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August 2022
Vol. 4, Issue 8

FACED

Metal in the Capital Region is seeing a genuine resurgence, and FACED is coming up.

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BY LIAM SWEENEY

Faced. Photo provided.

Some music is misunderstood. In the fifties and sixties, older generations didn't understand rock 'n' roll. And in the thirties, preachers had a problem with blues. But metal has seldom been understood throughout the generations. And the cool thing is that metal actually enjoys it. Defiance to the norm is on the underside of every nickel-wound string and dropped D.

Faced is a metal band, and they're one to watch. With an album out in 2020, they came through the other side of 'crazyville' to lay down brutality in the studio.

I sat down with Faced's Jordan Simpson to talk turkey.

RRX: You released "II Coming" in September of 2020, which was a pretty

crazy time. I won't ask how hard it was to put it together during that time; old news. But it touches on a point. Metal is about insane shit, apocalypses, general doom and whatnot. Does it feel different singing about, well, dystopia, when we're living in it?

JS: A lot of the material was written for a couple of years. On this record there is a range of topics from out of the mind and body experiences to straight up anger, loss of will and hope, smoking weed, the list goes on. So, the timing of it fit the period in all of our lives.

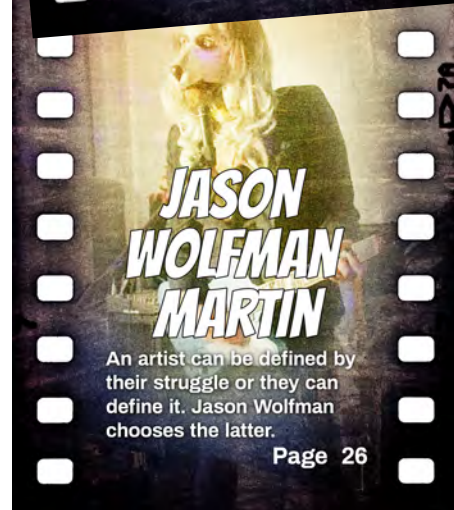
RRX: Faced has a really tight sound, not clean in the sense of like clean guitar, but clean as in maybe streamlined, well put together. And yet the sound is chaotic. And people who don't listen to metal think it's all chaos

because their ears aren't trained to it, but some metal is cleaner, tighter, than other metal. How do you control the chaos?

JS: That's a good question. We have always been musicians that push the edge. Always trying to zero in on how to do things better. So, with drive and practice combined we just strive to be the best metal band we can be, and the result is that tight sound you hear. We just try to be ourselves and true to the art. We don't follow trends or fads. We just pour ourselves out there.

RRX: I love that guitar sound. So maybe we talk shop for a second. Let's talk pedals. First off, do you guys use them, or is it all in great amps? If you do use them, what do those pedal

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boards look like? And how do you manage pedal boards in a live show – punch them during the show, or set and forget? If no pedals, what stops you?

JS: Glad you like the tone! I've worked many years to find my sound. Live and in the studio I use a Randall RM-100 head with a 4 x 12 loaded with Marshall Celestions speakers. In the studio I use a few pedals. For delay I use a DD-8 Delay pedal for leads. For wah I use a Dunlop 525Q. I also use a stereo chorus from the 80's made by Arion. Which is a diamond in the rough. But everyone loves the sound. For live I use a Headrush pedal board through my loop in my Randall. It sounds great and doesn't kill my back.

RRX: I've listened to Faced from the studio and Faced live on one of the Booze Cruises. There's a lot of similarities, and differences. I don't think it's even possible to recreate a live metal sound in the studio unless you record in a venue and let people mosh in the recording booth. Do you try things to bring the live sound into the studio?

JS: The studio is a different beast. We always try to capture the Faced sound. That's what we aim for. We don't want to sound like another band live or in the studio. So being true to ourselves is what comes through live and in the studio. Live we throw different things in there and take risks. We try to always out do ourselves. If you came to a show to hear what's exactly on the record what good is that. We always want it to be an experience. You never know what you will see or hear at a Faced show. Like to keep the fans on their toes.

RRX: Metal in the Capital Region is a tight group. Part of that is the music itself. Metal is a music that doesn't mix well with other music. You wouldn't see a metal band booked with a folk or a blues band. That said, metal does mix very well when it's mashups with other genres, like rap, country,

blues, folk...pretty much everything. Why is that?

JS: Well, I can only speak for our music. We have played with many genres under the sun. We love many types of music. We have shared the bill with many different acts playing many different genres. Hell, we even played a rave once! Our thing is as long as you have a dream and you're doing everything possible to make that dream a reality we back you 100%. Musicians stick together.

RRX: Most music, or most musicians, have a theme. Just basic, there's stuff we care about, so there's stuff we sing about. If I think the CIA implants radios in peoples' fillings, my albums might be me revealing that belief in 4/4 time. And that's a stupid example but Faced probably has themes to its music. What is the Faced message?

JS: We have many messages through many songs. We tell stories about life through real experience. It's real songs with twists and turns through the mind. We scream about things we have lived through and have seen. Pretty much it's all left up to interpretation. We make the listeners think about what it all means to them in a lot of songs.

RRX: This is where you answer the question I didn't ask. Comments? Shout-outs? Educate, enlighten, emote – the floor is yours.

JS: Come out to a show and party with us. We don't bite...much! Check us out on every streaming platform there is. If you dig it pass it to a friend.

We would love to give a few huge shout outs to our manager Bear without him some of the things we have done wouldn't have been possible. We would also like to give a shout out to the social outcasts, the misunderstood and the bullied. We love you all and embrace every last one of you. A Faced show is where you are accepted for who you are. Come out and be part of it. Thanks for all the support!!

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Robert Yerry

Clowning and magic and comedy - Robert Yerry was born to perform.

BY ROB SMITTIX

Robert Yerry. Photo provided.

RRX: I have such a great respect for comedians. I've even thought about doing it myself but I've found that I can only be funny on the fly. I'm not really great at set-up punchline jokes. It truly is an artform. How did you get into comedy?

RY: I actually started out as a clown. I graduated from Hudson Valley Clown Alley at the age of seven. Then I started to pursue magic and did that for years. I found myself starting to tell a lot of jokes during my magic act and I always loved comedy. I listened to Rodney Dangerfield's cassette "No

Respect" so many times that the tape broke. Like most kids that grew up in the 80's, I got to see all of the great comics of that era on T.V. I remember putting on comedy shows/skits for anyone that would visit our house. However, in school I was the shy quiet kid. I honestly feel that I was born to entertain an audience and like a drug there is no bigger high than being able to make people laugh.

The first time that I went to a comedy club was back in 2001 at the Comedy Works when they were in Glenmont, N.Y. I went with my dad. I was laughing

so hard I was crying. Then I found out that anyone could sign up ahead of time and perform five minutes as open-mic before the actual show starts. I went home very excited and worked very hard on material for a month. I went back to the club with my brother Ron on a snowy Saturday night in 2001. The club was packed. The MC was a comic from NYC. At first, he was rude to me and asked if I have ever done this before? I told him no, then he just rolled his eyes and said, "oh man, when I hold up the candle, get off of the stage because you are done." I said OK.

Then when it was my turn to perform, he introduced me with zero confidence. I took the stage and I KILLED IT! Every one of my jokes were spot on and the audience loved me. I never got the candle raised to me and when I was done, the same rude MC was a totally different person to me. He shook my hand while the people were howling and clapping and then said, "Robert Yerry everyone!"

RRX: I can relate to comedians in the sense that I am a performer but as a musician, if I hit a wrong note or if I mess up a lyric, the crowd is usually

very forgiving, and I still get the applause. Correct me if I'm wrong but I feel a comedian's performance relies on the audience. If the audience isn't feeling the stand-up from the beginning, does it usually end in disaster? How do you pull yourself out of that trap?

RY: I hold a pretty high standard of myself when I am writing my comedy material. Once I write a joke and it makes me laugh out loud. I know that I struck comedy gold. And all crowds are different. I can perform a show and get a ton of laughter at each and every joke. Then there are sometimes that you can perform the same comedy set to a different audience and get minimal laughter/odd reactions or they just don't get it. As a comedian I learned years ago to not let that get me down because I know my material is good and it's not me it's them!

RRX: And then you have hecklers.

RY: I have actually only been

heckled a few times in my career. They were always intoxicated people just looking for attention. I personally feel that they want to be a part of the show but in the worst way. People go to comedy shows and pay their hard earned money to watch the comedian(s), not some drunk guy/girl in the crowd. One time this intoxicated guy in the audience would not stop yelling crazy things that made no sense at all. So, I invited him up on stage, which could have been a disaster. I shook his hand and we exchanged names. I then asked him if he knew any jokes? He then said in his slurred words "I know lots of jokes.". I said, great! I put the mic in front of him and said, "go ahead, we all want to hear them." He had nothing to say, got off stage and left the club. I never ever pick on an audience member. I feel that is being a bully and I hate bullies. Some comics love to work that into their act because that is their style. I want to win over the audience

and talk to them like I am in my living room talking to my friends. If I get heckled, I feel that it becomes no holds barred and I promise you that a good comedian with a mic will win.

RRX: I am a member of your on-line group. Very funny stuff, is this open to the public?

RY: I am the administrator of a very funny group on Facebook called "No Respect." It is searchable but it is a private group. Anyone can ask to join but must be approved. This group is private because it can be raw and edgy and I believe in this crazy world that we all now live in, someone might get offended. The site has grown to just about 3,000 members now and grows every day.

RRX: That brings me to the next question. In the new cancel culture world are you afraid to deliver the same edgy comedy that in these times could get you erased?

RY: This new cancel culture thing

is actually pretty scary. I find it very sad that we live in the greatest country in the world and you can lose everything that you have ever done as a performer just because you may have said something off beat or out of context 20 years ago. I think that people really need to lighten up and relax a little. If you don't like what you see, don't watch it or go to a show.

I think that it is a lot of nonsense and I hope things change soon because taking away free speech is pretty damn scary. Like most comics I can work clean but I personally find it more entertaining to throw some swear words in my material. I tell people all the time that there is nothing like going to a live comedy show because it is very entertaining. I also tell everyone that if you get offended by anything at all. Don't go; stay home, so people that want to see a great comedy show can enjoy it.

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Collar City Crawl

BY JORDAN LANGERMAN

Alas -- sweet, sweet summertime has finally arrived in full force. Our beloved farmer's market is back on the blocks, the days are warm, bright and long, the grass is lush and the trees are full, the flowers have bloomed and the birds are singing and all is right and merry and beautiful.

Well, almost.

It is, until you turn on the TV and tune into the news over your morning coffee, or open social media and catch a glimpse of the latest, most terrifying headlines via memes, or you decide to take a sunset stroll down by the river with your main squeeze, only to have a near-magical moment interrupted by none other than Troy's finest anthem: the very calming, very soothing sound of sirens wailing in the distance -- bouncing off the brownstones, echoing throughout the city's walls -- fully saturating the air with its incessant, haunting, almost mocking pitch.

Basically, what I'm getting at is -- if you have a pulse, conscience, and/or possess the ability to think critically and fully comprehend the grave state of our current world, (on a micro or macro level), well, how do I put this nicely...

You're f*cked. Congratulations! #Isn'tThatLovely #JoinTheTeam

The more dialed in and cognizant you are, the more excruciating your reality becomes, because you aren't just going through the motions anymore -- you're painfully aware of every little

thing., even when you really wish you weren't. Hyper-fixated, if you will. It's the double-edged-sword of all swords, the bitch of all bitches. But hey, better to have a brain and put it to good use, right? I'd take being depressed and 'smart' over happy and 'dumb' any day. Blissful ignorance gets real old, real quick. (It's 2022 people, caring is actually cool now, in case you didn't know!)

With good, comes bad. With light, comes darkness. Yin, yang, you know the deal. When it comes to summertime, yes, we can count on blue skies, toasty lake days and fun evening excursions, but we can also count on more people flooding into the city, more violence, more drunk drivers, more drug use, and generally just an overall, heightened and magnified energy to the city that is not always in alignment with the energy we've grown to love of Troy.

In the past few weeks, vandalism and gang activity have been on the rise, there have been break-ins, stabbings, gun-shot victims and hostage situations, and there has been a very evident influx of panhandlers and the homeless population, all of which have seem to come straight out of the wood-works. (Special shout-out to Troy, PD -- y'all deal with some shit -- hats off to you guys.)

This energy can feel quite intimidating, and rightfully so. It is alarming. It is scary. It is unsettling. It can make you want to put three deadbolts

on your door, keep the blinds permanently shut and shades drawn, Door-dash all your meals and spend your entire summer inside huddled underneath a blanket watching endless hours of Netflix (can we get rid of that 'are you still watching?' notification yet? I mean, seriously).

If that's what you want to do, so be it. To each their own. But I think it's important to remember that this is what happens during summertime all across the country. It's not just our little ol', blip-on-the-radar, quirky city -- it's everywhere. Whether that makes it better or worse, I'm not sure, but I do stand firmly by this.

To hell with all that. To hell with fear, to hell with bunkering down, to hell with letting life pass you by. The world is a mess. Always has been, always will be. But that's part of the beauty, no? How would we know what to appreciate and what to stand up for and fight against without all of the mess? The mess gives context, it deepens layers, and it brings everything full circle.

Bottom line? Give love to the mess and embrace it. Acknowledge it, nod to it, be wary of it, and stay safe from it, but don't drown in it.

I think that's enough dark and gloom and preaching for one article, wouldn't you say?

If I'm being honest, I had a totally different game-plan for this second issue of Collar City Crawl in my head.

That's the funny thing about writing, though, or any creative outlet for that matter. You may have one idea, but as soon as pen hits paper, or you pick up the mic (or the guitar, or the paintbrush, or the frying pan, or the soccer ball, etc.), the item at hand just sorta takes you and shows you where you need to go. Planning is good, sure, but planning too much? Well, now, where's the fun in that...

Before I go, there's one last thing I'd like to share.

Someone that has very recently come into my life said something to me the other day that struck a chord and stuck, and I feel like it's the perfect way to close this bad boy out. We all have those people who we feel we've known for forever, going back moons and lifetimes before this one (if you believe in that sorta thing), when in reality we've only known them for a very short period of time. You can just feel it; there's a natural flow and channel in relationships like these, and this lil' mama is one of those for me (! you know who you are).

Anyway, when she described Troy as she did below, I knew she was one of my people, and that we were cut from the same cloth. #RealRecognizeReal

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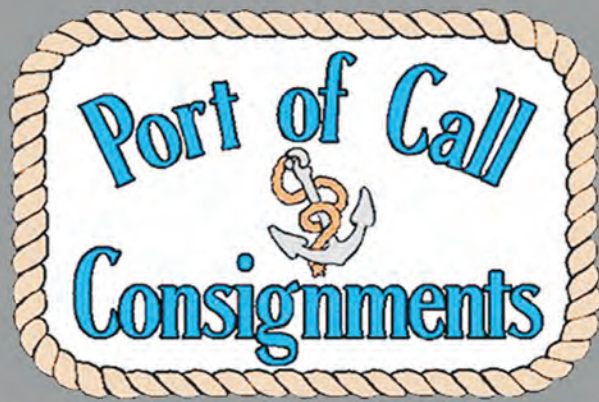
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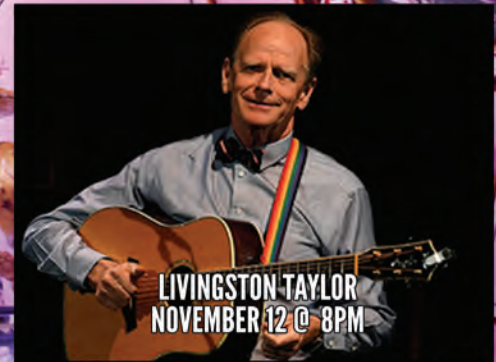
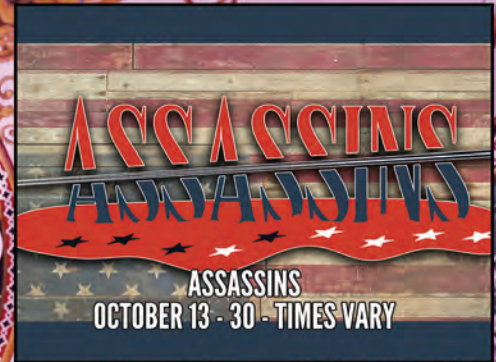
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RRX: I am here at Collar City Mushroomrooms, never been here before. Avery has shown me around a little bit. I got to see some mushrooms in development, this is a pretty cool place. So, in your words, what's going on here tonight?

AS: Tonight, we are hosting the third meeting of the New York Psilocybin Action Committee. We are a group of people interested in changing the legal climate around psilocybin. We want to create an accessible system for people in the future that can utilize psilocybin as a medicine for their well-being and also incorporating recreation as a means towards wellness. Because you know...you do have to dance around a fire and hang out with your friends and laugh a little to feel good.

RRX: Absolutely, I was going to

ask if you were interested in seeing both medicinal and recreational psilocybin becoming legal.

AS: I want to see people able to access the medicine. The way our system is structured and the fear culture that has been created does not really allow a direct unleashing of all the hounds at once. Similar to how cannabis was passed, I do believe we have to take steps in order to get to that...you know? Hanging out in a field with our friends, having a good time, enjoying ourselves in the sunshine. So, we're gathering people to create an advisory committee right now and one of the people that we met with helped pass the legislation in Oregon. He now works for TheraPsil in Canada, and they are unveiling a medicinal model for people in Canada to have access. It is legal in Canada for

medicinal use.

RRX: Canada and Oregon for that matter always seem to be ahead of the curve on these sorts of things. It took a very long time to get where we are now with marijuana, I imagine for psilocybin it will be a long process.

AS: I'm sure New York is very rigorous in how they roll out legislation. There is a lot of movement and interest in allowing access because people recognize that the drug war has done nothing but harm people. To transition out of that fear-based culture into one where the stigma has been removed and people are free to enjoy different substances either with the help of a clinician, in the company of their friends or alone is going to take time. We have been meeting with politicians in setting up the system that we're creating

right now. We have Pat Burke who submitted a bill last year, Linda Rosenthal who has submitted bills multiple years and John McDonald who is our local assembly member are all coming in upcoming weeks to directly discuss what we can do to help them move these legislations forward.

RRX: It's got to start somewhere.

AS: Right. So, a place like Oregon and Colorado can get ballots put on their voting register and allow the people to just enact things. We don't do that here in New York, where everything has to be a bill that is passed through committee, evaluated and voted on by the assembly, passed by the senate and then ratified by the governor. So, the legal system is a little different here and we have to work with the system that we have.

RRX: That's what we've got! I've got to grab my drink here real quick. I'm drinking oyster mushroom, turkey tail, reishi, lion's mane with herbal peach iced tea. It's damn good!

AS: And I have lion's mane, reishi, shiitake, maple syrup, lime and water, so it's a limeade drink.

RRX: I'm going to have to try that one as well. I am someone that has actually recreationally used mushrooms in the past. Back when I was much younger to me it was the funnest thing ever. You sit around with your friends and we all realize how beautiful the room is, which we never noticed before. We had some laughs and no harm done. You've got to be responsible obviously and stay where you are. More recently when I tried it, I feel like I took too much and it was intense. I saw these tubes in my living room that contained hundreds of ancient symbols flowing through them, which were cool visuals but the intensity was a bit too much to handle.

AS: Dosage and understanding the right amount is something that is difficult to determine right now because it's so underground. There hasn't been appropriate scrutiny on informing people how to safely consume.

RRX: I knew it was too much after it was too late. I snuggled with my cat for a while to have a companion to help me get through it. After some time elapsed the feeling was where it was supposed to be. I didn't take it for medicinal purposes, but I did find something within myself that I needed to work on. A voice inside that scolded me for everything I've ever done wrong in my life. It put me on a path to be a better person, so I think that was recreational but with a splash of medicinal help as well. As far as medicinal uses, what can psilocybin help with?

AS: Wow, so really the applications of psilocybin right now for medicinal purposes are still being studied. Stress, depression, PTSD, inflammation and

people have even recovered from irritable bowel syndrome. One of our members actually healed from a spinal injury with psilocybin and physical therapy and got movement back in her foot. Before that she was in a wheelchair and on the cusp of having her leg amputated from the knee down. She was depressed and suffering, took a larger dose of psilocybin and basically had not only a mental reset but a physical reset as well. It has some neuro regenerative properties in it. It can kind of move and reconnect pathways. The real major movement right now is palliative care, end of life stress and existential dread. People who have been diagnosed with terminal cancers or some other thing that they're passing from are staring at that approaching light with horror. Psilocybin can often help people come to terms with that transition.

RRX: Anything else you'd like to share?

AS: Inform yourselves, so many people have bought into the culture of fear and misinformation that's been propagated by the people in power. There are more and more studies coming out discussing the positive effects, so before you judge, understand what the possibilities are. On our Instagram I've been posting articles as they come out that are really talking about how we can come together in order to influence people that can make those changes.

RRX: Of course, there is the stigma but look at prescription medications, what it does and how so many of them destroy lives and families with the addiction that comes with it. As far as I know I don't really think that mushrooms are addictive.

AS: They're actually anti-addictive, that's another thing I should have mentioned as a medicinal benefit.

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Jason “Wolfman” Martin

Jason Wolfman Martin is sending out a Test Signal.



BY NIKI KAOS

Jason Wolfman Martin. Photo provided.

RRX: Jason – I love your new EP release “Test Signal” on Bandcamp! Amazing production quality and artsy vibe like I remember from you. Perfect pop rock feel. What inspired you to create your most recent project?

JM: Over the last seven years I’ve been recovering from a major life event that destroyed my career and livelihood. I’m finally ready to get back in the game. These songs were recorded over that time. I usually record quite fast. But I slowed down to like ten percent speed because I was so traumatized and injured. I literally wasn’t able to record music like I used to.

So very slowly I recorded 30 songs over seven years. And that’s the kind of thing I used to do in a month. And then when I went to mix them down, I thought – oh my god, I have so many songs to choose from! But when I

listened to them back, I noticed something.

One of the problems I’ve had is there was brain trauma, that has since healed a bit. I don’t know how to explain it. Between 2018 or 2019 my memory of how to produce music started to return. Now it’s much better.

Over this time, these challenges were playing out. I was trying so hard to record, and most of the time, I would fail. But maybe thirty percent of the time I would get something done. And that would take a long many days. And it used to be one day.

RRX: And it would be frustrating, probably?

JM: Yes. Well, not at first, because I was so out of it. And the sound of even the buses going by would trigger a flashback. At first, I didn’t notice it. But then when I got a little better, about

three or four years in, I was very frustrated by it.

I listened to all these thirty-something songs, and I liked them, but in hindsight I could tell my brain wasn’t all there. I had written fifty or seventy five percent of the song and jumped to making a final recording. And a lot of songs would be a weird length. A song that would normally be three minutes, would be six minutes. I used to chop away and get the hottest stuff during the last thirty percent of the composing stage. Press down to three minutes. But I didn’t do any of that.

I ended up with all these weird songs that you can’t edit in any kind of good way. And they’re all stopped at various stages. By the time I mixed down. Most of the songs were useless because they weren’t done.

RRX: I bet there’s still a lot of good

stuff in there. What great insight on your process. You’re not just recording. You’re producing and editing your music.

JM: Engineering, mixing and performing. Yeah.

RRX: This reminds me of how we met. I’m going in the way-back machine. The first time I heard of you was Brown Cuts Neighbors. There’s been a lot that’s happened between then and now.

JM: Yeah – for sure. That’s what 30 years? 40 years? I don’t know anymore!

RRX: I don’t keep track of time - QE2?

JM: It was like 35 years... playing out as a band during high school in 1989 to 2001. It was a band first, kind of conceptual and noisy. Then video on public access. And performance art,

where we'd be situationist type absurd interventions in social settings. That was fun too.

RRX: I think that's what attracted me to your music. And I was coming up around the same time, living in downtown Albany. You were in downtown Troy and the studio with Igor. And you created this space. I would get invited to these cool parties. You would have everything set up and designed in an interactive way. And that was something that really caught my attention - that you love the interactiveness of art and created space for that. What inspired you to do that?

JM: I've always had spaces like that most of my life. Even before 51 3rd Street, before I had my studio recording business and was hosting shows for all those years. 10-15 years before that point, I would always work out some deal, bargain or trade or I would always be hustling to have some kind of place to live. Some kind of place to put my studio, even if it is just a closet. And some arrangement with some kind of venue or space where I could host events and do these multi-media things with people from different communities on the bill. It was just like - I wanted that. And it wasn't happening, so I made it. If somebody else would've done it, I wouldn't have done it. Because it wasn't my passion. I got good at it, but it really kind of burnt me out after a while. After about 20 years I got pretty burned out!

RRX: 20 years is a good run. That's a good piece of history. Because I can honestly say you held space for a lot of musicians.

JM: That's great to hear! Because you don't think about that stuff when it all happens.

RRX: It's a grind.

JM: Right. It is! And largely invisible roles! And after having all these beautiful experiences, the end would be such a downer. I really appreciate hearing about these things from people

like yourself because it is easy to forget. I know those good things happened, I was part of it, but it is nice when other people say it.

RRX: One of the things I learned about your earlier work is the word hustle. You're always trying to get something done.

The fact that you had the confidence and vision for this is a gift. I'm grateful, because you used it to create something positive. You took it and you built things. I feel like that is one of your superpowers! You were never like the people I remember who I feel took advantage of people in the scene.

JM: They're exhausting. And they're too much work. I just wanted an easy time, and I just wanted to have fun. And so, I did that. And if people were weird, I stopped talking to them.

RRX: I'm just learning that skill now after all these years. It's creating a community. It's creating a scene. The closest thing I know for that now is the Super Dark Collective.

JM: Yeah. Totally. They're good friends. And they've supported me over my whole recovery time. They've been very supportive.

RRX: I feel like we need more of that.

JM: Agreed. For performing. I'm still benched and rehearsing. Finding the right venue and opportunity to perform in public again. I forced out that EP. I have a band. Guitar, bass, drums. Power trio.

At some point we're going to come out. But that might not be for a little while. But we've been playing together for the past year. And the sound is the favorite band I've ever had.

RRX: I'm so glad that you're back to doing more music. I would put every song of your new EP on my playlist. All four songs are catchy, quirky and very listenable! Catch Jason's EP Test Signal on Bandcamp and keep your eye out for Power Animal System!



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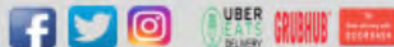
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Jack White: On the Record

BY JOHNNY MYSTERY

Jack White. Photo provided.

It is safe to say, 20 years ago, not many would even dream the vinyl format could be profitable again but there it is. The plastic waffle is outselling compact discs by leaps and bounds. A billion-dollar industry? That's the word now. The problem is the demand is growing faster than the ability to produce. Yeah, the old supply and demand syndrome. Many artists, who's fans prefer records are not able to get the product out. The lack of pressing plants means indie groups must wait almost a year to get a record out.

Jack White's "Third Man Records" company built his own pressing plant in 2017. He has eight brand new or refurbished pressing machines at a factory located in his hometown of Detroit. Keep in mind, new pressing machines have not been made in over 30 years. It's 60's technology but it still works.

The former White Stripes front man has now issued a challenge to Warner

Bros., Universal and Sony to build their own pressing plants. No word from these majors yet but it stands to reason, they would be missing out on a market that is not a novelty anymore. Turntables are flying out of box stores and Amazon warehouses. More and more music fans like the idea of holding a record in their hands instead of pulling it down from some invisible cloud in bliggity-blog land.

The possibilities of introducing a new generation to the great music that's been made over the last 100 years in this format are mind blowing. New bands and artists are also ready to bust out.

Third Man have procured the rights to releases from the catalogs of Sun Records, Chess, Tamla and Motown. That's a treasure trove of blues, country, R&B, rockabilly and soul, some of which are just seeing the light of day for the first time in decades. This music

is now available everywhere, every day and you can touch it. Their platinum collection of folk artists from Paramount Records recently won a Grammy.

Spoken word recordings from Carl Sagan and Conan O Brian are also being produced and here's a good one for ya; the very first record by the King of Rock and Roll is available. We're not talking about "Heartbreak Hotel" either. Jack managed to track down the acetate that Elvis made, when he walked into Sun Records in 1953 after his truck driving job, plunked down four bucks and recorded "That's Where Your Heartaches Begin" for his mama's birthday. Big E's real first record as in they only made one. A copy of that song is available now on a 45 or vinyl 10-inch. I know because I have one and it's magnificent!

Vinyl has truly reintegrated itself back into the culture. It shouldn't be a

big trick for the huge multibillion-dollar music mongers to get the machines up and steaming for profits I bet they can smell already. The artists need the outlets to produce. What's the hold up?

If Mr. White can put something like this together with his time, money and effort, one can only imagine what Sony, Universal and Warner's could do. For the first time in a long time, some people I know are pretty excited for the music industry but it all hinges on companies getting off their collective butts and taking a history lesson or two. Our recorded music is important.

I hope at least one of them takes a page from the Third Man playbook. At the Detroit plant, you can walk into a shop where they sell the records that they make right out back. They even have a window where you can watch the action take place. Kinda sounds like a bakery and who doesn't have fun at a bakery? Now go hit the bins!



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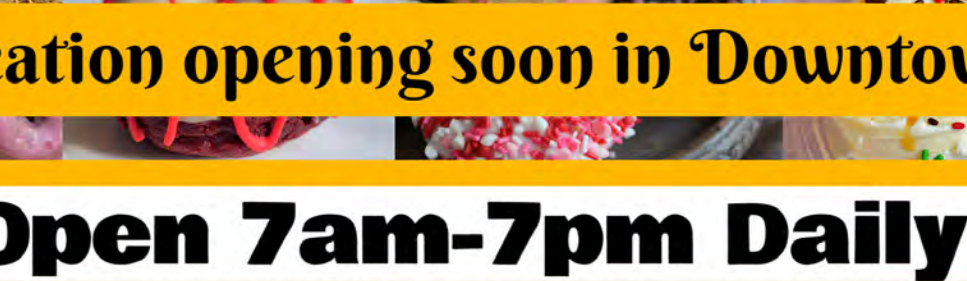


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Art Bernstein

Capital Region
Timekeepers

BY OP CALLAGHAN

Art Bernstein. Photo provided.

Art Bernstein has been playing, recording, teaching and writing about drumming for over 30 years. As a contributing writer to “Drumhead Magazine”, a teacher with The Empire State Youth Orchestra, and performer on over 40 albums, Art is a master at his craft, whose teachings, publications and performances have undoubtedly enriched the lives of so many drummers. To top it off, Art is a terrific guy; very down to earth and humble. I am proud to call him my friend, and a terrific drummer. His work with jazz guitar virtuoso Chuck D’Aloia is exceptional in every way. Art has written several lesson books, including “Kangarudiments”, which is one of the best lesson books that I’ve ever read. Art is a true gem in the world of percussion. So please welcome, my friend, Art Bernstein!

RRX: Hey man. Let’s start out with the basics; How old were you when you started playing? .

AB: I started playing in sixth grade as I remember. I started on snare, and quickly moved to snare drum and drum set. In seventh grade I played in the concert band and jazz ensemble. In eighth grade I started playing in both the middle school and high school jazz band. My eighth grade year was very busy, doing both jazz bands, concert band, as well as some drum set work on “upop” tunes at the time. The jazz ensemble material was almost always focused on swing, jazz/funk and fusion; really all over the map, and this really helped me grow as a drummer. I am so thankful for the time I had with all that material. In the summer of 1984, I was full time at the Eastern US Music Camp at Cortland State University, playing in

multiple ensembles all day every day, and studying privately with Tom Brown. In high school I studied with Kathleen Lowry, who is Tom Brown’s daughter! I am so happy to have had the opportunity to study with those gifted players, as well as my private instructor at the time, David Bitner. I am so thankful for having these wonderful teachers while growing up.

RRX: It sounds great Who inspired you early on in your drumming life?

AB: Too many to list! I was a very young drummer, but would cite Neil Peart, Stewart Copeland, John Bonham, Mitch Mitchell, Chad Smith, Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl, David Garibaldi, Chick Webb, Gene Krupa, Philly Joe Jones, Louis Benson, Buddy Rich, Tony Williams...the list goes on.

RRX: A long list! Tell me about

your “dream kit”.

AB: As an Ayotte guy I have to say pretty much what I am playing right now. Custom Ayotte four or five piece. I would love to add a 20” x 14” kick that could be tuned like a 22” or 24” kick if needed. A separate vintage wish list would include a vintage Ludwig Black Beauty, Supraphonic, and anything Gretsch Round Badge!

RRX: Nice! You’ve been teaching, writing, and playing your tail off for years; is there anything that you prefer to do?

AB: I truly love it all.

RRX: It shows! I like to ask jazz players about rock and roll drummers like Charlie (Watts) and Ginger (Baker) who preferred to be known as jazz players. So, having played several different styles of drumming, in your opinion, what is it about jazz that seems to

attract even the most “rock and roll” type drummers?

AB: I could go on for hours but let me boil it down and try to be succinct. First, I think that this is our history, as drummers. I think that we are drawn naturally to find out where we came from. If it were not for jazz, would there be rock? Second, to know as much as you can about where you came from historically with your craft, will assist you in so many ways, to help you figure out where you’re going. Third, outside of straight rock playing all 8th and 16th notes completely straight and playing triplets in strict orchestral fashion, everything swings to a varying degree. From totally swung to a James Brown funk feel, or a New Orleans jazz feel, and all things in between, they’re all related, and there is no right or wrong in my eyes, As Duke Ellington once said, “If it sounds good, it is good!” Fourth, in my mind, music is language, music is communication, most importantly as drummers, as we are listening, reacting to what we’re hearing, and subsequently being a supportive player with what we choose to play/say. No matter what we are doing stylistically we are always listening and communicating as we play. In all music, but particularly in jazz, we are supporting the other players, often through “comping” (which means to compliment) the other players. It makes a lot of sense to me that drummers are so drawn to this kind of improvised musical communication. I don’t mean to imply that jazz is the only musical style where this occurs, but it does seem to provide more opportunities for this type of playing. Finally, jazz drumming welcomes playing that incorporates four way independence and can span many genres within one tune when applied in a jazz fusion setting. That, combined with all my previous points creates a super fun, musically expanding and rewarding experience,

RRX: So true. Ok; worst gig ever?

AB: OMG too many to mention! I won’t name names though. Even the worst gig has its rewards. It’s all about the music.

RRX: Do you polish your cymbals?

AB: I absolutely understand why some drummers do, but I don’t. Something about the sound of an aged cymbal that is fairly well cared for seems to work for me.

RRX: Tell me your feelings on roto-toms.

AB: Wow! Roto-toms! I have not played them since the mid 80’s. I did own a set though. Benefits in my eyes include, easy to tune, simply swivel the head, three toms to one stand, and cost effective to add three toms to a kit! Drawbacks? Well, it’s a distinct sound, but probably has a place. Maybe there will be a roto-tom revival! That might be quite cool and fun!

RRX: I am waiting for the roto-tom revival. That’s a good name for a band. Is there one drummer in history that you would like to sit down with and interview?

AB: Again, too many to narrow down to one.

RRX: Ok Professor, as a teacher, performer, author etc., what is your favorite warm-up before playing?

AB: A cup of java and mixing things up with something different every day. Always rudiments, followed by a specific style, rotating every day. One day, Afro Cuban, the next day Brazilian, the next day swing/jazz, next day New Orleans, and then slow blues, funk, the next day...

RRX: Art Bernstein is not only a tremendous player, author, and teacher, but also a wonderful guy. Check out his work at “Drumhead Magazine”, or any of his recordings, especially the ABCD albums, or at his website, artbernstein.com. You will not be disappointed!

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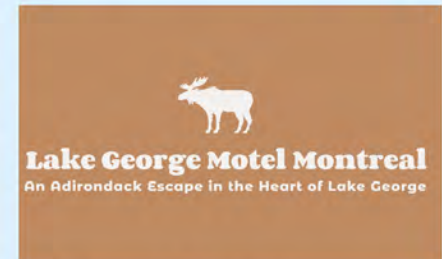
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Astrology

Welcome to the Monthly Astrology Feature. I'm Conscious Medium Brandon Russ and I combine all the tools of the trade for your journey. Connect with me at <http://linktr.ee/brandonruss> for events, classes and private readings.

The good news is, we've got warm weather and the stars on our side this month. Full moon in Aquarius gives the persona of fun at all costs, with a hint of a lack of apologies. Uranus goes retrograde late in the month and makes us wonder if we were dreaming or go all in with the next great thing.

Aries – Stick to the budget and realize doing nothing but sitting by a fire is a good time! Creative work schedules help you juggle it all, put you first, as per usual.

Taurus – Attention is coming your way for certain! Your practical side receives a dose of mushy as you move through this month. The full moon in Aquarius makes things spontaneous, so get ready.

Gemini- August is the perfect storm for all things Gemini, what a great month. All the stars align for professional and personal this month, because when Uranus goes retro on the 24th, your brand of zany will be needed.

Cancer- Optimism is a superpower, right? That's why the new opportunities come flying in. Relax on the love life, it will be there, but don't lose sight that it's a two-way street, always. Mercury enters Libra at the end of the month and restores balance.

Leo- Quit trying to control

everything and go with the flow. The full moon in Aquarius this month makes you counterintuitive with situations, take it easy and don't overthink.

Virgo- Confidence is high, repeat, confidence...is high. Use that confidence in your prowess for a mate, advancement or a passion.

Libra- Good time to plan a little R&R. When you're chill, that's when the magic happens, new directions, new lovers, new experiences. Mercury hits Libra on the 24th, Sparks...

Scorpio- Rocky start, but strong finish. You clearly want to know who is with you moving forward, in partners and in life. Intuition is getting you ready for something big.

Sagittarius – Career has a little more hold the first half of the month, after the full moon in Aquarius, you find your sweet spot for rest and love. Go get 'em.

Capricorn- You're a beauty but that's not enough. Saturn in retrograde is making you trim expenses and look at your career, hard. Don't let the temporary compliment distract you.

Aquarius – The energy you keep will be minimal. Planning season for you, opposite Leo, this is a time to focus on a 'plan'. Career number one, everything else second.

Pisces – After a period of healing, you get shot out of the proverbial cannon, especially for career. This while you evaluate what is important to you, Jupiter expands, play your game, everyone copies anyways.

Brandon Russ


 Brandon Russ
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Prog Digest



BY KLYDE KADIDDLEHUMPER

Jethro Tull. Photo provided.

So – last month our tease was about who won the first Heavy Metal Grammy in 1989 and beat out Metallica. For their album “Crest of a Knave” – it was Jethro Tull.

Something of a shocker to many and, in later years, the final Jeopardy answer.

Prior to being a more popular act, the band had many names. It was told, the only way they could get a repeat gig was with a new name. Names such as Navy Blue, Ian Hender-son’s Bag o’ Nails, and Candy Colored Rain.

So, why Jethro Tull. Turns out, again for the kinda new kids on the block, nearly 300 years after his birth, Jethro Tull (1664 – 1741) was re-nowned in his own right as an agricul-tural pioneer and the inventor of the seed drill, the horse drawn hoe, and an improved plough, all major

developments in the 18th century agri-cultural revolution, among others.

Eventually, they chose Jethro Tull when someone wanted to rebook the band.

The first record was ‘This Was’ (1968). The first to show real promise and chart number one in the UK – “Stand Up” (1969). “Aqualung”, “Thick as a Brick” and “A Passion Play” followed.

That is a little history – but you get the idea.

Having seen Ian Anderson and Jethro Tull a number of times – it is always a great show.

While the exact date evades this old prog-soaked brain – one day I got a call from the Executive Director of the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. She says – so, do you think we would do well with an Ian Anderson solo gig? Ummmm.....yeah.

One catch – we needed the local classic rock station to be on board.

I pick up the phone, make one call, and the deal was made. Had to have a local artist to share the stage and An-derson would do at least one of his tunes. Got the tapes, and we booked Kevin Thompson of Strange Arrange-ment (the cranky old guy might re-mem-ber that name).

The show was a hit, everyone was happy, and a good time was had by all.

This, of course, begs the question, why Tull and why now.

Just about when we release this issue and distribute, the 50th anniver-sary of “Thick as a Brick” is being re-leased on July 29.

This is not just a remastered CD, or some lame thing. It is a proper display.

The original vinyl release came with a newspaper. A 12” x 16”

newspaper telling the story of the imaginary youngster who ‘wrote’ the poem that is the song. Two sides on one 12” record that was one song. Nothing Prog about that.

SO – I will leave you with this (and I quote):

“Really don’t mind if you sit this one out.

My words but a whisper your deaf-ness a SHOUT.

I may make you feel but I can’t make you think.

Your sperm’s in the gutter, your love’s in the sink.”

If you are a prog fan with a turnta-ble – the package is worth it.

Oh – did I mention there actually is a “Thick as a Brick II”?

Until we meet again.

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Observations and Ramblings From a Cranky Old Guy

BY JEFF SPAULDING

Every one of you have had to do something at least once that we never thought about doing before, or were happy to do it when we knew we would have no choice, and not doing it could hurt us in the long run.

Have you ever, for example, stayed at a crap job because the money was too good, but you know you couldn't do better, or your bosses/co-workers were all douchebags, but there's an equal number of bosses/co-workers at any job you would have, even at three times the money you're currently making?

Have you ever had to stay in the rat hole of an apartment because you're broke, or have crappy credit or just got kicked out by your soon to be ex-spouse?

Have you ever had to get married to make sure the upcoming child won't be a bastard (consider this the SCOTUS overturn clause)?

For me, that something happened two years ago when I had my first acknowledged heart attack and heart bypass, and was forced to after 64 years (at the time) admit I had to get in better shape, that meant (initially) a cluster of sessions of cardiac rehabilitation, followed by joining a gym.

For the record, I have learned to love working out, getting the blood flowing, attempting to create myself a six pack, to maybe feel young again. Unfortunately, while I love working out, some of my fellow "athletes" fall under the douchebag category.

Without saying where I go, I'll just call it "World Healthy," (I don't want

to get sued) The equipment is top notch, in fine working order, clean and sterile, and the staff has always been very helpful. Unfortunately, certain members there fall into what I call three different groups. In fairness, these groups seem evenly divided.

There are people like me, who love working out and enjoy it without the use and/or need of anabolic steroids. We go slow and steady, and if we don't feel up to a full workout then we can do the best we can. The only goal we have is to get and stay healthy. We're not there to show off, or brag, or flex. We just feel good by feeling good.

Then there are people at the opposite end of the spectrum, the troglodyte, the neanderthal, the Hans and Franz rolled up into one massive bulk of muscle. They have so many popping up veins they model what you saw in middle school science class. Their toenails have muscles. They can lift a dumbbell with their tongue. I don't mind these one-chromosome lacking cretins as long as they stay away from me.

The third group is kind of a combination of the two. These are the people who kind of want to get in a workout, but they are more social. They go to the gym because it's the thing to do, but if they can chat with their besties (or who they think are their besties), that works. This is why I wear my earbuds every time I am at the gym, whether I am listening to something or not. It's my way of saying "stay the f*** away from me."

Now, I live by my phone, so much

my wife keeps looking for a 12-step program for me, but when I am at the gym, I use it only to listen to music, or the news. Not with some of these people. I can't tell you how many people I see get on a piece of equipment, do maybe five to ten reps, then jump on the phone to document their "progress," or see who tagged them online, or take pictures of their body parts that look more like "before" and not "after" pictures. While I don't really care what they do on their phones, they stay seated on the damned piece

of equipment for like 15 minutes at a time, holding up the use of said equipment, which is paid for, by someone who wants to use the equipment, like me.

Bottom line, a health emergency forced me to do something I haven't done since high school, take care of myself. I'd like to thank my heart doctor for making sure I could finally accomplish that goal.

Be hearing you



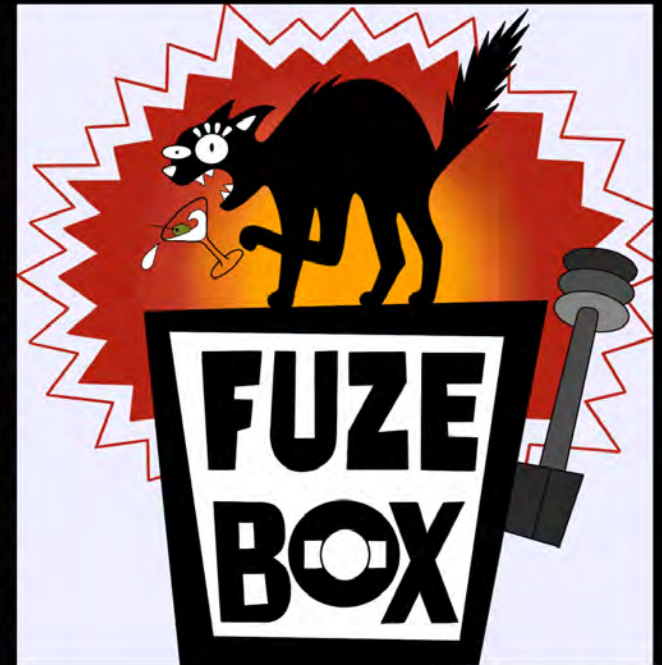
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8/5 Hex (speakeasy) Goth/ Industrial DJ 8pm
8/6 Trauma School Dropouts Reunion Show 7pm
8/11 Outta Time Presents 7pm
8/13 Playmates w/ Scottie Stratton 10pm
8/18 Smoked Out Tour w/ Filth 7pm
8/19 Resist Goth/Industrial DJ 9pm
8/20 Cretin Hop 10 year Anniversary 8pm
8/22 Ogbert the Nerd 7pm
8/25 Outta Time Presents 7pm
8/26 Strange House 7pm

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