OneDaySavior Recordings Interview on Canadian Releases

One Day Savior Recordings is actually a New York-based record label, but Christopher Tzompanakis has worked with quite a few Canadian bands so I wanted to interview him and talk about his encounters and relations with Canadian hardcore. It is one of my favourite record labels so it was a pleasure talking with him!

In all the label worked with six Canadian hardcore bands through eight different releases. Here is the rundown:

Ignorance Never Settles / Incision – “Within the Bast Realms of Dying”, December 1998

Confine – “The Beginning of the End”, 1999

In Dying Days “Life as a Balancing Act”, 2002

Boys Night Out – “Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses”, CD 2002

In Dying Days – “After the Fire”, 2003

Jude The Obscure – “The Coldest Winter”, August 2003, One Day Savior Recordings

Rosesdead – “Stages”, 2006

Boys Night Out – “Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses”, LP 2006

- ODS001 1998 – Ignorance Never Settles – Within the Vast Realms of Dying (split with Incision) 7″
- ODS003 1999 – Confine – The Beginning of the End CD
- ODS016 2002 – In Dying Days – Life As a Balancind Act CD
- ODS023 2002 – Boys Night Out – Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses CD
- ODS026 2003 – In Dying Days – After the Fire CD
- ODS028 2003 – Jude the Obscure – The Coldest Winter CD
- ONR040 2006 – Rosesdead – Stages CD (with Black Box Recordings)
- ONR042 2008 – Boys Night Out – Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses LP (with Forge Again Records)

-So when you first formed the label, where were you located? And how far from the Canadian border was that?

The label was started in Williston Park, NY, which is located on Long Island. I believe it’s about 8 hours from the Canadian border.

-Right because you were still in SkyCameFalling. Did you tour with the band to Canada?

Yes, we did one show on our very first tour in Ottawa. We booked the tour ourselves so we were pretty excited that we actually were able to go to play there.

-Who played there, if you can recall? And did you see any other shows while up there at that moment?

It's been quite a long time, so in all honesty if I named any bands it would just be me guessing. I am fairly certain that Matias, from Buried Inside, did the show. Unfortunately we were in and out so we did not have a chance to see much else. I remember being concerned about crossing the border.

-Why is is that so many bands have problems crossing the border when they come and go from Canada? I constantly hear stories of members not passing through, more in the 90s than now. It would seem legit for a band to come play a show no?

We actually had heard a lot of stories so I think we were more scared than anything else. For the most part we used the excuse that we were just crossing through to Detroit every time but once. We tried to go the legal, working paper route on one occasion which unfortunately was the only time we were delayed several hours and almost denied. I assume they caught on to what bands were doing by sneaking in and playing and eventually tried to put a stop to it.

-What was the first Canadian hardcore record you heard?

It was more than likely Chokehold "Content with Dying".

-That's in the top 5 classics of Canadian hardcore. When you decided to do the Godlike Communication Group around 1997, you originally contacted Confine for a compilation. Did you also contact other Canadian bands for this?

I think I originally intended to release a compilation. I'm not sure exactly what bands I was hoping to include but I am pretty sure it was the first few artists from the original

ODS releases like Ignorance Never Settles. A lot of the bands I communicated with was over Victory Records chat, which many of you remember as the Victory Records chat room. It's where I first started talking with Mike Charette of INS.

Ignorance Never Settles / Incision – "Within the Vast Realms of Dying", December 1998

-They were going through their Bloodlet type of phase. And you were lucky enough to release their split with Incision. Did you find it funny that there was also a pre-Grade band also named Incision? It was a little confusing for me the first time I read about Incision, trying to figure out if there were actually two bands, one from the states and one from Canada, but the one from states was doing the split with the Canadian band…

I actually did not know about that Incision until after the split was released. I am not sure exactly how I became aware of it but I do remember seeing ads after the 7″ was already out for a re-released 12″.

-Yes that was the Grade/Incision split in around 98-99 from Workshop Records. It was a vinyl issue of their second demo from 1993. What side of the split do you feel did better? Ignorance Never Settles or Incision? Were more copies sold in

the mid-west or in Canada?

There were only 500 of the records pressed. Most of those copies I ended up trading with other labels rather than selling them. With the label being so new at the time and bands also being fairly new (at least in the states), I was really just trying to get the name out there.

I never actually heard early INS so I can't really be sure exactly how that material stacked up against their earlier material. I was amazed by the Incision track as well as their demo. The INS material definitely reminded me of Bloodlet or bands of that ilk. The bands definitely complimented each other really well and I was quite pleased with how it turned out.

Confine – "The Beginning of the End", 1999

-Both bands were really great indeed and matched perfectly. So in 1999 you once again contacted Confine about working with them. Did you also want to work with Avarice (who also shared a member of Ignorance Never Settles) as they had done the split with Confine that you loved oh so much!

I don't remember if I ever communicated with Avarice with the intent of releasing a record for them. I am not sure why exactly. I did like the split as well as their demo. Actually the first time I remember hearing Confine was on

the split when Skycamefalling was staying at a house that Avarice had stayed at a few weeks earlier.

-The Confine record you released actually featured four new songs and three songs from the mentioned split on Redstar Records. Why did you or the band decide to have those on the CD rather than just have a short EP of only new songs?

I am not sure who suggested it or how it came to be but what I do recall is that the topic was the subject of some drama. I was under the impression that the label who released the split, Red Star Records, had given the okay for the tracks to be used. Years later I came to find out that they had not. I never communicated directly with them which was obviously my fault as well so it was definitely a bummer when I learned that they were upset about the situation. I am sure the record would have been fine with just the new tracks. I don't think there were any ulterior motives.

In Dying Days "Life as a Balancing Act", 2002

-In 2002 you released In Dying Day's second EP "Life As a Balancing Act". How did you first hear about this band? Was it because they released their first EP on Re-Define Records, who were supposed to release the last Confine EP in 2000?

Yes, it definitely was through the Re-Define EP. I was really impressed with them and contacted them almost

immediately after hearing it. I was already friendly with Phil who was also in A Death For Every Sin. Phil explained to me that they were thinking about signing with Good Life when I offered to release a record for them.

-That's right, they had a live performance featured on one of the Good Life Recordings videotape compilations.

I think they also had a song released on one of the Good Life samplers too.

-You think they were enjoyed in the states, or most of the records were sold in Canada?

I know they had quite following in Canada. I definitely think the first EP gave them quite a bit of exposure here in the states. Unfortunately the crossing the border for touring was always troublesome so they definitely were not able to tour as much as they could have. Still, I definitely think they were poised for something great. It's a shame they never reached that point.

Boys Night Out – "Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses", CD 2002

-Boys Night Out only had their EP "You Are My Canvas" prior to you releasing their first ep "Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses". How did you catch their breeze and what made you want to sign

them up?

Scott Sheridan, singer of Blue Skies Burning, who helped me out with the label from time to time, happened to hear of them. He sent me the links to check them out and honestly I was floored. There was something about them that was really unique. At the time the whole singing/screaming thing really hadn't caught on and the fact they blended it more pop/punk with hardcore and dark imagery really appealed to me.

I instantly called Ferret after contacting them and he was just as floored as I was. So we worked out a deal that they would sign to Ferret and ODS at the same time.

-That's really cool! I didn't it was done at the same time! How did the release of "Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses" come through?

Well I emailed the band and we chatted on the phone. Once Ferret heard You Are My Canvas he was on board so we set up a show for them in NY and they came down and played and we all agreed on an ep with ODS and full length(s) with Ferret.

I had them come down to Long Island to record at a studio here. I picked the 3 songs for them to re-recorded since I really loved those tunes and they recorded 3 new ones they had written.

-How many pressings of that album have been made over time?

Somewhere around 10,000 I think, give or take a few thousand. It was by far ODS' most successful release.

In Dying Days – “After the Fire”, 2003

-In 2003 In Dying Days were ready for their last EP “After the Fire”. How did that go down?

IDD was already breaking up which I was bummed about. They had a pretty big buzz going at the time, they played Hellfest. But getting into the states and touring was always tough. So that side of things never came together. And in my opinion, it really slowed that buzz down. They had the tracks written and asked if I would be into releasing them. I really loved the band so I agreed. We did one pressing and much like any release that comes out after a band is broken up, it was a slower seller. But I am happy I did the release.

Jude the Obscure – “The Coldest Winter”, August 2003

-I gotta tell you, the first time I heard the next release, Jude the Obscure's album "The Coldest Winter", I was blown away. Canada really had the best noisecore/mathcore bands. Apart from Dillinger Escape Plan and The Chariot, we had it all in the 2000s (Spread the Disease, Maharahj, Buried Inside, The End, The Abandoned Hearts Club, The Separation Suicide, etc)! How did you first hear of JTO?

JTO was first introduced to me by Portland who worked for Ferret. They had received a demo from Jude and didn't really have the time/money to work with a new band so they sent it my way and I was blown away by it.

-The album was recorded before you signed them?

Yup. It came together pretty quickly once their signing was announced to the actual release.

-I believe this was the first time you co-operated with another record label to release an album? It was pressed and distributed by Defiance Records in Europe?

Right. Defiance and I were always sharing new releases. They were good guys and I really loved a few bands on the label. They came to visit in the states and we met up. I gave them a Jude record and they loved it so they asked if they could release it in Europe, which I agreed to.

Rosesdead – "Stages", 2006

-Alright now Rosesdead's album is actually my all time favorite Canadian album. Its such a masterpiece! They were already signed with BlackBox Recordings when you co-released their album "Stages" with them, how did you get involved in the picture?

Well I was a huge fan of Fordirelifesake, and when I found out Wedge was doing another band I contacted him. They put me in touch with BlackBox and I asked to license the record for an official release in the states. I loved that record. Definitely another one of my favorites. There is a certain feeling that record conveys.

Boys Night Out – "Broken Bones and Bloody Kisses", LP 2008

-The last thing you released from a Canadian band was the LP reissue of Broken Bones. This was after the band had broken up, what made you decide to reissue this?

So Justin from Forge Again always wanted to release BNO on vinyl and I guess he attempted to contact both Ferret and ODS some time ago. Unfortunately for whatever reason, we never actually ended up discussing it and Ferret was not really licensing their records for vinyl anyway. So when Justin and I actually did sync up, we decided to release it together. We took advantage of a deal that United had for vinyl, which basically was a set number of records on any

color vinyl they picked and we went with that for a pretty limited run.

-So what was the pressing info for that release?

First press was around 500. Then there was a second press which included some 180g copies and a few other colors.

-Thanks for this great interview Chris! Any last words on working with Canadian bands?

Canada always has always been churning out some incredible bands. I feel fortunate to have released those records and worked with those bands. I am excited to hear what the next generation of bands will sound like.