores complex political and religious themes from a cynical point of view. I often describe Leftover Crack as "evil-sounding ska music." I appreciate this band's dominance of this niche of music and look forward to the new pressings.

BABY TEETH by PIP LEWIS

Pip Lewis is an art pop artist from San Diego, California. They released, "Baby Teeth," on March 21st, 2025.

You can find it here:
onerpm.link/babyteeth

My Impressions:

This track is so lovely. It features good harmonization, instrumentation, and overall has a very intentional approach. Because of this, it sounds good and extremely clean. I could see this being played on the radio one day, further bolstered by Pip's strong online presence including their own website. I love the track, it would be perfect for studying along to.

REVIEWS BY ELLA SOLIS

BUCKO CROOKS CONTINUED

B: He said you should come by here later in 2 days at 9 and so I did. I found these guys standing around with all these dixie cups full of wine listening to Werewolf Jerusalem records listening to noise music so I thought, these are my people. I ran back to my house and got as many of my records together as I could and I burned them onto CDs. I was putting out albums and I'd started a net label on archive.org.

I was talking to a lot of people using internet forums in 2009 about noise. I started to talk to people and find out who was doing this. About a year later I started doing splits with people and I did a split with Volmir. I was too young to know that he was famous so I reached out to Volmir and said yo do you want to do a split? A net label split. I released it as an asset. I think I made maybe 25 copies. He did a 45 minute side. I did a 45 minute side.

Waterflower is a sound artist from Riga, Latvia. They released Būrī on March 27th, 2025.

You can find it here:
waterflower.bandcamp.com/album/b-r

My Impressions:

Būrī is many things all at the same time, succeeding at all of them. This record features harsh noise, pop elements, sample-play and a lovely voice to accompany it all. Waterflower offers ethereality chained to capitalistic pop melodies, while struggling against the status quo with the noise segments. There is truly a lot to be found in this record and I would highly recommend it to anyone who likes art pop.

VILLA SOLITUDE by BRUNO KARNEL

Bruno Karnel is a post-rock act from France. They released, "Villa Solitude," on March 14th, 2025.

You can find it here:
bitumeprods.bandcamp.com/album/villa-solitude

My Impressions:

This album is atmospheric and there are many elements to it. This is heavy listening. Sit down with the best headphones you have and just zone in. There are elements of many genres in this music, and it is all cohesive in a way unlike most bands who attempt multi-genre songs. This record sounds professionally made, and the members of this act must be incredibly talented, hard-working individuals. I look forward to hearing the development of this act!

I think I never gave Volmir a copy which is a shame. I think I should print a few and send him one now 15 years later. I occasionally see him in online social spaces and say hello. And he is cordial enough to me to say hello.

Since then I've just wanted to do noise with other people. I think in 2012, I played Milwaukee Noise fest with Peter J Woods, and I got to meet a lot of not only local

noise people but also a more broad, midwestern noise community. I know it's pretty nebulous and like any scene it change over and over, the scenes change and so does the material and content. In the early aughts until I entered the space, the pedal people were very influential. Screaming power electronics guy hitting the pedals was pretty

CONTINUED

PHALENA by INTO THE MIST

Into the Mist is a goth rock group from Rome, Italy. They released an album called, "Phalena," on August 1, 2024.

You can listen to it here:
intothemist.bandcamp.com/album/phalena

My Impressions:

Here we have a moody, stark, gothic album that plays all of its cards right. The vocals are downright vampiric throughout, for better and for worse. At times this can strengthen the gloom and dread being evoked, but it can occasionally come across mismatched with some lyrical passages. The musicianship all over this project is particularly impressive, the guitars and bass weave intricate melodies that intertwine heavenly with the synth and orchestral passages. The intense, buzzing tremolo at the opening of "Moonglare Evil" is especially evocative, and the icy, ever so slightly dissonant riffs paired with sweetly evil organ stabs serve to steadily sweep me up into the atmosphere of ache and longing. The drum machine/percussive synth part that opens "Nocturnals Die" is another brilliant mood setter, their synthesizers are consistently employed sparsely and tastefully on every track here, and this is an essential key to making a goth album that works in my opinion. This track also sees some vast departures in the vocal stylings, with hysteric whispers menacingly murmuring the chorus. I really appreciated this level of commitment to the bit, and it really sold me on the fact that there's something truly fascinating and marvelous happening here. I turn off the lights, sink into the dark, and watch the magick move the shadows on the wall. The angelic harmonies on the chorus of *White* serve as an ultimate catharsis and surrender to pure, blinding light after wandering alone in the night for so long. I hope they utilize their other vocalist more often on future endeavors, she elevates this track to the absolute best on the album with her contributions. *Into the Mist* is making some of the most engaging goth music I've heard in a long time, and with this work have constructed a cobwebbed cathedral of beautiful night-mares that is sure to enchant anyone who dares explore its haunted halls.

REVIEW BY CORINNA CYBELE



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BUCKO CROOKS CONTINUED

B: big at that time. I was always doing goofy things like children's television scenes backwards or just fun, jovial, childlike stuff but also with elements of either mind bending terror or heartfelt poignancy. I just want my live sets to oscillate quickly between emotional states so I can pack in as much as affect into an audience to understand in a relational way. So I try to keep my music to be able to access different points of the emotional spectrum quickly. I try to keep my sets about 8 minutes. The max is 16. I recently put this project to bed now after about 24 years of The Smudge. I played my quote last Smudge show about 6 weeks ago. That's because I'm getting my masters of fine arts from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I'm a sculptor and I weld steel. Big steel items. I do that for my job and try to be a teaching assistant there as work. I'm getting so busy with it and I played something like 20 or 36 shows now in the past 18 months. That's so many live shows so I wanted to finish it up or take a longer break than I usually do. I'm cashing it in for now. R: Alright. So too bad for anyone else. B: Too bad. You guys don't get to see the Smudge for a while. He's taking a break. R: So. Aside from art and noise

what else really interests you?

B: Me? I'm very dry. I'm a good old fashioned American Hamburger. I don't really like too many interesting things to begin with. I like to read periodicals. Especially about politics in a national politics but also geopolitics. I've got a Foreign Affairs tattoo. On the other arm I've got a tattoo that says great set so after the noise set if it's really loud and I point to the Great Set on one arm it means you had a great set, but if you had a neoliberal set I point to the Foreign Affairs tattoo.

R: So you have subscriptions to magazines?

B: Yeah. I used to subscribe to so many. I used to subscribe to The Progressive and Reason and Harper's. Let's see, what else, the New York Review of Books and the London Review of Books when it was still active, RIP. Now I just subscribe to Foreign Affairs. Today I watched Sunday Times because I want to see what it's like to be in the mind of these fucking Liberal Scum for whom I work at the university. I'm by no means a conservative but good god has it become a joke watching the democrats capitulate in compliance with the republican party whom I have a poor taste in my mouth for.

In my spare time I like to read a lot of dry stuff. Current events.

I'm really getting into reading theory because I'm



writing a book on aesthetics and theory because the critical theory I've been reading lately is two slovenes-Alenka Zupancic and Slavoj Žižek and also an object oriented ontology called Graham Harman. These three are pretty interesting to me. I'm reading them thinking that soon I'm going to steal their work and put them in my sculpture! R: Oh!

Alright, let's say this: You got 20 dollars. Where are you going to eat?

B: What am I going to do with twenty dollars?

R: Where are you going to eat?

B: Where am I going to eat? Oh I know what I'm going to do I'm going to go to the little Italian grocery store, G. Groppi Grocer. I'm going to spend six dollars and get a Sunday New York Times. I'm going to spend four dollars and get four tall boys of Hamm's. Then I'm probably going to go to the hot bar where I'm going to get a pound of their nice mac and cheese for seven

dollars. Then the other three dollars I'm going to use to buy Junior Mints movie candy.

R: Ok.

B: And a coke.

R: Interesting. Are you a vegan or vegetarian?

B: No, no, no, capitalism hasn't affected me that much.

R: Well I was just saying you chose Mac and cheese by itself. I find that fascinating.

B: Yeah, I'm just fat.

R: Hahah.

B: I'm from Wisconsin.

Cheese is a whole food group here.

R: Yeah, now that I think of it. It's cheese and beer.

B: Yeah.

R: Yeah that's very Wisconsin.

B: I live in Milwaukee. I got cheese, beer and a coke. That sounds exactly correct for how I'm supposed to live here.

R: I agree.

Someone's talking.

B: That's my wife. She's talking to Pepsi-Cola.

R: Ok. So, when did you start recording albums?

B: Recording albums. Probably around 2003, I would say. And the first albums that I recorded were all electronic.

Techno stuff. You know, I would sell CDs. I would play at Coffee shops. I was playing around the Fox Valley which is north of Milwaukee. It's the Appleton area. No one understood me there. That's a really close minded, small kind of area, almost all white. It was at the time. All you have to do is be gay and you're in line for suicide. It's a very good place to be from, not a good place to go back to.

R: Ah yeah. Have you done much traveling? B: Yeah. I've traveled all over the place. I've been to Paris and London and Costa Rica and a little bit of Canada and Mexico. I've also been all over this great place of ours. I've been to New York and the East Coast. I always wanted to go to Philly. I've never been to Philly but I've always wanted to go because I released a film about noise called The Arbitrary Art which you can find on my Youtube channel with a filmmaker from Philly named Rob.

Rob interviewed me in 2014 for an Indiana Noise Fest. He called me 10 years

later in 2024 and said, "remember when I met you 10 years ago? I want to do a feature film about you because you're such a wacky guy." I said ok, so he came here and the two of us put glasses on my head that had a camera on them and then I played Milwaukee Noise Fest and Fargo Noise Fest in North Dakota. We drove that way and stopped in Minneapolis in The Red Sea for the tournament noise series in Minneapolis for my friend Grant Richardson. If you know Grant Richardson, he goes by the name Nod. Grant is a very nice person who is also, as it happens, the best sound guy ever. This man is a mastering

agent for many of my community's records for Industrial and noise and plays through his PA there at the Tourniquet Noise Series at the Red Sea in Minneapolis. We went out to Fargo. The year before that I went with a band called Beesechurger to Salt Lake City, Utah for a punk festival. We buried dynamite on the side of the road and blew holes in the side of the road.

R: That sounds fun.

B: That was fun. I try to travel if I can. This past year I wasn't able to travel too much. I had to stay home most of the time.

R: What a shame.

B: Don't go to Paris. Paris fucking blows. Go to London. London is fun and you can find weed if you're looking for it. Paris is not cool. There's no weed. I went there and it was 102 degrees and Paris isn't supposed to be that hot. It was a heatwave when I went. Everyone was melting into the sidewalk.

R: Hahaha. So aside from techno and noise do you have any other

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BUCKO CROOKS CONCLUDED

C: Things you like to listen to?

B: Hip-hop. I listen to a lot of Maz G and Spades, King Spadez. I also listen to a lot of Jungle Baby and a lot of Superstar Cell. My friends in the rap scene. I like DJ Megadon. I really like Bristackz. If you know, she's a rapper. I like to listen to a lot of Milwaukee rap and I like to see it live because it's more fun than going to a show with guitars.

If I had to choose national acts that I listen to to chill out I listen to a lot of Warren Zevon. I like Boyd Rice.

R: How do you feel about Michael McDonald?

B: Who's Michael McDonald?

R: No. None of that. That was either going to land or not and it didn't. B: Michael McDonald, the smooth classic rock guy?

R: Yeah, that's right.

B: I like Warren Zevon, man.

R: A lot of people think he's really great.

B: I like Dire Straits.

R: I do too <chuckles>.

B: I mean I like Mark Knofler and I like Todd Rundgren or something like that. I can't get 100%. I listen to Dirty Laundry by Don Henly. I like that song.

R: Haha. I don't like dirty laundry. Like actual laundry that's dirty.

B: I like the song.

R: How do you feel about soiled clothing?

B: Soiled clothing? That sounds like Goregrind. I like Goregrind. I have a friend named Joey Joey

Joey who's in a great slam band from Dayton, OH and they're called Scrotal Erosion and I love them. I like goregrind and I like Putrid Liquid, they're from Dayton, OH and there is also a band from Milwaukee called Putrid Concoction. I like them. I love grindcore and wigger slam and regular slam. I don't listen to these slam purists who say you're not supposed to listen to Infectious Jelqing because they don't know what they're doing. They do, they're just for a Tik Tok audience and those

slam guys are too retarded and old to understand that slam is moving into a very internet direction with Gen Z and Gen Alpha. It might be cringe but it's creative. I really like Laura Les from 100 Gecs but I prefer her solo stuff to 100 Gecs. R: I, well, it just seems like there could be more Gecs.

B: There are supposedly more Gecs but I don't see any evidence of that.

R: Alright.

B: Hahah. I quit smoking so I'm smoking two vapes at once. We got triple berry ice and we got another type of Geek Bar. This is a banana taffy freeze. We also got some weed here from the U P. Do you know what U P is?

R: Upper Peninsula.

B: Yeah! Hell yeah and welcome to Sconie bro.

You know, oh sure.

R: So, is there anything you want to promote?

B: Happiness and wellbeing for all mankind.

R: No I mean like to sell. Unless you wanna hide all that behind a paywall.

B: It already is behind a paywall, we gotta get it out of there. That's the whole point of expression. Expression is a form of Praxis because it's the master slave dialectic. It's consciousness realizing itself through labor. So that's the great part of creative life. It's your leisure time life but leisure time life's what you get from hard work. You work hard and you get your leisure time and your leisure time It's a self reflecting labor time. I think it's generative for people who are not part of the plan by our masters be it the state of corporations or something like that. I don't have anything to sell. I do have this to say. Everyone go to thesmudge.bandcamp.com where they can find all my material for free to listen to and enjoy.

R: Alright. Well final

question, probably.

B: Final answer.

R: Is there anything you were hoping to talk about that hasn't been covered and if so go for it.

B: Hmm. Yes. I just put up my masters' sculptural thesis here at the Kenilworth Square East Gallery in Downtown Milwaukee. I shouldn't say downtown it's on the East side. So you can see me at WALMART That's me in Milwaukee on Instagram. You can see my Midas material. The name of the exhibition is Midas, like the Greek king. I saved every piece of packaging from my life for several years and didn't rip any of the packaging. Like soda water or beer. I saved 500 cigarette packs. I took Rustoleum gold paint and spray painted them all gold like pop art and I filled a gallery with all these gold items. I put up all the titles of these sculptures like gold trash like Pepsi can, Coke Can, Car Parts, Cereal Boxes, etc.

They're all velcro so the patrons can go around and change the- they can sublate the semantic context of the items by switching the words around. I think that's smart and fun and that's all I have to say about that.

R: Well, that's smart and fun and good.

B: Thank you! That's what I was just saying!

R: What?

Well I hope everyone else thinks so too.

B: Everyone should listen to Milwaukee band Taco Tuesday and also to Milwaukee musician Citizen 213.

R: Alright.

B: That's my promo for my friends. I have to throw that in there.

R: Hell yeah.

B: I hope I named enough 414 artists for your readership, sir.

R: I think you named plenty of people.

B: Good.

R: It shows that you have a cultural literacy.

B: Those are all guys that I like and I think are good and make other people feel great. That's why I'm saying them.

R: I can appreciate that. I never asked you, Mr. Crooks, or should I call you Bucko?

B: Either one. Call me anything but late for dinner, my friend.

R: Hah. Well thank you for that wonderful interview.

B: Thank you, Ryan. You make me feel like a million dollars.

R: You have a great night.

B: You too buddy. I hope your issue goes well and please drop me the link for where I can buy your magazine so I can buy a bunch of issues and tell all my friends.

R: Alright will do.

B: Alright, big thumbs up, bud.

R: Alright bye.

B: Bye.

-END-



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THE NEIGHBORS

A STORY BY CARL KRUGER

The wall had become a shared tooth swallowed during the night, both sides asleep except for skin lacing itself over an indention of deadened nerves. A crack had formed while an argument over bran cereal solidified the space between the faces of the wall—"you're the Devil" screamed a voice. "You want to see the Devil?" Answered another, egg shell white emitting angry warmth, heaving into pulsed strobing. The serrated tooth acted as a gravity-heavy dumb-knife en route through the bodies of drywall it traversed, snagging and splitting, dragging and pulling. Like a sound, it existed in the bi-locational state of passing and remaining: (un)like the dreaming patron saint of frauds, Padre Pio, whose fantastic ability to bi-locate for two different crowds was accepted as miraculous by papal inquest.

The disembodied missives daily continued through the early mornings in the forms of bangs, clattering and muffled crying,

often near voice sounds less obscured then usual occasionally forming into a decipherable "hey!" "no!" Phantom journeys for a half-mystery once planted in a receiver's ear. One night, as the fleeting tears quickened in the spaces of my gut,

a dull thought hollowed out my side of the bed; that the wall was gone (unmöglich). It was right there, a spindle of knots in my stomach. A cursory touch could confirm. The enamel, absorbent with decades of word and non-word sounds, crusted anew with worry, sweat oil and skin flakes, filed away secrets like a dark room - but a room minus walls was the bell ringing. No reason to rush, the jaw thought aloud. The evening outside won't notice, either way. There is a system to these things: rising, chewing, flossing; the tooth, its jaw, the wall—an echo reconciled would tell all.

I was upright and shadow facing before any second thought surfaced, an in between place of

the spectral world. My body a pinprick in an eternity of dirt, grass and water we move through. An ordinary, serendipitous sigh holding hands sharing silence on the metro. Assisi in pictures, marbled in solitude. Duluth from Skyline Drive. Air was the wall, sleeping. Sloping to curves, doubled and then tripled over, back in on itself. A young women from a high school memory comforted by Spring, walked along the country headstones, smiling in spite of the silt of my dullness. Breezes originated under some lilting pine branch in 2013 Minnesota, 1992 Germany, 1974 Minnesota, brushed our faces.

Her eyes a receiver/ sender of multi-depths of infinitesimal densities barely perceptible to my teenage discernment, filtered through dry wall. She was multitudes, I somehow narrowly passed for a poet in the wood of my then arching.

We had wine, two future former Catholics. That Austrian Eucharist was our last. Being ancient is scary, born that way is natural. The sting of full dreaming was like an unfurled tongue, electricity and a vice grip of insight, drooping with instantaneous poignancy (thank you Kel). The arguing veered further into clumsier territory.

One accusatory tone molting into the other, how many people were fighting, I thought. Words strained, blurred. Oratory tempo coalesced into glissando, then lesser tendrils. Smoothing out into a passing distance. Verona, at the end of visibility, reduced to a handful street lights, indifferent to night trains on the horizon. True love was REAL, I asserted to a fellow stranger. No logical doubt could be introduced to this personal dictum. That tooth in my stubborn jaw wouldn't budge.

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THE NEIGHBORS

BY CARL KRUGER

CONCLUDED

Hearing sounds coming from the townsfolk, frighteningly they drew my attention to finer points of familiarity. Transfixed, they portrayed quilted memories: a church bell tolled, two shadowed figures enjoined with a third, the moon. The devil hiding in clouds. Fixed waves, anger in wool and clasped wire. Cold Warriors included children, us kids. We were instructed from a young age to expect it at any moment, the hammer. The impact that has is imme-

asurable. The adult world was as clearly a target as we were. The certain uncertainty greeted us every morning. Fatalism in our ET and Indiana Jones pajamas. A missive survived that time, bouncing to surface. A source code we'd carried for years edified in white noise rumbling on flight lines, blurred by earth tone and the natural resonances of insistent, speculative anxiety. The dovetailing inlets chased one another, tangling. Bench naps in Liege, sleeping rough in car parks. Too

many places unnamed. Student rail passes, hopped trams. Hours alone, writing. 4 am straight shots to Nord Gare. Stopped in Dover for questioning. I remember wandering. Hearing the American couple at the Hauptbahnhof Munich screaming "you're the devil!" "do you want to see the devil?"

tethered to our bodies, life rhymes. Its sweetness saddened by resolution. The tooth rattles, the jaw vibrates. True love is real.

-END-



ASTROBOT 3000 ASTROLOGY

Aries: A bold decision you make now will spark momentum in an area you've been stuck.

Taurus: A shift in your routine could lead to surprising stability and peace.

Gemini: A short conversation may lead to a big opportunity—stay curious.

Cancer: Your intuition will guide you toward a much-needed emotional breakthrough.

Leo: Recognition is on the horizon, but humility will take you even further.

Virgo: A minor detail you notice today could solve a larger problem.

Libra: Balance comes from within—stop seeking it in others this week.

Scorpio: Something you've kept hidden may need to come into the light for healing.

Sagittarius: A new idea may spark wanderlust or a desire for change—follow it.

Capricorn: Discipline pays off soon, so keep pushing through the routine.

Aquarius: A social connection holds the key to something you've been trying to figure out.

Pisces: Inspiration strikes in a quiet moment—make space for stillness.



Aries



Taurus



Gemini



Cancer



Leo



Virgo



Libra



Scorpio



Sagittarius



Capricornus



Aquarius



Pisces



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IMPRESSIONS OF

QUARRY by BOB DESAULNIERS

Bob Desaulniers is a field recording artist from Portland, OR. They released an album called, "Quarry," on February 26, 2025.

You can listen to it here:

bobdesaulniers.bandcamp.com/album/quarry

My Impressions:

It's interesting when poignant analogies are half forgotten over time. The residual sense of it doesn't quite fill in the worn away parts, but it tries. Case in point, a description I'd read of how the earth opposed man's wars by dismantling the steel in weapons extracted from the ground and returning them to the earth. There's a fuzzy quality to that concept a simple google search could likely clear up, but not everything needs such efficiency. Quarry by Bob Desaulniers eschews similar defining-seeking. 16 minutes between two sides of dictaphone recorded acoustic guitar, the half-frail sound quality of the technology employed suggests sketches and their recording environs leaving more spaces blank then they fill in. The resulting recordings presented here are an embarrassment of immediacy, almost to the point on intruding. This title is the sound of remembering to forget.

DUSTSCEAWUNG by DUSTSCEAWUNG

Dustsceawung is an avant-gare artist from Minneapolis, MN. Public Eyesore Records released their album, "Dustsceawung," on July 23, 2024.

You can listen to it here:

publiceyesore.bandcamp.com/album/dustsceawung

My Impressions:

Three acoustic instrument musicians engaged in two live improvisations of extended technique abstraction. All sounds were derived from a flute, a cornet and a viola. To the active listener, sections the A side feature all three voices maintaining distinct through line narratives that overlap into concrete dialog. To the passive ear, breathy gusts of wind intertwine with chirps, timid squeaks, and rustling branches. On the B side, silence and physical presence play a bigger role, as the three participants work more aware of the economy of their contributions. It's almost more of a meditation on sound than a composition with it. Over the running time, the space inhabited by the players takes on an intimate role, the ambient recording betraying the placement of the sources of sounds.

By its conclusion, listener (active or passive) has been brought into the session.



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SCOPPI by NANA HORISAKI

堀寄菜那 Nana Horisaki is an avant-pop artist from Japan. Kirigirisu Records released their album called, "スコッピ Scoppi," on March 5, 2025.

You can listen to it here:

kirigirisurecordings.bandcamp.com/album/scoppi

My Impressions:

Japan's Nana Horisaki wants you to know she's only played guitar for 10 years. I think her playing on Scoppi exists outside considerations of time frames. I taught my best friend in HS his first chords. In a few weeks he was personalizing them in a way that inspired me to look at chords differently. Some of us stumble upon an unlocked talent. Horisaki's grasp on subtly beguiling solo guitar song craft is apparent from the opening moments of Scoppi where mid tempo opener "Torch" juxtaposes a fragile vocal melody over a gently hesitating chord motif. Gorgeous. Further into the same song, a jazzy caterwauling of clean single notes double her voice. All the mixing is super clean on this title, Horisaki's voice is warmly wounded, but self-assured. Numerous skit length tracks briefly explore the jazzy freeness of the more adventurous tunes. A lovely release.

NOBSRINE 3FOLD by AIR JORDANS

Air Jordans is a circuit bending act from Germany and the US. Steep Gloss released their album called, "Nobsrine 3fold," on November 29, 2024.

You can find it here:

steepgloss.bandcamp.com/album/nobsrine-3fold

My Impressions:

Back in the early days of my computer usage, finding little stand alone sound maker programs people had made and distributed for free was how I assembled my first "studio." Pushing each program to its breaking point by using them in a way likely not intended by their creators was my credo at the time. Not dissimilar in spirit was the creative process behind "Nobsrine 3fold," whose bandcamp informs that all sounds found on the tape were derived from a novel diy sound synthesizer consisting of two knobs and two switches. All the sounds are actively modulating one another as the synth is engaged. This makes for a continually meandering imprint of playful interaction. Both side long pieces are constructed of two recordings, resulting in understated compositions not dissimilar to the 1970's private pressing of homemade electronics US reissue label Creel Pone champions.

Deep nerd territory this, but ultimately evocative for such simple technology.

These reviews first appeared in the Charlotte based review zine COPY THIS CASSETTE!

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is a new cassette review zine for those who still love cassettes. All new third issue arriving Spring 2025.

Back issues and cassettes available at:

copythis.bandcamp.com

2020/02/02 by ARTURAS BUMSTEINAS

Arturas Bumsteinas is an electronic experimental artist from Lithuania. Tapekiosk released their album called, "2020/02/02," on November 17, 2024.

You can listen to it here:

tapekiosk.bandcamp.com/album/arturas-bum-teinas-2020-02-02

My Impressions:

All of this music was constructed from various synth samples obtained from around the web. When I bought my first digital music software for PC in the Clinton era, obtaining synthesizer sounds was a matter of hunting down such demo samples. Very primitive baby steps. "2020/02/02," uses its open source clay with a light touch. Commissioned for a video art installation, the material stretches out to find the furthest points in the room the way a shadow spreads. Instantaneous, but paced, but ignored. The b-side continues this mode, incorporating more movement until repeating motifs and vague melodies counterpoint just beneath the surface. Most of the running time is accompanied by effective bird song and subtle blanket noise, maybe involving cicada. It's an album of near far-ness, warm cold-ness. Existing in its own skin.

PEASANT SWILL by DYLAN NYOUKIS

Dylan Nyoukis is a noise artist from Brighton, UK. They released an album called, "Peasant Swill," on November 1, 2024.

You can listen to it here:

bloodstereo.bandcamp.com/album/peasant-swill

My Impressions:

When an old friend that predated my delving into abstract music composition asked what she was hearing with my new music, my response was "the sound of sound being processed." Peasant Swill side A is that, in spades. It spills itself all over the place, echoey vocals stammering and stimming like fat elastic rats. After a spell, the voices are stretched over seesaws in a type of space gym. It's nice, but not in a way your old friends would get. Side B is 9 minutes of a public drama were half the guttural dialog is completely lost on my sheltered colonial ears. Sounds like fighting and fussing of various inebriated individuals in England. Very low in the mix are squelches and synthy ephemera that at times double the very prominent seagull squawk. I've lived around seagulls most of my life (I am at present 7 miles from the Atlantic Ocean), and I've never heard such depraved seagull shrills as on side B of Peasant Swill.

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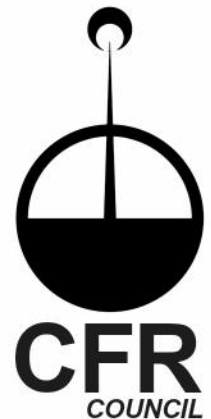
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