

DIY
DIY

9

1990

Featuring ...

Crow

**Toys
Went**

Beserk

VRAG

**The Melvins
(USA)**

**& Poetry,
Reviews etc.....**



**BUT I
THOUGHT THE
HOOK WAS
BLUNT !**

I DIDN'T GO TO
WORK TODAY...



...I DON'T
THINK I'LL GO
TOMORROW

LET'S TAKE CONTROL OF OUR LIVES
AND LIVE FOR PLEASURE NOT PAIN!

NO
NO

HOT RECORDS

Recently in the Metro section of the Sydney Morning Herald a no. of infamous and influential people were asked to list the Australian albums of the 80's. It included names like Basia Bonkowski, Mark Dohdson and John Casimir. Out of 50 or so albums listed, it was Hot Record label that reared its head more than any other label, apart from corporate giant Mushroom. When you consider it started in the boot of a car in early 1983 and faded, well almost, four years later, it is a mighty effort. Bands like the Benders, Triffids, Chads Tree, Celibate Rifles, Laughing Clowns and the Wet Taxis, made Hot a very important stable. Whether Hot was a rider on a wave or the tide that bought the music in is debatable, but its significance is not.

I met Graham Regan late last year at Circular Quay and asked him...how did Hot records begin?

GRAHAM: Well I was involved with retailing, and a lot of small bands were coming in with these records they had made. This was a difficult and awkward situation as shops were not really geared up to fix the situation. Also I got involved with importing records at the time, a time when imports were very sporadic. I started to bring catalogues of records into the country, ie; labels like Rough Trade. At that time I had made friends with Martin Jennings from Didgeridoo Records in Darlinghurst. Martin and I got distribution into action and we built a base in a number of shops. In 1983 Hot records began with the Celibate Rifles "Sideroxlyon" the first LP.

BLUNT: Why that particular record? ... What was the reason?

GRAHAM: Well the year before the Celibate Rifles came in with their first single "But Jacques the Fish" they had made themselves. They had pressed 1000 and had sold them rather quickly. We got on really well with them and they came back and told us they had enough money to record and release another single or LP. Well we said O.K "we will do the rest". So we released the record and at the same time put we put out the Benders which was a jazz album with David Ballaws and Chris Abrahams. It was quite wierd because we released a real rock n'roll album and a modern jazz record and that sort of set the scene what we were about.

BLUNT: You seemed to develop rather quickly from there.. What about the Triffids, and there Treeless Plain album.

GRAHAM: I had liked the Triffids for a very long time and we had been watching them. I wasn't directly involved with the band, it was Chris Rea. With Hot we sort of had our own individual bands who we looked after. For example mine were the Celibate's, and the Wet Taxis, Martin with the Laughing Clowns, and Chris with the Triffids.

BLUNT: Your involvement with the Wet Taxis?

GRAHAM: Well I used to see the Taxis alot, mainly because of their association with the Celibate Rifles. They had a reputation in that they couldn't be talked to, and were completely unco-operative in every way possible. I saw it as a challenge to get some vinyl out. Originally they recorded 5 songs, but it ended up being "Clock On the Wall" and "C'mon" that really stood out, the other tracks ending up on the from the Archives album.

BLUNT: How do you feel about independence and independent music?

GRAHAM: It is very important in that it serves a purpose as a breeding ground, but on the same token the majors have their place as well in that they can offer alot for a band. If it is in a bands interest to sign with a major record label they should as it can and will help them in the long term. I'm always interested in what is in the bands best interest and I weigh it up from there.

BLUNT: There has been alot of fuss recently over CD's and the declining sales of vinyl and the effect of that on the indies..

GRAHAM: The independents will have to move with the times. What will happen to it in 10 years when it is hearned down from the satellites. At the moment the production cost of CD'S is a costly process, But like everything as more and more are made and it begins to take over the market, the production of CD'S will come down. But at the same time there are ways to overcome the problem meaning other ways to go about it. The Roman Beach Party album is licensed in Holland and the CD's are imported over to Australia.

BLUNT: What did happen to Hot? It just seemed to disappear.
 GRAHAM: Well it didn't die, in reality it is still going but not in the same form. But like any market, the music market has its highs and lows. Like for example 'live' music was really strong in the early 70's as well as record sales. But with the coming of disco the scene constricted a bit. The same can be said for the early eighties and then dance music came about. Earlier on we put out a lot of records.
 BLUNT: Classic records.

GRAHAM: Well yes, but on the bottom line at the end of the day, the number of records that Hot was making did not match with the amount being sold. We were losing a lot of money. Hot is not over, it's an on going process. But what we have learnt is to say no, even if it is dealing with quality music. Before we were quite willing and ready to buy out everything we liked. Hot is now very selective, we now only put out one or two albums a year and that is fine. We recently put out a Greg Dear album. Labels like the Waterfront's for example have the same policy as the majors in that they put out say up to maybe 30 records a year. In a sense it becomes a hit and miss situation. All they need is three or four records to be successful and they can pay for the rest.

BLUNT: Like the Hard Ons. They sold over 30,000 records overseas on their last album.
 GRAHAM: Yes, exactly.

BLUNT: Do you think Hot will ever return to the way it was.
 GRAHAM: No. I like the way it is in that it is very selective, releasing only one or two records a year and that is how it will remain. In the future (Not too distant we hope)

BLUNT) we will get back together and form a label for the nineties with a different name different concept, quite apart from Hot which will be exciting. Hot will always remain strong with the management and publishing and the bands we are working with at the present time, ie; the Celibate Rifles, Bell Jar, Ed Kuepper and the Yard Goes ON Forever) which keeps us busy.

When we look back at the eighties and independent music, generally it will be seen as a healthy time, the heroes like the McComb's, Faulkner's, Ed Kuepper's, and Kim Salmon's, who helped mould Sydney's independent music scene were only names on the surface. The ones we tend to forget are the people like Graham Regan, Martin Jennings, and Chris Reas, who had a belief, a patience to pursue with music. They were the people who spent long hours getting it together and fighting bank managers just to document quality music.

article by R. Garland.



ANDY- Dario Argento films are fuckin' great.

COO - Mixed Blood, the film about street gangs in N.Y. really affected me.

ANDY- It's probably because those films that you mentioned didn't have an underlying sense of black humour, they were just grim kill films.

MARK- Films can vary so much in intent. Basket Case and Bloodsucking Freaks are similar budget films, they have a similar look, but whereas Basket Case has a story with characters, Blood-sucking Freaks is just sick, without any redeeming value.

CA - What type of horror films would you like to see made?

BILL- There's too many comedy / horror films. They're fucking up too many horror films today with Porky's type humour.

COO - They're just trying to appeal to the masses with that.

MARK- A horror film without all the obvious trappings would be good. Gore has taken the place of the story.

BILL- Something original. Blood Simple I really liked.

ANDY- Tenebrae worked really well because it had suspense and gore in the right places.

BILL- Everyone has a different favourite Argento film.

ANDY- The Goblins music immediately announces an Argento film.

BILL- The way he uses coloured lighting makes it look so theatrical.

COO - A film that would really scare me would be good.

ANDY- Getting back to humour though, Corman's The Raven is an example of out and out comedy that is effective. It's better than what you get today.

BILL- The original Little Shop of Horrors and Bucket of Blood were great too.

CA- Do you think that censorship has any positive applications?

COO, BILL AND ANDY- No!

MARK- Yes. Although I don't think there should be a censorship board, I do believe that some of the things that they get to see should never have been made.

COO - Like what?

BILL- Child Porn, Animal violence films.

ANDY- Snuff films. Any film where anyone or anything is hurt. But then, such acts are illegal anyway.

BILL- They don't let through a film like Day of the Dead but they pass movies like Shocking Asia and all those animal slaughter films.

QA- They get away with those movies by stating that they are only showing nature as it is, so it's okay to watch real death.

ANDY- But if it's real, then it's not escapism at all, is it?

MARK- Yes, but whether it's real or simulated, what you get on the screen is still a picture of suffering.

COO - It's not the same. If the suffering is real and you know it's real then you don't get the same feeling as when you're watching a fantasy.



MARK- DRUMS & PERCUSSION

AUDRINA
STOLEN GR
OUT OF YOU
SEE THE MAN
WIERD SHIT
SKULL OF ANDY
THRILL OF CHASE
MASS
JOHN DOE
HEAD
GUNS

SONG LIST FROM FIRST GIG.
15.5.86 HAROLD PARK HOTEL.



BILL - BASS & VIBRA SLAP



COO - VOCALS & B/VOCALS

FOREVER AND A DAY

(WORDS - COO; MUSIC - MARK, ANDY, CAROLYN & BILL)

- LABELLED AN INSANE OFFENDER
 THAT'S THE WAY HE'LL BE REMEMBERED
 FOREVER AND A DAY, THE BITTER AND THE STUPID
 HANGING ROUND THE PLAYGROUND
 HE LIKED TO WATCH THE CHILDREN PLAY
 THEIR PRICELESS INNOCENCE
 BEAMS OUT REFLECTING ON HIS FACE
 HE WAS JUST A SIMPLE MAN
 TOO SIMPLE FOR MOST TO UNDERSTAND
 BUT HE LIKED IT THAT WAY, UNITED WITH THE
 CHILDREN
 THIS BOND SO VITAL
 HE'D SEEN THE WAY THE GROWN UPS PLAY
 ESCAPING THE TRAGEDY
 HIS FEAR OF ENDING UP THAT WAY
 THE JOY THAT MASKED HIS DOWNFALL
 THE PRETTIEST GIRL HE'D EVER SEEN
 BECAME HIS ONLY FRIEND
 NEGLECTING MOTHER'S ORDERS
 HER CAUTIONS MADE NO SENSE
 IN LAUGHTER SHE COULD SEE NO HARM
 BUT HIS DAYS WERE NUMBERED
 THIS LITTLE GIRL WAS GROWING FAST
 TROUBLES PASS ON COOL WATERS
 THIS SECRET PLACE THEY ALWAYS GO
 HE SITS IN WATCHFUL SILENCE
 WAITING FOR HER TO SHOW

CAME NIGHT THE SUNSHINE FADED
 SO LONG IT SEEMED HE'D WAITED
 FOREVER AND A DAY



ANDY - GUITAR & ACOUSTIC GUITAR

TOYS WENT
BERSERK



→ BUT HIS ANGER MOUNTED
 SURRENDERING TO MAN'S DISDAIN
 THE HERO DROWNED BELOW
 SHE CAME AND WASHED HIM ALL AWAY
 SO IT SEEMS HE WAS MISTAKEN
 HE GAVE THE ONE CHANCE HE'LL NEVER
 GET
 IN THIS CIVILISED WORLD WE LIVE IN
 WHEN YOU'RE NOT THE SAME THEY
 DON'T FORGET.

MARK- We're easily bored so whereas other bands are happy to play the 4/4 beat endlessly in a song, we like to move things around.

ANDY- We don't like to tie ourselves to a formula but we don't set out deliberately to be weird either.

GA- Do you have any non-musical ambitions?

MARK- Yes, I want to learn the violin.

ALL- MORE LAUGHTER.

BILL- I want to play centre-half forward for Carlton in a Grand Final.

ANDY- We want to make a film, remember Bill?

BILL- I'd like to have my own studio. To work on a magazine, hint, hint. Learn how to do shove its on my skateboard.

COO- I don't have any really big ambitions.

MARK- I'd like to improve my cooking. I make a great omelette.

ANDY- Wouldn't be great to run a pub? I'd be the lanlord, talk to all the regular customers that come around. It'd be bloody great!

G.A. Do you have any final messages to pass on to our readers?

ANDY- Make us rich!

BILL- Have a rage!

COO - Be cool.

MARK- Start thinking.

GA- Thankk you for turning up so promptly, bye.

ALL THESE RECORDS ARE AVAILABLE FROM ABERRANT RECORDS-

C/O BOX A566 SYDNEY SOUTH, N.S.W. 2000.

Don't Run Away, No Warning, Forever and a Day, ALL 7" Singles.

Pieces, 8 track , Double 12" EP, Have no More 12" EP.

The Smiler with a Knife , Album.

article by Gerard Alexander

RECORDS

Depression - 'Hard Core History (1982-86)

Funnel Web records

In 1976, Mr John Lyndon Rotten squeamed out of our weekly Countdown ritual "No future" from the depressed world of Tory Britain. Our Australian "pop" culture was at the time made of satin suited manicured would be popsters celebrated over our "Ripper 76" compilation albums. It seemed so new, so refreshing. But what was Punk? Iggy Pop stated "it was a male prostitute in the American goal system", but grandpa iggy always tried to shake the "Pope of Punk" tag. At the time the movement did seem irrelevant (take away MCclarens, who utilized "Punk" as a money making venture) it was exciting, refreshing music, the explosion of bands that surrendered the garageland, like the Buzzcocks, The Fall, Jay Division, Gang of four and in the states The Dead kennedys.

But its over a decade since the event and what is left in the ashes of "Punk" and the rebellious, is "Hardcore". This is where Depression are to be found, back in the garage, angry unpretentious and highly political. On this double album we are served up with over forty songs, that cover boredom, frustration and conservation issues. Its speed metal, 4/4 beat, highly distorted guitar, monotone squeaming vocals, record live (mastered by Lobby Loyde). These guys can play their instruments (Wasted dreams could have been recorded by tall tales and true, with its jazz offerings). Unfortunately the sound quality is dubious. But is it relevant? in the land of the quarter acre, brick veneer and endless middle class. What has music that grew out of poverty and unemployment in Britain got to do with Australia? How seriously can we take on Australian bands like Depression, when Hardcore bands in Poland are bashed by security police, where in the iron curtain a person holding his head up high with a purple mohawk can be goaled for five years for the criminally insane.

But in the land of Oz, it is a statement, political or otherwise. Abstractions of rock'n'roll angry and furious just as relevant as Guthrie in the thirties or a middle class Dylan singing "the times are a changing" in the sixties. Maybe I've missed the point, it is just loud fast music to get drunk by and slam dance. But it doesn't matter, we need bands like Depression as a necessity to counter balance, the mostly bubble-gum opium sounds of the mainstream.

R. GARLAND

THE MADMAN - almost past caring

Bent 7#

The main problem with this sone its a little short of ideas, certainly the rythmn section sticks to bland basic 4/4 format and vocal melody hasn't explored at all and rolling themselves the madmen is litte misleading because there into really safe thrashy garage pop. Hailing from Brisbane, a really early Saints comparison isn't hard to make, but they lack the style. Flip it over, a nice wall of sound, with a heartwarming minor progression. I'm sure this band is capable of a lot more than this record shows, although the grey vinyl is quite nifty.

R. GARLAND

LIVE..

DISTANT LOCUST/CROW -HOPETOWN HOTEL 4/1/90

Probably this editors 2 fave local bands for this present moment. Well, quite possible. Why? Co's ed. can like them for what they are, not what they are trying to be. They're both honest and know importantly how to entertain. Fuck reviews suffer from indulgence at times.

Crow are first to go on stage and are fronted by local giant Peter Fenton and his fellow 3 humble comrades. They look more than ready to launch an assault on the typical Thursday night yuppie audience. They do a mighty fine job as well. Highlights of the set include the charming 'Parade', 'Bad Fun', and the seven and a half minute, somewhat epic 'The Charlie Horses' a song which slowly builds, gets faster, reaching crescendos which inspire the crowd for more. A friend reaches into my ear and describes the band as 'apocalyptic'. Crow had managed to win some fans over, even the ones who rarely listen to guitars. See them quickly.

Distant Locust have been around for a while now and like a few other bands continue to get the big snub from the 'mules' and those associated with the bigger music press. Maybe the narrowmindedness will change once the band gets O.S. The Locust arrive on stage and look primed to deliver. That, they do, in a set which lasted over an hour and had the crowd wanting more. Accompanied by the new drum machine making way for old stager MAX, the band churn out songs from their 2 vinyl offerings (the self-titled EP, and the Top Of the World EP) as well as doing an interesting cover version of the Stones 'Sympathy for the Devil' without the rock n'roll guitars, as well as everyone's Locust fave live track, the cover they do of 'I Feel Love' by Donna Summer. Bodies danced, sweated, some suggesting even stronger things. Fun was the operative word.



DISTANT LOCUST at the Journo's
with old drummer MAX.

Left to Right : Matthew (electric piano), Steven (bass
+ drums), Brian (guitar, vocals)

LIVE at the Star (again.)

THESPIAN PLOT, VRAG, THE WAXWORKS - SAT. 11/11/89

Walking into the Evil Star I was quite taken back by how sparse the place was, not surprising by the sounds being heard. Thespian Plot are a morbid mix of dated early eighties British jingle jangle, lacking the depth of the Smiths or the emotion of the Bunneymen as they fall into no-mans land. There seems to be more care given to their well groomed upper North Shore rebellion of 'hey, lets look inner city'. After a couple of songs I was placed into the mood of hearing 'Stairway to Heaven' 400 times - I went to the back bar.

I returned to VRAG, people in VRAG, being along the dirge, VRAG the sweat off my forehead, this band is wild. They are probably the funniest band this side of the Tasman. Rumour around town has it that they had to leave New Zealand. It was a choice of being drafted, goaled, of the penal colony across the Tasman - they took the latter. Within the first moments of the E chord being thrashed out about 70 people emerged out of nowhere in a swelt of sweat to be sprayed with shaving cream, foul mouth lingo and clever songs.

Musically they lay somewhere between American funk and PUNKSTERS Red Hot Chilli Peppers and the Gun Club with catchy tunes in songs like the released single 'Regret' and 'Litest Shade of Black'. VRAG mock and hinder their way through 60 minutes of thrash, funk and country punk amidst the sleaze and safari suits.

The Waxworks had a job to follow the cuckoo's nest, the fate only being made hard by what serious band could follow VRAG. Waxworks put the world in shoulder in comparison. To their credit it took only a couple of songs before the crowd was receptive.

The Waxworks are at odds with themselves with the production of the pop song and the more creative experimental side, not unlike Died Pretty. The band seems to be evolving and changing all the time, always trying to find new ground. It's only 6 months since the Madman EP and it seems more like 2 years in the average bands self development. The newer songs like 'I Don't Know' show a sort of American sense of underground pop sensibility. While 'Dust' is more layered building up in a mock sense of a nuclear holocaust, the rythm section is sound and very creative with strong playing underneath bold striking sax lines and thrashy guitars. Edwin's vocals are different and unique, but not monotone. There is an emerging style not unlike Pete Shelley singing like Nick Cave. The Waxworks played late and it was their second gig of the night (playing earlier at the Sando) and to their credit 30 to 40 people were still standing watching them by 2.30 in the morning.

J. WATSON.



: THE WAXWORKS

CROW

CROW consist of: Johnny 'Boy' Fenton - drums

Peter Fenton - guitar, voice, chief headkicker

Jim Woff - 'just another' bass player

Peter Archer - other guitar and voice

For me, I first caught Crow live at the Landsdowne late last year supporting the Headless Chickens (N.Z.). First impressions were that the band had a lot of rawness and energy, if you like to put it in a few words, 'a fusion of loud abrasive noise mixed in with the melodic bits'. Not long later I approached Peter Fenton the band's major playmaker for a chat about this noise and these melodic bits, as well as all the other usual things, over the usual few quite ales in downtown sunny Newtown. A brief history lesson was first given.

PETER: Paul Cormack, our old bass player, and I, first formed the band about 18 months ago. He lived with Peter Archer above Possums Gourmet in King Street. This silly scenario began where I had this riff which Paul bought a bass line into and Peter just joined in. My brother John had mentioned that he liked to play drums, so hence Crow evolved.

BLUNT: Crow have suffered only one major change in their line up since their existence, that being Jim Woff replacing Paul Cormack on bass. How has that had an effect on Crow's live sound?

PETER: Paul had a really fat sound where he liked to play his bass loud, as say opposed to Jim who plays it not as consistently as loud but

more like a real bass player at a less slamming level.

BLUNT:

CROW are really into tunes in a big way. They like to play really hard and aggressive, as well as enjoyin' the subtleties as well.

PETER: It sort of like this aggression working within this vehicle of a melodic sort of animal. Personally I like nice sounding things. In music like Chopin and Mozart there are all these things that are happening where there is one certain melody to something and that is injected by these other sounds which hit off together. A critic once described us as being like this dichotomy of of sounds. He liked the way we'd all look humble and then once we got up on stage we'd turn into these vulgar

VRAG

It's a few days after the release of Regret/Litest Shade of Black by Surry Hills favourite family entertainers-VRAG. It's a quirky and highly addictive debut 7' released on their own Smiling Faces label

Guitarists Johnny Leadfinger and Hot Cappuccino face the Blunt tribunal. Those not present are King Sticks, Gash Clittich on the bass, and Chuck Slimmerod; the voice and the antics.

Chuck says 'up your nose with a load full of jism-he can say that because Chuck is not afraid.

See Chuck covered in peanut butter offering jatz crackers to the punters (the lepers offering).

See Chuck on his knees rubbing the inside leg of an elderly woman (see photo) who happened to be at this soundcheck and raced home and changed into something black, something borrowed.. Chuck is a working class shit from Newcastle and he likes to touch nerves.

Cappuccino, Leadfinger and Clittich were beamed from the Good ship Tarranaki N.Z. and played in 'ECNALG' a band that was pretty noisy around 1986. Chuck and Johnny meet up while studying in Sydney, Australia. Cappuccino decides he has seen enough of the world and has very itchy fingers, and Gash well, she is open to suggestions. The time, August 1988.

O.K. So I've introduced you heroes to you, let's put them through the BLUNT wringer, let's see how they come up under a little light-lean over a little further please Chuck. VRAG live are like cartoon provocateurs-big on the biff and crash and light on the smouldering intensity. Collectively they challenge an audience to shift out of video hire stroke entertain me mode of standing watching a band and everyone just shaking inside themselves-but to get involved, get active, to get their fingers covered in erotic food covering fom Kraft. Hot Cappuccino quips enigmatically 'VRAG make money to keep doing what VRAG do..'

To a couple of my orifices they're musically into subversive England/America, e.g. Dead Kennedys, Resillos, Stooges, James Brown Velvet Underground and Public Enemy who Hot Cappuccino say 'create the nastiest sound since the Sex Pistols-They bark and yes friends they do bite but all the while with these silly grins on their faces. They rap (Bound by Love-a smart move for a single maybe?) and they do singalongs (organised). The VRAG philophosy is 'don't be suprised, we never are'.

So it's January 1990 and they have just released their first single produced by Kirk Godfrey which should do something for his credibility after the abominable 'Ring my Bell' and Kirk if your reading this the VRAG bootube is on it's way. They have another 4 songs recorded and ready to be pressed, maybe they will go searching for a deal but it highlights their brashness that they couldn't stand to wait for the indie record co's to recover from the demands of the silly season to release it so they pressed it themselves and are selling them only at gigs with a pair of boxer shorts; we joke that they won't sell any records but sell out of the boxer shorts and consequently throw in the music and take up fashion design.

In the Vrag camp anything is possible and that is why you will like 'em. GET VRAGGED.



THANK MUST GO DIRECTLY TO KIRSTINE FOR HELP WITH PHOTOS + LAYOUT,
R. GARLAND FOR REVIEWS + HARASSMENT, LOUISE + CAMERON FOR U.S.
WORK, CROW FOR BEING CROW, VRAG FOR THEIR ENERGY, TINA FOR HER
POWER, M. LIOTTA FOR HIS PASSION, GERARD AND HIS PLAYFUL TOYS, A. FROST,
HARRY VALENTINE FOR THE COOPERS ALE, STATE LIBRARY OF NSW, ZRSR,
SOUTH SYDNEY WOMENS CENTRE, SAMANTHA FOR THOSE PHONE CALLS, AND
YOU THE SWINE WHO PURCHASED IT. SEE YOU ALL NEXT ISSUE.

R. P. Buckle xxx

JUST NEW YEARS

TOYS WENT

I AM LICENS

BER

REGULAR KINDA GUY

