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ISSUE#12



# GLOSSÉ

theHELM

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Letter From the Founder:

Hello everyone, thanks for picking up Issue 12 of the Seattle Passive Aggressive. Thanks for continuing to read our zine. Of course, there are many people to thank for making this possible, but I'd especially like to thank our staff for all their hard work and time devoted, and all of you for reading.

In February, we will be celebrating our third year of publishing. This is a massive achievement for a small independently ran and funded zine. I never saw this going three issues, let alone three years. Thanks to all of you for your continued support. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and all that if you want to keep current with everything we have going on. For now, enjoy this issue. Sincerely,  
James Ballinger

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# GLOSE

By Jeffery McNulty  
Photos By Matt Koroulis

Glose are a progressive noise-rock band from Seattle that first got together in late 2011. According to guitar player and singer Aaron Lundborg, "Doug's old band, Madraso, shared a practice space with my old band, The Ruby Doe. We spent a day setting up said room and came to the conclusion that we were both more of the 'Dude Who'll Fix Your Shit When It Breaks' type." Doug Owen is the mastermind behind Thermionic Effects, the handmade tube distortion pedals. A few years ago he took some time off and built his bass amp. Also by hand. From the ground up. It sounds amazing and fits his style perfectly.

When Aaron and the drummer from The Ruby Doe both had kids it naturally led to a band hiatus. In the meantime, continues Aaron, "Doug called me up and asked if I'd like to join the band he'd put together with Matt P. Remembering the fact that we were both of the "fixer" type which is a rare combo in one band, and I really dug Madraso, I gave an enthusiastic yes!"

Guitar player Matt Portolese, formerly of the band Skin Picnic, naturally complements Aaron's guitar playing style. On Glose's recent full length *The Very Best of Glose* they sometimes meld together so you can't tell who's who and then they break away and forge ahead on their own in a shower of noisy riffs.

They found their drummer Matt Hennen on Craigslist. "He listed a band that was essentially The Ruby Doe's precursor (The Cat Ion) as an influence," explains Aaron, "and since there were probably only fifty people who were aware of that band, I figured we should meet the guy just so I could see who it was. Turns out he could really play and we shared a common friend who lent him that recording. Small world. Big drummer." Hennen is indeed large enough to be comfortable playing college football. And his main vice is something he probably only has in common with the drummers of Manowar and the Misfits, weightlifting. His style is intricate and heavy and perfectly matches the intensity of the band.

The *Very Best of Glose* was recorded by Kowloon Walled City's Scott Evans at Witch Ape Studio. It sounds huge and is punch-you-in-the-face tough.





In their infancy KWC had played with Madraso, and Scott originally intended to record them, "but since they weren't around anymore, he got stuck with us. I've come to the conclusion that Scott could record a band and fix your plumbing all while delivering a baby and everything would come out great. He really is that good and cares that much."

The band's influences are wide and probably not surprising to those who have been listening to acts like Jesus Lizard, The Dazzling Killmen and Cherubs, but one influence stands out: Their love for Black Elk. Not because of the way they sound necessarily but because of their singer's name! "I think I was singing at practice and Doug said something along the lines of 'Sounds like you're doing some Tom Glose type shit!' It was originally kind of a ridiculous inside-joke," says Lundborg.



Tom (Black Elk, Lopez, etc) and Aaron are both from Wenatchee and have been friends for a long time, "Tom had a big hand in introducing me to a lot of great music." They worked together at a gas station in the early 90's and Tom brought in plenty of new records, "Back then, if it didn't somehow involve The Big Four I probably hadn't heard of it. I distinctly remember him giving me shit for being someone who 'probably knew every lyric on Ride The Lightning' though. Totally true."



Doug and Tom have been friends for quite a while now too, actually. "Truth is, our first show was quickly approaching and we didn't have a name so we had to decide quickly. We had, literally, over 200 names in an email thread that was circulating between us on an almost hourly basis. 'Glose' just happened to be the only one that we all could agree on. I think it narrowly beat out 'Horsepussy'. I seem to remember Tom saying it was the stupidest name ever. Turns out, Tom's wrong, YOU'RE WRONG, TOM! WRONG!!!! "

Glose has just finished recording a song at Aaron's new space, Tukwila Sunrise. The song, called 'Wake Up, Winborn' was written for a friend who was diagnosed with ALS, "He's actually going to get cryogenically frozen so the song is for him to listen to if/when he gets thawed-out years down the road." They were also recently featured on The Cha Cha Seattle Noise Vol. 1 compilation.

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



# theHELM

By Pamela Sternin  
Photos by Melissa Bird

"I think the whole reason I got into aggressive music was to release an anger in me that is unrelenting, it's imperative that I play music for my mental well being. Because if I don't...well, it's not a question of how but it's that I have to," guitarist Timm Trust warns. Judging from his imposing frame and fervor of the bands live performance we should all count ourselves lucky that Trust prefers to wield an "ax" in public rather than an actual ax. The Helm (Das Helm) have retained an almost cult status in the Seattle/Tacoma hardcore scene what with 10 years of brutality under its belt, major line-up changes and just the inescapable crush of life it's hard to believe that now more than ever the Helm is at their strongest and most intimidating height.

The Helm has evolved through all original members save guitarist, Trust. Crusading alongside Trust in the downsized three piece we know today is the heavy hitting drummer, Jeffrey Poso (Big Trughk) and high guy bassist, Tony Wolfe (Earth Control). Vocal duties once pitched by resigned frontman, Bob Swift are now entrusted to Trust and even more recently, Poso. "It's a little draining playing guitar and singing," says Trust, "I'm challenging Tony Wolfe to do more vocals. Jeffrey is doing a lot of vocals now. Playing drums like he does and singing at the same time is incredibly difficult, I can't believe how well he pulls it off!"

The Helm has a long history and was born from revered local hardcore VIP's with a touch of East coast snarl. "Bob Swift (original frontman) recently transplanted from Syracuse, New York. In 2003 I was introduced to him casually at a show," Trust says, "He had befriended Ryan



Murphy (drummer/Undertow) and Ben Colton (bassist/Champion). Somehow we were all at a show together and just started talking about wanting to play something fast and heavy, so we all came together and had our first practice. I came with a bunch of riffs that didn't get used from when I was in this project band called So Few Remain in 2001. Those songs became the first Helm 7'' which was released in 2005. Colton played some local shows but quit the band pretty soon after that to pursue a degree. I asked my friend, Joe Helsing to play bass with us

after that. We had a tumultuous relationship and he eventually quit the band. We did a couple tours with Ryan Murphy but eventually he became too busy and couldn't play anymore. By that point Jeffrey had just moved to Washington from California. Our album *Grim Harvest* was out by then and the Helm was writing new stuff, we wanted to continue. We had Jeffrey come try out and it was perfect."

"I had seen the Helm and Owen Hart (Earth Control) at a show in Anaheim before," Poso exclaims while Trust grins, "Didn't you have a rat tail?" "Yeah", Poso laments. "Yes! That's right! I remember seeing you!" Trust laughs. "I joined the band in 2007 and literally went on tour 3 months later," says Poso, "We did a U.S. Tour and that was weird, Joe quit." "Joe would get drunk and rowdy. He would mess with Bob a lot," Trust remembers, "Joe met a girl on tour and they fell in love. We play a show in Pensacola, Florida and he quit right there and then to go to her. The next day I drove 8 hours to Louisiana in silence, watched Thou at a show we were supposed to play then just drove straight home. After that we met Jerad Shealey (Old Iron) over the internet in 2008, asked him to play bass and we started writing



our full length, *Home*. In 2009, we flew out to the East coast to do a tour with Oak&Bone, when we returned Jerad quit. He had a lot of stuff going on and I understood, but it was still a bummer."

"That's when I really started feeling the "are we having too many members to continue?" thought. At that point we had two full lengths in, a 7''...we were on our third bass player, our second drummer...it was stacking up and it felt questionable to continue at times but I still loved playing those songs. So, that's when I asked Tony Wolfe if he would be interested at all in playing bass in this stupid fucking band." "It was just before the second split Earth Control/The Helm tour we did in 2010," says Wolfe, "We didn't even practice. I learned the bass lines and then we just kept going. From a Tacoma stand point I felt like the Helm were a Tacoma staple. They'd been around for a long time and I thought they were sick. I remember dissecting the riffs and every weird ass transition when I was learning the bass parts, it was pretty crazy complicated."

# Witch Ripper

By Brian Kim

Photo by DeAnna Lee

Magically and violently as their name suggests, Seattle's up and coming progressive stoner metal adventurers Witch Ripper fuse together mind melting, red hot riffs with expansive, sweltering sludge. Proggy technicality and spaced out psychedelia add further dynamics to the rock solid songwriting and hauntingly pervasive hooks as grim sonic landscapes provide a ruthlessly ominous backdrop for this brew to flourish and ferment into a sound Witch Ripper fiercely make their own.

Witch Ripper began as the brainchild of guitarist and vocalist Curtis Parker after the disbandment of his previous project, Minneapolis based progressive metal outfit Iron Thrones. After writing a handful of songs loaded with scorching guitar solos and bloodthirsty growls, Parker recorded what would become the debut Witch Ripper self-titled EP, packed his bags, and moved back west to his native Washington state.

"I knew I wanted to start this band, but moving to a new city, if you're like 'I have a band, wanna come play with me?' no one's going to pay attention to that," Parker states. "So I knew I needed to have something to actually show people."



The self-titled debut EP, which was originally available digitally before being independently released on cassette tape earlier this year, is four tracks of deliciously smoky, intelligently crafted heaviness. The opening track "Space Debris" lulls the listener in with delicate guitar picking and quiet atmospherics before breaking into crushing

waves of thick, heavy fuzz coursing beneath searing leads and explosive drums. The record, which was recorded at Signatoretone Studios with Adam Tucker (mewithoutYou, Minsk, Mouth of the Architect, Thou) sounds pristine with a professional level of polish while still maintaining the raw power and energy Witch Ripper displays live. The final track, "Queen of the Green", is an epic seven minute odyssey across oceans of sludgy riffs and chugging rhythms, building and folding upon itself before erupting into an incendiary, Gilmour-inspired guitar solo to close out the record.



The EP garnered positive press from the heavy music blogosphere, drawing many comparisons to progressive and stoner metal masters such as Mastodon, High on Fire, and Baroness. Parker also released a series of music videos for each of the four tracks off the EP using footage from movies such as Metropolis and 2001: A Space Odyssey, creating a dramatic aesthetic to accompany the epic, sprawling songwriting. The record even received substantial attention from entertainment and social network giant Reddit and earned Witch Ripper fans not only all over the country, but worldwide.

"It's one of those things that randomly caught steam and just blew up." explains Parker. "I mean, we ship merch to Helsinki!"

Parker's initial plan proved to be successful, as not long after the release of the EP the members of Witch Ripper began to assemble. Parker found guitarist Coltan Anderson through mutual friends, and wrangled drummer and recent Nashville transplant Joe Eck along with bassist John Roberson, ironically a former Minneapolis native and Iron Thrones fan, with the help of a Craigslist ad.

"We kinda clicked right off the bat," Anderson describes. "I think our first practice, we just learned all the songs in like seven hours straight".

Since their live debut with fellow Seattle Passive Aggressive favorites Grenades, Curse of the North, and Dogs of War, Witch Ripper have been gigging relentlessly, shredding the stage alongside national touring acts like The Fall of Troy and Lord Dying, as well as local heavyweights such as Ancient Warlocks, He Whose Ox Is Gored, and Breag Naofa, building their following and cultivating their craft as a band. "We've had a lot of internet hype from blogs and stuff, but getting accepted locally has been a huge deal for us," Parker states.

After having spent over a year ferociously hitting the local scene in support of the self-titled EP, Witch Ripper has begun writing new material for a forthcoming full length album, which promises to push the band's sound and dynamics to the next level.

"I want the slows to be slower, the fast parts to be faster," says Parker. "We have this core, but we want to see how far we can push it in each direction."

Witch Ripper will be laying relatively low throughout the writing process, but those searching for expertly forged head banging tunes would be wise to order Witch Ripper's self-titled EP via Bandcamp and to keep eyes and ears open for rumblings of the band's next move. There is no doubt that this is a band with great things coming for them over the horizon.

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

# Local Spotlight

By James Ballinger

On top of being in a multitude of different bands (Sidetracked, Owen Hart/Earth Control to name a few), Brian Skiffington of S.E.S. Presents has been booking shows around Tacoma and Seattle for over 14 years. "The first show I booked was in 2001, a Champion/Breaker Breaker show in Parkland on PLU campus," Skiffington says. "Really I just started booking because it seemed the most logical way to get my bands on shows. Instead of asking to get booked, I started booking our own. That show was already happening and I was able to add those bands to it because my band Sidetracked was playing." While Brian has put on plenty of shows in Seattle, he is also been a big voice bringing bands through Tacoma. "It became apparent very early on that all the shows I wanted to see were happening in Seattle. There were about four of us that would cram a two-seater pickup truck with a canopy and the rest of us would sit in the back and roll up to see shows. When our bands started playing shows it just made sense to make things happen in Tacoma."



"There were a few venues at the time but really things didn't gel for me until the 1227 house started," Skiffington remembers. "All of our bands supported this little basement and we were all booking shows there and playing each other's shows. Early on we did everything collectively. Bands would come to town and we would give them floors to crash and take them dumpstering for produce and cook for everybody. It seems funny now but everything was very communal and supportive. The shows were about the music and about supporting bands on the road."

Rain Fest is another thing that Brian has been involved with. Now in its 9th year and 5th at Neumos, the hardcore festival has become one of the countries premiere hardcore festival. "In 2006 Champion played their last show and invited bands from all over the place to come in for the weekend. There show was on a Saturday but they booked two stacked shows on the Friday and Sunday. People flew in from all over the world," Skiffington says. "Zack Ellis, Matt Weltner and our friend Steve Jackson wanted to keep the momentum going, and put together the first year of Rain Fest in 2007. My bands played the first year and I facilitated some out of town bands getting added but was not involved. 2008 saw Jackson leave the fold and I jumped head first into it. It has been the 3 of us ever since."

While Rain Fest has grown in size over the years, Brian attributes its success to having an extremely hardworking volunteer staff, a good relationship with the venue, and not compromising themselves or taking cash from corporate sponsors. "We want Rain Fest to feel like the best hardcore show, not a concert," says Skiffington. "What we do is still intimate and realistic for our expectations of the isolated, forgotten about Pacific Northwest."

Upcoming, Brian's birthday show will also be the very last show at Chop Suey as we know it, with Black Breath, Harm's Way, Theories, Ill Intent, Earth Control, and Wreck January 19th, the third Bleak Outlook weekend in Tacoma March 20th-22nd, and Rain Fest announcements are also right around the corner.

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