

PSYCH TRAIL

ISSUE
#8

Mix



PSYCH TRAIL MIX

Issue #8 – Chrome Special
Fall 2013

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ATTENTION

If you enjoy the content within, **PLEASE** consider donating. I spent a fair amount of money out of my own pocket in order to obtain some of the exclusives for this issue. Anything that you are able to would be great. \$5 plus shipping (\$3 shipping to the US, \$4 to Canada, \$7 to U.K., anywhere else please e-mail me for shipping price) gets you one of the **LIMITED EDITION COPIES WITH GLOSSY COLOR COVER**. The biggest publication of Chrome material to date, so if you're a fan, something like this might be worth having, I'd say **MUST** have! Send paypal to: psychtrailmix@yahoo.com or well-concealed cash (U.S. Dollars only please) to the address to the left in "contact information." If you are able to contribute more than that even, if you greatly enjoy this content and are financially able, **PLEASE** do so. Thanks very much for your support!

THANKS TO

Amanda Marley, Craig Smith, John Lambdin, Gary Spain, Helios Creed, Gary Mankin, Paul H. Williams, Jens Dornheim, Fabienne Shine, Dick Taylor, Isobel Sollenberger, Wayne Proctor, Tommy Grenas, Michael Manning, Oliver DiCicco, Mom & Dad, Mike Stax, Peter Niemann, PLUS all of the musicians/artists who have created the sounds that have inspired my writing for this zine!

This issue is dedicated to Kevin Kormylo who took his own life in January of 2013. Kevin was always a big supporter of Psych Trail Mix, and a HUGE Chrome fan, since the early days. I'm sure Kevin would have loved this 'Chrome Special' issue



Helios Creed & Kevin Kormylo
@ On Broadway in San Francisco, CA
Circa 1983

Cover design by Lulu Artwork!





YOU ARE HOLDING IN YOUR HANDS (OR PERHAPS READING ONLINE) THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE OF MY HUMBLE LITTLE FANZINE, PSYCH TRAIL MIX. DURING MY HIGH SCHOOL YEARS, I'D GRADUALLY BRANCHED OUT FROM OLD PUNK ROCK MUSIC INTO THE DEEPER, MORE IN-DEPTH, THREE-DIMENSIONAL, MIND EXPANDING REALMS OF PSYCHEDELIA. DELVING INTO 60'S PSYCH WAS QUITE THE TRIP. DUE TO ITS VAST WEBS OF BRANCHES, VERSIONS ETC. THAT THE PIONEERS LAID OUT AS THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE FUTURE OF PSYCH, WE'D ALSO BEEN

HEAVILY INTO A GROUP OF WILD, ACID-FRIED TEXANS NAMED THE BUTTHOLE SURFERS WHO WERE KNOWN FOR THEIR OFF-THE-WALL UNIQUE PSYCHEDELIC-ROCK WHICH OFTEN COMBINED SEVERAL THINGS; HUMOR, OFT-TIMES NIGHTMARISH LANDSCAPES, MEGAPHONE-SUNG LYRICS, DOUBLE TRIBAL DRUMMING, AND TOP-NOTCH PSYCHEDELIC GUITAR WORK. IT WOULDN'T BE UNTIL JUST AFTER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION HOWEVER, DURING THAT SUMMER THAT WE'D DISCOVER THE ORIGINATORS AND INFLUENCERS TO THOSE YOUNG BUTTHOLES.... THE PSYCH MUSIC OUR YOUNG SPONGE-LIKE MINDS HAD BEEN EXPOSED TO WAS ABOUT TO GET MUCH MORE STRANGE, INTERESTING, AND HEAVY. WE'D READ ONLINE ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS INFLUENCE OF THE BHS'S GIBBY HAYNES AND PAUL LEARY, EVEN THE NAME... IT WAS SIMPLE, YET IT HAD CLASS AND A BIT OF MYSTIQUE - <HROME. I WOULD FIND MY FIRST <HROME RELEASE IN THE ODDEST, MOST UNEXPECTED OF PLACES - THE MALL! YES, THE MUSIC STORE IN THE BIG

SHOPPING MALL ACTUALLY HAD THE <HROME "FLASHBACK" BEST OF RELEASE. I'D SPOTTED IT FIRST AS WE BROWSED THE SHELVES THAT AFTERNOON AND GRABBED IT LIKE I WAS GOING FOR THE FAST DRAW TESTING MY REFLEXES ON A TV GAME SHOW. MY BEST FRIEND LOOKED ON IN JEALOUSY AS HE'D SEEN WHAT I HAD IN MY HANDS.

I DROVE HOME AND IMMEDIATELY POPPED THE DISC IN AND LISTENED WITH INTENT AS THE SCREECHING BEGINNING SOUND OF "TV AS EYES" BEGAN. AT FIRST SOUNDING LIKE SOME UNIQUE TRASHY GARAGE MUSIC WITH FAR-OUT LYRICS - THE STRANGE PART AFTER THIS WAS CUT OUT DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS OF THE BEST-OF COMPILATION, BUT LATER ON WHEN I GOT THE FULL RECORD (HALF MACHINE LIP MOVES) I GOT TO HEAR THE SEGMENT NEAR THE END WHERE IT LAUNCHES INTO AN ABSTRACT DIVERSION OF THE ORIGINAL SOUND OF THE SONG AND INCLUDED "FOUND-SOUND" LIKE TV AND THINGS, VERY OTHERWORLDLY FOR SURE. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF THE MUSIC AT FIRST, HAVING HEARD NOTHING LIKE IT BEFORE (OR SINCE). THE MORE I LISTENS, THE MORE I LIKED IT. STILL TO THIS DAY THE STUFF AGES LIKE A FINE WINE. EVEN THE MYSTERIOUS NAMES "DAMON EDGE" AND ESPECIALLY THEIR PSYCHEDELIC GUITAR WIZARD "HELIOS CREED" PIQUED MY INTEREST AS I WALKED

THROUGH THE DOOR INTO THE "OTHER" WORLD OF THE MIGHTY <HROME. I WAS HOOKED. ALSO, AT THE TIME OF DISCOVERY, AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, I'D RECENTLY STARTED GETTING INTO THE SCI-FI WORKS OF AUTHOR PHILLIP K. DICK, AND <HROME MADE FOR QUITE THE COMBO AS FAR AS THE BACKING SOUNDTRACK WHILE READING DICK'S STRANGE NOVELS OF OTHER WORLDS/DIMENSIONS, PARANOID REALITIES, AND OF COURSE SPACE. I WAS

ABLE TO OBTAIN SOME AMAZING EXCLUSIVES FOR THIS BIG <HROME SPECIAL AND SPENT QUITE A FEW BUCKS OF MY OWN MONEY. SO PLEASE CHECK OUT THE INFO ABOUT HOW TO DONATE ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE IF YOU ENJOY THE <HROME CONTENT WITHIN! ASIDE FROM THE TREASURE-TROVE OF <HROME MATERIAL, THERE'S SOME OTHER TREATS IN THIS ISSUE OF PTM AS WELL; INTERVIEW WITH DICK TAYLOR FROM RHYTHM AND BLUES KINGS - THE PRETTY THINGS!!!! INTERVIEW WITH WAYNE PROCTOR OF 60'S GARAGE-PSYCH GREATS - WE THE PEOPLE. PSYCH GODDESS ISOBEL SOLLENBERGER FROM FUZZED-OUT PHILADELPHIA PSYCH-HEADS - BARDU POND!!!! PLUS MUCH MORE..... WITHOUT ANY FURTHER DETAILS, GET YOURSELF A CASE OF <CHROMOSOME DAMAGE BY READING ISSUE #8 OF PSYCH TRAIL MIX: <HROME SPECIAL!!!!



Helios Creed & Brent Marley (May 2013)



SHOW REVIEWS



Show: Bardo Pond/Major Stars

Venue: PhilaMoca

Date/Location: Philadelphia, PA, June 27, 2013

the opening band "Major Stars," but when they took the stage I surely wasn't disappointed! It would be a back to back show of bands featuring kick-ass women of rock! Major Stars, out of Boston, Massachusetts had a powerful sound, very snotty and punk, catchy songs, but also had a bit of a psychedelic edge to them as they went into some great sessions of jamming and just rocking out. They had not one, two, but THREE guitar players on stage; a lively redhead woman that you could tell was very much into it, a guy that had a sort of Gallagher haircut and ripped on guitar, he was a killer guitar player! Gallagher smashes watermelons, this dude smashes riffs and leads? Ahhh nevermind... And another guy that stood off to the side stage left working his axe. Their lead singer Hayley Thompson-King had a great stage presence, cool voice... She had lots of energy, commanding the mic as well as taking breaks while the guys jammed to sip on some cold PBR, keeping all very rock and roll this night in Philly where there were multiple warnings for TORNADOES by the way, so it was a good night to get out for a show... Hayley also picked up a tambourine at times during the set. Major Stars kicked MAJOR ARSE! Bardo Pond would be lighting up



this tiny space next with their sounds. This was a really cool little space to see Bardo Pond with their BIG powerful sound, and the sound was great here. The Gibbons brothers wall of fuzzed guitar sounded great in the little room, and projections of images played behind the band as they played, adding to the atmosphere. Isobel was great and I don't know if it was the harmonics of the room, the effects Isobel was turning on and off with her feet, or the cocktail of things I'd had before the show, but I was hearing all sorts of searing sonic delight coming off of her vocals bouncing off the walls of the little art gallery space that hosted the night. They put on a great set as usual, even playing a newer song that will be on their upcoming album "Peace On Venus" in October, a mellow sort of song that was amazing, called "Taste." They also played some usual live staples, a couple from their highly rated self titled record from 2010; heavy, soulful version of "Just Once," an amazing live version of "Cracker Wrist" with Isobel dancing about onstage rocking-out before the haunting, mesmerizing vocals of the song begin. The band was totally into it, their farewell show prior to their Aussie tour. Great night!



Both Photos By: Dan Cohoon

Show: FLAG/TSOL

Venue: Trocadero Theatre

Date/Location: Philadelphia, PA, September 18, 2013

Black Flag songs, I planned on going... then later they announced that TSOL was the opener!!! So, it was well worth the price of entry to see two of my all-time favorite punk bands that I've loved since high school perform in one night! I remember coming home from school and just fucking BLARING the Black Flag "First Four Years" disc, the songs "Nervous Breakdown" and "I've Had It" pretty much summed up how much I was digging early high school life at that time! I was pissed off and I could relate to punk rock, it was the perfect outlet. TSOL hit the stage and played all the songs I had hoped to hear... All original members minus the drummer (Todd Barnes passed away years ago), they sounded awesome and Jack has still got his voice, he sounds damn close to those early TSOL records. Ron Emory was ripping on guitar and Mike Roche still holds his own on bass. Grisham paced back and forth onstage like the early days... remarkable how even as much older guys, they can still play that energetic fast-paced punk music!

I had missed TSOL when they played Philly several years ago, and I always regretted it, especially when in an interview Jack Grisham said TSOL would never tour the states again. Well, when I saw that original Black Flag members Keith Morris and Chuck Dukowski were touring as "FLAG" playing all the old



They played "Sounds of Laughter" from their 1981 album "Dance With Me," which they also played the title track... "Wash Away," the song they played in the punk movie "Suburbia" was also played and sounded great. "Superficial Love," "World War 3" and "Abolish Government" were played from their first EP. They closed the set with "Code Blue" of course... couldn't have asked for more! FLAG were up next, and Keith Morris was sure to give a little disclaimer before the set declaring "we are not BLACK FLAG, we are FLAG," due to the current dispute with original member Greg Ginn... Anyway, no business BS, let's get back to the MUSIC, what it's all about! Again, it's crazy how these now much older guys can rip through this frenetic punk music like they did when they were basically kids! Chuck Dukowski was jumping around as much as he did in the old days, maybe even more! Anyway, the band fucking kicked you right in the balls with their energy and volume! All the old greats I wanted to hear; "Nervous Breakdown," "Fix Me," "I've Had It," "Wasted"..... you name it! It happened to be Keith Morris's birthday, and Jack from TSOL walked on stage mid-set with a b-day cake & candles to blow out for Keith – which he did in one breath by the way... a unique little moment of an incredible night of punk rock music!

CHROME

SAN FRANCISCO'S PSYCHEDELIC ACID-PUNK OUTSIDERS

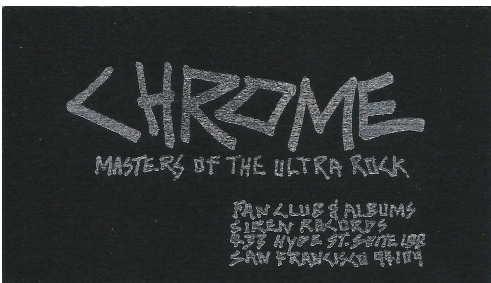


Photo by © Chester Simpson / Rock-N-RollPhotos.com

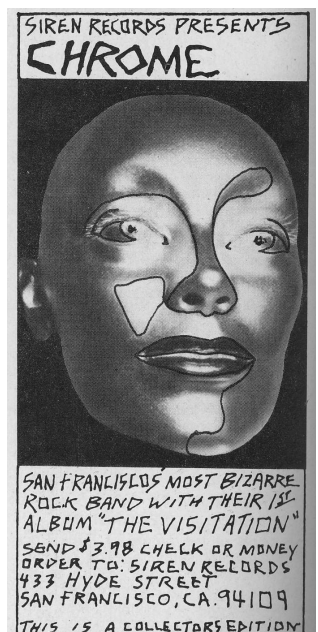
L to R: Damon Edge, Helios Creed, Oliver DiCicco - September 24, 1979 @ Mobius Studios

The usual categorizations we've all heard over the years will come up to describe SF psych/punk innovators CHROME; "industrial" - yeah Chrome were industrial in the sense that they were very heavy, but I think that sort of pigeonholes the band into a very narrow category, "post-punk" is also another term that comes up, but I don't buy into that term either because Chrome were around since 1976, during the start of punk! It's hard to label a band like Chrome, but I think that "acid-punk" best describes their sound. They totally had that energy and attitude of punk, but they were also surely psychedelized as any turned-on Chrome fan in the know will tell you. Damon and Helios once described their sound simply but effectively together as *"really alien."* A radio DJ & producer from ABC once said that "Chrome was the most authentic psychedelic music" he knew and "far more like the experience of an acid trip than anything produced in the 60's." Psych Trail Mix proudly presents the full story of San Francisco, California's psychedelic-punk warlords CHROME!

Chrome was originally formed in 1976 by 27 year old Damon Edge (Thomas Wisse) and Gary Spain. Bass player Gary Spain gives his first impressions of Damon Edge during that time, *"Upon meeting Damon (whom I knew as Tom), I thought he was an interesting admixture of gruffness and artistry, sort of physically large and round faced like a bully but really kind of a teddy bear. I liked him myself, and found he had interesting ideas."* Shortly thereafter, the duo would enlist John Lambdin on guitar who had previously played in a band with Damon called "Ba Ka Da" and did a movie soundtrack for "The Clay Pigeon" (MGM 1971). A man named Mike Lowe also played guitar in the band as well as sang the majority of the vocals on the first Chrome record that would be recorded in his garage, the record - "The Visitation," released in 1976 on Damon's own "Siren Records" through mail order accepting check or money order and boasting "this is a collectors edition" on an early ad for the album. This debut was the first glimpse into the Chrome sound, and featured some decent songs, while the main highlight is probably the guitar work. Damon Edge came from an art school background, having already studied at the California Institute Of Arts since he was 18 years old. Another key inspiration to the vision of the Chrome sound was a trip Damon took to Europe where he was exposed to Arabic music for the first time. Damon lived in Berkeley Heights and drove a blue squareback, he also came from some money, so he could freely devote his time and energies on his artistic endeavors in evolving the sound of his new band Chrome. John Lambdin started getting into heavy drugs and gradually drifted away more and more, before finally ending up back in L.A. and unable to make the trips to Berkeley to continue playing guitar in the band. Chrome now lost their main guitar player, but bass player Gary Spain would soon solve their problem by way of a young 21 year old blonde musician named Helios Creed who had recently moved to San Francisco from Hawaii to pursue his musical aspirations. Gary gives his first recollections of a young pre-Chrome Helios: *"I met Helios at Gulliver's Pub, and he seemed lucid, interesting, and semi-mystical, with his hippy-long blond hair and one eye looking off to the side, upbeat, mostly fun loving. He played his originals on acoustic guitar, and at least one had an odd time signature, a sure draw for me! And his lyrics were pretty darned poetic, or struck me so anyway. I played violin with him at Gulliver's Pub, a place in North Beach in SF on the corner of Columbus & Grant where you could pass the hat and the bartender would give you free beer if he liked you."* Gary Spain, without a doubt, has a very important spot in Chrome history as he would be the one who would enlist a solid, important member of the Chrome army and introduce the two Scorpions who would soon sting and unleash their liquid psychedelic venom, setting the punk crowd into a state of complete lysergic shock with their strange and very unique alien sounds.



Chrome Business Card (sent to fan circa '78)
Thanks: Paul H. Williams



THE MEETING OF THE SCORPIOS

Chrome needed a replacement guitarist and in mid 1977 Gary Spain introduced Helios Creed to Damon Edge – Helios, in a bit of showmanship, showed up to the Chrome rehearsal in a pirate costume! Helios was raised in a Navy family, so he was already quite well traveled by this point. He dropped out of high school early because he knew that he was on this planet to create music. He'd been exposed to some live music shows on powerful LSD that would greatly influence his guitar playing and music – most notably Black Sabbath, and even more so Jimi Hendrix. Chrome came up at the perfect time for Helios as he wanted to make records, not just have a band to play in the club circuit. Helios and Damon together would be a perfect combination as they melded their two worlds together nicely into the Chrome sound; Damon came from more of an art school background and had been exposed to working with different medias, and abstract things, whereas Helios came from a more musical background and was already a seasoned singer/performer/songwriter. This combination would create the TRUE Chrome sound, the original period of Damon Edge and Helios Creed. The two Scorpios hit it off immediately and made others feel even a little left out as Gary Spain explains: *"I introduced Helios to Damon Edge, and the*



L to R: Oliver DiCicco, Damon Edge, Helios Creed - September 24, 1979 @ Mobius Studios

Scorpios hit it off, to the point where I later felt I was virtually irrelevant, and since I could no longer support myself (living in Berkeley at the time), I moved back to L.A. In the fall of '78." Damon further proves this assumption by Gary during an Australian radio broadcast from 1981: *"Helios and I have been the nucleus ever since the REAL beginning. The very first Chrome album Helios wasn't on, and as soon as that was over Helios and I met.. and in getting into contact, all other people around us seemed meaningless."* In another early interview Damon acknowledges the similarities and the differences between he and Helios' roots as well as his own personal disdain for boogie dance music and wanting to be sure to not do something cliché in Sounds magazine from May 10, 1980: *"Helios was kinda... we had different roots. We both had rock roots, but he had more rock roots, and I had more, I don't know, aesthetic desires. In terms of not doing something stupid. Most rock is very stupid, good rock is great, but when you hear these guys singing weird music like "Dance to the music" - it really does something strange to my brain. The boogie thing makes me feel like throwing grenades!"* A funny thing to note from the above quote is what Damon considers "weird" music!

Not long after they got together, Helios would begin laying down his first Chrome recordings on the album that the earlier members had already gotten a start on, the record being the appropriately named early Chrome classic – ALIEN SOUNDTRACKS, put out on the bands own record label "Siren Records." Recorded on a 4-track in Damon's living room, this was the album that really introduced the Chrome sound and what the band was all about in all of its spliced tape, TV-infused, other-worldly, strange psychedelic glory. From the beginning distorted, fuzz-laden guitar thrashings of "Chromosome Damage," Pat Steven's hatred of buttermilk in "The Monitors," before a particularly freaky piece of high-grade Chrome mind-fucking, to the wizard-like psych guitar leads in "Magnetic Dwarf Reptile" leading up to the Sabbath-like heavy fuzzed chord rocking break – Alien Soundtracks was an incredibly original record and was an instant classic in the underground. The first moment where Helios' presence is up front and center on a Chrome record is the song "Pygmies In Zee Park" from Alien Soundtracks. Helios' Shawn Phillips inspired crooning on the track adds to the sort of eerie effect of the song. Helios explains this inspiration as well as gives us an idea of what his early solo-acoustic days at Gulliver's Pub may have sounded like in the excellent "Rip It Up And Start Again" (Feb. 2006) by Simon Reynolds - *"That's left over from my folk days – that's the way I used to sing. Shawn Philips was a big inspiration. He did a lot of lyrics for Donovan. He had the most incredible voice and the most incredible range, and me and my friends all tried to sing like him."* An interesting bit of Chrome-legend was that Alien Soundtracks was originally to be the soundtrack to a live sex show at Mitchell Brothers "Ultra Room Live" at the O'farrell Theater (corner of Polk & O'farrell St. in SF). The story had long been a tale told among Chrome fans and enthusiasts, but it wouldn't be verified until 2005 thanks to Joe Dupre of staticwhitesound.com as he tracked down the original 7" reel-to-reel tape from around 1976 with the cover of the reel reading the band name "Chrome" and "Ultra Soundtrack" - so now the pieces of the puzzle logically fit together to confirm this very interesting tid-bit of the haze of mystery that surrounds the early Chrome years. This 7" reel contained some unfinished as well as longer versions of several songs that would shortly appear on the 1977 released Chrome classic "Alien Soundtracks!"



THE STORY OF

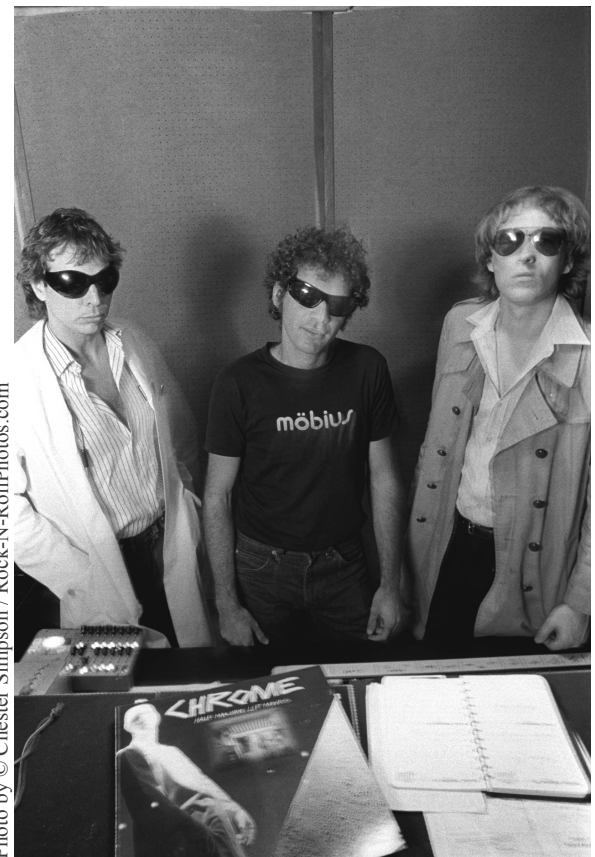
PAT
STEVENS



So, now the groundwork had been laid down for the main concrete foundation. The core of Chrome had been established and Damon Edge had found his musical partner who would be the second half of the creative force behind the psych-punk sounds of the band. Damon sums up the beginning of this fruitful relationship in the Australian 81' radio broadcast interview: *"As soon as we started working together on Alien Soundtracks the results were so obvious. Things started going on for us immediately. We'd been together 6 months when stuff just started flying. Both of us had been with different people and different situations, had always been looking for something that was really real, and you didn't have to force it or make some relationship or tell this guy 'hey I really think we should do this'... We just had this feeling about the whole thing, we both liked the rhythm, we both liked certain electronic aspect, and it was all together, it was perfect. Helios was incredible."*

OUTCASTS WITHIN OUTCASTS

From the start of the band in '76, Chrome were true DIY kings – they distributed AND promoted all their albums on their own through their “Siren Records” label.... all the way up until eventually being picked up on Beggars Banquet (wide European and worldwide distribution would be a benefit of this) signed by Stephen Webbon in 1980. Damon explains in one of the earliest Chrome interviews (Search & Destroy #8, 1978) that starting a label wasn't quite out of a need to fulfill a dream of his, but more so out of necessity: *“I didn't want to start a record company - it was just the only reality there was left. Because a lot of the American labels said “These guys are fucked UP,” they said we were Charles Manson music, bad Doors music! I've got the letters, they're really outrageous. They wouldn't know a fuckin' creative person if they met one!”* Damon notes the criticism here, and also Chrome took a lot of flack from the press – maybe the trendy elite in journalism at the time weren't quite ready for something as out-there as Chrome were, and their reviews were particularly scathing, at least the ones that didn't get it. Perhaps these reviewers were only concerned with the “scene” at the time, the “new wave” as its been called, but Chrome's music defied categorization really.. and maybe that's what frustrated the higher than thou music reviewers in certain publications. I don't think the band gave much thought to it however, as Helios Creed once stated frankly: *“who cares who's making the scene.”* As an example of the bad press Chrome got at times, Terri Swanson in a review from Sounds - October 4, 1980 states *“The real reason I hate it is because I can find no excuse for ugliness, pretension, and fraudulence of this kind.”* Again, Chrome could care less as Damon declares: *“We're outcasts within outcasts because we don't play the regular scene...”* (Search & Destroy #8 1978). In the true spirit of punk, Damon and Helios didn't give a fuck, and the naysayers weren't going to deter them from their destined musical path of creations. Damon further solidifies this stance declaring in an issue of NME from Nov. 17, 1979: *“We didn't want to kiss ass. Didn't want to have to play some high school scene for people to like us. And if they really liked us and they thought we were OK, then we'd be let out into the world and it would be OK. Forget it, man! I don't have to ask anybody's permission. I don't care!”* And “mass acceptance,” Helios gives his thoughts: *“To appeal to the masses? I don't think it would ever happen for us. We're too weird. We don't really want to appeal to the masses 'cuz they're a bunch of assholes.”* (Rip It Up & Start Again – 2006). Yes, Chrome seemed ok with being outsiders, content with it really... Damon sums it all up nicely with: *“There's earth and the Western world. And in the Western World there are those entertainment zones and performing zones. And we're on the outside of that. We're the bad boys. We live a rebel kind of existence. Feel like outlaws, outside. There's us and them. We're outside of everything.”* (NME – Nov. 79')



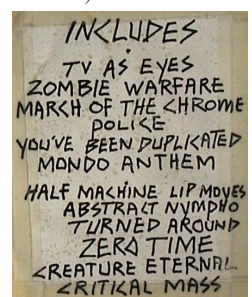
L to R: Damon Edge, Oliver DiCicco, Helios Creed
September 24, 1979 @ Mobius Studios

TELE-VISION MUTATIONS & INSPIRATIONS



1979 saw the release of a few recorded outputs from Chrome, most notably an album that is considered to be an all-time Chrome classic to this day – Half Machine Lip Moves. HMLM was basically ALL Damon and Helios. Again, this was recorded on a 4-track in Damon's living room. The album featured tons of tape splicing, samples from TV, blistering guitar work from Helios and Damon's unique unconventional drumming. The album would give us classics such as “TV As Eyes,” the amazing Chrome insanity of the title track “Half Machine Lip Moves,” and the fuzzed-out attitude of “March Of The Chrome Police,” just to name a few. In the Search And Destroy interview from '78, Damon speaks of his inspirations for Chrome's mutations: *“That was good (speaking of cal-arts), there were a lot of different kinds of ideas and types of media to be exposed to, like TV... get a glimpse of how to mutate something, elaborate systems of mutation on whatever medium you were dealing with.”* There was a steady groove/beat to the weirdness of Chrome, it's not just “noise,” unless you're a total airhead who can only equate what you think as “music” to the lame dance pop you hear on the radio. The music was alien and weird as hell, but you could rock out and even dance to Chrome's music if you'd like because they fucking ROCKED. The band did have sort of a philosophy behind their sound and methods employed in the music, Helios explains in issue 12/13 of Damage from June '81: *“Vibrations of notes have different ramifications. There are certain keys that we mostly write in. 'E' is one of the major notes that Chrome deals with. 'E' is in tune with the genitals, and is also the vibrations of change. 'E' rules the sign of Scorpio, which me and Damon both are, and that's the sign of death and rebirth.”* In the same publication Helios goes on to elaborate further: *“Now 'D' is the vibration that is the rate that people should be on when they're aware of visions that the music will be transcending to them; visions of rebirth kind of energies. 'D' is a 'higher' level of vibration.”* At this point you may be wondering what inspired some of the crazed psychedelic madness of Chrome, Helios gives his thoughts: *“We were really inspired by Pink Floyd, from Syd Barrett all the way to Meddle, and by early Hawkwind. But we weren't hippies. It was something else.”* ('Rip It Up...' - 2006)

Damon gives his thoughts on inspirations while carefully treading to be sure they aren't pigeonholed into a cliched view of psychedelia: *“Movies, women, music and drugs. We use drugs. Hash and stuff. We use psychedelic drugs. We have psychedelic roots... that doesn't mean late 60's roots.”* (NME – Nov 79') Damon elaborates on his and Helios' love for psychedelia: *“I, myself, and Helios I can speak for him about this, we were both heavily influenced by the psychedelic movement. The ideas of exploration and tonal differences and getting a kind of aura about your music, more than just a song. Creating a sort of real dimensional sort of 3-D kind of space with music.”* (Australian Radio '81) In 1979 another Chrome release would be unleashed, “Read Only Memory,” a very experimental (even for Chrome) record that would be the last 4-track living room release that the band would put out before moving into a studio environment. Often times Damon mentioned this possibly being a “soundtrack” to a film that the band were going to create, but nothing ever came of it. On “Read Only Memory” it sounds like Damon and Helios were at the height of their tape-splicing, manipulation madness. Also, hear Helios sing “I Am The Jaw” through a megaphone – just one of the many tools employed to help them get certain sounds they were trying to achieve.



OUT OF ZEE LIVING ROOM & INTO ZEE STUDIO

By this point in the story you know what inspired Chrome among other things... but the band name CHROME – it's simple, classy, mysterious, but how did the name originate you ask? In a very rare Australian radio broadcast from 1981, Damon gives the full details on the inspiration behind the name of the band: *"One of the periods that I liked besides the psychedelic movement and some classical movements was the surrealist movement, and I was reading an article about the Shah of Iran in 1930 who had commissioned an artist to invent air conditioning for his car, and that's how air conditioning was invented (laughter), because the shah wanted air conditioning... after that he was really impressed so he said build me this far-out mansion... and the guy stuck a lot of Chrome in it... and I was in the doctors office looking at it, the magazine, it just seemed to sort of give me a sense of design, Chrome. It seemed to... the metal itself is very high class, it's very stated, it's very minimal. And it has something deeper about it too you know..."* Inevitably when you spin a Chrome record and Chrome's wall of noise and mutations come oozing out of your speakers, you also take note of the lyrics, those often effect-laden alien-like vocals... what the hell are they saying, what does it mean? Damon gives us the skinny on this in #12/13 of Damage from 1981: *"keep the lyrics elusive, because they mean more that way. Anytime we get into writing anything that says too much directly, I seem to think it loses something. I like hidden things, they're more attractive."* Getting the point across that they're open to people's imaginations, Damon elaborates further in an issue of NME from January 1980: *"We put pictures in people's heads. It's information to trigger the imagination, therefore it's open to interpretation. We aren't a finished entity."* Now, you may have seen that up to this point in the band's career that all the albums were created in a living room on a 4-track recorder, but the upcoming 1979 "Subterranean Modern" compilation of various SF "post-punk" bands would feature Chrome with their first foray into a proper 16-track studio, with the studio being Oliver DiCicco's "Möbius Studios." Oliver gives his first impressions of both Helios and Damon: *"I remember Damon being really intense. Helios was more laid back, a little spacier I guess. Damon had a certain intensity*



L to R: Helios Creed & Damon Edge
Circa "Blood On The Moon" Era
Thanks: Fabienne Shine

to him, I guess he lived up to his name - Damon EDGE." Chrome created their first three songs with Oliver at his Möbius Studios with "I Left My Heart In San Francisco" which was basically a 30 second bit of noise that sounded like something that could have come off of "Read Only Memory," another 2 songs were a bit more expanded; the classic "Meet You In The Subway" which Chrome would later make into a video with Damon and Helios dressed as droogs a la Clockwork Orange walking through San Francisco's BART subway, and also "Anti-Fade," which is a great Chrome song that features the squelching fuzzed out guitar of Helios, Damon's unconventional drumming into a swirl of psychedelic ear-candy – but again, the sound is kicked up a notch as Chrome enters a proper studio. Oliver DiCicco reaches further back into his memory banks to describe more about the differences of both Helios and Damon in his studio: *"Helios was a more natural musician. The music just sort of seemed to flow through him more... Damon was a little more, I don't know.. a little bit more studied somehow? If that makes any sense... I remember Helios would pick up the guitar and just get this music to flow."* And was working with Chrome in studio completely flawless and professional? Oliver explains some minor difficulty that would occur occasionally: *"I mean they had their moments.. You know Helios could be a little spacey.... Sometimes Helios would get a little spacey and you'd have to go plug his bass in or something.. For the most part they were pretty cool to work with."* And I always wondered what time of day that Chrome would assault the studio with their madness, I always figured night time would be the preferred location of the sun for the Chromies, and Oliver would confirm my suspicions: *"We worked at night. There was a guy coming in during the day who was recording sort of jazzy... light jazz.... then in the evenings those guys would come in and kind of rock the place."* In 1980 Oliver would produce Chrome's "Red Exposure" record, where perhaps being in the studio with more options, gave the band a chance to sound a tad more polished while still retaining their strange other-worldly qualities. Red Exposure opens up with the classic Chrome song "New Age" - Helios' melting acid-guitar work with the warped vocals of *"I'm on the inside looking at the outside, nobody inside looking at the outside, I'm all alone."* This was the first Chrome record where the band would be on a record label other than their own Siren Records, as Beggars Banquet signed the band for this release. In the same year Beggars would also re-issue the Chrome classic "Half Machine Lip Moves." Red Exposure would also be the last album that would be just the two Scorpions behind the instruments, as Oliver DiCicco would soon introduce Helios and Damon to John and Hilary Stench of the band Pearl Harbor & The Explosions. Chrome had a solid rhythm section with this new addition.

Soon after the addition of John and Hilary, Chrome would release their 6th studio album "Blood On The Moon." With this record, the band fell more back into "creating rock music" as it's been said, however we're talking about CHROME here, so their blend of rock music was quite unique to what was going around at the time. The songs on Blood On The Moon really rocked with the new, solid rhythm section of the Stench brothers, but it also still contained all the weird, effect-laden psych sounds that the band were known for. "Innervacuum" with its eerie sort of gloomy mood would crawl out of the speakers with those strange effects, the song absolutely lives up to the "three dimensional" element that Helios and Damon had talked about previously when it came to their music. "Brain On Scan" was another classic from Chrome's 1981 gem with its fast, steady pace and relentless drum beats, Helios' signature guitar tones, and all the background sort of unidentifiable alien-like hisses, screeches, and howls – it's a song that beings from other planets or dimensions probably danced to as Chrome cranked the volume and blasted into the night at Möbius Studios! This same year the mystery curtain over Chrome would be slightly lifted as they played their very first live show on July 20th 1981 in Bologna, Italy at Palasport. Their setlist consisted mostly of material from their most recent album "Blood On The Moon." Damon kept the mystery going even through the show as he explains *"We didn't tell anyone it was our first show."* The original Chrome period of Helios and Damon would only see two live shows with them both onstage, the above mentioned show in Italy and another show about a month later on August 21st 1981 at the On Broadway in San Francisco. Again, the set consisted mainly of songs from Blood On The Moon, but the lucky ones in attendance that night also got a sneak peak at a couple of classics from Chrome's upcoming 1982 masterpiece "Third From The Sun," which saw the band return to even darker themes, and even louder, scarier sounds of squelching fuzzed out, phased/flanged guitar insanity and the driving rhythm section the band had at this point. Damon's wife Fabienne Shine (of France's 'Shakin Street') would contribute vocals to both "Off The Line" and "Shadows Of a Thousand Years." "Armageddon" in particular on this album is a well constructed masterpiece that stands up as some of the best work from the original Helios/Damon Chrome period.



Damon Edge & Fabienne Shine
1984 – Paris, France
Thanks: Fabienne Shine

CHROME - 3rd FROM THE SUN

A RECOLLECTION FROM

STUDIO ENGINEER GARY MANKIN



In the early 1980's I was a staff engineer at the Hyde Street Studios in San Francisco. In 1981 we'd moved into the space that had previously been occupied by Wally Heider Recording. Heider's had been the premier recording facility in SF during the late 60's and most of the 70's, but changes in ownership, plus the opening of newer facilities in the area, led the Filmways corporation to shut the studios down. A group of smaller studio owners joined together and moved into that building.

This was the place where many famous artists had recorded: Jefferson Airplane, Crosby Stills Nash and Young, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Santana, The Grateful Dead, Tom Waits, Paul McCartney and Wings, Rod Stewart, The Pointer Sisters, Herbie Hancock, Ohio Players, Eric Burdon... and on and on. However, under the new regime, the equipment wasn't as top notch as what had lived there previously, and the rates were significantly lower. That may have kept the big names away, but it gave opportunities to many interesting, diverse local artists.

In late '81, I gave a studio tour to Damon Edge and Helios Creed. At that point we had 2 music rooms up and running, and I showed them the better room, Studio C. Heider's had built a very nice tracking room, moderately live, with a two small isolation booths. One unique thing about our facility was that it had acoustic echo chambers. In those days, digital reverb units were rare and rather expensive. The best-sounding reverberation was produced by custom-built rooms which had no parallel walls, with all surfaces plastered smooth. A speaker fed sound from the recording console into that chamber, and a pair of microphones picked up the echoed sound and returned it to the mix. Hyde Street had 4 of these chambers, each with a different size and character, which could be patched into any of its studios. When I explained this to the Chrome guys, Damon said, "You mean each member of the band could have their own chamber? That would be cool!" I think that detail sold them on recording at Hyde Street. I think they also liked the fact that the control room sported a console (which had previously belonged to the Rolling Stones Mobile truck) built by the now-legendary British maker Helios.

We started recording on December 21. Damon and Helios had hired one of the best rock rhythm sections in town, the Stench Brothers (John and Hilary Hanes) for the sessions. John (the drummer) came in and commenced to tune all of his drums down as low as they would go, to the point where the bass drum head was practically flapping when he played it. He didn't want me to dampen anything. He was obviously going for a "heavy" tone, compared to the kinds of sounds he went for with, say, Pearl Harbor and the Explosions. Besides my usual close microphones for the drums, I put out a pair of room mics to capture the ambience of the studio.

Damon and Helios both played through identical combo amps, I believe they were Peaveys. They seemed more keyboard amps than typical guitar amps, but Helios had enough stomp boxes that he managed to get a pretty massive guitar tone regardless. Damon, too, did plenty of processing of his sound, such that I can't really tell what kind of keyboard he was playing when I listen to the songs today.

Our sessions began at 9pm and went into the wee hours. Many of those days, I was recording Chris Isaak's band during the afternoon in the same room. Imagine the contrast of Isaak's near-rockabilly to Chrome! For the nighttime sessions we'd turn the lights down low, and the guys would just dig in.

We cut the band tracks in 5 or 6 nights. After the first of the year we came back and did overdubs: vocals, more guitars and keyboards, plus some sound effects.

That was a very rainy winter in Northern California, and I recall that one day Damon came in and told me that a few nights before, during a particularly intense storm, he'd felt uneasy in bed. He lived in a rented house in the Oakland hills at the time. He took his wife from their bedroom downstairs to sleep on the couch in a different room. During the storm, a eucalyptus tree next to his house was blown down. It crashed through the bedroom ceiling and landed directly across their bed. Had they not moved, he said, they'd probably have died there.

Again, we took a few days off, and then returned to the studio to mix the album. As it turns out, we didn't put each player in his own echo chamber; the sounds were so dense that we didn't really need a lot of reverb. However, we certainly didn't skimp on effects. The guys really liked lots of delay on the vocals, and liked panning various parts from side to side. I also showed them how to make "preverb," which was backwards reverb that preceded the sound it echoed. To create it, you had to take the 2" tape off of the recorder and flip it over, so that it played backwards. Then you ran the part that you wanted to effect into an echo chamber, and printed that sound onto an open track. When you flipped the tape back over, the reverb would anticipate the original part. You can hear it on the snare drum at the front of the title track of this album. Also on the vocal on "Heart Beat." It's possible to create a similar effect in Pro Tools today, but it was a lot more fun and artistic back then, and definitely more surprising.

As we neared the end of the recording, Damon informed me that he had hired David Kahne to remix "Firebomb" as a single. Kahne had been a staff engineer at Heider's, and went on to produce the Bangles, Paul McCartney, Tony Bennett, Fishbone and Lana Del Rey. I was pretty disappointed; I thought we'd nailed it in our mix, and that it didn't need an alternate version. Kahne mixed the track to sound more contemporary for the time... the drums were not as thick, but were louder (as was the style in those days), and the vocal was clearer. Of course, Chrome was hardly a "singles" band, and I'm not sure that the remix made a big impact on the world. We did have a copy in the jukebox at Hyde Street, and it played in rotation with Flipper, the Dead Kennedys and other clients of the time.

Chrome was unlike any band I'd recorded before (or after). They were a bit shocking to me at first. They used tons of effects on their instruments, loved panning them from side to side, and liked tons more processing on their vocals in the mix. I definitely got into it as we worked together.

ANCIENT-MODERN: GOING THROUGH GEHENNA

Around the time of the addition of the Stench brothers, Damon had moved from his original post on the drums to an instrument that would allow him to play in a live environment as well as play standing next to his partner-in-crime Helios- the instrument was the "Moog Liberation," a "keytar" synthesizer that was held in the same manner as a guitar and allowed for all sorts of sounds with its built-in controls of "filter," "modulation," and "oscillators" just to name a few. Maybe after acquiring the Moog Damon was a little more comfortable with something he could use in a live setting, as he explains in Damage Issue 12/13 from 1981 how their old works were a little more difficult to reproduce faithfully in a live show: *"being able to play what we play live was always a limitation to us - to play live you can only do so much, and we felt that we could do so much more on tape than we could in a live context. Though now, we're working out certain minimal concepts, where some of our past stuff hasn't been that minimal."* The live Chrome output from the original Damon/Helios era would be short lived however, as the above mentioned shows from Italy and SF would be the only two they would ever play together, two shows that took place over the span of one month. Luckily, recordings exist of both shows, but the more interesting document however, is the recording of the last show they did in August '81 at the On Broadway in SF, any Chrome fan should seek this out as an important document of one of two shows the Helios/Damon combo would ever perform onstage together (available on helioschrome.com in the "Bootlegs" section). While 1982 would be the last year that the original Chrome period of Damon and Helios would collaborate together, the year saw lots of new as well as old Chrome. Released in 1982 on Steve Tupper's "Subterranean Records," the "Chrome Box" would emerge; a 6 vinyl set that consisted of "Alien Soundtracks", "Half Machine Lip Moves", "Blood On The Moon" and three NEW albums - "No Humans Allowed," "The Chronicles I," and "The Chronicles II." The "Chronicles" records saw the band moving into an even more sort of experimental spacey-jam types of songs structure, and these records would produce some of the band's most unique outputs to date. Hilary Stench points out the challenge to playing some of these tribal like explorations of long sonic jams: *"That record was a challenge both physically and in terms of focus, because on most songs we would play a section over and over again, then switch to another section that we'd play over and over; then to another section, then repeat the whole process several times"* (interview by Jef L. on damonedge.com).



Photo by © Chester Simpson / Rock-N-RollPhotos.com

L to R: Oliver DiCicco, Damon Edge, Helios Creed
September 24, 1979 @ Mobius Studios

Helios Creed had an inventive way that he would keep everyone together on these long jams as John Stench explains: *"When playing for a very long time like on the Chronicles stuff... Helios would map out what changes they were going to do when by the tiles on the floor in the studio, where he would step on a tile to let the others know that that tile meant what they were supposed to play at that time, then another tile for the other parts and so on..."* Damon's wife Fabienne appears again on "Wings Born In The Night" and the epic 10+ minute "Gehenna Lion." Perhaps prophesizing the death of the original Chrome, Helios explains in an interview conducted by Steve Tupper that was included in the Chrome Box the deeper meanings behind "Gehenna" - *"The Gehenna Lion is the spirit of death. It identifies itself, right? You go through the identification with yourself, but you're gonna die. You go through Gehenna, which is the realm of death, the battleground, and you end up in Eden. Very simple, right? That's where the whole Chrome trip ends up, right there at "Gehenna Lion," where it wipes out even small record companies. That's an ancient story that goes back to the 1500's. The last thing we did, "The Chronicles I and II" was the most fanatical, insane, positive projection as we could put out. The records before that were more subconscious than this."* Helios elaborates further in the same interview, sort of wrapping up the original Chrome-period chronicles: *"The last song in the box, "Gehenna Lion" seems to wrap up the whole story. I projected the battle as won at the most bitter, darkest moment. Desolation, then all of a sudden it breaks and everything's okay, total white magic. Things don't happen unless you project it. In the last two or three years we've been working with that in mind. Being sick of what's in. To me, what's happening in the world is like what this music feels like, tensions*



L to R: Damon Edge w/ Moog Liberation during early Chrome years, and Tommy Grenas with Damon's original in August 2013

building up, things are about ready to bust open and something's gonna happen. It's a heavy feeling, it's not, "Oh baby, I love you, everything's gonna be all right when I meet you at the club." The general consensus as far as what broke up Helios and Damon, ultimately ending the original Chrome era was that Damon did not want to perform live, whereas Helios, being a live performer even prior to joining Chrome, wanted to play live shows. Also, Damon wanted to move to France with his wife Fabienne, which he did, and Helios had no desire to relocate. Damon kept the band name and released several titles over the years, and many adored by his fans, although one could argue that they sound and maybe SHOULD have been released under the name of "Damon Edge" as solo works. Unfortunately, a live reunion of Damon Edge and Helios Creed never would occur as Damon passed away from reported heart failure in 1995 after being in bad shape for quite some time due to alcohol addiction and apparently being distraught over his break up with Fabienne Shine. Helios Creed continued a long solo career, still to this day he puts out some top-notch psychedelic records. He also had a "Chrome Reunion Tour" in 1998, which had a lot to do with Tommy Grenas who, through being a friend of Damon Edge and knowing some of his relatives, acquired Damon's original Moog Liberation and some of his other equipment. Helios and Fabienne Shine reunited in January of 2005 in Austin, Texas where Fabienne collaborated with Helios on his solo record "Deep Blue Love Vacuum," contributing vocals to a few tracks. Chrome, always having been quite ahead of their time, are now legendary and their unique sounds and music have inspired countless musicians. Fans of the original Helios/Damon era were delighted when some old unreleased tapes from '79-'80 were bought back thanks to a kickstarter campaign started by Helios. These tracks released on a record titled "Half Machine From The Sun" in 2013 are the biggest revelation on Chrome to come out since the original period had ended. See the review of said record in this publication at the end of the CD Reviews section. Chrome lives on!

I'm A Roadrunner Honey... OW!.... An Interview With Dick Taylor Of

THE PRETTY THINGS



L to R: Dick Taylor, Brian Pendelton, John Stax (top), Phil May, Viv Prince

Ahhh yes, London's PRETTY THINGS! Apparently, back in the early days of the 60's these guys made the Rolling Stones look like a buncha' wimps.... like something you'd see on today's network TV talent shows such as American Idol! Forming back in 1963, the Pretty Things played some of the most powerful, abrasive, raucous rhythm and blues of the time, and for ANY time for that matter boobie! Their notorious tour of New Zealand in 1965 which got them BANNED from the country is well known amongst seasoned Pretties fans, but if you have yet to purchase the book "Don't Bring Me Down...Under" from Ugly Things Magazine - DO purchase it! It is a MUST own, well detailed, fascinating read loaded with amazing photographs.. including Viv Prince's crayfish! Oh, it also made me quite crave fish n' chips with an ice cold beer! I remember years ago when I bought my first Pretty Things set - the 2 disc "Rhythm & Blues Years" from Repertoire records and just becoming obsessed with that snotty, primitive R&B.... those DRUMS from wild man Vivian Prince were one of the most bad-ass elements of the sonic assault. Still their R&B years are my favorite of their output, however they did trip out to some quite psychedelic material a bit after their early raunchy R&B years. I'm honored to have had the pleasure to interview Pretty Things guitarist Dick Taylor for this issue of Psych Trail Mix... Enjoy!

Who were your early influences as far as guitar playing?

Initially I heard Big Bill Broonzy, my sister bought an album by him and I just wanted to play like him, although I guess even before that there was Elvis and Scotty Moore and of course Buddy Holly, and then I heard Chuck and Bo, so there I was trying to play an F chord, but wanting to sound just a little

bit like any one of my heroes, strangely I also had a huge appetite for jazz too, but I would look at the bop chord charts and just know I had no chance, I had a trumpet and some lessons, but the lure of the guitar was too great.



Viv Prince Servin' Up Some Prettie's Drinks

At The Bar L To R: Brian Pendelton, Dick Taylor, John Stax, Phil May

What are your memories of playing bass in the early Rolling Stones years and of Brian Jones?

Mick, Keith, myself and our friends Bob Beckwith and Alan Etherington piled into Mick's dad's Riley, (he had just passed his test) and went to Ealing to see Alexis Korner's band. It was left to Cyril Davis to introduce a couple of guys as the interval act, Brian and "P.P." Jones, "does that stand for perpetually pissed?" says Cyril, it was of course Paul Jones, but what blew us away was Brian's guitar playing, slide as it should be played, a beautiful Martin with a De Armond pick-up across the sound hole, Elmore personified. We couldn't resist talking to Brian, went back the next week when Mick and Keith went on stage with Alexis, Brian asked Mick to come and sing with the band he had formed, to cut a long story short he asked me if I would like to play bass, I thought I would give it a go, went and bought a bass for twenty five quid and we started rehearsing in a room above a pub in Soho (the now defunct Bricklayer's Arms), apart

from rehearsing the one thing we seemed to do was laugh a lot, Brian, for all his moodiness had a wicked sense of humour. I remember one day we for some reason went to Mick's parents house for dinner; Joe Jagger said Grace and Brian and I exchanged glances over the table and he pulled one of the ridiculous faces he seemed to specialise in, I came close to a complete mirth crackup. We spent a lot of time rehearsing, the drummer situation never seemed to resolve itself, but we managed to cobble quite a varied repertoire together; it was all good fun. After we had done a (very) few gigs, I realised that I was in quandary whether to concentrate on the band or my studies at art school and whether I wanted to play bass or lead...

How did you hook up with Phil May?

Phil was this guy at art school who was obsessed with tennis, I thought he wanted to be Robert Culp out of I Spy, but he would sit with a few of us and listen to records at break times and also be there when guitars were produced. After I quit the Stones he nagged me into starting another band, as he didn't play an instrument he had to be the singer, a role he just naturally fitted, he had unlimited enthusiasm and a lot of talent, he had to work on his short hair though.

Do you have a funny road story or two that you wouldn't mind sharing about early Pretty Things drummer, wild man Viv Prince?

Viv was drafted in as a real professional drummer; he also was a pretty hardcore raver; as we soon found out, we used to have to pick him up from a watering hole in Denmark Street. I remember us being parked in Charing Cross road waiting for him in our driver's nice shiny Zodiac Estate, Viv staggers round the corner and opens the rear door just as a lorry drives past, the door swings out as one of the rope hooks under the side of the lorry catches the open window and off down the road goes the door; just another ordinary day with Viv and the pretties. Viv had an unerring knack of befriending other pissed people and then falling out with them in a big way. I remember being in a hotel room in Scotland with the other guys when we saw Viv in the car park and seeing the two new best friends ever suddenly decide they actually wanted to slaughter one another. While we were in Hamburg, Viv had bought a gas gun, it looked like a little revolver but shot tear gas pellets, and of course he fired it at his mate who was trying to punch Viv's lights out. We all sat in the room moaning about our drummer's antics unaware that he had crept up to his room which had an interconnecting door. Although the door was locked, that didn't deter Viv who managed to knock it off its hinges and stood there with his weapon and threatening to shoot us all for slagging him off, at which point John Stax showed his skills as a hostage negotiator by talking Viv out of it, persuading him to dismantle and hide his gas pistol and calm down. I guess it was the price to pay for having such a brilliant drummer.

Be honest, did that giant crayfish Viv would walk around with freak you out?

Only the smell!

Where would you say the most memorable shows were during the early R&B years?

The gigs I used to enjoy most were the really cool clubs like the Windsor Ricky Tick, Sheffield Mojo (where Pete Stringfellow got jammed up against our PA and his tinnitus was first triggered) and of course the Hundred club. However for sheer mayhem, our appearance at the Blokke Festival in Holland would take some beating, we were used to either cool mod style audiences or screaming girlie crowds, we were a bit unprepared for a bunch of overenthusiastic guys who took on the security men ringing the stage, it was a full scale riot.

Can you recall what made the band go in the psychedelic direction ala the great psych classic "Defecting Grey?"

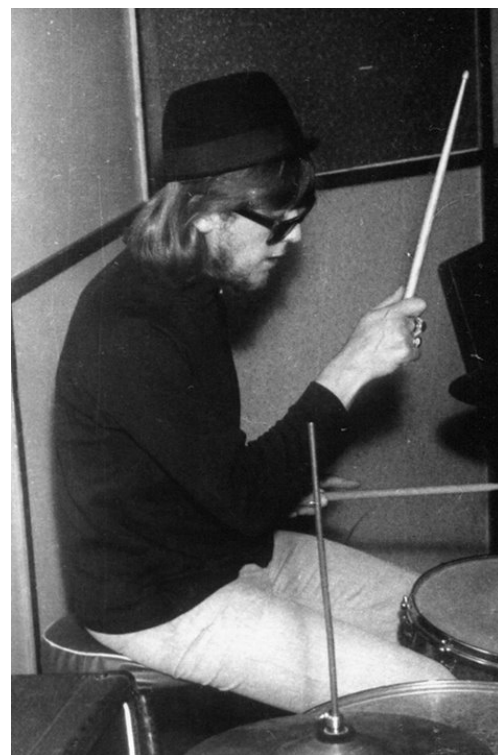
We were at the end of our Fontana contract, for ages our recorded output had not reflected our live shows which went to some pretty weird and wonderful (I hope) places. Our line up had changed; we now had Jon Povey on keyboards to replace Brian Pendleton and John Stax had emigrated to Australia, Wally Waller had the task of filling his large shoes. We decided to write and record some demos with the idea of getting another record deal, but also with no producer or record company breathing down our neck, we could be as experimental as we liked and also could be more like our onstage selves, we were not in a vacuum. The underground was starting to blossom and our output reflected the Zeitgeist of the time.

What was it like producing the first Hawkwind album? What are your memories of those guys in studio?

I first saw Hawkwind in a little hall off Ladbroke Grove, it was kind of like being at an early Pretties gig with a touch of acid thrown in; lots of raw energy spiced with very early synth style noises. I loved it and through Andrew Lauder got the chance to record them. We started off with "Hurry on Sundown," which actually went really quite smoothly, apart from Dave Brock occasionally diving off to do a bit of busking to raise some money. We got a bit stuck on the next track so Andrew and I decided just to set them up in the studio, PA and all and just let them play and try to get the most faithful recording of what they sounded like live. They were all great characters, I can understand why Michael Moorcock got hooked up with them and how much inspiration he must have got from them. Mother London is one of my favourite books and I love how he weaves the real life characters from Hawkwind into it. I actually did a few weeks as guitarist with them before Huw Lloyd Langford joined them, chaos reigned...

What are you up to these days?

Lots of gigs with The Pretty Things, quite a lot of bass playing and some guitar in the Studio for the amazing Sacha Morgan and the wonderful Callista Robertson, both of whom I am sure you will hear a lot of soon. Hopefully a new Pretties album will commence soon too. I also work with an Isle of Wight based band called The Hillmans, although I have had to share guitar duties with a fine player called Ross Honeybourne who does the gigs when I'm off being Pretty. And finally after a twenty year plus plus break I did a gig at the Twelve Bar Club the other night as a member of "Auntie and the Men From Uncle", much fun was had by one and all! Oh, and I nearly forgot Stephen Dale Petit who I did an album with (again on bass a couple of years back). Other than that I'm busy extending our house, isn't semi retirement great....



Viv Prince



L to R: Phil May w/ a smoke & a cold one, Dick Taylor & Phil May onstage



One morning in 1983,

I heard a song on the radio in a basement room that, at the tender age of 18, changed everything for me.

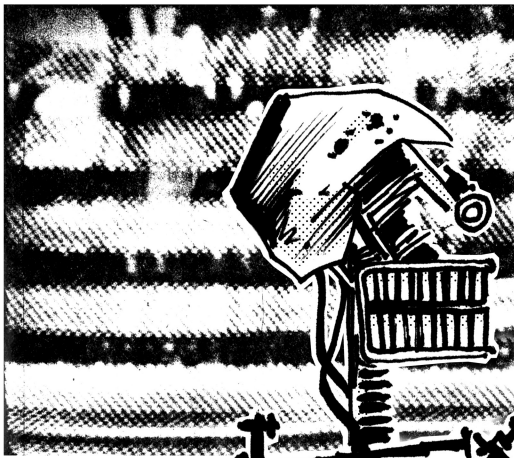
It began with the ghostly hum of hollow atonal amp noise, a barely perceptible scrape of fingers-on-fretboard static, then - a slashing buzz-saw guitar riff (and not just any riff - it was the Guitar-Riff-To-End-All-Guitar-Riffs) followed by the pound of drums, throbbing bass, and droning synth chords that doubled that guitar riff into a monolithic power drive that bored its way directly into my cortex. Two-part vocals - one, an evil droog-ish whisper; the other, a de-ranged shout - spoke of disappearing, burning leather angels, losing another skin, buildings collapsing, slipping into the void, while the rhythm section hammered away, the synth stabbed and buzzed like a demented insect, and the guitar ululated like some alien creature howling into the wind-swept abyss.

The ludicrously over-the-top imagery of the lyrics and the song title **Anorexic Sacrifice** rivaled that of many of the bands I was just discovering - Butthole Surfers, Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, Flipper - but unlike those other bands whose music sounded firmly rooted in in the punk rock here-and-now, this music sounded like it was transmitting from another dimension - a bad acid, science fiction nightmare world of burning car wrecks, malfunctioning cyborgs, kinky sex, and disintegrating cities.

It was one of the greatest things I had ever heard in my admittedly brief life.

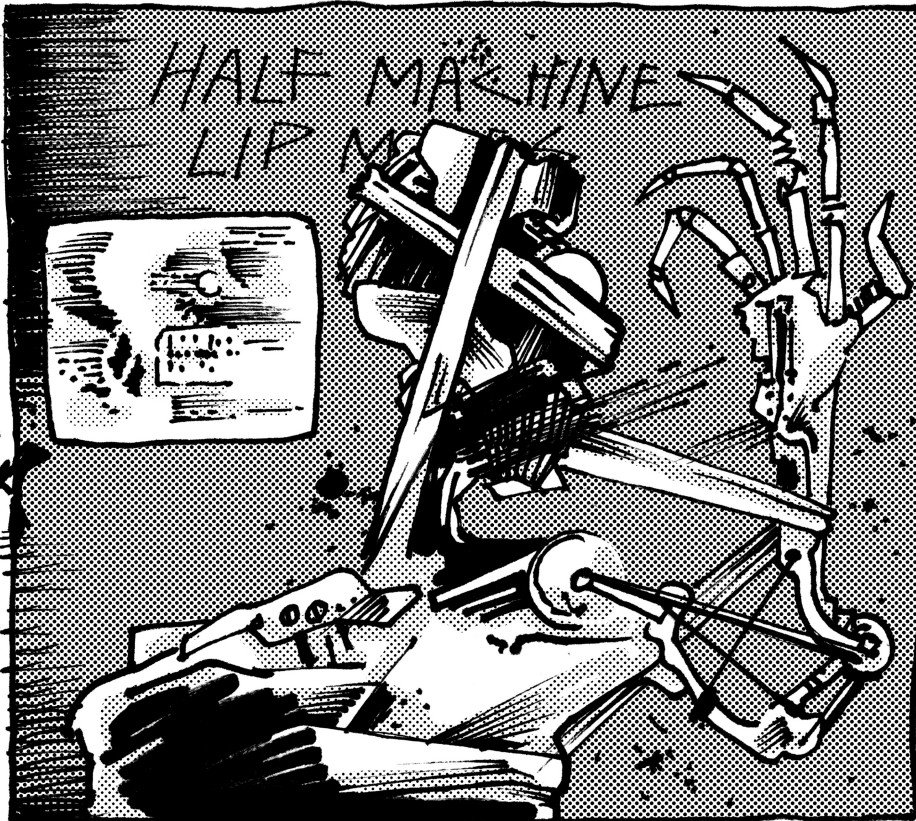
A former-punk-turned-metal-head friend who deejayed at a local college radio station confirmed that the band was **Chrome**. He didn't know much about them but spoke of them with a sort of awed reverence that made me realize that I was definitely on the brink of a major discovery. I subsequently made it my goal to find every bit of Chrome music that I could lay my hands on and started working my way backwards (and forwards).

It would be a couple of years before I realized that what I had heard that day was basically the last gasp of Chrome's original incarnation and the only single from their most radical musical statement to date: **The Chronicles** - a double LP which at the time was only available in the highly-coveted **Chrome Box** collection. Chrome records weren't easy to find in those days and information on the band itself was even scarcer but discovering that this music had been created by shadowy figures with names like **Damon Edge** and **Helios Creed** only increased my appreciation for the mystery I had uncovered.



The first Chrome album

I picked up was **Blood On The Moon**, followed by **Alien Soundtracks** and **Read Only Memory**. Long before **Red Exposure** or **Half Machine Lip Moves** had taken their place in my collection, I had found Helios and Damon's new solo albums, **X-Rated Fairy Tales** and **Alliance**. I scored a copy of **Raining Milk** (a condensed version of **The Chronicles**) in Montreal and the **Fire Bomb 7"** from a record shop in Philadelphia. A visiting intern at the animation studio I worked at loaned me his precious copy of the **Chrome Box**.



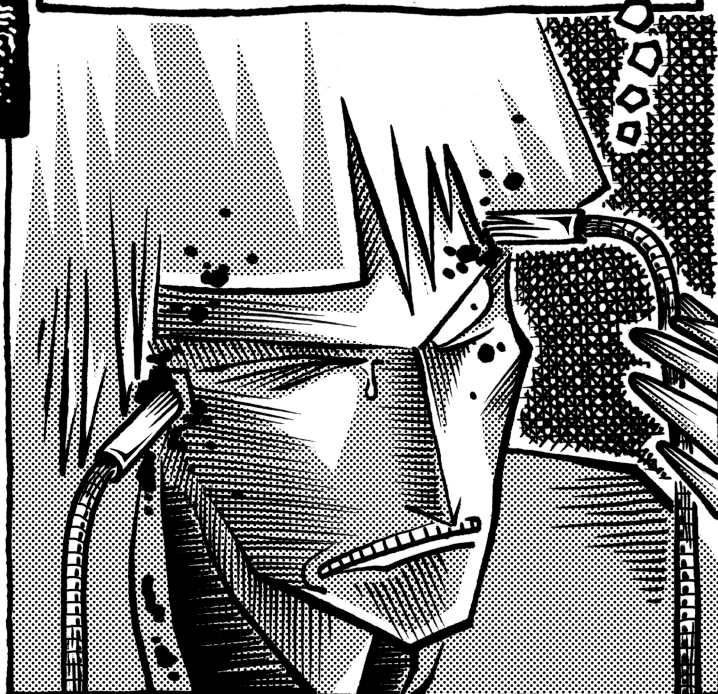
The interview with Helios that was included in the box set was both confounding and a revelation. As I read and re-read his enigmatic responses to **Subterranean** label head Steve Tupper's questions and studied Chrome's printed lyrics (where available), some pieces of the puzzle fell into place while new mysteries were created. My obsession with Chrome deepened. The **Gehenna Lion** image from **Third From The Sun** became my totem and I painted it on two different leather jackets along with Damon and Helios's faces. At almost every local music show I attended, I could usually count on there being at least one person I had never met before who would recognize those symbols for what they were and excited conversations with fellow initiates in the Chrome mysteries would ensue.

I soon realized it wasn't enough to simply listen to Chrome. For me, it was the kind of music which always demanded that I go even deeper into it. I knew I had to take things a step further and create something inspired by it





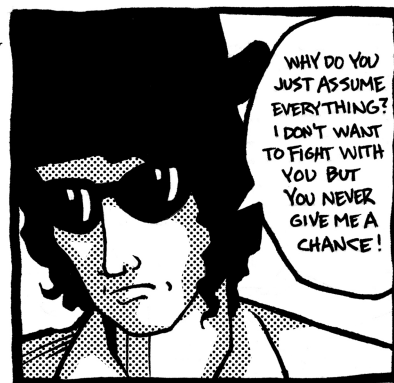
CONTACTS ARE CHARRED - SOME GOOD SHIT!
... AND MY VISION ... THE SOUTH BURNING
DESTRUCTION COMPLETE DESTRUCTION
...AND MY BROTHER ... GEHENNA... COMING HERE!
THIS APOCALYPTIC ANGEL GUISE HE'S TAKEN ON...
DOUBTLESS FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS FOLLOWERS.
AND WHO ARE THEY? DESERT TRIBES, PERHAPS...
SAVAGES GIVEN THE MIRACLE OF KILLING TECHNOLOGY.



In the winter of 1986/1987, I began to write and draw **Red Time Overload**, a strip based on concepts and characters in Chrome's music, which I self-published in the six issues of my comics zine **Zero** (aka. Xero). Damon and Helios became Chromium and Gehenna - brotherly rivals, living, dying, and reborn through multiple incarnations as street punks in a decaying cityscape, cybernetic deities worshipped by warring tribes, inventors of a machine capable of inducing psychedelic visions through artificial telepathy, and many more.

I liked to think that **Red Time Overload**, like Chrome's music, had its own internal logic. Whether I succeeded or not is debatable. In fact, when I look back on it now, I can see I didn't make much of an attempt to present a coherent storyline to the casual viewer and I doubt that anyone except me and a few other people even recognized the Chrome references. At the time, what was most important for me was to tap into and pay tribute to that feeling of dark raw energy, that cut & paste urgency which, for me, characterized Chrome's best work. **Red Time Overload** wasn't the first comic strip I had drawn but it was the first one that I felt motivated to self-publish. The fact that much of Chrome's early music was released on their own **Siren Records** label wasn't lost on me.

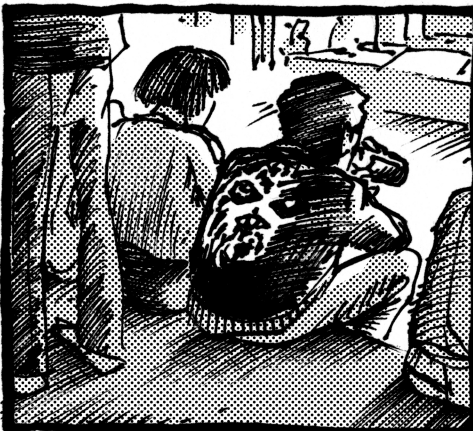
When I visited San Francisco in the summer of 1987, the first two issues of **Zero** had been published and I made sure to bring copies with me because one of my goals for that trip was to give them to Chrome's former guitarist Helios Creed. I met and had a long talk with **Steve Tupper** at **Subterranean Records** which was still on Valencia Street at the time. Steve very kindly agreed to pass my work on to Helios who was currently living in bus and not the easiest guy to get in touch with. Steve also gave me a copy of the **Anorexic Sacrifice** single which I still treasure to this day, and later, a demo tape of Helios' **Superior Catholic Finger** LP almost two years prior to its official release. It would be several months before Helios (who had temporarily relocated to Texas) and I would connect via phone and letter, beginning a friendship which would culminate in my moving to SF in 1991 and doing animated film projections for his live shows - but that's another story.

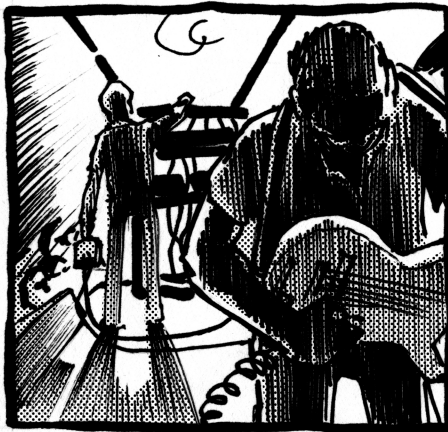
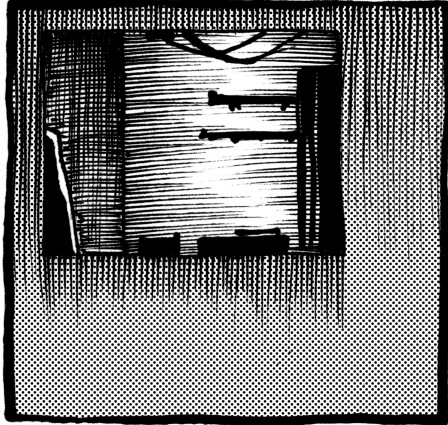
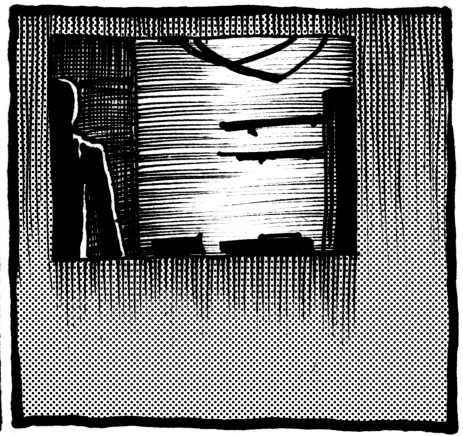
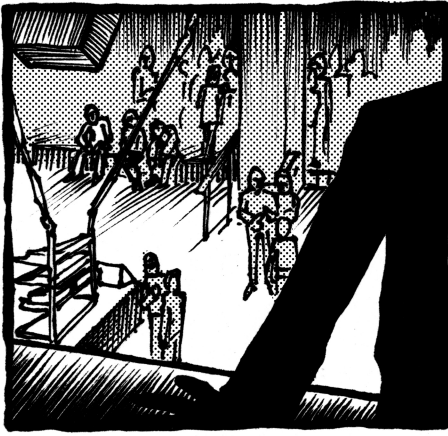


I think the best way to view this piece is as a remix - a few highlights from **Red Time Overload**'s first three chapters, cleaned up and reconfigured for your viewing pleasure. Material from chapters four thru six was reprinted in my **Cathexis** collection in 1997 in a less Chrome-centric form but which I still dedicated to the two men who originally inspired it. I'd like to offer that dedication again for this version of **Red Time Overload** and thank Damon (RIP) and Helios for music which continues to resonate through my art and life. - **Michael Manning (2013)**



RED WINE OVERLOAD



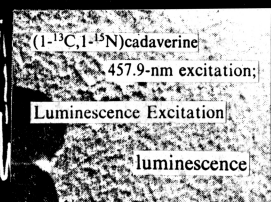
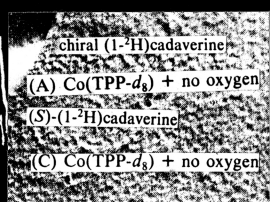
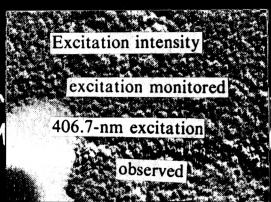




Pharaoh Chromium
bleached + 53% FLESH
(a rare occurrence)
absorbs sound/noise
Grainy &w music
crystallizes in
the Forebrain

From body to Body - Shape Flow-
ing in the Mercury Life stream +
Whims met with an adjust -
ment ... tailored genetics,
Bio-engineering, Cybernetics
FLESH has become a controlled
tornado image surrounding the
MIND ↔ EYE - FLESH, GLASS,
Plastic, Metal - synonymous

image shift, slow
langorous build-
up, no fast rea-
lity change ...
chance to exx
pand-center-



Three point five grams of ST37
... should be enough for a vision,
some insight into the shit going
down in the SOUTH. The reports
of fighting in the city centers,
the mutations... DAMN this shit
is POTENT! I think it's already can

ACCELERATOR

i am on fire

Follow the riff and drum beat → SOUTH

3.5 grams of something i have trouble
remembering does its' work

and

I

think

I AM BURNING UP
BURNING UP AND
EVERYTHING SPREAD
OUT TO THE HORIZON
BURNING SHIFTING

THE TRIBES
THESE ARE
THE TRIBES
WHERE MY
MY PEOPLE
CAME FROM
MY PEOPLE
THE 12 TRIBES
I CONTROL



my voice roaring out to the horizon:
WHO HAS DONE THIS?

IT UNMOVING

growing closer / my speed (supersonic)...

-it → center 278°

shield edge razor bite

BLACK IRON SCAR

target EYE

my brother

GEHENNA LION

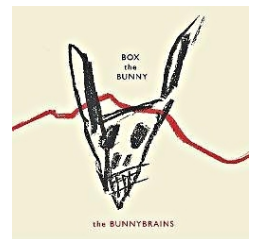




60's Psych And Beyond CD REVIEWS



Artist: BunnyBrains
Album: Box The Bunny (4 CD + 1 DVD Set)
Label: Narnack Records



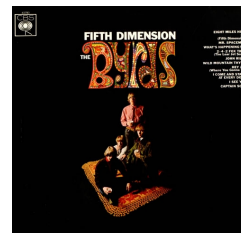
I've had in my possession for quite a number of years now, a couple of loved releases of these East Coast psychotic noise maniacs (with a good sense of humor by the way)... But when I stumbled upon this release I couldn't pass it up due to the value (amazing price) and DEPTH of this collection. You're getting 4 cd's and a DVD jam-packed with the fuzzed-out psych-noise, humor-infused, thrashing-of-anything-considered-proper, sonic assault of New York's BUNNYBRAINS. You read reviews and some people act like it's a task to sit through the "just noise" of the music, but it's not just noise - there's a ton of rocking, balls-to-the-wall heavily distorted guitar numbers that are quite danceable... just listen to "I am Not Your Friend (I am Your Destiny)" off of the "1993" disc, totally danceable with its up-front-in-the-mix bass and drum rhythms. The set includes first time on CD albums by the band that were previously only available on vinyl, so it's a sweet little confined box of all the BunnyBrains noise and BALLS you can handle brotha'! Full contents include: "1993," "Bunny Magick," "Beach Bunny Bingo," "Show Me The Bunny," and of course the insane montage of live material and band antics included on the 5th disc, the DVD, which really sweetens the Bunny pot. Grab this while you can, who knows how long this 5 disc bargain splattering of Connecticut psych-punk material will be available in a coolio little package like this...

Artist: Bardo Pond
EP: Rise Above It All
Label: Fire Records



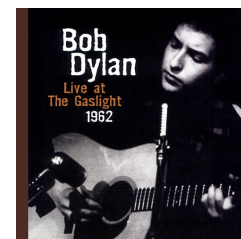
Released in March 2013 as part of a limited edition exclusive Record Store Day release by veteran Philly psych rockers Bardo Pond, comes this killer EP containing covers of Pharaoh Sanders and Funkadelic songs done in Bardo Pond's unique, transporting style and charm. Their cover of Funkadelic's "Maggot Brain" like many BP songs starts melodic, then builds up as the song moves along...blistering distorted guitar leads begin to be peppered in, a somber sort of mood throughout while gaining momentum, but also being quite beautiful amidst the chaos that develops. Pharaoh Sanders' "The Creator Has A Master Plan" is the real gem for me of these songs, one of their best covers ever. The intro is about 3 minutes long to this one by the way! Isobel's flute really shines on this one, some of the best I've heard from her on all of BP's output. Explosive kaleidoscopes of color and sound that turn-on your brain! Yes, the song is long (about 15 min.), but it's what is necessary to achieve the high level of elevation that Bardo Pond can take you to!

Artist: The Byrds
Album: Fifth Dimension
Label: Columbia/Legacy



Summer in the sixties baby, summer of July 1966 to be exact, the Byrds unleash their third (and in my opinion best) album, AND the first one that's not swimming in Bob Dylan covers! Just a beautiful sounding 60's psychedelic record from start to finish. "5D (Fifth Dimension)" kicks the album off and is probably THE best song on the record. 5D is the kind of song that if you REALLY listen and take it all in, that you sit back and start questioning your patterns of behavior... in other words if you're led astray on a bad fork in the road, this song can sort of steer you back onto the path of bliss and lift the curtain of things that can sometimes cloud our visions as we all walk through life... this song sort of helps you see the bigger picture to me... no wonder it was banned on many radio stations! Maybe one of the best psychedelic lines in a 60's record - "and I opened my heart to the whole universe and found it was loving - and I saw the great blunder my teachers had made - scientific delirium madness." The song "I Come And Stand At Every Door" is fantastic - an eerie, beautiful, anti-war, cry for peace, sung through a little girl who died at the age of seven at the hands of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima. Years ago I thought this was a Misunderstood song "I Unseen," then come to find out it's the Byrds that did it first and that it's the English translation of a poem from Turkish writer Nazim Hikmet Ran. Another classic on here with "Eight Miles High," I mean could there be a better example of beautiful 60's psychedelia than this gem? Roger McGuinn's manic, jumpy, Coltrane-influenced 12-string guitar work really makes this song shine, and those drums kicking in between each verse add to the effect and launch you higher and higher till you get to the Eight Mile mark, musical elevation you could say? Their psychedelized cover of "Wild Mountain Thyme" also brings you to that space of psychedelic bliss... If you don't have this 60's psych classic yet, get it!!!

Artist: Bob Dylan
Album: Live At The Gaslight 1962
Label: Columbia



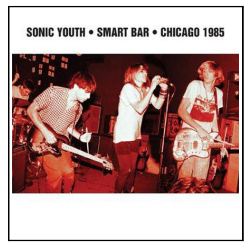
I only recently picked this live Bob Dylan album up, and I don't know why it took me so long to do so.. the fact that Starfucks was hawkwing it may have turned me off perhaps. This recording features Dylan very early on in his career, performing a show at the Gaslight Cafe in New York's Greenwich Village. Contained are some of the earliest performances ever captured of some of Dylan's best songs including the opener "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," Dylan's epic tune of impending doom and the injustices and tragedies of life, a warning of apocalyptic visions brought back from a prophet perhaps... one of his true masterpieces, and a great early version here... It's actually been said that Dylan wrote this song in a room above the Gaslight Cafe on Wavy Gravy's typewriter! Very early "Don't Think Twice It's All Right" is played here also, these songs wouldn't be formally released on record until the "Freewheelin'" album was released the following year in 1963. We get treated to lots of the folkey-type Dylan material here, and he still had that whole Woody-Guthrie sort of twang going on in his voice at the time. That lovely Dylan fingerpickin' also displayed throughout, just listen to it on that cover of the traditional song "Cocaine," and the beautiful "Barbara Allen," another two gems on here. The sound quality is fantastic on this, giving even a warm feel like you're sitting in this little coffee house witnessing the early stages of a true artistic genius.

Artist: Creation Of Sunlight
Album: Creation Of Sunlight
Label: Lion Productions/Hallucinations



Here's a slice of well revered Californian sunshine 60's psych-pop that failed to really impress me other than a couple of the "choice nugs" within the collection. A lot of it sounds dated, but in a bad way for me... I'm ok with dated, but something about this is just... reminds me of a bad TV sitcom theme song, a lot of the songs. I dig "Light Without Heat," cool mellow 60's pop. Some decent fuzz guitar throughout the record. "Seven Times Infinity" I believe is the best track on the album with its ascending fuzzed bass guitar and wah wah guitar break in the middle. Thought I was in for another mind-blower like "Plastic Cloud," but was disappointed here.

Artist: Sonic Youth
Album: Smart Bar - Chicago - 1985
Label: Goofin'



"Bad Moon Rising" from 1985 is the first album I ever bought from New York's melodic noise rockers Sonic Youth. During a perfect time too - in the chilly fall season, and the eerie music went well with the cool evenings during that start of 10th grade... Great live show here from that era. Killer drumming from "new guy" at the time Steve Shelley. Unreleased song "Kat N' Hat," as well as a glimpse of some "Evol" tunes. Over an hour of early SY soundscapes from a live 4-track recording. Can't go wrong if ya dig early SY!

Artist: The Cramps
Album: Psychedelic Jungle/Gravest Hits
Label: A&M Records



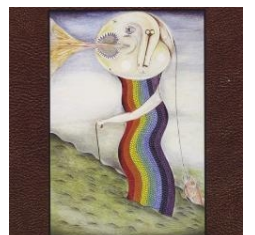
Lux Interior and Poison Ivy made a great couple, and they also made some killer psycho-billy, demented surf, garage-punk ROCK N' ROLL baby! This single disc includes two great things - you get the Cramp's second album from 1981 "Psychedelic Jungle," AND their very first release, the "Gravest Hits" EP from 1979. Psychedelic Jungle has some great songs on it including some Cramped-up 60's covers as well, like their heavy, driving version of Randy Alvey & The Green Fuz's "Green Fuz," and the Cramps version just oozes cool out of the speakers as you crank your stereo receiver and let that ooze of cool wash over YOU - let it happen, let the Cramps dement your mind and enhance your soul with inspired demented mother-fuckin' rock and roll. How about that cover of the Nuggets-immortalized 60's band The Groupie's "Primitive," a song just made for Lux Interior's vocal chords - cool, bad, whatcha' gonna do about it attitude, timeless. Primitive, that's how I live.... I love "Beautiful Gardens" too, just rocks so hard - and displays the insanely great guitar work that the Cramp's had in their music thanks to Kid Kongo Powers. Lux Interior's vocal acrobatics are always a treat, he was great, just listen to those hollers and tongue rolling gyrations on "Goo Goo Muck," just awesome. "Human Fly" starts things off for the Gravest Hits part of this set... such a great song with Lux's buzz buzz bzzzzzzzzzzzz reverberating through the speakers. Lux's vocal acrobatics displayed again on their cover of "Surfin Bird," rival that of Joey Ramone's from the "It's Alive" live Ramones record, oh and the Cramp's version is extended with some killer Link Wray-like chicken-scratchin' slidey gee-tar work my friends. The Cramps are a great band to party with friends together or late-night drives through desolate industrial towns with graveyards peppering the landscape.

Artist: The Bees
45: Voices Green And Purple/Trip To New Orleans
Label: UT Records



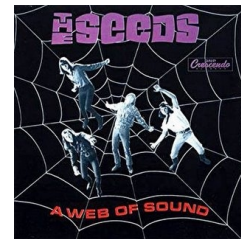
Mike Stax and Ugly Things magazine have given us quite the treat here with their re-release of an old Nugs classic from the BEES - the bad acid trip tale "Voices Green And Purple" and the not-so-shabby itself "Trip To New Orleans." UT has re-issued this with the original cover sleeve; that killer, totally PUNK rock looking album art - just bizarre stuff - read more about that cover and the meanings behind some of the gibberish written on the walls in issue #34 of Ugly Things. They used the cleanest vinyl-source available and with the graces of bassist/singer Robbie Wood, bring you the best quality available that you will find of this 1966 garage/punk classic in which the original had only 250 pressed!

Artist: Sunburst Carrier
Album: Part Diamond
Label: A Landscape For Cowboys



Out of Shrewsbury, New Jersey come Lisa Kowalew and Jeff Weiner of Sunburst Carrier. Great stuff to check out. Guitar work really shines on here; fluid, melodic... some of their stuff is reminiscent of Sonic Youth's mellower material a la "Murray St." Drums sound great, even some nice piano on the album. Far-out album cover to boot!

Artist: The Seeds
Album: A Web Of Sound
Label: Big Beat/Ace Records



The next installment of Big Beat Record's delicious re-issues of the classic old Seeds albums is here with "A Web Of Sound" from 1966. While the Seed's first record is a bit more primitive, gruff n' punk, this album we really see the Seeds come into their own, and their sound evolving a with a bit more experimentation. You really get the best of both worlds; Sky Saxon's sneering, snarling punk vocals as well as the trippy organ/keyboard sounds provided by Darryl Hooper. Oh, couldn't forget that great 60's fuzz-tone piercing out of the speakers to give that extra spike to the brain from Jan Savage... that's gotta be a Maestro Fuzz Tone fuzz box, right? Anyway, with Big Beat records I think it's safe to know that you are getting your moneys worth with the sound quality, packaging and extra goodies - with this you get a 2 disc set with the original stereo mix on the first disc and the original mono mix on the 2nd disc for the first time ever. Disc 1 also features some bonus tracks/alternate takes and disc 2 features basically another full album with "A Full Spoon Of Seedy Blues," which is not quite as SEED-y as you'd get from the SEEDS, but it's a nice addition and good to sneak into your collection under the guise of the Web of Sound album, save some shelf space perhaps? The swirling psych sounds of "Pictures & Designs," the epic 14+ minute sex-laden orgasmic 60's tune "Up In Her Room," the superior sound quality... the beautiful digi-pack case, 32 PAGE BOOKLET with interviews and well researched info from Alec Palao. What are you waiting for - go to the garden...

Artist: Syd Barrett
Album: Wouldn't You Miss Me?
Label: Capitol



This is easily the best "greatest hits" collection of Syd Barrett's post Pink Floyd solo material. A collection of 22 songs that I think are a good choice as a solid introduction to Syd's solo works. Starts off with 3 of the greats from Syd's first solo record "The Madcap Laughs;" Octopus which is a classic example of the whimsical Syd with his fun child-like wonder lyrics, this particular song is actually about a ride at the carnival... oh a fun little fact I learned recently from reading about Syd is that the title of the record "The Madcap Laughs" actually came about with David Gilmour mis-hearing a line in this song, he heard the line "the mad cat laughed at the man on the border" as "the madcap laughed at the man on the border," a good thing too as "madcap" is such a better word for Syd and the title of the record in my opinion! Anyway, back to this collection, in which all the songs are also remastered, and they sound amazing, much more depth with this remastering. Glad that one of my favorites, "Terrapin" is included here - such a stoney sort of song that you can just space out too with its slow sort of seductive crawl of mellow acoustic and electric guitar combo, one of the first solo Syd songs I heard and still one of my all time faves. OH, one of the essential pieces of this collection is the previously unavailable, and to my knowledge still unavailable anywhere else is Syd's amazing tribute song to Bob Dylan, "Bob Dylan Blues" that he wrote back in 1963 (possibly after catching a live Dylan show w/ Gilmour) but didn't record until 1970 - but didn't see the light of day until 2001! Thanks to David Gilmour for digging through his vaults so that this recording wasn't lost in time. If you're only going to own one collection of the madcap's solo material, this is the one to get as it contains songs from both his solo records, "Madcap Laughs" and "Barrett," and even some songs from the collection of outtakes album "Opel," with which the great title song is included...oh and "Bob Dylan Blues" is probably now my favorite tribute song to "Mr. Dylan-the king."

Artist: Spacemen 3
Album: Sound Of Confusion
Label: Taang! Records



Spacemen 3's 1986 debut is still my favorite from these fuzzed out drug-inspired English heads. Gotta love that uber fuzzed-out, stoned-drone heavy sound. Great 8 minute cover of 13th Floor Elevators' ode to the benefits of psychedelic enlightenment - "Roller Coaster." I think that this record does, as band leader Sonic Boom wished - "connects with the other fucked up children of this world."

FEATURE REVIEW

Artist: **CHROME**

Album: **HALF MACHINE FROM THE SUN (THE LOST TRACKS FROM '79-'80)**

Label: **KING OF SPADES RECORDS**

Thanks to the fans contributing towards a kickstarter campaign started by Helios Creed, tapes from Oliver DiCicco's Mobius Studios consisting of recordings from the original Chrome period of 1979-1980 were bought back (Chrome originally had failed to pay their bills apparently) and able to be released for Chrome fan's listening pleasure. This is perhaps the biggest revelation on Chrome to come out since the original Helios/Damon split up around 1983. "Half Machine From The Sun" consists of well over an hour of original Helios/Damon era Chrome material that has never been released until now! First off, the sound quality is amazing on this, thanks to Jay Tausig for the top-notch remastering, the sound is absolutely brilliant. The collection starts off with some heavy, metallic sounds during the start of **"Anything"** which consists of a killer fuzzed out guitar riff from Helios, along with the warped vocals reminiscent of their song "New Age" from 1980's Red Exposure. Classic Chrome sounds and oddly danceable! The next song **"SALT"** is a favorite from this collection of unreleased Chrome - trippy, flanged-out and sort of eastern guitar sounds from Helios, and Damon singing about the "SALT" talks between the U.S. and the Soviet Union back in the 70's?? **"Looking For Your Door"** is another one of the gems on this release - with lyrics sung by Helios and that tight groove that Chrome were known for, trippy leads from Helios and an amazing bit of "angular" guitar work with an eerie sort of feeling given off from the

controlled-feedback. This track also gives us more of that Shawn Phillips-inspired crooning from Helios that we heard on his first vocal presence on a Chrome track during Alien Soundtracks "Pygmies In Zee Park," so this surely fits the grade for classic early Chrome sounds. **"Tomorrow Yesterday"** is an interesting piece; groovy fuzzed sounds from Damon's Moog, vocals sung through what sounds like a megaphone - yes, pre-dates Butthole Surfers days kiddies! Dig how the end leads right into "Eyes In The Center" from the Red Exposure album. **"The Inevitable"** is a cool little instrumental where it just keeps descending down and down accompanied by strange, garbled vocal sounds - classic Chrome strangeness, Helios' guitar tones are great too. **"Fukushima (Nagasaki)"** starts off with a soundscape that sounds similar to Red Exposure's "Static Gravity," and the song has a tight groove, and shines with that early unconventional drumming style from Damon where the fills are placed in the oddest of places, Helios' guitar leads are killer on this song as well. **"Charles Little Problem"**

is a short piece, a playful sort of song with elementary piano piece throughout - Chrome's nursery rhyme perhaps, put your kids to bed to the sounds of Chrome! Hahaha.... **"Ghost"** is one of the more bizarre numbers with Damon taking vocals on this, truly warped-out freaky vocals - in another song that continues a downward descending in the rhythm of the track, also on this one a phenomena where the vocals were isolated and they don't equate until it becomes a part of the mix and evolves into the full spectrum of the song - sounds in the vocals that don't become present until it's all mixed together - Helios says the vocals are maybe "what ghosts sound like when they try to sing." **"Sound And Light"** - another great track of flanged-out acid Chrome sounds. **"Autobahn Brazil"** is a killer Chrome instrumental with Helios' dripping acid guitar wizardry, Damon's unique drumming all the while with a b/g of TV sound that we all love of the early Chrome records. **"Sub Machine"** is very Pink Floyd-esque for Chrome, and the song is actually quite mesmerizing and beautiful really. **"Morrison"** is a short experimental piece of the title chanted along with other short phrases. **"The Rain"** is a melodic piece again with Helios' Shawn Phillips-inspired vocal treatments. **"Something Rhythmic"** - it's been said that it could've been a hit.... a danceable number featuring the 2 Scorpios sharing the vocals together. Lyrics yelling "I can't wait" and "I need you tied to my bedpost" - well Chrome did say that "women and sex" were one of their inspirations! **"Housewarming Party"** reminds me of those early Chrome records like "Half Machine Lip Moves" and even "Read Only Memory" with all the abstract bells and whistles and things - imagining a collaborating Helios and Damon in studio going nuts creating this strange piece that sounds like one of those wacky trains the folks at Whoville were riding in The Grinch Christmas cartoon classic! **"Sugar Moog Pops"** is a cool little Moog piece that eventually breaks into a cool little flanged-out drumming section of the song, reminds me of a similar break in the song "Trip Thru Hell Pt. 1" from the CA Quintet's classic 1968 album. **"Intervention"** is a short 15-second piece of feedback and noise - very Chrome-like to toss that in the mix! **"Sunset"** appropriately ends this heady trip through the early Chrome days - reminiscent of a "Blood On The Moon" instrumental, it's a great way to end this incredible collection of "Lost Chrome Tracks." This is MUST-HAVE material for Chrome fans, and thankfully these were salvaged and properly re-mastered to be put out there for fans of the band to enjoy and not lost, gathering dust in some basement due to Helios and Damon's "forgetting" to pay! A true treasure for Chrome fans to cherish for years to come.



'Lean On Me Chromie'

L to R: Oliver DiCicco, Damon Edge, Helios Creed - September 24, 1979 @ Mobius Studios

BARDO POND

FINALLY, a local psych band to my hometown of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania are included in an issue of Psych Trail Mix! Bardo Pond was originally formed in 1991 and have developed quite the following and deservedly so. With the Gibbons brother's (Michael and John) wall of fuzzed out guitar/white noise soundscapes, Clint Takeda's creative/energetic bass guitar work, Jason Kourkonis's fluid drumming, all combined with the angelic vocals and other-worldly flute sounds of Isobel Sollenberger, Bardo Pond are one of the BEST psych bands in Philly today. Isobel's haunting, mesmerizing vocals are the perfect complement to the swirling noise and chaos of the mighty Bardo's sound; she's like Nico, if Nico were a tad more psychedelized! The albums are all amazing, many named with obvious references to psychedelia, but if you get to see them perform live, THAT is really their element. They put on amazing live shows and I've witnessed several. I had the pleasure of interviewing lead vocalist/flutist Isobel, and I'm PSYCHED to include that interview in this issue of Psych Trail Mix! Enjoy!

What are your earliest memories of getting into music as well as taking up the flute and singing?

My mom's mom did some singing professionally and she had quite a repertoire, so she was always singing for me and my brother. My parents had a collection of late 60's and early 70's records and they were always spinning, too. One of my earliest memories is of my mom waking us up in the morning with the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun". She used to take us to yoga class with her and there was always a "free jam" at the end of class with the yogachary's instruments. And in general, we did a lot of listening and dancing to music for fun. Then in grade school I picked up the flute, and it was really tough at first, but I stuck with it. There was a pretty healthy music program in my high school in New Jersey and that's where I really started learning how to play and sing, in the marching band and choir and some musicals too.

What musicians inspire you from the past? And who today stimulates your brain?

This is a hard one! There is so much to love and appreciate. And it depends, too, on what I am doing in the moment. When I am doing pure listening and traveling through my brain and making visual art, it's been jazz and free jazz; Sun Ra, Pharoah Sanders, Albert Ayler, John and Alice Coltrane, Don Cherry, and Ornette Coleman have really been keeping me going. Today I am digging a lot of local artists: Chris Forsyth, Birds of Maya, Spacin', Watery Love! The Strapping Field Hands and Brother JT are two of my favorite bands of all time, so I feel so lucky whenever I get to see those guys playing in Philly. I've been really blessed to work this freelance art handling job with John, where there is a turntable in the shop, and when I'm working I definitely dig a more structured song-based vibe. This week I was listening to The Hombres, David Gilmour, The Pretty Things, The Nazz, and Procol Harum, among others - basically whatever we've picked up on vinyl. And I'm so psyched the Philadelphia Record Exchange just moved into my neighborhood, we've been making more visits over there!



Isobel Sollenberger
Philadelphia, PA, 2013

A lot of your album names are psychedelic references... who is responsible for those names, a single person or the band as a whole? And is psychedelia in general a fairly big inspiration to the sounds of Bardo Pond?

Well, it's more of the band as a whole. I think we found music as our way to enter the altered state. And in particular, music fueled with electricity.

How was Bardo Pond's mini tour of Australia, were you guys well received?

It was real fast and furious, a lot of flying... The best part was listening to and meeting the opening bands. A lot of great music in Australia! Our show in Melbourne was awesome because there were a lot of strong women musicians in two bands, the Ohms and Pearls. Mt. Mountain and Scum of the Earth from Perth sounded amazing, very heavy. The crowds were really enthusiastic, really present, and it felt so good to be there playing our music.



11-16-07 - The Vacuum
Philadelphia, PA

What are some of your favorite songs to play at live shows?

I've been enjoying "Rumination" from Amanita more than ever. Mostly, I love doing the tunes from our last record, the self-titled: "Cracker Wrist" is super-fun, and then we've been doing two songs with a noisy segue between- "Don't Know About You" into "Stars Behind"; I think "Stars Behind" is my newest fave, it's so open, I am always finding new things in it; it gets really sonic and improvisational and uncontrollable, and that's the best feeling of all.

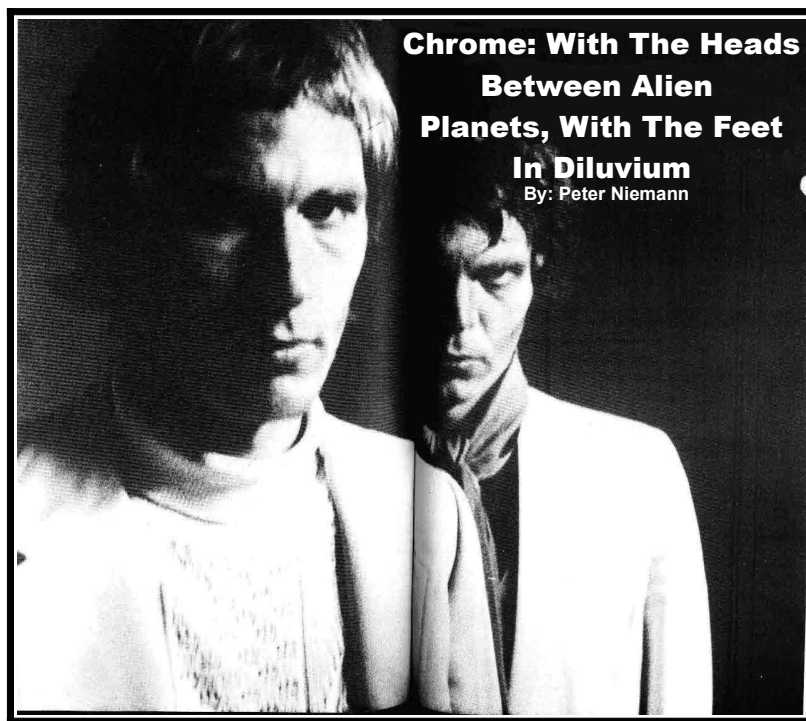
How do you like living in Philadelphia?

I like Philadelphia, it's been a loving and soulful mother. I feel like I've always been here.



8-15-13 - Race St. Pier
Philadelphia, PA

****Be sure to check out Bardo Pond's NEW LP "Peace On Venus" due out Oct. 29th on Fire Records!!****



**Chrome: With The Heads
Between Alien
Planets, With The Feet
In Diluvium**
By: Peter Niemann

The following is an account of a 3 day visitation with Damon Edge and Helios Creed in 1981 by a journalist named Peter Niemann. Following this interview is an interview with Peter about this encounter with CHROME by Jens Dornheim. This essay was originally published in a book entitled "Rock Sessions Vol. 6," in German. A HUGE thanks to Jens Dornheim for the German to English translation. This essay was re-printed with permission from Peter Niemann.

San Francisco – main hippie town of old days – Haight Ashbury – today the town of the most pathetic and at once most repulsive bums in the world. Burned out flower power people – stuck on pink dreams of the 1960s. Only long glued hair are left – no colorful clothes anymore – no prospect of ever getting higher than their drugs carry them. The kindest bums I have ever met who apologize when they ask for a few Cents, but not without the psychological urge that oneself is actually the bastard whose fault it all is. “Hey man, you know Frank Zappa?” “Yes.” “You know Captain Beefheart?” “Yes, I heard his music.” “How about 50 cents? I’m Wild Man Fisher.” There he is, showing me he his identification as a proof. The legend, he, who became famous because he made music with Mr. Zappa on one of his records which is out of stock for ages. Just on the edge of insanity – a sinking into rock icon dreams and yet knowing it’s all over. “Elvis Costello is big. Is Elvis Costello bigger than me?”

Five years ago for the first time in San Francisco, Berkeley – I hoped to meet Jerry Rubin on the streets when I noticed that you could buy “Do it” second hand in all bookshops. A book cobbled and in miserable state in a time the German alternative bookshops kept on dreaming to re-publish it again. “Do it” had been re-released since and sold a lot of copies – at that time Messiah Jerry Rubin had already published his refusal of what he was once fighting for – “Growing Up At 37”. Today Haight Ashbury is populated by rather wealthy people. What Rubin scarcely failed with his candidature as mayor, Jello Biafra also tried. San Francisco – huge demonstrations against the Vietnam-mistake, huge Open-Air concerts, (GRATEFUL DEAD, JEFFERSON AIRPLANE) – psychedelic, always unique in its music in spite of the striking distance to Los Angeles where three powers meet – film, television, music. San Francisco has its own music, a trend-setter. When the last concert of the SEX PISTOLS romped over the stage, Los Angeles still kept dreaming to the music of the EAGLES. THE DEAD KENNEDYS are from San Francisco, PEARL HARBOR AND THE EXPLOSIONS, TUXEDOMOON, ROMEO VOID and long before all of them THE RESIDENTS. These four gentlemen from Louisiana, the Cryptic Corporation, are the link to CHROME – not musically speaking, but from a business point of view.

The fact that CHROME appears on the “Subterranean Modern” album of the Ralph-label is rather a coincidence or more likely an accident. Back then, 1979, conversations were conducted that CHROME might possibly change to Ralph. These thoughts were probably not taken too serious by both sides – “but we knew it would be a historical album and therefore we absolutely wanted to be on it!” explains Damon. On this sampler of bands like MX-80 SOUND, TUXEDOMOON and RESIDENTS everyone plays amongst others a version of the old hit *I left my heart in San Francisco*. CHROME’S contribution: a more than 27 seconds swelling capstan. CHROME had their own label from the start – Siren Records. The first LP called “Visitation”, an opus that was recorded at home like many of the following CHROME pieces, on a simple four-track-system. “Visitation” is in Damon’s point of view the inglorious beginning of his musical career. A subject you better keep silent about. I wasn’t even allowed to this old music, I wasn’t even allowed to take a LP with me. If everything goes as scheduled the last remainders will soon be sold and shut away – this might be a good hint for speculators. Even before this LP Damon had been in the music business. In Los Angeles he played in a band who understood themselves as avant-garde group. Back then he was still registered for arts at the university. One of his lecturers was Allen Kaprow the >inventor< of happenings. Damon denies to come out with the name of his first band and also not with the names of the old friends. Five people had been in the group: Drums, guitar, bass guitar, violin, wind section. Damon took the drums and synthesizer parts. In retrospect he seems not too happy with his elitistic art-trip – which may be the reason that he did not make much out of his academic studies. Of course he is the one who did the layout for all covers.

Damon moved to San Francisco, auditioned for some people on the drums, was allowed to stay, suggested to make a LP – and created “The Visitation”. The guitarist of the band from Los Angeles played sporadically on it, the name CHROME didn’t exist yet, the basic tracks are blurred and wide. Damon: “It sounds just as it is – a piece of shit. The only good thing was its name.” >Visitation< At the same time David Bowie had a song in his film *The Man who Fell to Earth* called “The Visitors”. Damon: “That happens to us a lot of times. It seems to be a collective consciousness which surrounds some people – but it gives you a feeling of being stupid. You discover the best of names and ideas just to find out someone else has already used something similar.”

A huge warehouse was rent which featured enough space for rehearsing and living rooms for everyone, but the guitarist became a speed freak and had other things on his mind. Already booked concerts had to be cancelled because of too little practice – everything went wrong and probably fortunately for Damon. The band split. Shortly after, Damon met Helios through the bass player Gary. Both names, Damon Edge and Helios Creed, are phantasy names which both of them invented independently from each other. It was still during long-haired times and before the little music revolution. Both names are characteristically for the personalities of the two friends. Damon is the dark, gruff Burkhard Driest guy (*note: Driest, born in Germany 1939, was a former bank-robber and then actor; often cast as a villain*) who only talks with this deep, bubbling voice if he inclines to do so or if it could be useful for business. He has a reputation that he does not like anybody, does not care for anybody and antagonized a lot of people. There are not many humans he accepts – Snakefinger is one of them and of course Helios, Mister Nice Guy who can be friendly even to those he does not like, something that could never happen to Damon. Both are so different, the misanthrope and the daydreamer – both are one in music.

The story of the second LP is actually a smart financial trick – it worked to pre-finance the production long before the thing took precise forms. The magazine *Bomp* of the homonymous label from Los Angeles wrote a review on “The Visitation” in one of their last editions and Damon placed an advert of the new record in this very edition, including cover art with the note that you better order it soon. In the US it is often commonly accepted that you can buy directly by sending money to the declared address – and to hope it was not a swindle. Those mail orders are a good way to get records which are not listed in the regular catalogues of the wholesale dealers. When Damon opened his mail box one morning a huge amount of those precious letters tumbled towards him - all asking for the second album. Damon as cool as always: “Well, and then we just decided to make the album everyone had already bought.” “Alien Soundtracks” was recorded by Damon and Helios in two weeks in a house in Berkeley. A quick work and a cheap one as well. It is like Geri Reig but it does not sound like it. Back then the guys had to glue the covers themselves. In spite of the brilliant financial coup there was still not enough money – they had to lend another 900 Dollars. Up to now CHROME was rather fun than a chance to make money. For Damon, music was an alternative to brush and paint. Damon: “We work with music because we like music. We work with music because there isn’t anything else. We want to make art. We made collages and audiovisual things. But it is not only art, it is *psychic art*.” “Alien Soundtracks” caused sensation. The press started to gain interest for this off-the-wall band who produced themselves and who had additionally founded one of the first independent American labels but which was never intended to accept further bands. Now it came to CHROME’s ears that also other audacious people from San Francisco had interesting plans – the RESIDENTS. In habitus they were close to CHROME, rarely performing live, independent productions, no conscious commerciality. A friendship has maintained until this day especially with Jay Clem, the business man of the RESIDENTS. The mystery circling around this band isn’t one anymore in San Francisco.



That was in 1978. Now there were only two members left in the band. Gary and John are still registered on the inlay of “Alien Soundtracks” because old tapes had been used. Only two musicians which also meant that more instruments had to be handled by both of them. And it worked. On many occasions Helios has discovered a melody on his guitar which is finally used by Damon on his synthesizer. The vocals are equally divided, as it should be amongst brothers. “We are both Scorpions” Damon comments meaningfully. “And pay attention that the number of photos is equally parted between us!” “Half Machine Lip Moves” was the impressive title of the third album. Just five months after the finishing of the “Alien Soundtracks” recordings they started realizing the new project. There was enough money floating in and there was nothing else to do than business as usual, so time was ripe for “Half Machine Lip Moves”. During a period of five months they met several times a day but nothing much came to pass. Damon: “We did not record anything unless we felt enormously inspired. We were completely stoned for days.”

Apparently, drugs are an important key to the music of CHROME. This solid rock pounding aggressively, deep and charged with emotions through the cranked up amplifiers, gains a certain meaning due to psychedelic electric effects which can be especially discovered in an altered state. Damon and Helios have both extensive drug experience but have never become addicted. They are both too rational and future-oriented to get into severe addiction. New plans are coming up. Psychedelic – another key to the music of the two loners. This band of the new psychedelic scene developed against San Francisco’s historical background and according to Helios this scene also includes bands like JOY DIVISION, KILLING JOKE and SNAKEFINGER. In CHROME’s understanding the psychedelic, the other dimension, the profoundness of music is of importance for the content of the music. Not many bands are accepted by Damon as terrific – Snakefinger is one of the few because he is almost psychedelic. “Half Machine Lip Moves” did and still does sell very well. Like many copies of the older LPs still do because the group’s fan base steadily grows. The press finally paid attention to the group although many still were not sure who the people behind the band really are. There were rarely interviews. One by phone for example where Damon talks surprisingly open about his time at art school. No live concerts. No adverts and boring news. On the records, Gary was still mentioned as a musician although he did not really contribute to their development anymore. But Damon and Helios thought that people would not



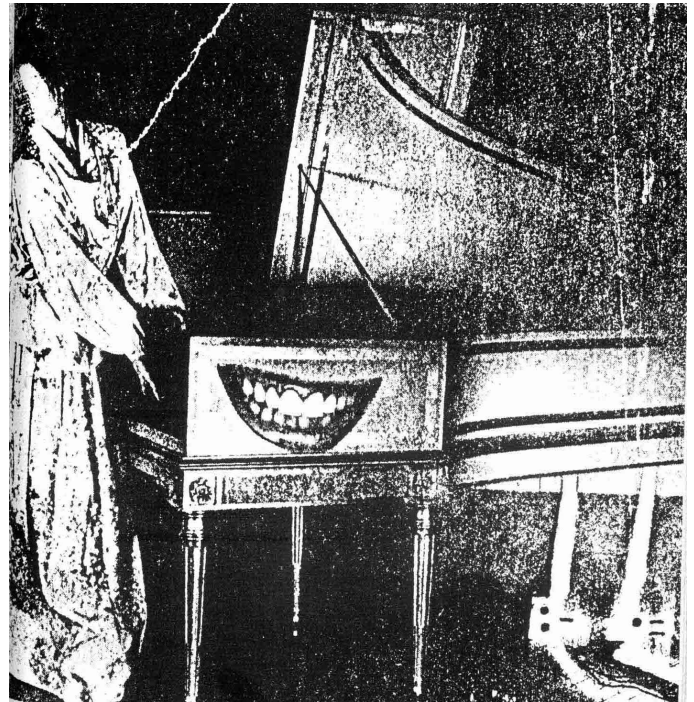
understand how just two persons could make this music which droned almost live through the speakers. Again, they made enough money to realize new recordings. The “Subterranean Modern” sampler was produced by *Ralph* and made its awaited mark. Not least that work placed TUXEDOMOON into the ear of many listeners – Chrome gained also many new fans from this San Francisco album.

Probably on the height of their drug career Helios and Damon recorded “Read Only Memory” – an EP which was made in a very short time under the considerable influence of a huge amount of opium. The result is an indigestive collage which calls for the listeners imagination. Damon thinks it is the perfect soundtrack for Bertolucci’s film *La Luna*. It would not be the first time that Damon had done music for a film. Already in the old Los Angeles times he composed a soundtrack for an MGM B-movie which had to be done live during the film. It was at a time when he had to fight for jobs. Nowadays he is more relaxed. There is enough money for the undertaking, enough for all involved participants to survive and enough for new projects to realize. The nerve-wracking and quite unprofitable direct-mailing of records to individuals is completely out of Helios’ and Damon’s minds. They feel too established and too valuable.

Others are doing this tiresome necessity now. All “Siren Records” are distributed through wholesale dealers but they were only supplied when they order reasonable amounts of records. Since 1980 they have a contract with *Beggars Banquet* (the label of Gary Numan) which is part of WEA. With the help of the English company which has also sub-labels like *4 AD* (Bauhaus) or *Don't Fall Off the Mountain* (Raybeats) they could use a well-equipped studio for the first time. For 15.000 US-Dollars “Red Exposure” was produced here – which was received quite controversial by critics because it was a lot softer than anything Chrome had done before. One could get the impression that they are running out of steam. “Red Exposure” sounds like it was recorded by command. Damon explains that they heralded a more quiet period on purpose because it was just the right time and the vibrations to do so. But Damon is also a very smart guy who would never admit a mistake or a weakness in the CHROME discography. In his personal charts CHROME stands alone at the top. NEU, JOY DIVISION and SNAKEFINGER follow on his list after a while.

“Red Exposure” is an intentionally commercial album which was appropriately merchandised – and with success. A single like “New Age” is an extraordinary undertaking for a band like CHROME. Helios: “We are actually not a Single-band but it happened with our agreement.” In addition to the Single, two video clips were made by Damon and Helios with comparatively long preparation. Parts of one of the clips were filmed on a nearby graveyard – a permission for shooting on this quite extraordinary location of course took its time. Changing colors, swapping sequences and persons who are hard to recognize, should give the right expression for the music. This mystic element is consciously used by both of them – like on the cover arts where never any of them is recognizable, except for “Inworlds” maybe. I have not recognized Damon by all means when I waited for him in the hall of the Essex Hotel and he walked through the reception in a John Wayne style. I spent three days with him and Helios – films, music, Tequila Sunrise, a radio show with Ray from *Rough Trade* San Francisco and Damon nearly for a night in prison: his car was towed away when we were having some drinks in a noble hotel. It emerged that he had not paid some old parking violation tickets and he was faced the choice of paying 130 Dollars or spending a night in prison until the money came in. Damon: “I have never been in prison, at least not in the United States.” In England he had the misfortune of getting caught with some knives in his bag at the airport. It was just at the time when he recorded “Red Exposure”. Warner Brothers sent three lawyers immediately. After the release of “Red Exposure” the level of awareness for CHROME in Europe grew enormously. It was always bigger than in the US, especially in France where Damon's wife Fabienne lives who also sings every once a while in a band. In France they are so famous, they even appear in the French yellow press. Helios is from Hawaii where his illegitimate child lives along with his brother. The mother has been sent to a kind of asylum. Damon: “It happened when it all started with CHROME. She is one of the victims that CHROME demanded. I think there are even more.”

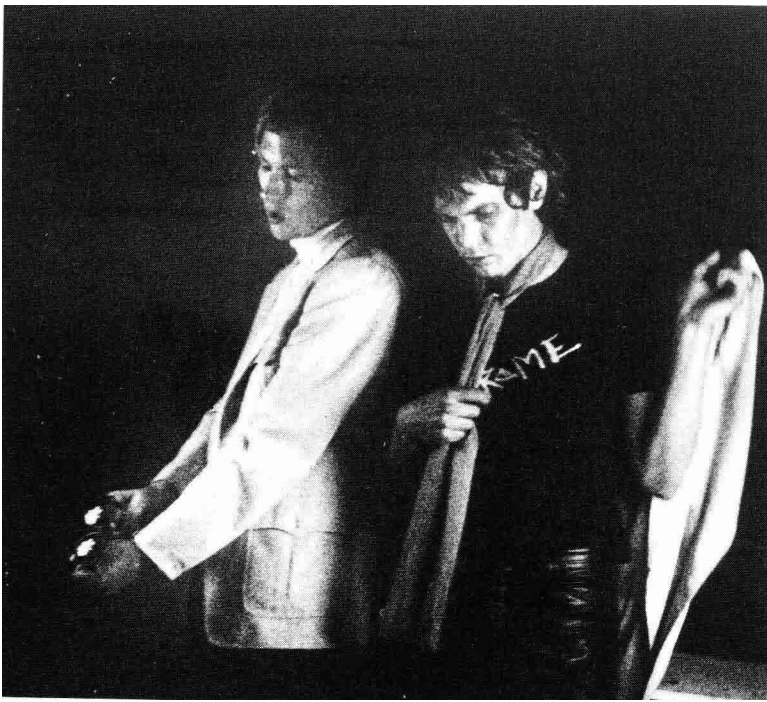
Beggars Banquet decided to release also “Half machine Lip Moves” on their own label. There has been some trouble with Warner Brothers because of an advert for the “Inworlds” EP which was released at the beginning of 1981 on the small label *Don't Fall off the Mountain* – and its sound definitely had a New Wave atmosphere. The time for recording the two songs took a month – exactly the same time which was needed to record the whole “Red Exposure” LP. Perhaps a small sign of stagnation? Lewd, interplanetary creatures were shown in the WEA advert and they were so little appreciated by the CHROME boys that they are going to do the layout for those issues themselves again. Damon: “Those people do not want to hurt you. They are inspired by something but when they are doing such things it's just not right because they do not really understand it.”



Producing EPs has become fashionable ever since the very low financial strength of the independent labels and has been adopted by larger companies to give the semblance of belonging together. Out of the necessity of producing without much effort they made a virtue, yes, even a new strategy on the market. With the help of the easy to finance Singles or EPs the market is scanned and informed at the same time. By splitting the funds in many small projects the risk of a capital fail-investment has been reduced. More people now have the possibility to present themselves on vinyl in public – it's an overrun on the whole musical and cultural landscape in never known variety. Originally CHROME did not belong to the New Wave jungle. Fans were mainly long-haired speed freaks. But the transformation did happen unremarkably and smoothly – just as the consciousness of the musicians. Moritz of DER PLAN: “After the whole punk thing there was suddenly CHROME. I'm a huge fan of this music.” So CHROME slipped into the sales department of New Wave – maybe this is also why the “Inworlds” EP was released. “Read Only Memory” is also an EP but it was a completed work which had this range by pure chance. But CHROME as a New Wave formation? Damon: “What we do could maybe be described as spacepunk. It is not only art. It is ‘psychic art’. We know we are doing something special. That was always the reason why we continued.”

CHROME understand their music not only as pure entertainment but as a very important contribution to the whole western society. Their music, which basically contains simple rock schemes and overdubbed electronics, creates anyhow the impression of high standards and difficult musical structures and evolves from the intellectual approach to make art. The music of their last album “Blood on the Moon” seems to be freed from this barrier as it sounds pure and direct. Damon: “We were going back to the roots of our music – to where we've never been.” One could call the music of this LP with its instrumentation and simplicity almost minimalistic. Damon only plays one synthesizer (the Moog-guitar synthesizer) and its heavy image fits to him perfectly. Helios operates on the guitar and two new people are there, John and Hilary, who are established as constant band members now. Where in the past, at least to me, the last kick was missing or the pressure of the band was not concentrated enough, now the new force of the combined CHROME sound is pounding. John and Hilary Stench are brothers. “That's OK. Helios and I are also like brothers” says Damon. Both were in the first PEARL HARBOR AND THE EXPLOSIONS formation. When PEARL HARBOR criticized in an interview with the English *Zig Zag* magazine that her old band was too Jazz-connected, one can only wonder what the lady meant. “At the very first sessions when the new songs were slowly developed, I often had the impression that Hilary was sitting bored behind his drum kit – but as soon as the recording machine was running this man exploded and electrified all of us. We have assembled an unbelievably good band here.” Insofar Helios' enthusiasm about the new friends.

Due to the two new members, Helios and Damon gained a great freedom in concentrating on their special instruments. A duo with a rhythm section. “There were times in the studio where Hilary and John had strange ideas of how we should make music. Then we decided very quickly that we should fire our sound engineer – from that moment it went well” declares Damon and indicates that the two old war dogs will still hold the reigns in the future. Nevertheless the two newcomers wrote all of their music themselves which was not a huge problem because all of them actually agreed musically from the beginning.



L To R: Helios Creed & Damon Edge

Neither Helios nor Damon are able to read music or work with music in a theoretical way. "We are inspired through a sound and create a song around it." When Helios explains it that way it sounds probably more easy than it actually is. "Blood on the Moon" was recorded live in six days in the studio which means that there were no overdubs except for vocals. If CHROME had been seduced to the chances of a huge studio, using the first multi-track-recordings in their history on "Red Exposure", then they abandoned anything superfluous now until only the skeleton of the music, white and shiny, stood right before them – the same skeleton that had carried the CHROME music since years. By throwing off the art-fouled ballast, "Blood on the Moon" becomes the most commercial product of a long line of releases. Commercial is not meant as a negative term this time – their music has just become more transparent, clear and understandable. For us consumers it is no longer necessary to light a candle and pump the head full of drugs like some CHROME-fanatic does at any new release to enjoy the highest pleasure and comprehension. The new straightness allows it to let CHROME just roar loud through the speakers. The energy is strong enough to stand on its own – without spheric sounds and friends from outer space.

For the first time CHROME is a full operational band with musicians who can play their music without any difficulties. There will also be concerts for the first time which will be a more audacious task because nobody knows exactly who will play in the concert halls. It goes without saying that due to the strong self-image of the CHROME members a test as someone's supporting act will never be gazed

seriously. It will be a jump into the deep, dark water in the end. Damon: "I guess a lot of New Wave freaks will appear. Maybe some old hippies – but we don't want them." What about the heavy metal fans? - "I don't think so. But I don't know, maybe yes."

For a tour, of course, there are ambitious plans. It is really something special when after five years of mystique, a band suddenly comes into the spotlight. A simple, old-fashioned gig won't do the trick. The idea of showing a film as an introduction occurred and to play the soundtrack live behind the screen (not visible for the viewer) and finally at the end of the movie blow the audience away with full force. Main obstacle for the realization is again money. Damon: "When we sell tons of records we will make some strange things as a start. Definitely a movie." The terms are favourably. Just now, where more and more people are taken by New Wave, the music of CHROME becomes straight-forward and clear. The so far quite schizophrenic relationship of the band to success is now clearly aligned to the charts. A permanent, well-harmonizing band exists – ideal conditions. "I think Warner Brothers will not buy this album – but I feel that they will buy it anyhow" hopes Damon. "When we have a good start into the US market we will make a lot of money. It took a long time until we achieved something. If we had the money we could do real cool things. All of those who became famous very quickly are losing control. We've never become crazy, we never felt the need to be everywhere at the same time. If our album makes it into the first 100 of the *Rolling Stone*, I would not become crazy. I would not think I am another person now. Helios and I have worked since three years together and we achieved a lot. We released many records but we also never had this energy-sapping tour strains – we were aware of the dangers. And even now we don't want to travel for months just to eventually stagger each other in the end."

The cover art of "Blood on the Moon" derives from a video clip which was shot during recordings. Nothing extraordinary really, but the clip with its eccentric color-changing effects reminds me a lot of old Beat Club-days where technicians were overwhelmed by the undreamed possibilities of television. There will be a lot of changes in the video clip before showing it to public – the demands of an ex-art student are still distincted by his knowledge of unlimited creativity. Nevertheless Damon does not think that CHROME is an intellectual band. "Intellectual means to me that somebody tries to explain with many words in very circumstantial manner that something is good - what really sucks. Look at Stockhausen for example, he sucks. Go back to Germany and tell everyone from me that Stockhausen sucks. With our sound we bash him through the wall. We only understand what can be done with technology but we do bring the right feeling – it is a psychedelic feeling. And my instrument is my instrument. I have a Moog because it feels great and when 500 watt roar behind me through the speakers and I do have the right sound, I feel as a whole, then I can identify with myself. I have some effect machines. But I don't tell which ones. I scratched off the name from the most important one." The opposite of the wonderful world of music-making is the daily business – answering fan-mail, selling records. The fanbase is especially persistent - as it is with many bands who swim so close under the visible surface. The lack of information makes their idols even more interesting and at the same time even more mysterious. The fan of a band which is underrated becomes an accomplice because he "knows" about the band's qualities.

The necessity to sell records is handled by Damon with stoicism. "When we have to do business we have the attitude that we are on a mission. And to complete that mission we have to go through that kind of shit as well. Like some people use god. They are fucked up but they have god to believe in, keeping them upright. So we have CHROME. But having CHROME is of course better than having god – you can touch it." I have purposely quoted Damon most of the time because he is the talkiest of the four and because his words express the self-image of CHROME very well – and because he is extremely articulate in what he thinks. "Damon, who do you think are the ancestors of the CHROME music?" I ask him having the old San Francisco in mind. He answers without hesitation: "I think they are strangers from outer space – aliens!"



I got in touch with CHROME comparatively late – it was around 1997, at this time Damon Edge was dead for two years already. I was searching in second hand record shops for relatively unknown New Wave bands – at least unknown to me. In Germany, there had always been a huge interest in this kind of music, especially during the 1980s. Some of the German bands were very influential themselves at the beginning of that decade, like KRAFTWERK or EINSTÜRZENDE NEUBAUTEN. But when those groups were at their peak I was too young to relish them (I am born 1973). I liked and still do a lot of musical styles, from classic Rock’n’Roll to Punk to Jazz to New Wave or even Soundtracks. When I was in a certain phase, I wanted to get to know as many bands as possible. One of my oldest friends, Tex, is a kind of musical encyclopaedia and I gave up counting the amount of records, CD’s (and meanwhile MP3’s) he possesses. I will always be grateful to him because he got me in touch with so many wonderful underground bands – too many to recall them here. Anyway, CHROME was not amongst them (Tex was always more into Garage/Punk than into New Wave/Industrial). I read quite a lot in music fanzines as well. One day I came over an interview with Andrew Eldritch of THE SISTERS OF MERCY. The interviewer asked him about some uninteresting tribute sampler and if Eldritch had listened to it. He negated and said he would not listen to a single one of them as long as only third-rate Goth bands were doing it. What bands he would prefer to do it the interviewer asked. The answers were bizarre. I can only remember TORI AMOS and – CHROME. I had never heard of them but I forgot about that issue shortly after.

As mentioned before I was searching in a record shop for “new” sounds and suddenly held this LP in my hands. It had a collage cover art, very 80s but at the same time very different and quite unique. It was a CHROME record called “Another World”. I remembered the name of the band from that interview and as I liked the design and thought the guy on the back cover looked quite cool, I decided to buy it. The listening experience was also a singular one. Although this music was definitely a product of its time (precisely mid 80’s) it was produced extremely fresh and demanding. The drums were not done by a machine (like SUICIDE) and yet they sounded unbelievably mechanical. The guitar sounds contained returning wah-wah effects and the endless, steady and monotonous songs with its strange Moog noises and its even stranger singing (for sure Damon is no Mike Patton but he had one freaky voice) came like a revelation to me. I had to listen to the record over and over again. It was the *only* music which turned my then-girlfriend into fury. She yelled at me like a mad Ren Hoek: “Turn this crap off!!!” – So, I decided to get to know more of this weird band.



And it got weirder. The next records I could lay my hands on were “Alien Soundtracks” and “Half Machine Lip Moves”: The *true* CHROME as most of the fans would call it. And yes, in retrospect, these are certainly the more innovative and mind-blowing records of the band. The Damon-Helios collaboration was the core and soul of this strange band and brought the best out of the two men. I think I won’t have to write anything about these recordings. Others have done so – and not only because CHROME gained a growing cult following ever since they had formed. But I also remain a huge fan of Damon’s solo music and I will always take up the cudgels for him. He has been, unjustly, condemned to have betrayed the CHROME-legacy by some individuals. However, I admit that Damon would have been wiser to call all of his European recordings just DAMON EDGE. My above quoted ex-girlfriend decided that she hated every CHROME record of *any* period, so I was determined to leave her. Well, what else could I have done with a girl who was nuts and telling me that this is the worst shit she had ever listened to?

There was not much written about CHROME in German music fanzines. There is only one interview in the *Zillo* magazine with Damon from 1990. I was able to find three reviews by the then-leading German intellectual music critic Diedrich Diederichsen in the magazine *Spex*. He reviewed two Damon solo records (“The Wind is Talking” and “Grand Visions”) and one of Helios’ solo records (“X-rated fairy tales”). When he started one of his reviews he did not hesitate expressing his feelings about the original CHROME when the two guys were still working together: “CHROME – this is one of our sins we have to pay for eternally.” – You might guess what all of the three reviews were like (I think “The Wind is Talking” came off best).

Anyway, I searched for anything about the band I could possibly find. It was not much. With the help of the internet there were more (international) articles and even fan-websites like *helioschrome* at least. Finally, I tried to get in contact to some band-related persons in Germany, respectively those who knew Damon because he had a German record label when he started his solo career in Europe, *Dossier Records*. I made a short contact to Manfred Schiek, the owner of the label. But he rejected to answer any questions about Damon. It was four years after “Angel of the Clouds” appeared and Manfred apparently decided to make a cut. I spoke to him on phone and only when I mentioned the name Damon Edge, he said “No.” I asked him why and he answered: “We were friends, yes. But that’s a long time ago. He is dead and buried now. It’s over.” I did not insist or try anything further. He was very serious. I made contact to Sven Rösler who did CHROME communications for *Dossier* and who is now a friend of mine. Sven also had reservations talking about Damon. They were close friends back then and Sven was terribly shaken by Damon’s early death. There were signs though. I also spoke to the sound engineer of “The Clairaudient Syndrome”. He is German as all the other musicians on this record were. He told me about the bad condition Damon was in during that recording. I thought about writing an essay on Damon Edge but there was not enough interview material.

I am glad that I finally have the chance to contribute something to the CHROME chronicles even though it’s only a translation of an essay. A very special thanks to Brent Marley of *helioschrome.com* and Andrew Mullen who encouraged me:

Some day, I happened to be in a used book store and I looked into some written material about music artists. Suddenly, I held this little book in my hands called “*Rock Session Vol. 6*”. The cover advertised amongst others CHROME. “Can’t be them”, I thought. I opened it randomly and shook my head. I could not believe my eyes but it was clearly there: A picture of two guys I recognized immediately. Damon and Helios. In this book, already published in 1982, there was a long essay about CHROME written at the time when “Blood on the Moon” was released. It also contained several never-released photos of the band. I liked the in-depth article which contained a lot of quotes by the two masterminds. It was written by a guy called Peter Niemann. As I hadn’t heard of him I tried to search him up in the web. I found a politician and an artist of the same name. I decided that it must be the latter one. It was. Peter was very nice and answered my e-mail at once. He said he cannot remember too much of this occasion: “Damon did only talk when he was in the mood for it.” Anyway, Peter agreed to try to answer my questions.

At the very first he asked me “What are the guys doing today? Is Damon still alive?” which lead me to the (correct) assumption that he had not written his essay as a fan. “I am sorry to tell you that he is dead”, I replied and told him what has happened since he spent three days with Helios Creed and Damon Edge in San Francisco 1981.

This was our brief correspondence, conducted in 2010:

Jens Dornheim: How did this happen with *Rock Session* and your article on CHROME?



Damon Edge Painting
Courtesy Of: Jens Dornheim

Peter Niemann: “I knew that *Rock Session* was out there and I made an application. The chief editor, Gregor Pott whom I never saw suggested that I should do something about CHROME. So I flew to the US – on the off chance! At that time I wrote for the magazine *Musiker* from Hagen (note: a small town in Germany) and I had my own column where I wrote about strange New Wave music. Good times – bad times. ‘Freelance journalist’ is maybe a big expression for a enthusiastic music-fan. I think we were just fighting against dinosaurs like YES or GENESIS. ‘Death of the guitar’ was very fashionable then and I played the drums myself in two bands respectively (KEIN MENSCH and ERSTE WEIBLICHE FLEISCHERGESELLEN SEIT 1945). There was not much art in music. I learned that from the German band DER PLAN. So I came to NY and had only one contact at Warner Bros. But nobody felt responsible because CHROME was not signed at Warner anymore. Actually nobody seemed to know Damon or Helios in this huge Rockefeller Center. Eventually I got a direct contact address which is always bad because it was not a contact of a record company which was needed for a journalist at that time to get information. I once got into a John Cale concert in the legendary Studio 54 through Warner Bros. for example. Well, somehow I arrived in San Francisco and met Damon and then Helios. I think the atmosphere was not the best between the two. No conflicts, more a kind of alienation from each other. Maybe CHROME was only a side show for Helios – for Damon it was dead serious.”

JD: “How would you describe the two guys in retrospect? Is there something you especially remember?”

PN: “I lived in Damon’s house on the outskirts of San Francisco. Very bourgeois for a guy who pretended to be so dangerous: House, dog, garden, married. I think I would have got along much better with his wife. I particularly remember his Irish shepherd. Any time I see one these days I have to think of Damon and his nice wife. I don’t know if I mentioned the dog in the story. I have to look up the *Rock Session* book in a while. I also sent two books to San Francisco when it had been published. It was returned to me after a long while. (note: Damon must have left the US with Fabienne Shine to France at that time).

JD: “You mentioned that Damon was not extremely talky.”

PN: “I was about 22 years old back then. I did not take any drugs and I was not up all night long. I guess I was not the right sparring partner for him. But I wasn’t too impressed with his dangerous attitudes either. To me, this dark kind of music was a bit affected. We already had BAUHAUS, JOY DIVISION and ZEV - although CHROME was much more aggressive. I was not a CHROME-fan but I think it is often better to write as a non-fan. I wanted to be part of *Rock Session* and make a good story. Gregor Pott thought if someone makes the effort to fly to the US rather than conducting an interview via phone it should at least contain something exceptional or personal. Unfortunately nobody knew CHROME. And as far as I’m concerned this hasn’t changed after my essay.”

JD: “You wrote that you felt Damon represented the self-image of the band best because he was very articulate and outspoken (if he liked to be). Were there other reasons?”

PN: “As far as I remember Helios was blond and nice - almost a surfer boy. Damon was black and laughed sinisterly which looked quite strange in the sun of California. They were guys who wanted to the top. But those ambitions worked better in L.A.”

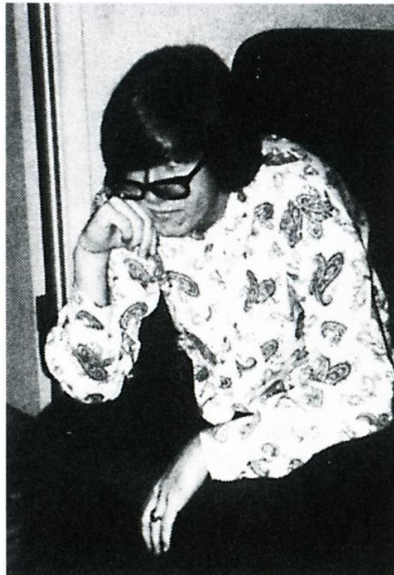
JD: “It seems you didn’t follow the history of any of the two.”

PN: “No. There haven’t been any more news. I heard that Damon moved to France. But that’s it. I’m sorry to say that I don’t possess the photos which were published in *Rock Session*. The only things I still have are the CHROME records Damon gave to me.”

JD: “Thanks for your time, Peter.”

PN: “My pleasure. More anytime if you need something.”

WE THE PEOPLE



Wayne Proctor

When you think of Florida, you mainly think of hot, humid weather, giant flying cockroaches, and just the looniest of the whacky news stories that come out of there... I mean really, is there any other place that you hear about more in the news as far as people doing crazy shit, than down in Florida? Anyway, that hot weather and all around down-south craziness could have inspired a few to get off their asses and into the GARAGE! And in the mid 60's some friends in Orlando, Florida did just that and formed one of the now all-time classic 60's garage/psych bands - WE THE PEOPLE - well... actually the band was formed by 2 other bands joining forces: The Offbeats and The Trademarks. I got my first taste of We The People with the fast paced, rowdy, grooving and very danceable "Mirror Of Your Mind," and man.. those vocals are just so sneering with that 60's adolescent attitude. That song would actually reach a number of the top 10 singles charts in 1966 (ahhh, a time when the charts consisted of actual MUSIC!). After chowing down this appetizer, my appetite was still strong with my belly growling for more more more! I searched out the fantastic 2 cd set "Mirror Of Our Minds" on the Sundazed label and quickly chowed down an appetizing full entree of these Floridian 60's cats. The tray at the buffet was very diverse with this collection; not only could We The People pull off sneering punk-garage attitude, but they also had just some of the most beautiful melodic psych numbers that I believe stand up there with the best... I mean songs like "Color of Love" just melt you, and I think the song "Nothing Like A Vision" is sort of an uplifting, positive guide for life when you're at a fork in the road and are kind of shifting gears, "striking another match and starting a new" if you will... well that's what I get out of it at least when I play the song. "You Burn Me Up And Down" is another one of their greats; that killer fuzz guitar with the sneering vocals and wailing screams - intense 60's punker, just another one WTP have in their arsenal of great songs. The band only lasted a couple of years, being disbanded by the looming threat of the Vietnam War draft - but in spite of their rather short existence, the band left behind a vast collection of diverse music. I was able to track down the man who played lead guitar and wrote some of the band's best songs, Wayne Proctor. Enjoy the interview!

I'm a big fan of fuzz tones, so I usually ask this... especially to musicians from bands back in the 60's (great fuzz tones)... but do you remember what fuzz box was used back during the We The People days?

To the best of my knowledge and memory, it was a Gibson Maestro FZ1 Fuzztone, Brent.

What was the music scene like in Florida back in the 60's?

The rock music scene was extremely new, and there were few bands around the area at the time. We didn't care about money back then, because all we dreamed of was getting famous like the Beatles or the Stones, etc. There were good, great, and not so great bands all over the nation and Florida at the time, but we had only heard of them, and seldom got to see them. Of course, there was no "video" of bands on TV or computers, so the only way we learned about other bands were from the radio airplay. IF those bands had recorded a decent enough record, the stations would play them - us included. I could go on and on this subject, but I wouldn't know where to end. All I remember is wanting to sound like the Beatles, and having girls scream for us! And, eventually they did. At that time, the only rock bands that people saw on TV were HUGE bands like the Beatles, Stones, Animals, Byrds, Dave Clark Five, and so on. When WTP played in other states or cities, it was usually because a radio station brought us there to promote their own agenda. Many times, when we arrived for the show, the girls went nuts. They had never seen the likes of long-haired rockers in person, and live on stage. That, of course, inspired the music world to take note.

Did you guys catch any flak for having long hair back then? I imagine down south in Florida, there wasn't any shortage of the type of character who would hassle you for that kind of thing.



Absolutely. It's hard now for people to understand the culture that existed back then, and guys with long hair were considered very, very strange. We were called "ma'am" in restaurants, stores, toll roads, and most everywhere we went. It was a time when blacks weren't allowed to order from the front counters, had to use their own water fountains and restrooms, and long-haired boys found out quickly how unjust the world can be—all because of our looks.

Have you made any cash from We The People, even with the big re-issue scene of today and the accessibility for music being greater now?

Not much money has been made, Brent. The music world is not, and never has been fair. As teenagers, we didn't care how much money we made, and we signed almost any paper put in front of us in order to have a record company let us record. We were naïve, to say the least, and underage. Most of our stuff being sold today is owned by companies we've never even heard of. But, I have to look at it as one of the greatest adventures of my life, and just be thankful someone still cares enough to play our songs, much less buy them from someone, whoever they may be....

Where did the inspiration come from for the song "My Brother The Man"?

I was tired one evening, and was constantly asked by my manager to write a "hit" song, but I just couldn't get into the groove. So, I was sitting in my room one night after mom and dad went to bed, and remembered the old short-lived TV series called, "My Mother, the Car." Something about that title fired me up, and I started throwing together a Kinks-like riff on my guitar, laughing the whole time. Then I started singing words that were made up differently every time it was sung, but I never wrote any of them down. Thinking I was pulling a joke on my manager during our next practice session, I plugged my Gretsch Country Gentleman into my homemade speaker/amp setup, and let it rip. The band easily followed right along with me, and I started singing and whooping words that rhymed – but never remembering them from town to town.

"Color Of Love" has always been one of my favorites, beautiful song. Do you remember how you came up with that lovely, unique guitar sound for that? Accidental or was lots of time spent on that?



Thank you for that, Brent. I remember writing it, and that it flowed so easily at the time. Not much time was spent on it, and when I found the chord progression, the words just rolled out for me. Not sure how that happened – but, then again, I'm not sure how most everything I did back then happened! I feel very fortunate to have been a part of We the People...

"In The Past" is another one of my favorite "We The People" songs, I'm sure I'm not the only one... What were the circumstances upon writing that song? Also, what did you think of the Chocolate Watchband's version?

In the Past was written and recorded during the popularity of the sitar making an entrance into the rock world by the Beatles. As circumstances happened, I was visiting a high school friend, and we toured his attic. In the attic was an old beat up instrument that looked like an oversized mandolin that was handmade by his grandfather. It had a very primitive electric pickup attached to it, so I thought it might be interesting to plug it into my homemade speaker cabinet of two 15" Jensen speakers, pushed by a Fender Bandmaster head. I asked how much my friend wanted for it, and he said, "just give me \$5.00." That was about what an evening out at the local teen dance would cost back then. When I got it home, I started "double-picking" a few licks and pieced them together with the lyrics I had written, and the rest is history. When I plugged it in my amp at band practice, it blew everyone away. That's when our manager decided we should record it. And, the rest is history... Regarding the Chocolate Watch Band's version, it made me proud to hear it. I felt it lacked the original intensity of the song, but it really didn't matter to me. I was just thankful someone wanted to record it!

You started receiving draft letters during the time in We The People, was that one of the things that ultimately broke up the band?

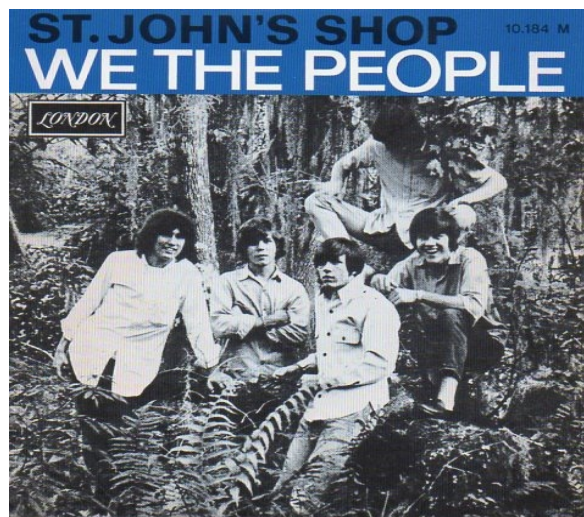
Yes. We had been on the road and recording for a long time, and it seemed we just couldn't find the right record company to make it all work for us. Nashville, TN, which is where we chose to go, had no idea what to do with a long-haired rock & roll band in the mid 60's. So, when the Vietnam draft started searching for me, I felt it best for me to go to college and leave music behind. Soon after that, I had to take my physical exam for the military, and they found something wrong with my back. I was then classified as 4-F, but I had already given up music at the time. The guys added another member or two after I left, but they never seemed to make it work the way the original band did – although I thought they were incredibly commercial.

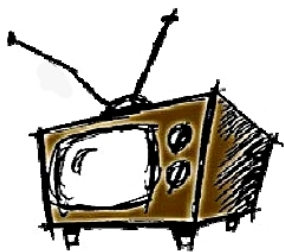
What are you up to nowadays? Are you still involved in music at all?

I have recently retired from my County Planner position with Anderson County, South Carolina. After 24 years, I felt I needed to lose the politics, and ride my Harley Davidson as much as possible. I felt the stress was really destroying me, so getting out while I am still "young" was a good thing! I still jam with a few friends now and then, but my musical drive has turned more towards the blues these days. I do still love the old stuff, but of course I love learning good new tunes, too. So, my wife and I both have our own bikes, and life is very good again!



'We The People' Practice Session In Warehouse
Jungle Auto Supply
Leesburg, FL 1966





DVD & BOOK REVIEWS



Book: Ugly Things #34 & #35

Order: www.ugly-things.com

Mike Stax & co. deliver the usual straight dope of the good stuff, mainlining the great 60's & beyond psych/garage that we all crave to satisfy our addictions. Issue #34 contains a very interesting interview with bassist of 60's punks "The Bees," Robbie Wood in which he gives the whole story of that killer, psychotic 45 that the band cut. Also stories on "Montreal's Rolling Stones" The Haunted, The Others & much more! Issue #35 is a milestone 30th anniversary for the greatest rock mag of all time and contains the killer material you would expect from UT, with one of the most interesting pieces being a 30 year retrospect by UT creator Mike Stax with his recollections/memories of every back issue! Oh, I really dig the cartoon that precedes Mike's memories, done by Anja Stax of Mike maniacally typing away creating an issue of UT while records blare in the background, reminds me a bit of myself creating an issue here in the PTM lair! Fascinating piece on The Seeds, Philadelphia's The Nazz & MUCH more!!

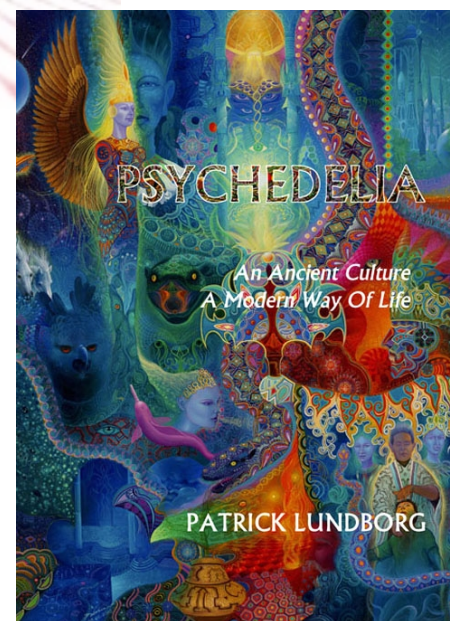


Book: Psychedelia: An Ancient Culture, A Modern Way Of Life

Author: Patrick Lundborg

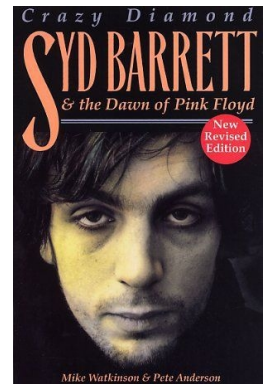
Order: www.subliminalsounds.se

From the author of "The Acid Archives" (book on the "choice nugs" of underground music from 60's to 80's) comes this 500 page tome on all things psychedelic, past to present! Now, I want to make it clear that I don't know if you want to get this book if you just have a passing interest in psychedelia, this is an in-depth coverage of ancient times ALL the way up to the present! Patrick starts off with what is said to be the first trippin' gatherings from Eleusis 2500 years ago where they would drink a psychedelic concoction called "kykeon," and dance the night away in pursuit of individual enlightenment. The fact is also presented that the beats and folk musicians were some of the first people to experiment with psychedelics as far as musicians/artists - many people think the psychedelic 60's (which is covered nicely as well and shreds some misinformed myths of the time) started it and only can look as far as when psychedelia was majorly commercialized for a brief (in the grand scope of time) period in the mid-late 60's. I like Patrick's writings best when he is writing about music, and his tastes are usually pretty right on with mine, with a minor exception being my doubts on the psychedelic authenticity/quality of the Father Yod/Yahowa 13 recordings. I craved more of Patrick's writings on psychedelic music, but this book is more of an OVERALL coverage of psychedelia, and of course music is but one of the many facets of the vast web of psychedelic culture. Patrick is as enthusiastic as I am about Texas psych legends the 13th Floor Elevators, and his dissections of certain songs/lyrics here are quite fascinating. There's some really interesting sections on psychedelia entering modern film and literature, even sci-fi authors like Philip K. Dick are touched upon. Patrick shreds the notions of any naysayers who shrug off psychedelic culture as some sort of passing fad, and his enthusiastic views on psychedelia and its way of life are refreshing as he outlines a philosophy in which the joys of the psychedelic experience can be brought into everyday life. The book is very well-researched and includes some great photos and clippings as well.



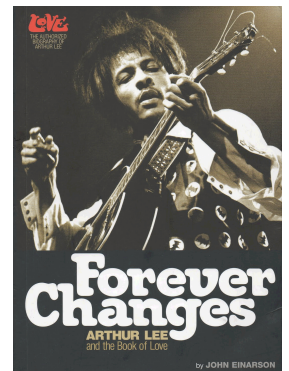
Book: Crazy Diamond: Syd Barrett & The Dawn of Pink Floyd
Author: Mike Watkinson & Pete Anderson
Order: www.amazon.com

I've always been fascinated with Syd Barrett, and "Piper At The Gates Of Dawn" is THE psychedelic Pink Floyd record to get in my opinion. I knew the basic gist of the story as far as what went down, but I wanted.. no I CRAVED more! The story is too interesting to just skim the surface. After seeing some good reviews noted of "Crazy Diamond," the book you see to your right, I decided this would be a good starting point. The authors really give you the full on story of Syd, starting with his early days in Cambridge, his art school days, his beginnings in Pink Floyd. I found out shortly after beginning this that it's actually the first full on bio of the madcap, published originally in 1991.... Well, if you happen to seek this out, get the "new revised edition" (note sticker on cover), that was published in 2006 to get even more info and have the aftermath of Syd's death covered nicely too. A couple noteworthy interesting little facts that I learned; the main riff used for "Interstellar Overdrive" was actually inspired by a friend of Syd's playing him Love's "Little Red Book," Syd made a little variation on that riff and came up with one of the early Floyd's all-time psych classics! Also, I had no idea that WHILE Pink Floyd were recording "Piper At The Gates Of Dawn" at Abbey Road studios, the Beatles were right next door recording Sgt. Peppers! Several pages of photographs covering the span of Syd's life are also included. The authors also dispel many of the great myths that have been told over the years, you can tell they are genuine fans of Syd, yet still tell the story objectively. Great book to start with when it comes to Syd Barrett.



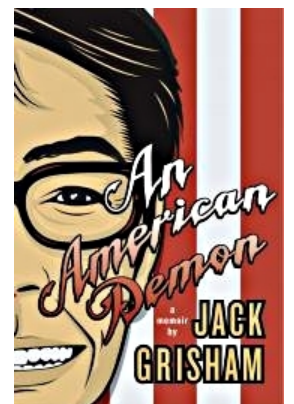
Book: Forever Changes: Arthur Lee & The Book Of Love
Author: John Einarson
Order: www.amazon.com

The original Prince of the Sunset Strip Arthur Lee and his band LOVE are covered in this fantastic bio by John Einarson. John was given the blessing by Arthur's widow Diane Lee to write this bio and have access to Arthur's unfinished memoirs that he wrote upon his release from prison in 2003. So, while you're reading the story, Arthur's words are selected that correspond with the topic at hand and are displayed in italics throughout the book, it adds a nice touch, and in a sense sort of helps Arthur complete his memoirs with the addition of first hand accounts from the people/musicians who were there during Love's career, & childhood friends & relatives. The book is also chock full of great photos, including 11 pages of color pics. Not only is Arthur's personal life covered, but the amazing music is also covered with integrity including fascinating insight into how things were worked out in studio etc. From their folk-rock days to their psychedelic masterpiece "Forever Changes" & beyond, it's all covered here in this incredible biography of Arthur Lee and LOVE!



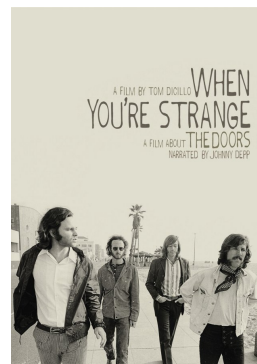
Book: An American Demon
Author: Jack Grisham
Order: www.amazon.com

Who would've though that Jack Grisham from TSOL was an author? After hearing all the insane early stories of Jack's infamous first punk band Vicious Circle and of course after with TSOL, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to read Jack's memoir "An American Demon." A word of caution: if you are just looking for a punk rock bio on the TSOL days, you're not quite getting that with this. Also... and I admit I was a bit sketchy at first upon reading about this, but this book is written by Jack through the eyes of a demon... I know, it's a bit confusing, but it works! That element really gives the book a more creative and interesting spin, and shortly into reading it I discovered that I really enjoyed this aspect of the book that I was questionable about at first. I know they're cliches at this point, but I can honestly use them for this - I really "couldn't put it down," and it was truly a "page turner." I finished the book quickly and craved more! Jack's insane life is covered with integrity from the time he was a child all the way up until present day. Don't worry, there's plenty of wild stories from the Vicious Circle/TSOL days as well. Be forewarned: Jack pulls no punches, this book is not for the weak stomached, it gets pretty brutal. Great book!



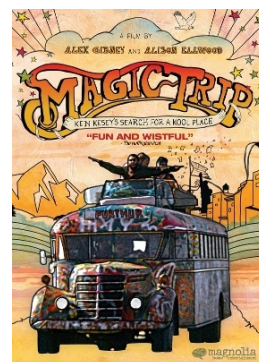
DVD: When You're Strange: A Film About The Doors
Order: www.amazon.com

Well, it's about time! Finally, one of the greatest rock bands of all time - THE DOORS are given the treatment of a full documentary. The film was narrated by a man who is no stranger to counterculture, whether it be film or rock and roll, yes Johnny Depp with his previous portrayal of Hunter S. Thompson and having played with Butthole Surfers front man Gibby Haynes, guides us through the story of the band and does a good job with it. The doc is laden with unseen footage, and some footage fans may have seen, but the quality presented here is obviously from the vaults and it's beautiful old footage indeed! While I quite enjoyed the doc, and I loved how the whole thing consisted of footage of Jim and the band, not detouring into present day interview accounts, I thought that it could have focused more on the MUSIC, rather than wild man Morrison's drinking, drugging and stage antics, but it was entertaining! Special features include first time interview with Jim's Navy-man Dad, a nice addition.



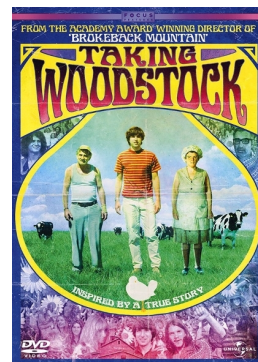
DVD: Magic Trip
Order: www.amazon.com

The 1964 LSD-fueled journey across America from author Ken Kesey & his Merry Pranksters is covered in this creative and highly enjoyable documentary. Inspired by Jack Kerouac and his epic novel "On The Road," Kesey, along with a very speedy (an understatement) Neal Cassady as navigator of the colorful bus "Further," head from California with the final destination in mind being New York City's "World's Fair." However, their trip would take on more meaning than their destination. The creators of this doc were given access to the footage in the vaults, in which they have lovingly restored along with first-hand accounts to present the journey in a beautiful, color-filled way that I thought was extremely well done. One interesting piece of info I found amusing was when the pranksters departed the World's Fair and through Allen Ginsberg, were able to visit Timothy Leary's Millbrook compound in upstate New York, and the freewheeling sort of child-like pranksters didn't seem to jive with the Harvard Professor dropout turned LSD-guru! Although, Richard Alpert was friendly at least! The directors finished the doc that the pranksters had intended on making!



DVD: Taking Woodstock
Order: www.amazon.com

As with any mainstream Hollywood movie, you must be skeptical when it comes to the portrayal of a psychedelic 60's event, as it could be overly flooded with the lingo of the time and have its emphasis a little TOO much on bell-bottoms and flowers in the hair... you get what I'm saying, right? Well, I was surprisingly pleased with this depiction of the famous "3 days of peace & music" festival. Director Ang Lee did a great job and the film was quite charming with Elliott and his two little Jewish parents - the backstory of them trying to keep the farm and not go into foreclosure. That's one of the things I loved about this film, the fact that you get the background on how the whole event took place, how permits were obtained and certain obstacles were overcome. One thing I think that there could have been a bit MORE of in the movie was the MUSIC, I mean there was some good stuff, but a lot of it was meant to be heard at low volumes as Elliott made his way to the festival when he decided to "take the trip"... speaking of - we have here what is so far the BEST, and most accurate on-film re-creation of an acid trip! The special effects have gotten good enough apparently, and they surely captured the visual aspect of it as Elliott and his two recently made hippie friends stared at the patterns swirl and undulate on the tapestries in the VW bus! I also loved how Elliott and the hippie chick left the VW bus and journeyed down through the crowd to get a closer look at the "ocean" of people while the effects of the LSD still lingered on as they observed the beautiful energy from atop the hill. OH, and you see online how predictably there will be people screaming how this film was "INACCURATE!" - well you can read concert promoter Michael Lang's (curly haired concert organizer dude in the flick) book "The Road To Woodstock" and it looks like the filmmakers had their facts pretty dead on. So relax people - maybe you need 2-3 of those brownies that Elliott's parents ate? Chill out! Oh, and wasn't the Dad from the American Pie movies great as Max Yasgur? I LOVE that guy!





ANNOYING CO-WORKERS PART 2

+ MORONIC CHICK-FIL-A GAY BASHERS, CELL PHONE BATHROOM MIRROR DORKS & OTHER OBSERVATIONS OF OBNOXIOUS HUMAN BEHAVIOR!



CONSTANT ATTENTION SEEKERS

These are some of the most irritating, obnoxious people of the work place! They talk at excessively loud volumes on purpose so that everyone in the room can hear them, all the while looking around to see who is noticing them. What went wrong? Are they trying to make up for not being part of the so called "cool" crowd at high school and their social status never achieved the heights they dreamt of? Too many siblings? They can never just sit in peace and quiet and enjoy the SILENCE once in a while, their under-used cobweb-infested brains can't take the sounds of silence! Sit quietly with their thoughts? - Nope, they don't have any thoughts to begin with! Many times excessive prescription meds are also part of the equation, creating endless mundane chit-chatters by the dozens. Bottom Line: Obnoxious!

THE "IF I WON THE LOTTERY, I'D STILL COME TO WORK" PEOPLE

When I hear this declaration from these half-wits it just makes me cringe while breaking out in a cold shiver of douche-chills. Really? You'd still come to your job of mindlessly crunching numbers or doing data entry sitting behind a desk if you won money that would have you set for life?? Unless you have a job that you enjoy that inspires you creatively where you create art or something that enriches your soul, then this statement should never come out of your mouth. It's sad, it's an indicator that you have no hobbies or passions in life. These are the truly zombified walking-dead robots of life. "But what would you do all day??" they ask.... The real question is what would you NOT do if you had the entire day to do whatever you wanted to do every single day of your life?!?!?

THE GRUFF 'THINK THEY HAVE BALLS' VOMITS

These people are true vomits, one of the worst types you'll encounter in the work place or out of the work place for that matter! They walk around all day with a chip on their shoulder wading in their own baseless self-righteousness, it's pathetic. They are SO quick to want to tell someone off, but in reality they could easily be reduced and shredded with words if you hit them with the truth as to what they really are - LAME, uninteresting, miserable vomits. And always with their predictable cliché "life" quotes on their facebook page or something about people "judging them" or them bitching about someone. AND these VOMITS ALWAYS find one another!!! Often you'll see them huddled together talking trash on everyone around them. OH yeah, they constantly love to say that they're "REAL" - get over yourselves, you're lame, no one cares, and it's pathetic that this is the way you need to act to try and validate your existences, it's just sad..... Get a hobby.

CELL PHONE BATHROOM MIRROR DORKS

Did you ever see these dorks? It's like who do you take your cues from - 15 year old teeny boppers? Uhh yeah, we see the cell phone, so the picture is technically shit in itself on top of the already douche-chilly premise. Oh, it's even more douche-chilly when you see them snapping the shot with their "celly" in front of the mirror while tilting their head to one side like they're a "G" or whatever lame persona they're trying to impersonate in their Empty-V brainwashed heads. You don't look tough or bad, you look like a trendy douche-bag who is trying WAY too hard. Just stop, you're embarrassing yourself. Oh yeah, it's usually accompanied by quotes containing improper use of the English language: "wit," for the word with, "da" for the word the, "lil" for the word little, or "I'mma" for I'm going to.

MORONIC CHICK-FIL-A GAY BASHERS

"I'm gone buy me a chickin' sandwich to show my support AGAINST the queers!" MY GOD-have you ever seen such ignorance from a bigger group of assholes than the ones who went to Chick Fil A after some bloated old Fox News douche-bag created this "Chick Fil A Appreciation Day?" "Well I'm against same sex marriage" --- well FINE, then wallow in your own hatred by yourself and ignore it, there's no reason it should be against the LAW simply because you don't agree with it! The worst part is that I saw an article in the paper of a guy who brought his young son to it... So sad, hence the reason we have endless ignorant assholes in this country, they BREED and raise their kin like themselves.

FILTHY PUTRID HUMAN WASTE

Am I the only one who is disgusted by all the trash and shit that I see when I drive down the street? People are such slob. It's even worse when you see McDonald's wrappers on the side of the road, these people are the true assets of society; pigging out on shit food while polluting the environment at the same time! They're "multi-tasking" if you will. You want your habitat to look like shit? I don't get it.

2013 EMPTY-V VIDEO "MUSIC" AWARDS

Just stop....