

# MARRIED LIFE

QUARTERLY

AUTUMN 2010



607 Midgard Rd Columbus Ohio 43202

# HOME IMPROVEMENT

Wherein we work on projects around the house and listen to records

Starting Memorial Day weekend, Jen and I began a complete renovation of our only bathroom. After saving up tax returns, we each took a week off of work to try and get it done with minimum disruption to our daily routines.

Old bathroom and Guttled bathroom:



In general, I'm a bit reluctant to replace anything serviceable that is simply old and ugly. UPDATING is what it's called by the evil culture of home ownership. In this case though, the plastic tub surround was cracked in several places, and water was getting back behind it. Pink plastic tiles were actually falling off of the wall, and so was the light fixture. The work clearly needed to be done, so we decided to rip everything out, and start from scratch. The walls came down and were replaced by cement board and tile as was the water damaged vinyl floor. We got rid of the old cast iron tub we never used (the hard way, by breaking it into a hundred pieces with a sledgehammer), and replaced it with a roomier shower.

Anyway, after countless "learning experiences", new tools bought and mis-used, plenty of peeing in a bucket and showering at friend's houses (Thanks Sally and Nate and Candice!), lots of unpaid visits from friends who actually know what they're doing (big thanks to Josh from FTS and Aaron Klamut as well as Patrick Weber and Isaac McCain) and another holiday weekend (4<sup>th</sup> of July) come and gone, I present: our new bathroom:



**Octis / Ocrilim 7"** - Nicolas gave me this one for my birthday. Mick Barr of Orthreilm solo project. Like Asberger's Syndrome rendered in sound. Not sure which is the bandname, maybe it is both or maybe two different bands. Same sort of inimitable brutal tech guitar style which is Mick Barr's contribution to the instrumental history, but with electronic driller drums. Play this at 45rpm, it's especially ridiculous sounding. The songs are all around twenty seconds long, which is annoying on the LP's, but sort of works great in this format, and they all start with this strange synth-y guitar tone that rings out, it reminds me of a ringing bell, and functions like a ritual call for the FREAK OUT that follows. Let's face it, there is nothing/ and never has been nothing that sounds quite like this stuff before and it's WEIRD.

**"Apocalypse Now" soundtrack (2LP)** - Matt Bush gave me this perfect Morning music, and fucked dbl LP. There was a time when I watched this movie every few months. Had a VHS copy of it, and even read Heart of Darkness but I never really paid attention to the soundtrack, which is mostly my man Bernard Krause's electronic MOOG meditations! What? Or awesome rock songs made way more freaky by the constant monologues over the top of them from the movie. I don't get people who don't dig The Doors. Without the visuals though, the monologue recordings are either creepy genius sort of things, or really just a waste of space on these records.

**William Bolcom / William Albright – "New Music for Organ"** – Awesome LP on Nonesuch that I picked up at Ron House's dollar record sale 2010 (this year I bought thirty records). Two sides, two different SATANIC church organ compositions from two guys named William from 1967. The original kill yer parents, carve a pentagram in your skin LP, except made and played by avant garde composer types trying to expand the repertoire for organ. The fact that these two crawled into churches in the late sixties and recorded this stuff (with a little help from killer tape sounds on the piece Black Host) is amazing. The liners are pretty hilarious talking about black magic, witch orgies, etc.

**King Snake Roost – "Things That Play Themselves"** – In some issue I reviewed a KSR LP saying that the Birthday Party (from Australia) influenced Scratch Acid (from Texas) who in turn influenced King Snake Roost (from Australia) and brought it full

circle, but on this album there's another Texan influence at work, and that's the Butthole Surfers. Even more deranged and flat out weird than the first KSR record. I really like these guys a lot, and think they have got to be one of the most underrated bands in the whole AmRep constellation.

**Bells on Hi Fi – “Carillon at the 1962 Seattle World’s Fair”** – Found this one sitting on top of a pile of thousands of records in a gigantic warehouse in Western Massachusetts, and someone told me to take it, so I did. I used to have a copy of this, but I gave it away to a stranger when I thought I needed to pare down. The guy I gave it to came up to me at a party about a year later, and said: “Hey man, you’re that guy who gave me that Carillon LP. That’s one of my favorite records!” I was like, what? Since I’d given away the record, I’d discovered Carillons, which are these awesome huge bell towers that are played by a keyboard attached to all of the bells. The first ones were in the Flemish part of Belgium / the Netherlands, but many were built in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the US. There are many in churches, and public parks. Not all bell towers are carillons. These are the largest instruments in the world. They’re architectural in scale. Anyway, the only way to play one is publically. The closest one is in Dayton, and they do (or used to at least) recitals on Sunday afternoons in the summer. It’s really cool, you are in this park, and then suddenly this huge tower seems to magically “turn on” and releases this very beautiful delicate bell music. Anyway, this record is like that. I also have some Carillon music on cassette. I have heard of the existence of a few kind of far out carillon compositions (it’s easy to imagine), but have never actually heard any. A lot of this stuff is classical music and traditionals transcribed for the instrument. They usually do like a Beatles song or something when you go to Dayton.

**Soundtrack from “the American Dreamer”** – Speaking of Dayton, at that huge flea market just north of Dayton, I once came across a copy of this record. The cover is a picture of Dennis Hopper (R.I.P.) wearing a drug rug poncho kind of thing, looking Manson, walking around with a M16. I’d never heard of the movie, but figured it was probably some sort of long lost 70’s movie about revolution or the Mansons or the dark side of the 60’s or something. I didn’t recognize the names on it, and at ten bucks, wasn’t sure whether I wanted it, so I passed. I came home, looked it up on the internet and apparently the movie is actually a documentary of Hopper editing *The Last Movie* and is full of drugs, groupies, guns, and excess. The music is mostly 70’s druggy loner country folk kind of stuff. I immediately knew I’d let something good slip me by. So I found this at Ron’s in a sleeve without a cover (the cover is amazing!) and bought it. Got it home and noticed that it was probably the most warped (as in physically) record I’d ever attempted to put on the turntable. No way anything on the first side would even play, a handful of tracks from the second side play, and they’re all good, but trying to listen to this thing is too much work, and now I’m on the hunt for another copy (with the cover!).

**Eagles – “One of Those Nights”** – I kind of think the Eagles rule. I never know Eagles songs though so I’ll be driving around, hear some great song that I recognize, and I’ll be like “who is this?”. Jen always looks at me, and is like, “are you fucking joking? It’s the Eagles...” This has a bunch of their hits, including “Lyn’ Eyes”, which I think is a great song.

**Gone – “Damage Control” 45** – Pretty awesome / terrible I guess. It’s weird to hear Greg Ginn doing his special brand of guitar shred over this kind of almost techno-y jazz music. I tried playing it at different speeds too, and no matter the speed it’s always awesome and terrible.

**TS Eliot “reading Poems and Choruses”** – TS Eliot rules, and here he is reading his own poems. So English sounding, so good.

**Ministry – “Burning Inside” 45** – Maybe the best Ministry song.

**Rick Wakeman – “Myths and Legends of King Arthur”** – Not sure why I buy things like this. The other solo Rick Wakeman album I have (Journey to the Center of the Earth with the London Philharmonic(?)) is garbage too. I guess it’s because they’re always in the dollar bin and I love the idea of the Yes keyboard player doing these ridiculous concept albums / literary adaptations even if they aren’t really any good. Also, maybe it’s because “Yes” has become one of my favorite bands of all time over the last few years and I just can’t get enough.

**Maths Balance Volumes – “Lower Forms”** – I think MBV has the distinction of being the greatest band that I ever missed live because I was wasted and talking to people in the other room while they played. This record is the proof. Sounds are coming from all over the PLACE. Let me list a few PLACES that this reminds me of: Subterranean sound chambers flooded with mud. Old houses with 30 rooms and no entrances / exits in any of them. Dormant factories that used to produce magnetic tape. The inside of a coffin. Etc. MBV do the sleepwalker stumble mumble tape mangle and it’s on par with Nyoukis’s best shit (Choco Monk has put out a few of their cd-rs in the UK...). LP fits right into what I like to think as probably my favorite genre, which is simply: WEIRD SOUND. There is some stuff on this that is surprisingly musical, like some singing and some nice violin scrapey-scrape but it’s mostly hair falling out drool sound. These guys moved from a small town in Minnesota to Toledo sometime after releasing this which extends the confusion a bit closer to home. Great record. Awesome paste on album art screams ltd to 100 copies, but I have seen this around a bit. I picked mine up in NYC while Sword Heaven was on tour. [EDIT: finally saw this band, they ruled, and I asked about this record, scum stats: 200 copies]

**Sightings – “Arrived in Gold”** – Speaking of NYC, Sightings is in my top 10 favorite bands, and I own most of their discography. This is my favorite sounding Sightings record, and the only one I ever illegally downLOADED. When I saw it at Academy in Brooklyn in the used bin I had to pick it up, which also maybe makes this the only album I’ve ever bought that I downloaded first.

Anyway, this record is a really great distillation of the Sightings sound. I know some people who prefer the more blown out sound of the earlier material (Mark Morgan himself says that his favorite is the one that they put out right before this: Absolutes, and yes, that one is also REALLY great), but I think they mixed this one just right. Still sounds super gnarly, but you can hear some of the amazing things the drummer, Jonathan Lockie, is doing. Sightings are like one of those circular pie charts with equal triangular sections, perfect power trio, and all of them are doing really unique things instrumentally. Hell, you know that old legend about how Eddie Van Halen would turn his back when he would do solos so no one could see how he was doing it, well, Mark Morgan should do the noise equivalent and hide his pedals to keep the most instantly recognizable guitar tone since Steve Albini a SECRET. Don’t get me started on Richard’s bass playing either because every time I think the key to Sightings is they have the best drummer on the planet, and the most interesting guitar work, I realize it’s all being held down by the bass playing, dubby, punk, formless, out there. So good. I’m a fan of balance and economy and these guys have it and I’m also a fan of total obliteration, and somehow this band does that too. They’re like a black hole.

Almost every song on Arrived in Gold is a heavy banger (not sure about the uh, kind of groovy sounding one), even the more subtle, sparse and abstract ones. This record came out around the time that I decided Sightings was the best live band I'd ever seen, when they would endlessly expand songs that were already like 10 minutes long, simultaneously hypnotizing and pulverizing, and every person you'd look at would be standing there, mouth hanging open, and if you made eye contact, they would simply give you the "can you fucking believe this???" look. Every element perfectly synched. An inspiration. And the album cover of "Arrived In Gold" is their best album cover...I can't believe I've been settling for a crappy burned cd-r all these years.

**Jeff Rehlund - "Gangnum Basement"** - Wild mash up of feedback, yelling, layered distorted field recordings on North Carolina label, Hot Releases. All sounds recorded in Korea a few years ago, some of it sounds like pavement being drilled inside a casino. Some of it was probably recorded at various Korean temples??? Lots of gongs, chanting, crowd noises, etc. Classical music radio broadcast recordings that overlap each other. The whole thing has the feel of someone waving a microphone around wildly and hitting record occasionally which is an aesthetic I can get fully behind. Mechanized and degraded. Got this from Ryan Boyzone at the second Voice of the Valley with a few other (at the time) recent Hot Releases including the legit LP reissue of Maurizio Bianchi's "Armagedon" and that weird Andrea Stroud "Killer Workout" cassette.

**Circuits Des Yeux - "Sirenum"** - Private midwest rituals put to cassette by a young lady from Indiana. Pressed to LP by the old(?) guy(s) at De Stijl in Minnesota. I actually haven't listened to this late at night, but I have listened to it by myself, and I'm thinking this is late night, by yourself music (think Jandek or... Neil Young). Backwards vocals, horror movie pianos, gutter noises, found clanks, squeaks, etc. Thick wordless keening. A floor tom. Basic guitar strum. Tape hiss. Those are the elements of the songs. Great album cover. I think I might have seen her play her first show, and it was very awkward stuff.





Artwork via Nicolas MURER

**STARE CASE / MATHS BALANCE VOLUME / DOG LADY  
/ STEVE KENNY / WASTELAND JEWELL UNIT  
THURSDAY JUNE 24<sup>th</sup> at SKYLAB**



Good turn out for this show, although it went way too late for me (Stare Case was still playing when I left around 1:15am). I was lucky and didn't have to go into work at the usual time the next day, or else I would have missed the last two or three bands I guess. There was a good twenty to thirty minute gap between each of the 5 bands. This is always annoying for those of us who work early, and often, the longer the shows go at Skylab, the smaller the crowd gets, but people kept coming late, and it seemed like plenty were raging, and into the bands, so what do I know?

**WASTELAND JEWELL UNIT:** Real good Cinci/ Columbus "noise nerd collab". Wild and squirming free noise drum, sax, clarinet group sound goop. As Nicolas said, what you might expect from these three and very good!

**STEVE KENNY:** Too long synth drone stuff. In the "guy with synth, holding a note, turning some knobs..." genre. I was bored.

**DOG LADY:** Kind of a shaky start with the vocal samples, not sure what the best way to incorporate that is but morphed into pretty ominous sounding basement rattle noise. I was pretty captivated by the end.

**MATHS BALANCE VOLUME:** Fantastic cassette tape duo from Toledo. Two dudes, 4 practice amps, kind of bored / wasted vibe to the "performance" (dudes change tapes occasionally and mix the results). It's an alchemical cauldron boil of sounds bubbling up from the basement slab. Layered, but not so thick as to not be able to pick through the wreckage a bit.

**STARE CASE:** John Olson and Nate Young in a new unit of the seemingly endless side projects of Wolf Eyes. This one has an awesome beatnik spoken word / open mic night vibe. Nate Young plays Bass guitar, kind of clean and jazzy sounding, actually playing sparse melodies occasionally, but super slow, slower even than the chopped and screwed mixes they were DJing between every band with Olson accenting Nate's mumbled confession vocals with his homemade reed playing in the extended style. Both of them with mixers adding hot and sticky ambience to the fog. I guess by open mic night vibe I mean if claustrophobic table top pedal mixer noise was part of the usual spoken word/ bongo equation. Not real loud. This was closest to a combination of the solo Hatred (?) set I saw Nate Young do a while back when he toured with Olson doing his solo Spykes set. Both of those were super minimal. This was a nice mix of the two. The first words I understood from Nate Young were: "FUUUUUCKKKKK OFFFFFFFFF". I thought it was great.

## OVERLOOKED on LOAD RECORDS by Ben McOsker



Record labels are rarely started to release all the records that eventually do come out. Load Records as a label started in 1993 to put out some friend's music. Just do a 7". How it happened that 130 LP's, CD's, DVD's, and 7" s have come out shocks me sometimes. I sometimes look at it as a way to put fucked up music into Best Buy. I mean... before everything was available with a click, finding music off the beaten path was tough for losers living in secondary markets, i.e. small towns.

LOAD is a label I run with my wife, Laura Mullen.

The early years of Load are likely associated in many people's mind with a local focus on the Fort Thunder band scene. This is only partially true as the label predated that whole scene by a few years and came much more out of the tradition of bands from Providence like Six Finger Satellite, Dungbeetle and Von Ryan's Express. It was the release of LOAD 002, Von Ryan Express's "Up on the Block" 7" EP that really provided the building blocks for the label. This band mixed a frothy Detroit energy with some real between-station strangeness. The band released a few other things but most importantly morphed into the Hydrogen Terrors, who had two releases on Load. The Hydrogen Terrors, the Scissor Girls S-T-A-T-I-C-L-A-N-D 10" and Six Finger Satellite's "Clone Theory" 12" were the label's attempt to focus on something more than the Soul Asylum clones, twee pop, and other indie rock that was so much a part of the mid 90's for so many.

Not all the releases along the way might be familiar to everyone, so this wrap up should be helpful in making a road map.

**Astoveboat**  
*New Bedford*  
LOAD 017 CD  
(1997)

I received a tape of this two piece band and was instantly excited. Lineup was Dale Cunningham (ex-Glazed Baby) and Tom Coucci (Baylie's Band). Tom played bass through a massive SVT stack and Dale played a 55 gallon drum and a washing machine tank. All of their songs concerned Herman Melville's 1851 novel "Moby Dick" through the prism of heroin ridden MA seaside port, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Plans were immediately made to record the band at Six Finger Satellite's new studio, the Parlour. John MacLean, aka Juan MacLean handled much of the production. A Morse code pulse hums through much of the record. Some of the tracks were actually miked through a PA in the middle of a parking lot in the rain. The record was tracked onto 2 inch tape for extra wallop. Echoes of bands such as Slug and early Swans is definitely present, though the band very much has its own thing going. The band toured the Mid-West extensively, and did well in Kansas City, MO, Lawrence, KS and Chicago.

**Jon von Ryan**

*Organs Vs. Furniture*

Load 013 CD

Jay is the singer/moog operator for Six Finger Satellite. He passed along a tape of his brother's 4 track material. Jay used to have a place on Angell Street in Providence, RI. I used to go over there quite a bit and hang out. Jay would play a lot of 4 track material from sessions from others such as Guy Benoit, John MacLean, and his brother John Ryan. A lot of John Ryan's stuff was done up in his family's garage in Cumberland, RI. A photographer was hired to follow John around the northern town of Woonsocket, RI with his portable organ. These pictures and other photos of John form the layout of the CD. The cover of the release has John recording the record amidst guns, jars of cleaning solution, and sporting equipment at the Ryan family compound.

The release is a total downer but with tons of attitude and tape hiss. I was unsure how to promote this record

**Olneyville Sound System**

*What is True, What is False*

LOAD 037 LP

Another Project involving Dan St. Jacques and Jon Ryan. Adam Autry from the Golden Touch 7" (Load 004) is drumming. This record documents a blues soaked descent into mono browed, cross eyed riffs run straight into the soil. It really is just relentless caveman rock telling the tales of prostitution, cars with loud radios, immigration and third person strangers. The band did some touring around the release of the record but really has remained a secret indigenous to the RI area.

**Forcefield**

*Roggabogga*

LOAD038 CD

A completely alien document of the Forcefield troop's trip to the Whitney Biennial and back. Grabbing sounds from unsuccessful cultural transplantations, broken drum machines and knitwear, this release is not so much a document as a snapshot of a time and place. This is the end of the old Providence, Fort Thunder, etc. – and the beginning of the move to a more decentralized place. While for many Providence is going to be associated with masked bands, and much of the foppery that was to become a Williamsburg punch line to the art rock joke, this release is a very convincing and earnest attempt to put forth alternate reality as an attainable goal. Disagree if you will,

but you likely missed out on the Lightning Bolt / Forcefield 1997 tour of the United States. Seeing lonely aliens bark foghorn sounds into empty parking garages was not the way of the walk then, and came across as something a little bit more of a middle finger.

Features an elaborate booklet for home perusal.

**Necronomicon**

*s/t*

LOAD 058 CD

Three piece Providence band (two guitars and drums) that is a serious piece of molten metal. Taking cues from stuff like Nuclear Assault, this raises the bar with its psychic string abuse. Astounding technical and totally instrumental. Features grim metallic art from the day after. Toured the entire country of the United States. Noxagt played a number of shows with them. In a just world this band would be playing as Fuzak from every bank machine worldwide.

**Metalux**

*Waiting for Armadillo*

Load 060 LP/CD

Got this as a demo in the mail with no explanation. While I knew Jenny and Carbon from Bride of No No, this record came across as a chillier beast entirely. Sounds like a more lady-like take on something like Crutchfield's Dark Day project with a little bit more in the guitar department. Entirely recommended.

**Burmese**

*Men*

Load 064 LP/CD

SF, Bay area dirges bringing some real adult topics to the table. The band was recorded on this record by Weasel Walter and achieves some real depressing heights. While on the surface this may look like shock rock, it is in fact a laserbeam pointed at dickhead attitudes using sledgehammer repetition and pummel.

The band toured with the Hospitals on this record. I'm not sure how this was received elsewhere but the live shows were amazing. Not depressing musically, just very realistic and heavy.

**Monotract**

*Trueno Oscuro*

LOAD 106 LP/CD

After the Ecstatic Peace release, *xprmntl lvr*, I was very curious to see what they could do as a band in a studio. This release is an otherworldly scrape that takes Nancy Garcia's wonderful airlock croon to some new heights. While the band split up soon after this was released, this serves as a pretty awesome tombstone to all they did. It

really combines Carlos Giffoni's synth chops with Nancy's guitar shreddery into something that's really hard to explain. Roger Rimada's drums really are recorded well.

At this point I was really starting to wonder why Load is putting all these noisy bands in the studio. Am I the label that does this? I guess I settled on the fact that yes, Load was that label.

### **Vampire Can't**

*Key Cutter*

Load 073 LP/CD

While both Vampire Belt CD-R's were excellent post Lightning Bolt styled string/tub froth pots, I was really excited to see them collaborating with Jessica Rylan. Plans were made to put them all in a studio here in Rhode Island. Sure as shit, Record was hit and it was pressed up. It's a real hi-fi affair for something that is a really busy mix of homemade synths, treated guitar (badly treated) and a small drum kit. Bill Nace and Chris Corsano (Vampire Belt) have a strange communication that must be in the microwave frequencies as it really boils burritos for several blocks when it takes off. Jessica Rylan forces the more rockulist tendencies of Vampire Belt to sit idling while she gurgles and snorts her contraptions to full levitation modes. Beautiful cover art by Mat Brinkman. Pressed at RTI and mastered by Peerless.

### **Drunkdriver**

*s/t*

LOAD 128 LP/CD

Never actually released... so I guess it's not technically on Load. Rape allegations against the drummer eventually broke the band up and made release of this record an unwinnable situation. I wish this could have been more of a learning experience for me from the beginning, but Load made some poor judgments that should have been seen from the beginning. Midway through production of the record I had heard about the allegations, and followed up on them... CD's had been made at this point. I did not act fast enough or take these allegations as seriously as I should have. Ultimately the record was withdrawn.

All of this said, the record is an undeniable vortex of negative power. I wish all involved in this project well. 50 test pressing made with paste-over Stoughton covers, actual release labels, and inserts – shrink wrapped for your protection.



## Burning Star Core:



I've seen C. Spencer Yeh's **Burning Star Core** in about as many different solo/duo/trio/quartet/whatever formations as you can imagine, and have never once been disappointed. I contacted\* everyone who has ever played with Spencer and asked them the following questions:

- 1) How long/ often did you play in BxC, and what were the circumstances?
- 2) Please tell me about the live shows / recordings you played with BxC?
- 3) What is your favorite BxC release?
- 4) Please tell us something about Spencer Yeh?

### Jeremy Lesniak

- 1) Sporadically from 2000 til the present. Live shows playing percussion, drums, water bowls, laptop, etc. also, improved recordings .
- 2) One of my favorites shows was opening for Deerhoof in Akron Ohio. They were really nice, cool people and it was a awesome show. Also, many shows in Chicago and Columbus Ohio, local dungeons as well. Spencer is always recording, everything he does is captured on tape and re-edited and made into amazing records that you're like "is that really me on there?"
- 3) There's many, but *Mes Soldats Stupides* is my favorite. Close second would be *Challenger*.

4) Spencer has an extreme insect and nature phobia . We bond on our distaste for germs and bugs. Spencer is also a fantastic cook and lover of good food. His knowledge of obscure film and music is limitless. He should be a professor of music and film. His taste is sometimes surprising. He celebrates the good and bad in all music and film. Everything from Show Girls to R. Kelly (trapped in the closet), guilty pleasures he surely has you beat.

### **John Rich**

1) “Maybe like 2000-2001, I played with Jeremy and Spencer, and played prepared guitar. Jeremy played percussion, objects, and Spencer played violin and voice. I think that what the general credits, always. Then I went to college.”

2) “After that initial period, John [Lorenz]and I played a fest with him as like, default dudes. That was the Nashville Big Ears fest, and Trevor and Robert couldn’t make it, so I think we were nearby, and he was like: “Hey, you guys wanna play?” So I think it was just like two default people, like two other people who he knew. We have done collaborations with him as Wasteland Jazz Unit and Spencer Yeh. I’m on “background audience sound and applause”, there’s a split we did with Coltrane Motion, I don’t know what that was, I don’t have it. I’m on something on that Cenotaph compilation, Mes Soldats Stupides, I’m on disc 2.”

3) “What did other people say just out of curiosity? It’s hard, because there are ones that fit different moods, because it’s pretty diverse, you know.” \*\*

4) “He totally fired me at the Avantronics Fest [*editor: here in Columbus in 2001*], I was in school up in Chicago and the morning I was getting ready to go get on the bus I sliced my hand on the marquee lights in my dorm room and I called him to be like “ahh dude, I just fucked up my hand” like when I got back from the hospital I was getting my gear together to play and my roommate was cleaning up the sprays of blood that were all over the bathroom, and I was like getting ready to go and my roommate was like: you can’t go anywhere! But I was totally going to, so I called Spencer and he was like: “Man, you’re fuckin’ fired, dude!” He was like: “No More”. But then actually, I think I was home for some break, and we played a gig, and then afterward he was like: “Yea man you’re fucking fired!” and before I left again for school, he came in to where I worked and was like: “Dude, you’re fuckin’ fired”. I mean he just kept firing me. All he did was fucking fire me. On the way back from Knoxville once, he had John [Lorenz] fire me! What kind of dude just can’t fire another dude, after he’s already fired him like 4 times...like...the heart’s not there.”

### **Trevor Tremaine**

1) From 2003 to 2009, I was the drummer/percussionist for Burning Star Core. The "Core" (ha ha ha) lineup for this period was a trio: myself, Robert Beatty on electronics, and Spencer doing violin/voice/stuff. Sometimes Mike Shiflet rounded this out with more electronics, and, a couple

times, bass. There were other guests in there... notably Jeremy Lesniak and my wife Sara O'Keefe. We played a bunch of gigs and recorded profusely.

2) Lots of gigs. The most recent was really strange. It was a quintet... us plus Sara and Shiflet. At No Fun Fest at the Knitting Factory. Generally it was improv, with Spencer giving us some guidelines at the beginning which we would immediately throw out. We did some tunes, too, and at least one cover. I'm on a bunch of recordings. Probably more than I'm even aware of. Some of them I managed to not completely ruin.

3) *Amelia* is a total classic. *Challenger* rules too. Of the ones I appear on, maybe *Operator Dead: Post Abandoned*. It's a tough call, though, 'cuz *Very Heart of the World* is great through and through as well. Of his non BXC projects, I highly recommend *White Noise 2*.

4) I've also never seen him use a blanket when he sleeps. He uses his coat.

### **Robert Beatty**

1) I've been playing with Spencer since 2003. Hair Police had played a lot of shows with Spencer's old band Death Beam and he was looking to get a BxC live band going again, so he asked me and Trevor to play with him.

2) The first few times it was usually a trio with me on electronics, Trevor on percussion and Spencer on violin and vocals. After that it turned into a quartet lineup with Mike Shiflet added and then various other configurations with others for live shows and recordings. I've done two tours with BXC being a duo of just Spencer and I. One was on the west coast in 2004 and one last year in the midwest. Those were probably some of my favorite shows I've ever played with Spencer. We're planning another duo tour for later this year.

I've played on most of the major BxC releases that aren't just Spencer. I also played on the Hototogisu and Comets on Fire collaborations.

3) As far as ones that I play on, *The Very Heart of the World* is my favorite, then probably "*Operator Dead, Post Abandoned*". I think my favorites that I'm not on are "*Inside the Shadow*" and "*Challenger*", although I play jaw harp on one track on *Challenger* and I did the artwork.

4) He is one of the funniest people I have ever met. I'm always surprised when people who haven't met him think he's going to be super serious. I really think he should be making fucked up comedy instead of fucked up music. Hopefully he'll figure out how to combine the two sooner or later.

### **Mike Shiflet**

1) Mostly in 2004-2005, infrequently since. Circumstances were a bit

different each time, but most of the time involved amplified boxes of junk and my laptop feeding back and/or droning. Playing bass at No Fun '08 was memorable as well.

2) The shows I remember the best are the ones opening for Comets on Fire (Yeh/Beatty/Shiflet/Tremaine) in Columbus and Louisville and the tour up to Victoriaville (Yeh/Beatty/Shiflet). Completely generalizing: Robert's electronics gurgled, mine droned, and Spencer could work the violin into either state or find a balance between the two.

The major recordings I appear on are *Operator Dead...*, *The Very Heart of the World*, *The BXC/Yellow Swans collab LP*, and the new *Papercuts Theater*. I'm also on several of the tour/live documentation tape releases and probably a few others from mid-decade.

3) I want to say *Operator Dead... Post Abandoned* because it is an absolute favorite in my personal discography, but if am to be 100% honest, I think *Challenger* is slightly better.

4) I used to be convinced he was some kind of alien or Aztec god. Then I saw what the C. stands for and I became even more convinced. Still unsure as to which though.

### **Sarah O'Keefe**

1) Two or three times, the most memorable being No Fun at the Knitting Factory in 08.

2) I remember recording a piece for *The Very Heart of the World* where Spencer said to play like the sound of the Titanic sinking. Usually Spencer comes up with an idea or a sound and says "play like this," and I do it. We played at Boomslang Fest in Lexington with Jon Lorenz from Wasteland Jazz Unit, which was a last minute thing, no preparation. We just jammed out. That was the last gig.

3) *Challenger*.

4) He was staying with us one night, and I woke up to him standing in the doorway of our bedroom flicking a lighter. I woke Trevor up because I was freaked out and Spencer went and laid back down on the sofa. He was mumbling something. The next day he told me he dreamed he was in a cave or something, and he apologized.

### **Jon Lorenz**

1) I've played in BxC a few times since early last year (09). Once for last year's Big Ears Fest in Knoxville which is the only time I have played in BxC for a full set, with me on sax and John Rich on prepared gtr. Once at Boomslang in Lexington with myself and Sara O' Keefe on horns. The rest were during the Wasteland Jazz

Unit/ BxC tour last April. I joined in with Spencer and Robert Beatty for the "cover" song, which was the Conrad/Faust jam.

2) I don't think I'm on any BxC recordings. As far as live shows, I mentioned most above but I'll elaborate on the Lexington gig. Spencer asked me and Sara to jam on something for his set. He told me it would be similar to the Conrad/Faust thing which has a steady slow beat throughout. When Spencer started up the beat for this jam it was a UB40 sample or something. Total dance beat unlike the Conrad/Faust thing. Ended up being a total gnarly, post punk sounding jam. Kinda caught me off guard. Ruled though!

3) Probably would be *Very Heart of the World*. It was the first BxC record I heard once I moved down to Cincinnati for college and started exploring the music scene and what not. Actually the first song I heard was the "Christmas Time" song which dates back to 1996 or 97. It's a lo-fi indie pop song so it totally threw me for a loop. Months later I finally heard *Very Heart of the World*. For the longest time after hearing *Very Heart of the World* I thought that the "Christmas Time" song was actually something labeled wrong on the internet or was a different Burning Star Core. I totally forgot about that song until I heard the "*Definitive Party Atmospher*" Cd-r again years later.

4) He tells the weirdest jokes.

\* All interviews done via email except John Rich which was done at a show in Columbus and facilitated and recorded by John Lorenz. Edited for clarity.

\*\* I actually "interviewed" John Rich twice for this (both times facilitated and recorded by John Lorenz) but the first time, I forgot all the questions except for the favorite release one, and the whole "interview" is just me and John Rich talking about our favorite BxC records.



**TUSCO TERROR**  
**DISCOGRAPHY SELF REFLECTION**  
**By NATHAN and PAPA BEN**



**2003**

**-split w/Nautical Almanac/c60/no label**

*Nathan*-Papa and I made this tape in the summertime. We were living in Kent Ohio... I think it's me playing drums and Papa playing guitar... We played some of our very first shows with Nautical Almanac and we were so excited about their band... We used different parts of some recordings from the two Ohio shows we played with them... We printed the cases/inserts in the Kent State printmaking studio.... It was just white paper screen printed to look like ruled notebook paper... Carly Ptak helped us fold the paper cases... we used a typewriter to write the info onto the covers. Half of them say "Spookwolf 4" which was the original name of the band (a sequel to 3 movies we all made in high school)... I haven't listened to it in a while but last time I did I thought it was pretty awful... and really long.. nautical stuff is fucking insane though. really

*Papa*- I vaguely remember recording this. We were trying to make good use of everything in our basement. I should have a copy of this somewhere but I haven't listened to it since shortly after it was recorded but I can't imagine that it would be very good. It was thrown together pretty quickly between to two shows with Nautical Almanac and I think it was mostly to have something present them.

**2004**

**-Live New Years Day/c60/King Toot (kt02)**

*Nathan*-An early show from a basement in Kent. Doesn't sound much like the majority of our tapes... lots of percussion and vocals. The band was Weber, Talons, Papa and me.

*Papa*- This was a personal favorite recording of mine for a while. I'm not sure what I would think if I heard it now. Lots of low end, manic screaming and tape distortion. Everyone was shitfaced. Everyone got destroyed by flying drums and

cymbals. We wore armbands back then because no one respected us and we didn't give a fuck. Not that much has changed. The B side is cut up material that we did in our basement in Kent. It is mostly drums and circuit bent electronics. We did a lot of percussion in our early days up through the first tour.

**-Forest of no Relief/CDr/Heresee (hs23)**

*Nathan*-Nautical Almanac asked us to do a CDR for them and we felt so honored to make it cause we all think they are one of the most fucked up bands ever... So Papa and I recorded this in 3 days with the help of Talons and Weber. Weber played trumpet live and on all his early recordings,,other than that we were just using vocals and drums... Talons was using some tape loops he made. The different songs on this recording have some real obvious structures to them but its still totally warped and a lot of the sources of sound are totally distorted and indecipherable.

*Papa*- Nathan and I spent a number of very late nights putting this one together. Our tracks mostly consisted of one person making sound in some form and the other one manipulating it. The first cover we sent to Heresee was shot down. It was a drawing I did of a rabbit ghost king complete with crown and scepter on a napkin in ballpoint pen. It was pretty shitty. We sent them the new drawing of the eagles screaming "Tusco Terror" which Carly screen printed on watercolor paper. The Cdr has an early Tusco logo Nathan drew also screened by Carly. The interior sleeve is a true artifact... a piece of wallpaper torn straight from the walls of Tarantula Hill before the fire. The full image depicts a Victorian nature hunt.

**-Touch of the Downs/recycled cassettes/Tusco Embassy (14min)/(te02)**

*Nathan*-Made about 10 or so of these. Not unlike the Forest of no Relief recordings. Except this was the first thing we recorded after we moved to the Diamond Shiners in Akron. I don't have a copy of this. We gave most of them away to the people in our new neighborhood.

*Papa*- I always remembered having an uncomfortable feeling when I listened to it. This one lowered the bar. Hence the title. It was an exercise in unlearning shame.

**-Gold/c60/Exinfut, Tusco Embassy/(te01)**

*Nathan*-Doesn't say "Gold" on it anywhere, but it was printed in gold ink in Kent State's Printmaking Lab (my least favorite place at the time)... We recorded all the stuff on this tape in Diamond Shiners over about a year. Hard to believe that we could get anything done in that place cause all of us were beyond fucked up while we lived at that place... Its a good tape with a lot of different approaches to recording and improvising throughout. This recording has Papa, Weber, Talons, Natalie, Russco and me on it.

*Papa*- Initially this was conceived as an experimental disco album. I don't necessarily think we conveyed that very well or that we came up with a very good plan for executing this but it was on our mind at least to some degree during the recording process. I feel like this reached a new level for us at the time and set a precedent for the recordings to follow. Yes, this undoubtedly was the most "fucked up" period for the band. Contains the tracks Blood Dreadlock and Bodacious Load.

**-Tore Up (live)/3"CDr/King Toot (kt03)**

*Nathan*-Three live gigs in Akron and Kent played simultaneously. sounds pretty chaotic. performed by Weber, Papa Mike and me,, recorded by Russco. Released by some "bootleg" dude who also re-released the early comp of pre Tusco related bands called "Noxious Burning Urinary Tract Infection" in 1998.

*Papa*- I believe the Kent performance was a show we had set up with Indian Jewelry (they were NTX + Electric at the time). We opened that set with deadly swinging guitar action. One of the first and last sets we used guitars for a long time because they always became instruments of destruction and we always got beat up pretty badly. After one of the Akron performances, somebody shouts " That sucked soooo bad!" I responded with words and gestures. A section of it can be heard on the end of the recording. The cover art was tie-dye inspired.

**2005**

**-Tumor Eclipse/CDr/Durable Stimuli, Tusco Embassy (dust16, te05)**

*Nathan*-One of my favorite early ones. First edition (on Steve Dracula's label) was less than 20 and packaged in 5 1/2" floppy disks. The T/E version was issued in oversized spray painted foam chunks. There are 42 tracks on the CDr and only about 5 or 6 are more than 3 seconds long... pretty wierd bad trip vibes and odd ball harsh noise crazy.

*Papa*- Yeah, I've always been proud of this one. I think everyone feel the same about this recording. Probably the most ridiculous recording session ever. Lots of throwing gear down stairs. Everyone was going berzerker full panic mode. Aaron Dilloway later reviewed it as having "total disregard for anything." We have always been really proud of that statement and amazed at how much it captured the spirit of that release. Shame was no longer an achievable emotion.

**-split w/Heart2heart & Leslie Keffer/CDr/(tour only, no label)**

*Nathan*-Made about 30 or 40 of these for our first tour. our tracks were two tracks of unedited cruddy basement murk. The Leslie Keffer tracks are exceptional... I think one of her songs was a tribute to Glen Danzig.

**-Great Barrier/c40/Pink Triforce (no catalog number)**

*Nathan*-The first time a person we hadn't met before asked us to do a release. Brian Seger is a really nice dude. He explained our music as "Punk Rock Musique Concrete", which i always liked a lot.

**2006**

**-Feral Cousins/c32/Tusco Embassy (te04)**

*Nathan*-After I moved to Cleveland we decided to try and practice/record at my new place. I was kinda weary about pissing off my new roommates so we broke into an empty rental house a block away. We recorded both sides of the tape in about an hour in the "cottage house" and mixed, mastered, dubbed and printed the tape the same night. The first side was used as our side on the Emeralds split record on Ecstatic Peace two years later.

*Papa*-This has a very organic feel to it. We utilized a lot acoustic instruments when we recorded this one. The original cassette release had an amazing psychedelic

Tusco logo that Nathan drew. It was screened in two colors on brown paper. We tried to replicate this recording at a Cleveland show at the Church. It was part of a two day festival. We stacked all our amps ten feet high, and it came tumbling down within thirty seconds, disconnecting everything. Somehow we "performed" for another ten minutes. Russ and Nathan pushed an amp onto my head and while I was laying helplessly on stage, they pulled my pants down. For whatever reason we were the headlining act. It was not received well.

**-split with Emeralds/c24/Tusco Embassy (te08)**

**-Tore Up III (live)/CDr/Wagon (no catalog number)**

**-split w/Emeralds (christmas tape 06)/c40/Tusco Embassy, Wagon (te11)**

## 2007

**Bad Acid/one sided 7"/Tusco Embassy(te20)**

*Papa-* This was the first vinyl release for Tusco Embassy. It was completed at the same time as the Ecstatic peace split. This is one of the few recordings that every single member of Tusco Terror was present. We recorded it similar to Touch of the Downs and Tumor Eclipse. It was a celebration of absurdity. One side of the 7" was etched. The packaging was a screened Russco collage with Tusco Logo.

**Black/c60/Tusco Embassy/(te15)**

*Papa-*I like this one a lot. It could be considered a follow up to Gold. It was recorded and mixed in the same kind of process with a year worth of material and had a loose theme and featured similar packaging. This was our first release that was directly influenced by the abomination that is metal. Like Gold, I don't know how much of that is conveyed to the listener but that is what gives it its "Tusconess". It is something like forty tracks blurred together. Contains Dry Birth and Hell Wax.

**-self-titled/c30/Hanson (hn172)**

**Seventy Second Eternal/c20/Chondritic Sound (ch-203)**

*Papa-* These releases are not related in any way except that they were both, conceptually, experiments with fidelity. The idea was conceived while working on the Hanson tape. Perhaps, better expressed on Seventy Second Eternal. Each session was recorded simultaneously on multiple pieces of equipment which varied greatly in recording quality.

**-Yellow River/10" lathe/endleseries (TR#12)**

**-split w/Fossils/c60/5snakefork (5f21)**

**-Mapping a Burial/CDr/Cut Hands (ch026)**

One of a few recordings that I would categorize as super skronky. Four or Five guitar wall of scum.

**-Oozer/c24/Eye Wish Arts/(eye wish 21)**

## 2008

**-split with Emeralds (Vaporizer/Feral Cousins)/LP/Ecstatic Peace (e#105h)**

**-Psychedelic Narcosis/CDr/Arbor/(arbor65)**

**-Plumb Creak/c20/teenage whore (UNRELEASED)**

Recorded onto three or four tape decks in the middle of the woods in kent ohio.  
Sound of smashing dilapidated playground equipment

**-Golden Touch/c22/i just live here (cat#??)**

**-Tore Up II/c20/Mistake by the Lake (msl005)**

Cool live set from diamond shiners new years eve show. Tape starts with Alice Cooper's "18".. pretty excellent live moments on here.

**-split w/Birds of Delay/c40/Snakefork (UNRELEASED)**

*Nathan*-Never released but I remember this recording as being one of the best guitar heavy recordings that we made at the Embassy space in Cleveland. A standout moment is when Papa bursts into some weird riff and sings "Ride, Sally Ride".. the rest of it sounds like zz top on ketamine.

**-split w/Dying Live c20/ A Soundesign**

**-split w/Wether/c20/905 Tapes (905-1)**

*Nathan*-Loved the track we submitted for the first 905 tape but somehow the final mix was really quite and didn't really sound very good.

**-split w/Sword Heaven/c52/Teen Action (tar015)**

**-track "scumbagg" from It's Battery Acid You Slime/cassette comp/Heavy Psych (hp25)**

*Nathan*- I was having problems naming all the tracks we had been putting together at this time so I just used a few popular nicknames I earned during my residency in Cleveland.

**-track on Brains on Backwash/cassette comp/905 Tapes (905-31)**

**-split with Druids of Huge/Terror Tapes vol.41/Middle James Co. (mjc242)**

**-God Has Forgotten About This Place/8" Lathe/Tusco Embassy (te40)**

*Papa*-This was recorded over a weekend in the basement of a large house where Nathan was dog sitting. It is also one of the only sessions where a track was dedicated to each performer. There is something distinct about it. I think it has a subtlety not present on other recordings. Clear Vinyl. Great packaging design by Stoney.

**2009**

**-Scummer/LP/Tusco Embassy (te50)**

*Papa*-This is our only full length vinyl release. It contains material recorded from another session at the Hudson House. It also has a live performance from a junkyard just outside of our hometown. We performed in front of heavy duty construction equipment. Once again, it was directly influenced by the unlimited amount of metal we were listening to at the time, and of course, our always present themes, tormented psychedelia and impoverished lifestyles. We completely cleared the place out. A photo from the show is printed on the backside of the cover. The front depicts "the Scummer".

**SIGHTINGS / ENVENOMIST / UNHOLY 2 / HORRIBLE CREEPS**

April 21, 2010

Skylab

by Laura B



I missed these guys on their last several passes through our fair state. Why did I avoid them for so long? Appearing on bills with bands I'm "meh" on [I'm picky]? Laziness[who am I kidding? probably]? Well, for whatever reason, I just hadn't bothered, so finally catching the NYC trio on a spring night at Columbus art loft Skylab was fairly revelatory. Oh yeah ... and I'd also ignored their recorded catalog, which stretches back to 2002.

I had been promised, by very reliable sources, perfection, the best live band of the decade, etc. But I've been burned before, so now I only trust my own sweet ears and the brain between them. Minutes into their set, and lo: there they were, the best band of the decade, before my very eyes, me feeling foolish for not having given them the time of day before. Their appeal is pretty self-explanatory, their affiliation with Andrew W.K. immediately understandable: noise may have its merits, but sexiness isn't one of them. Perviness, sure; predatory eroticism, absolutely, but rarely capable of, you know, a *party*. **Sightings**, straddling as they do the line between noise solipsism and rock's orgiastic communalism, effortlessly blend the best of both, picking up where Throbbing Gristle left off and transposing TG's trapped-in-the-machine noise and flickering, disembodied vocals into a more rockist tongue. It's worth noting that it appears they create their destructive live

onslaught entirely via guitar/drum/bass, augmented by than an admittedly vast array of pedals, a few electronic drums and/or triggers, and some big fucking amps. You have to believe it's the airtight musical kismet they've achieved that accounts at least in part for the chest-compressing, lung-emptying, physical density of their sound.

"Now it's gonna get heavy," said singer Mark Morgan, as the room throbbled with a pantload-inducing bass heartbeat and they descended into "Pine & Tar," the opening track off their 6th and latest LP *City of Straw*. His performance--guitar riffs bent and groaning like a collapsing bridge, strangled-whisper vocals--was permeated with the wanton menace that is the hallmark of all that is good and holy in music. The crowd moved against me sweatily, having into congealed into a single organism with a single brain. I found out later that the band's name is also that of an *X Files* episode. Appropriate: they are indeed awe-inspiring in a *Close Encounters* way. "That's the soundtrack to one of my nightmares, mang!" enthused a cheerful fan, who looked like he'd wandered in after a shift in the restaurant next door, as they finished. "Like the end of a horror movie!"

**Horrible Creeps** started, while the house lights were still on. I usually have a fondness for dense, sludgy hardcore, but these guys--no. Not tonight. Although maybe it was just too loud, and I too damn old. They were stultifyingly loud, though.

\$kum-rock (pretty sure that's how you spell it) trio **Unholy 2**, who by now comprise 1/3 of 50% of all shows that happen in Columbus, have honestly never bored me live, despite their ubiquity. How Lutzko can maintain the patina of sleazy frontman 24-7 is beyond me, but here, on a Tuesday night, he didn't crack once as the band ground out their gory Am-Rep-style white-guy blues.

**Envenomist** is horror in slow-mo, one moment of frozen pain extended infinitely in every direction. I wish more people had been there to watch David Reed (who also performs as Luasa Raelon and Brittle Foundries), but it was down to me and 5 or 6 other people, stretched out on the floor and on benches, feeling the atmosphere change around us as he slowly assembled a three-dimensional cathedral of air and electricity in the dark.

This issue comes with a bonus cd:

Washington Beach Basement Blues put to tape by an unknown band and found in an alley by me about 5 years ago when I was making a "living" recycling scrap metal. Out of the 400 cassettes of early 80's radio talk shows I found behind some North Campus apartments, there were about 5 that I accidentally discovered had jams on them.

Really awesome psychedelic crud here. Great old man vocals. Check. Crappy drum machine rehearsal tapes. Check. Ugliest solos ever. Yeah. A entire zonked live set in front of an audience of like 5 friends. That's here too.

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