

(SEATTLE PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE)

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ISSUE : #2

SMOOTH
SAILING



NOISE A-TRON

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Letter From the Founder:

Awwww shit! Issue number two!
Thanks for picking up and reading the second issue of The Seattle Passive Aggressive. After I put out the first, I wasn't sure what the reaction would be like, or if I'd even make another. Much to my surprise, the reaction has been overwhelmingly positive. So here we are, two months later putting out another. I've got so many people to thank for all of the love, support, and encouragement that I'd like to take the opportunity to do so now. First off, Jason, Lea, and Tyann for all the support, help stapling and folding, and overall just pushing me to do this and keep going. This wouldn't have been possible without you. Thanks, and I love you guys. To Nik Christoferson, you are the man. You do so much for local music and having you in my corner and even writing for us has been a real blessing. To Alina, Aneesh, Chris, Joe, and Jake, thanks so much for your time writing, you've all done a fantastic job.

To Pamela Sternin, what can I say? You've been a big help getting issue two out. Your enthusiasm has been infectious, and I'm so happy to have you as my second in command. To Brian and Lisa, you guys are the best. Thanks for helping out with the distribution and just being awesome people. I'd also like to thank Jolene from KISW for all the love and support, and getting me on-air to co-host the local show. I'd also like to thank all the bands, fans of the zine, readers, locations who have let us stock the issue, and everyone else that has read an article online, gone to a show, picked up a CD, and people that have taken a chance advertising with us. You are the reason issue two is out and I thank you for your support, and choosing to continue to support local and independent music.

Going forward, we are doubling our print run, and plan on a new issue every two months. We plan on doing two runs of 500 copies, each with a different show on the back page. The sky is the limit at this point, once again thank you to everyone.

Sincerely,

James Ballinger



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NW NOISE

By Jake Weller



Have you heard the news? Seattle has itself a hard rock scene again! Hell, the entire Pacific Northwest is flaunting its courtship feathers right now. Alas, it is of dire importance that this rejuvenated beards-and-beer community protects its flannel reserves, lest they be found on models sashaying up and down catwalks in New York. As a recent episode of VH1 Classic's hair-farming documentary series, *Metal Evolution*, made abundantly clear when featuring the Seattle "Grunge" scene and its contribution to the annals of metal: 1. Jerry Cantrell has surprisingly shitty taste in music, and 2. we've kind of been here before.

The good news is that being a part of such a vibrant artistic community, for both fan and musician alike, comes with a ton of sweet bennies: bigger crowds, better shows, an enthusiastic support system, wider exposure, etc. But here's the bad news: the better a music community is, the more fragile it becomes.

Keeping a local community strong is asking a lot from the artists and music lovers who enjoy what it offers. Everyone needs to remember that the main reason that anyone is exposing their art to the public—especially now that the eye of Sauron is watching *The Voice*—is because it is tons of fun and you may get to talk about it with other artists. Five years ago, most everyone readily admitted this fact. They had to! There was absolutely no other reason to spend so much time and money on what basically amounted to an excuse to drink out loud. It was this attitude that made everyone relax and enjoy themselves, whether they were playing or watching their friends rock out. It was this attitude that also made the scene positive again; finally restoring it as a viable source of entertainment.

But now that the audience and general buzz is growing, it's very easy for that ol' rockstar attitude to come out and turn all that cheerio fun into a bowl full of shitty glass. This is when bands stop talking to each other and making nice; this is when dudes get bummed, bridges get burned, and it resonates through the bones of every audience member.

Admittedly, it is perhaps inevitable that anything that becomes super awesome will soon get blamed for the careers of Creed and Nickelback, but increased awareness of the pitfalls may just be enough to put it off until we all go happily deaf. There are many members of the community who have been at it for years and years, even through the darkest of days, providing a reason to stray from the temptation of those pitfalls—people like Adam "Superfan" Noble Bass and Eric "Gibson-Sponsored" Carnell (or Android Hero) to name just two. If you don't know them personally, just go to any show ever and look for the beacons of jollity in the center of the room. They are the ones just purely having fun, smiling and hugging all of the friends they have made simply from loving live and loud music. They have made, and continue to make, a huge difference in the energy of the community. Guys (and gals) like these should serve as our role models for how to handle whatever eventual success this tiny scene might see. And they are just a couple of folks who are helping to power this electric buzz we are starting to feel about the scene. There are many more, but it's looking like it could be a shitstorm a-comin'. They can't do it alone, folks; it's up to all of us. Remember, everybody, this is fun.

Local Artist Spotlight

by James Ballinger



Aside from focusing on bands and musicians here, we also want to spotlight local artists, promoters, and other people that work in the music community. Sometimes that person works diligently behind the scenes, trying to make a name for themselves much like the bands and musicians do. A good poster can occasionally take a good show over the top, or call more attention to a lesser known one.

Local artist/screenprinter Andrew Crawshaw owns and runs 112 Printworks in Fremont. "I spend most of my time screenprinting commission jobs for bands and graphic designers. When time allows I also design and print my own posters and occasionally work on record layouts, logo design and t-shirts." Andrew also plays in two bands; (A) Story of Rats, and Terminal Fuzz Terror. "When I was a teenager I had a shitty punk band and was against the idea of paying someone else to print our t-shirts. So I taught myself how to print. I primarily printed t-shirts up until I moved here almost 8 years ago, from a small town north of Boston called Newburyport. Upon moving here I became exposed to the whole world of screenprinted poster art and opted to start doing that. It tends to be a lot more rewarding and interesting than printing t-shirts was for me."

Starting out, Andrew designed posters for Hot Cross, Playing Enemy, and Breather Resist. Using the printing facilities at the old Vera Project, he learned how to start doing poster art. "I did a whole slew of poorly designed and poorly printed 11x17 screenprints for little shows, but thinking back the first ISIS poster I got to do really helped boost my confidence in reaching out to bands that I thought might be too big for me to make a poster for. The first couple prints I designed for them were pretty terrible. But they were super nice and let me design and print a poster for every Seattle show they played after that. I ended up curating and printing an entire poster series for one of their last tours."

Now running his own shop along with Rick G. from Row Boat Press, he is the primary printer. "My longtime girlfriend Danie often helps me with larger and more complicated jobs and helps run the retail store. We also have one employee Lance that works one day a week" he says.

As for future plans and projects, Andrew plans to just keep printing. "I've been running about 3-7 jobs a week. Anywhere from 1-6 colors and 50-700 prints per job. I've got a couple prints of my own coming and some record layouts I'm finishing up. I'm working on designing posters for Zola Jesus, Tragedy, Kiss it Goodbye, Undertow's final show as well."

www.brokenpress.blogspot.com



By C.C. Parker

The dudes in Lesbian (Lesbros) have been at it for some time. Dredging up their fierce musicality & precision from time put-in with many honored local acts over the years (Abodox, Golgothon Sunrise, Shining Ones, Asva, etc . . .) in addition to their own deep love & understanding of music in general. But that's only a preliminary for where Lesbian is going & where they have the potential to take us. Into shifting landscapes of brutal & beautiful sonics . . .

Daniel LaRoche coined the term "brutiful" which not only fits the man, but also his approach to music. Mercurially churning beneath the surface where a fire begins to form. Is this metal? Fuck yes! Building up from the earth until it is a fully formed cathedral. It takes time & must never be rushed. Lesbian WILL pummel your skull, but that is not their soul-mission.

Needing to tell a story to get their point across they understand that it's the creative process itself which allows patience to pull it off. Arran McInnis, who is a blur on stage, has composed such detailed passages that you imagine he's slowed them down in his head: conjuring the dramatic in sweeping bursts followed by more contemplative shades.

The rhythm drawing it in so we can find our footing. Benjamin Thomas Kennedy's breathing drums at center of a tribal mass. People go into a trance at Lesbian shows & return home with it lingering in their subconscious. Reality is determined by something Outside - Art as a divination tool.

When the voice finally comes in it becomes clear that this is indeed a metal band. Dorando "Pete" Hodous' tortured howls across an increasingly aggressive landscape. This is Lesbian's guts & darkness. No tale is complete without wars of mind or rage one feels when faced with permanence. Isn't that the basis for great metal, anyway? A berating of existence with intelligence & force . . .

In the literary mode of ancient story-telling. A tribe gathers around the flames to hear "myths" of other worlds. Some might even call it religious, but we are smarter than that. We understand the beauty & horror of art is in us & that we are the keepers of its true intent. It's always been this way.

Lesbian has an elemental purpose. Each album, in fact, is based on this principle. Dissolving elements of progressive, psych, jazz & drone, plus seven metals to reduce it to its most basic principle. Talk to them & know they're not just about the music. There's a philosophical meaning to all this.

There are moments in Lesbian's music when strains of sound NOT being played by the principle instruments are coaxed from the culminating dirge. In alchemical terms it's to discover the fifth element: a reconciling of four warring elements into one harmonious & perfect unity.

It's what we're seeking & occasionally have the ability to manifest. Yet it's a difficult time for art & artists. There seems to be less interest in being sincere & more emphasis on product - True art doesn't sell, but divulges mysteries! That's the basis for our entire fucking journey & it is absolutely crucial . . . !

The Lesbros are more a tribe than a band, which extends to other tribes & so forth. People who want to take back what's been taken from them. And although this isn't meant for political discussion it's important to realize what's illusory or real. There is no time for symbolic posturing.

Taking us on their journey to show what's possible, never swaying from a road they've carved for themselves. Spirit warriors stand their ground, showing but never telling because ultimately it is for you, yourself, to discover.

Art that is free from the constraints of matter or time. Other than it's own ageless heartbeat, moving through us to tear us apart & then build us up again . . .

When the lights flip back on you're left with deep feelings of respect. Not only for the band, but something of the imagination flashing across the screen in your mind. Glimpsing beautiful worlds that DO exist.

Only one must traverse a brutal-dark & sediment of life to get there - Lesbian understands this as it is their life-blood. And the only way, truly, to divine the philosopher's stone.

<http://lesbian.bandcamp.com/>



Photo: Phil Petrocelli for Petrocelli Designs, LLC site:
<http://petrocellidesigns.carbonmade.com>

SMOOTH SAILING

By Pamela Sternin

Smooth Sailing come at you with all the debris and ferocity of a tornado, followed by the serenity of sun break. An orchestra of panicked intricate riffs, turbulent melodies and scalding vocals. Teeming with time signatures off the beaten path and alluring interludes that often sound like 10 music boxes playing simultaneously. The connoisseuring ear with an appetite for technical musical posturing would be easily sated. This is not your run of the mill band. Do the math: Two guitarists, two bassists, a drummer and what is essentially a special effects technician running a series of lights and fog. The combined wattage alone must be topping out at 1,000 and the overall decibel level is like a fire hose to the face. Their debut full length album xoxo delivers the thunder but to fully experience this band, exposure to their live performance is key. Because you know what can't come across on a recording? A crowded room sweatily headbanging all the while being enveloped by crimson fog or seizure inducing strobe in cahoots with a wall of amps that punch you in the chest with enough force to jar a pacemaker. It's like being at a circus and all the kids were given knives. This band is undoubtedly heavy and their presence is huge. But it seems that Smooth Sailing will be leaving us, venturing to other shores. The East coast to be precise. Not forever don't worry, our hometown bros will be back. With their new guitarist, Tyler Romo onboard and a brand new engine in the van (thank you, Kickstarter) this sextet is ready to blaze a trail across the U.S.



And, what's a tour without tour hi jinx upon the locals. Ever heard of an Apache Badge before? Simple enough, make idle conversation and eventually lead the topic towards the solicitation in the removal of a lock of someones hair either with a knife or if that's not available, unritualistic scissors. How about a Strange Brew? That's when you take someone's beverage at a bar and secretly drink it without them knowing about it. They've been known to work this angle in teams like thirsty raptors, so watch out for your mojitos. This will be their first time weighing anchor on the East coast as well as their longest voyage to date spanning from May 3rd through June 2nd, letting the secret out that the North West is a' brewing again.

Photo: Jesse Barracoso



Once back from tour Smooth Sailing are going to hit the ground running, teaming up with a local theater company, Blood Ensemble in a combined effort to birth what could closely be called a "Heavy metal opera". The band will be acting as an orchestra conducting a background score for the thespians live performance. Expect ambient auditory including Timmy Keener on lights adding a very unique spin for the habitual theater attendee. Committing an entire month to writing around an hour's worth of symphonic instrumentation, illumination and coordinating with the action and storyline of the play, the maiden showcase will be this coming July running until the end of the month. The ultimate vision is that the quality of the play will bring out the drama fans but creepy and dark enough to bring out music fans.

After their national tour and their theatrical brush with Blood Ensemble it's going to be back to the rehearsal space writing new material for a future Ep. Wonder what tour hi jinx would come along with promoting that album...hmmm, I don't want to know. The tour kickoff show will be May 3rd in Portland OR at the Laughing Horse. Then it's bon voyage until their safe return and solid homecoming show at the Comet on June 2nd with Princess, Grenades and Mico De Noche.
www.smoothsailingtheband.com

NOISE-A-TRON

By Alina Shanin

Most musicians experience doubt and battle many of obstacles throughout their careers. Many would agree that there are always reasons to abandon the art, but to Noise-A-Tron the personal journey and growth are worth every effort.

Jason and Lea Bledsoe are the rhythm and heart of Noise-A-Tron. Lea, 33, is the artistic, inspiring part of the band and creates loud free-flowing music while Jason, 32, builds the framework and perfects it rhythmically. The amount of sound the duo produces is unbelievable; Noise-A-Tron describes them well. Jason's intense and precise drumming always impresses even the harshest critics of the genre and when paired with Lea's loud effects and bass riffs, they demand the attention of everyone in the crowd. For how heavy and loud Noise-A-Tron is, the music flows smoothly taking the listener on a journey with much anticipation and complex ideas being conveyed without text.

It all started with the two meeting each other in Florida in 2001. At the time, Lea was playing in a noise band called Terror Organ, while Jason drummed for a slow drone metal band Bullhead, which Lea eventually joined as a bass player. A couple years later Bullhead ceased to exist and the two started a new project called The Human Echo. In 2006, the band moved up to Seattle, where just a year later the duo found themselves out of a band and out of patience for others. Their passion for music and need to create pushed them to start an independent two-piece group.

Noise-A-Tron was officially born in August 2009 when Jason and Lea recorded their first EP with engineer Robert Cheek, who's worked with artists like Deftones, RX Bandits, Tera Melos, and Two Sheds. Since then the duo has been working on getting louder and acquiring the necessary equipment. Their current setup includes a four-piece drum set, a keyboard, an eight-string octave bass, two loop stations, five effects pedals, and samples projected through a second mixer.



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What drives the couple to keep producing new material is simply the lack of knowing anything else, according to Jason. Both have been involved in music for so long, they can't picture their lives without it.

"Music has always felt right," Lea said, adding that even as a toddler she would post up in the bathroom and play around with echoes. Her artistic drive grew as she did and is part of the reason why Noise-A-Tron has accomplished many of their goals, like writing, recording, getting a van, and touring. Production of a full-length record is next on the list.

To Noise-A-Tron, performing is a form of meditation and an escape from reality, which is why neither interacts much with the audience while on stage. "I'm in my own universe," Lea said, adding that she hopes the audience can do the same.

She compared performing to a rollercoaster ride, complete with some fear, anticipation, and lots of excitement and adrenaline. Jason said he knows the show is going well if he's able to transcend and completely float away with the music.

The overall open-mindedness of Seattleites' and the acceptance of their "bizarre" music is one thing that Noise-A-Tron is grateful for. Writing their first song was quite an accomplishment, said Lea, since the genre is so open and new. While both musicians had an idea of what they wanted to create, there was no textbook to follow.

"Regardless of accomplishments or defeats...we will look back upon this time and realize how unique and special it really is," Jason said, adding that not many people get to embark on amazing adventures with their significant other. "It won't last forever, so enjoy it."

To check out Noise-A-Tron's music, visit reverbNation.com/noiseatron or noise-a-tron.bandcamp.com. For show dates and band information find them on facebook.com, myspace.com, or twitter.com/noiseatron.



Photo: Phil Petrocelli for Petrocelli Designs, LLC
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