

BLUNT

FEAT.

MASSAPPEAL

LUNARCIDE

MEDICINE SHOW

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THE WINTER RAG - JUNE '93....

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EDITORIAL AND NEWS

Hello and welcome to another BLUNT issue. You may have noticed that there has been somewhat of a lull in between the last issue and this, but hey, what makes things interesting is not necessarily consistency, yet sometimes the essence of a time gap to motivate a production. Changes in the last nine months include new ready made contributors, access to some hellish equipment, greater distribution, and change in address. Contributors who wish to help out on BLUNT, those who are committed to input of a community anarchic cultural and realistic presence, please send contributions c/o BLUNT MAGAZINE 386 Parramatta Rd, Petersham 2049 Sydney New South Wales. Also if you are interested there are plenty of old copies of Blunt mags/cassettes/ and record available through post - see catalogue.

* There is another Blunt cassette production in the making for the end of the year. Keep in contact to hear more about it. Interested parties can reach us at our postal address.

* Don't believe all the hype!! There is more to life than the collective of bands that get it. Check out some local bands like.....

THREE TOAD SLOTH - feature ex member of one of Sydney's finest Feedtime. A three piece with plenty of grunt.

STIGMA - one of the best heard demos in some time. Remember one of early Go-B's, Small World Experience, and Sonic Youth.

AVATAR - a weird bloody lot intent on evoking a challenged reaction.

LUNARCIDE - see interview for further info. Used to be called Orson.

CORN BEEF CURTAINS - ex members of Methrapunge minus old lead singer. Into putting on a performance with the odd candle or two.

FREUDIAN TRIP - a bent jazzy fusion combo made up of operatic singing, tribal percussion, live poetry to music, etc.etc...

TEMPEST MOON - provide an interesting blend of psycho-rock hillbilly post punkish sounds soon to hit the Blunt Banter in the winter issue out in August.

SKIN JOINT - feature Roger from the Plug Uglies, Lachlan from the Aftertaste, Steve from Johnny Teen and the Broken Hearts, and Roberta from Velour. Pop, funk, punk a dunk with this lot! Much heavier than a lot of the stuff they've all been responsible in the past for. Have a knack for changing their name before every show. Don't ask me why, but I'm sure there's a good reason.

Just some names to remember. MORE NEWS !!!!!

***Ashtray Boy**, featuring Randy from Nice, Neil from the Craven Fops, and Thomas from Big Home Orchestra, have recorded an album to be released on a Chicago based label in August. One awaits the Cannanes next album to be released on the same label and titled **CAVEAT EMPTOR**.

*Stewart from **A HAPPY FAMILY** has returned from Europe in the hope of some recording and some live work. Stewart spent some time in the U.K. and Poland spreading the word. Look out for future gigs.

Scratches, Newtown. R.I.P.

Nowadays it seems like that main street of Newtown, King Street, is becoming more and more of a cosmopolitan melting pot due to the ungainly nature of the shops which reside on it.

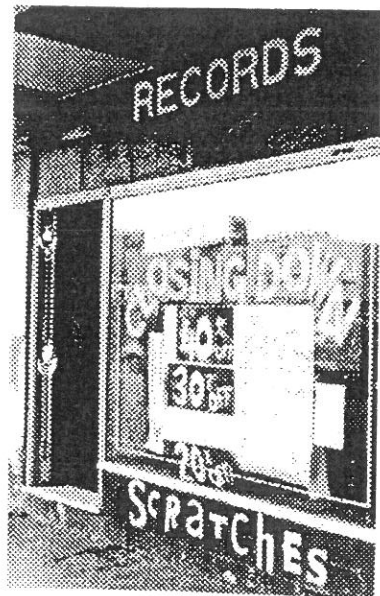
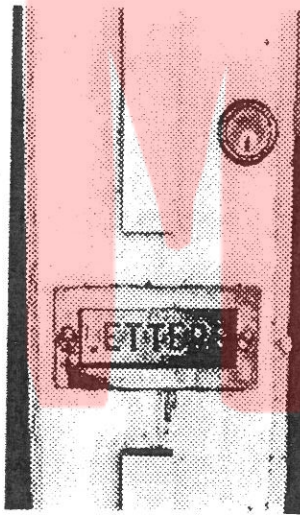
Bookshops, hairdressers, cake shops, cafes, restaurants, hotels and cocktail bars, all clutter the lengthy street, adding a cosmopolitan flavour to a changing cosmos suburb.



All this crowding brings with it a competitive business environment where time and sales are the very essence of

survival. That's life...but, the cruelty of it all is what the private world does, the community barons and to the heart of a town. Recent competition on King Street has meant that those who offer a little more than a plush shopfront have found it hard to keep up with the Joneses. Peter and Jeanette who were part of the scratches stable (one of the better record shops in Sydney) for some ten years, abiding in a small space in the north end of King Street, closed shop in late March of this year.

The recession and the changing nature of things didn't help according to Peter, a friendly man with a genuine concern for lovers of music. Scratches alone provided earbashers with a quality collection of predominantly women's



and other 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, worthy shit. The prices were fair, the collection of reading material worthwhile, and the service was genuine. And, yes, it was away from the Metropolis of the CBD, in the heart of Newtown, where else? Now it's gone, a sad thing, a cherished memory of the good ole days, and what sick ethos is gonna replace it.



Alternative

The indie scene rose from the embers of the dying punk ethos of the late nineteen seventies. Punk was replaced by a new cynical pop, illustrated by bands such as the Cure, late Joy Division, and the NME darlings, the Smiths. These groups continued the legacy of a pop-political cultural groove, started by the industrial waste sounds of punk and New Wave.

Unlike the musical style of the seventies, these bands carried significant political undertones, specifically targeted at, to quote Rik, (that well renowned social theorist, "Thatcher's bloody Britain").

With most sub-cultural emergences, comes a trademark, which characterises and reflects its beliefs and musical leanings. BLACK - a non-descript, non-colour, which seemed to best reflect the enigmatic and sombre attitude that these groups approached in their musical social commentary.

Bands like the Smiths managed to encapsulate in their lyrics, this feeling of hopelessness and nostalgia, for a pre-Thatcherite England.

Their music can be seen as a direct rebuke against the competitive dog eat dog Toric work ethic, in their sense of nothingness and personal ennui.

In Australia, Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, amongst others, succeeded in imitating the sound, but something was lost in the translation.

The image was artifice.

The scribbles of doom, and the cold austerity of a northern winter, could hardly be seen as an accurate portrayal and reflection of our cultural bent.

But unfortunately, the image myth is still being perpetuated today, when the true discourse behind it died almost a decade ago.

Not only has the underlying cultural meaning of the music been warped, but so too has the concept of what alternative music actually is.

"Alternate" record labels were set up by middle class, publicly educated entrepreneurs, as just another way of entering the youth market. Labels in the U.K. such as Factory, Rough Trade, The Smiths and Stiff Records, which featured artists such as the Damned, paved the way for this new musical trend. It was conceived that because these groups fell into the category of "alternative" their music was considered to be more radical than their "mainstream" counterparts, and offered a whole new lifestyle to go with it.

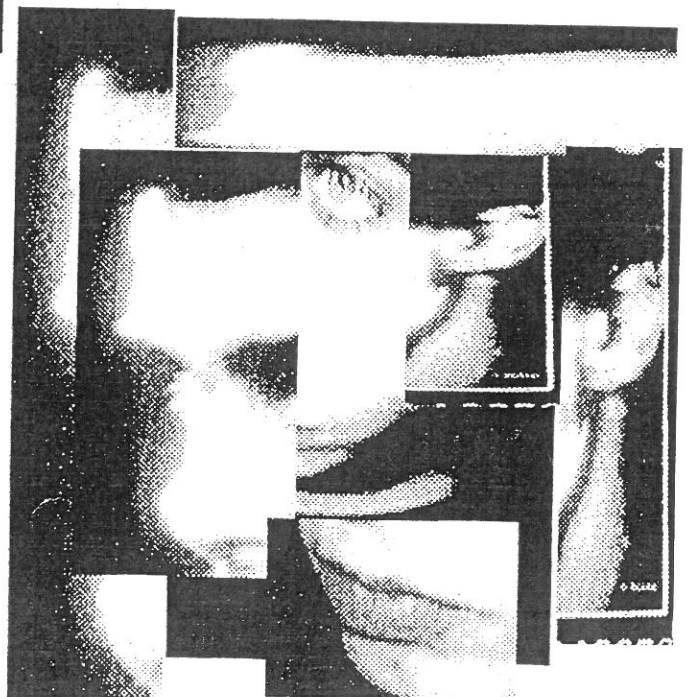
Enter the world of the groove-lick nite-club of studied boredom, severe haircuts, one packet, blue-black, one packet auburn hi-lights, done by a "close friend". Of struggling artistes, who don't know what they are struggling for, teenage angst fills the room heavier than oxygen, Doco's pound the floor.

But what does it mean to be 'alternative'?

Alternative to what? to the 1000's of other people who do exactly what you do? Individualism now means uniformity, so called "Indie" bands have crossed over to the mainstream.

The notion of being alternative, as previously mentioned, is artifice, propped up and destroyed by its own self righteousness in continually having to be different.

MC





MEDICINE SHOW

Interview- Medicine Show

Medicine Show are:

Adam Gathercole (drums)
 Andrew McRoberts (bass)
 Begsy (lead guitar)
 Ross McDonald (rhythm guitar)
 Dave Slade (lead vocals)

The current abovementioned line-up have been together since January, 1992 and are all responsible for the 'noisy racket'; which 'blasts the ears' on their self titled debut CD out now on Timberyard.

Medicine Show are an interesting band in that their music reflects a crossover of what one could well tell is 'conventional hard OZ rock' (like ACDC) mixed with the hard edged sounds of naughty rock bands such as the Stooges, MC5, Danzig and The Scientists. The CD reflects this hotchpotch of influences providing the listener with a diverse array of sounds and experiments.

Dave Slade, recent frontman for ex-Sydney band No-Man's Land, and current expouser for Medicine Show, had a chat to me in the Pismo Bar in April, just after the release of the album, and what will be remembered as before plentiful things to come(?) Dave> The whole thing with No-Man's Land was that frustration

was coming into everything we did or tried to do. The line-up kept on changing and to tell you the truth, I got a bit sick with it and the whole music business. There was also interpersonal band matters which didn't help. No-Man's Land were a rather comical rock band of the 1980's who cleverly rehased the 70's Stooges era with a finesse for hard glam rock. Signed by Augo-go they released a few recordings until they split.

BLUNT > How different is the songwriting approach of Medicine Show as opposed to No-Man's Land?

Dave > This is definitely more accessible and more straightforward rock n roll. All along my intention during and after NML was to get back into doing something more to my liking. My roots were embedded in bands like Terms of Power, New York Dolls, Creedence, etc, with a local likeness to bands like the Birthday Party, Scientists, Radio Birdman.

BLUNT > How does the music crossover in style?

Dave > I feel that cos we're from different backgrounds we tend to overlap in what we write. For instance, Begsy (lead guitar) and Adam (drums) come from a much more hard rockin' straightforward, where they love ACDC, but in an also surprising manner, really like Alice in

Chains, which is a more menacing and darker style of music.

Ross (guitar), as we all do love, likes Rose Tattoo. He'd always be seeing them down at the Lifesaver. He also likes alot of Birdman and Stooges as well. Andrew (bass) is the youngest, but don't ask by how much 'cos I won't tell you, is into things like Iron Maiden and Danzig.

I guess when you have such diversity it makes it all the easier to overlap and brings styles to each other.

Medicine Show work within a communal structure in regards to their songwriting. Rather than having a dominant player, each member contributes equally, which Dave feels enables the members to "input into everything, be credited, and remain interested".

BLUNT > So democracy can exist in songwriting?

Dave > Of course. We're a fairly democratic lot to the extent that I write all the lyrics. It seems to work better that way. I don't oppose to having a ringleader, I just believe its better to have everyone contribute rather than one boss and a host of employees. Obviously if one is good at something they'll do whatever that may be. Occasionally someone will say that sounded good, let's do that, but that happens spontaneously anyway.

INTERVIEW ✦ MASSAPPEAL

Recently, May 93, Mariella Attard took valuable time out to talk to Randy, vocalist from Massappeal. On the green lawns of Belmore Park we talked about Massappeal - past, present and future. This is not always easy to define - Massappeal shifts and changes, its components as fluid as V.B. Or maybe that's an exaggeration, but the band has been through quite a few lineup changes.

RANDY - It's always bringing in fresh stuff and new ideas, but also it's bad because we've had so many line up changes it's prevented us from putting out records when we wanted to and touring and stuff.

In the space of 8 years Massappeal has released a total of two albums, a mini album and a couple of singles. These days Massappeal is Brett Curotta (guitar), James Meek (bass), Peter Allen (drums), and Randy Reiman (throat).

In the years between their first album *Jazz* and the second *Mechanic*, Massappeal's sound has changed a fair bit.

RANDY - I think the *Mechanic* sounds a bit cleaner than the *Jazz* album. It's more produced, the guy who produced it is our sound guy. He does all our live stuff so he knows our sound fairly well but at the same time he had some ideas that now we sort of look back and go oh no we don't like that... it sounds a bit cleaner than *Jazz*. I'm just not really happy with the guitar sound but I guess we just wanted it to be more noisy like the *Jazz* record.

To get down to the technicalities...

RANDY: What they did on the *Mechanic*, our producer sort of squashed the guitar sound. The guitar sound on *Jazz* sounds a bit fatter and I guess we wanted that again. Also on the *Jazz* album there is a lot of bar chords and on the *Mechanic* there wasn't as many.

So what makes the Massappeal sound?

RANDY: Well we are all learning to play our instruments a little better....

Hmmm, I guess that's a definite plus. But what about the ideas, the inspirations?

Musically speaking, the *Mechanic* came mostly from the minds of Brett and Sean (the then bass player), but basically it is a collective effort with certain members bringing in some ideas but not completed, finished songs.

RANDY: I'm musically illiterate. (Randy admits in a lowered tone of voice). I sort of go da da da....

We think this is amazing considering how such literacy ends up with a bit of distortion. The lyrics are Randy's real domain.

RANDY: I don't know what they are really about. I sort of don't write with an idea, oh sometimes I do, now actually.... I was never trying to get some message across or trying to force anything on anybody... mainly it was just to have something to vocalise. They are important to me. Now with the new stuff, lyric wise I do have some sort of ideas that I write down. The song might actually mean something all the way through and not a whole lot of different little things but also people can take it or leave it. Yeah, I'm just not really into telling anybody what to do.

The definitive thing about Massappeal has to be their live sound. If you want to know what energy sounds like this is it.

While Randy might indulge in a few neck rolls back stage...

RANDY: So, I don't hurt it too much!

What sparks Massappeal live and seems to happen every time they are on stage is that it's still a bunch of musicians having a great time.

RANDY: I guess we really like the stuff we do. When it is not fun that's when we are going to leave.

The new album is likely to come out in August and will be out on *Survival*, like the *Mechanic*. With things being quiet on the Massappeal front for the last few months with the band being busy writing for a new album, we should be hearing from Massappeal very soon as they promote their stuff.

RANDY: We have to play the new stuff anyway to get it tight enough so we can record. Every time we've recorded we've played the songs for at least one year before we'd recorded them so the songs would work themselves out really well and this time we are sort of rushing it so I'm a bit worried about that. It could happen that after we record the album we start playing the songs and

they develop more and they are fantastic in a year's time and the versions that are on the album are not that good. Hopefully that won't happen.

You know when you go to a gig and someone up the back yells out for a really old and obscure track? Well, the band hates that as much as the audience does. Don't get them wrong, they really really appreciate their audience but....

RANDY: In any way we really don't give a shit what they like. We get up there to have a good time ourselves and play the songs we like... I don't want to get up there and play the songs for a crowd. Well, not all the time, like it has to be sort of 50/50, you get that sort of balance. If you play for yourself totally that is just really selfish, but if

you play just for others totally then you just don't get anything out of it. It's hard, people say play the old stuff and you think no, we want to play something new (he gets rather passionate about this) don't you want to hear anything new? A lot of people don't.... they have already heard the old Massappeal years ago and that's what they think Massappeal is.... that Massappeal is gone you know. Finished.

Which brings us back to that really hard question - what is Massappeal?

RANDY: Well it's not really easy listening. If people want to call us grunge or heavy metal, whatever that is fine... I don't know if it sounds wanky or not. You know, hey, we don't want to be labelled. No one wants to be labelled. Nobody wants to be put into this or that, everybody wants to be known as hey we're just Massappeal, but I couldn't be bothered thinking about that. In our persistent attempt to pin the sound of Massappeal we press on. Sometimes the guitar sounds like *Naked City* or late Miles Davis. In some songs they....

RANDY: Start with the melodic bit and work into the *Slayer* riff. but I don't think it sounds like *Slayer* at all.

Well, if you really want to find out what it is that Massappeal actually sound like, the opportunity will rise late in May this year when they start playing the stuff on their new release, which should be out in August or September.



sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar

sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex

DIED FOR YOUR DINNER

sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex magic fish!

magic fish! sugar sex magic fish! sugar sex

