Eliot Rosewater Official Biography

Eliot Rosewater was a short lived band from Mississauga that was only around from December 1995 to October 1997, though they managed to record a great deal of material, and apparently had written over 50 songs. It featured Ian McPhedran on bass and vocals, Dan Zabawa on guitar and vocals and Ryan Kennedy on drums. In early ’96 the band recorded their first album at Rumenal Records Studio. This was released on tape (and is pretty much lost, that’s why it’s not included in the discography zip. but if you have it, send it to me!!!). There were about 100 copies of the first album/demo that were made and three cover versions of the photocopied insert existed. One had a picture of a pulsar, another had an abstract photograph of Dan’s girlfriend at the time, and a later one had an anime character that Dan drew.

For their first compilation appearance on “Regional Ornament” representing bands from Southern Ontario, they recorded their songs with two mics and a four track recorder in Ryan’s basement. They had Steve Werben master the songs, and often argued with him to leave the hissing in, and make it purposely badly recorded. Another one of these songs was supposed to be released on the “Benefit for the Animal Defense League Compilation“, but it never came out.

In March 1997 they would record their second demo/album, once again in Ryan’s basement (their jam space) in the same manner as the tracks from the Regional Ornament compilation tracks. Ian elaborated quite well on this demo, so I wouldn’t want to misquote him.

> “It was recorded in March 1997 in Ryan’s basement on to his dad’s 4-track. We set up three or four microphones and recorded in a similar fashion to the regional ornament comp.

> We recorded the first tape at Rumenal and probably didn't have enough money to do that again since none of us had jobs. Dan did a few overdubs, but it is pretty much all done "live". Dan also mixed and mastered the tape. Using two "master" tapes (the first two copies from the final mastered version), we dubbed them as we ran out/needed them for shows. To package them and save costs, we bought blank cassettes in bulk and small manila envelopes and decorated them ourselves. Dan made an insert which we photocopied as needed. Like the first tape, we did not make labels, opting instead to use a knife to carve in the tape side number, our name, and often some nonsensical message (i.e. let your children run wild and free). Mine usually had a red flag, our name, and the words "élan vital" or "cultural revolution" written on them. I have no idea how many were made—probably 100. I had my copy of the "master" for a long time, but lent it to Aidan Koper (now of the band Germans) and Steve Kado (one of the founding members of Blocks recording club) because they wanted to do a cover of "Green Christmas" for a band they were in. They never returned it and it is probably long since lost."

In mid 1997, the band did their third demo which was partly recorded at Rumenal Records Studio partly at Al P's new studio. The initial copies of the third demo was ten songs, spread over two sides of the tape. Not many versions of this exist because after the band broke up, Ryan took the remaining copies of the tapes and erased the second side to replace it with his new band's material, The Tet Offensive. These "split" tapes are the copies most widely available. This third demo was sent to Vince at Lake Erie Hi-Fi Records, who was putting together "The 49th Parallel" compilation, which used two songs from this third demo. Vince also propose releasing more material on his label from this demo, including a split 7″. But Vince quickly lost interest when he attempted to master the songs for a vinyl output and the person who was doing it told him it was too poor a quality to be mastered.

The band ended up breaking up in late October, and was barely included on the “Better Luck Next Time” compilation. Dan, who took care of it, apparently took his time to send them the DAT and didn’t bother to send any artwork. Witching Hour was obviously pissed, and you can tell in the way the booklet looks when you get to “e. rosewater”, page, with a whole through the “e”, making many, many, many people mislabel this band as “c. rosewater”. On September 27, 1997 Eliot Rosewater played their last show at the masonic lodge with Smother, 8pdan, Soap Box Racers and The New Grand. Ryan had been busy with The Tet Offensive and Dan and Ian started up The Stereo 17.

They reformed for a one off show on November 7th 1998 in Ryan’s basement with The Tet Offensive, to about 30 fans.

Eliot Rosewater Discography (minus the first demo and the second half of the last, get in touch if you have info on them)

teve
Werben