

Fans of Bad Productions Records Interview

This label was very special, so I did a special type of interview. It was more in the sense of a conversation with Chris Iler. It was great to do and the guy is a dictionary of knowledge of the whole Canadian scene. This label really helped a lot of smaller bands be remembered thanks to his compilations. Over the years Chris has played drums with Ten Dead Men, 26 Letter Prison, Bag of Nines and Velvet Claws.

You may contact Chris about getting what's left of the label's releases at chris.iler@sympatico.ca. The list of left overs is at the end of the interview.

Here is the complete release catalog of the label

- FOBP1 "Summer Squash" compilation on tape with zine, 1990
- FOBP2 "Made in Michigan" compilation on tape, 1990
- FOBP3 "Ya Ma Bzzz" compilation on tape, 1991
- FOBP4 "This Ain't the Hot Fudge Show" compilation on 7", 1991
- FOBP5 "Attack & Decay – Squirrel Sonatas in the Key of C" on 7", 1992
- FOBP6 "Dirty Bird – A Good Burn" on tape, 1993
- FOBP7 "Chicken Milk – Chicken Milk" on 7", 1993
- FOBP8 "Fuck the Commonwealth" compilation on 12", 1994, on CD and tape, 1995
- FOBP9
- FOBP10 "Go!" compilation on double 12" and CD, autumn 1998
- FOBP11 "Drunk – ...Again..." on CD, 1999
- FOBP12 "Drunk/Goat Boy – Split" on 12", 2000
- FOBP13 "The Street Enters the House" compilation on CD, Summer 2000

- FOBP14 "Frenetics/Nakatomi Plaza – Split" on 7", 2002
- FOBP15 "Killed by Canada" compilation on double CD, 2006
- FOBP16 "Velvet Claws – Quarantine" on 7", 2007

-Alright well lets start with how you came to get into punk and hardcore. What was the first band you got into, and your first show and year if you remember that?

I used to live in Windsor...my home town and I by chance tuned into a radio show called The Imperfection Hours on CJAM out of the U of W. The Imp Hours was a punk show and they used to play stuff like Minor Threat and Dead Kennedys...this was around 1984. First punk show was around then too...SNFU and Sudden Impact played the U of W pub called The Subway.

-What was your first punk/hardcore record?

Misfits Walk Among Us

-How did you first get involved with the scene? Was that with the zine you started? Or was there implications before? Did you play in bands?

I never did a zine although I have contributed to many. I guess I got into the scene largely through a guy who I met through CJAM named Paul Abrash. We both put in a proposal to the radio station to do a metal/hardcore crossover radio show...we were teamed up to do a weekly show called SHREDDING INTENSITIES. I did not play in bands at this time...that came later when I moved to Victoria in the 90's.

-Ya Paul Abrash from Crisis of Faith. So at that time you had already moved to Toronto. And was it through this radio show that you decided to start releasing material? Can you explain a bit how the "Summer Squash" tape came about?

Paul and I were both from Windsor and met there. We became good friends and moved to Toronto in 88. We started a new radio show out of CHRY (York University) called DEATH METAL

UP YOUR KILT. A few years later I stepped out of the DMUYK show and started co-hosting a show at CHRY with Stephe Perry called FAST & BULBOUS ION THE SPOT...my tastes were changing and I preferred punk to the death metal thing. Stephe was compiling a tape comp at the time called ONTARIO YOURS TO DISCOVER...I helped him out w/art for this project and it inspired me to do a tape comp...SUMMER SQUASH was a 100 minute tape and photo zine that documented the punk scene in T.O the summer of 1990.

-Can you recall the majority of bands that were on that tape?

There were 20 bands in total. I recorded them live off the board at various venues in the city at the time. The bands were ROCKTOPUS, SUPERFLY, SONS OF ISHMAEL, KINGPIN, PHLEG CAMP, TENT OF MIRACLES, DEEP END, EPILEPTIC BRAIN SURGEONS, GUILT PARADE, SHARK GRAFFITI, MSI, ONE BLOOD, TOTENTANZ, SUCKERPUNCH, CHANGE OF HEART, 5 FT NOTHING, NO IDENTITY, 4 1/2 REASONS FOR RETROACTIVE ABORTION, LIQUID JOY & MÜD. 400 copies were made.

-And was that officially released on Fans of Bad Productions or independent at the time?

That was the first FOBP release.

-How did you come to use that name of the label?

Stephe worked at a student newspaper and he helped me with the production of the photo zine part of the Summer Squash comp. One night hanging out there he said he was a fan of bad production as apposed to a slickly produced record. It stuck.

-At the time he was just starting to do Raggamuffin Soldier. Did you consider doing a label together?

No but we both certainly helped each other with each other endeavours over the years. Stephe was and still is a hugely

influential person in my life.

-The label's next release was another compilation called "Made in Michigan". How did this compilation come about? Was it still only bands from Canada?

That tape was basically a bootleg compilation with Detroit bands. I accumulated lots of demo tapes and stuff from Detroit area bands when i did radio in Windsor (border city w/Detroit) a couple handfuls of dubs were basically given away to whoever was interested.

-Did any of the bands on the comp take it seriously or asked to work with you on an album release?

Yes...Paul and I were friends with one of the Detroit bands called ATTACK & DECAY. They released a demo called Lunchbox Philosopy. It made a great 8 song 7-inch!

-Which was one of the labels next releases. Did the band often play in Ontario or were they solely known in Michigan?

They played Windsor 2 or 3 times before breaking up. They changed their named to INTACT but recorded nothing and fizzled out soon after. Because Paul and i did that record together the label was a split release with FOBP and the one time ever label name known as SPAM DAGGER.

The next release for FOBP was another tape comp called YA MA BZZZ. it came out in 1991 and featured 7 Toronto bands. LIQUID JOY, MÜD, CRISIS OF FAITH, MOURNING SICKNESS, GODS MOM, HI DUMMY, CHICKEN MILK. The idea for the YA MA BZZZ tape was that it featured some new bands that weren't around at the time the Summer Squash tape was put out and it featured more than just a live recording of each band. It was the first time songs from Crisis of Faith with Dave Lake on vocals was released. The YA MA BZZ comp. was more of a release of friends bands.

-There was then another compilation, "This Ain't the Hot Fudge Show"...

After the YA MA BZZ tape came the Hot Fudge 7 inch comp... the labels first vinyl release... featuring 4 bands with the common link of members from each band attending the Ontario School Of Art. HI DUMMY, LIQUID JOY, MÜD, CHICKEN MILK. 500 copies were pressed on red wax.

-At this point you started releasing one band eps. The first was the "Attack & Decay" 7", which we discussed earlier, and then followed by Dirty Bird's "A Good Burn" tape and Chicken Milk's self titled 7". Did you find it harder to sell solo bands' records than compilations? Or did it not matter because they were usually close friends bands?

Most comps are label samplers but FOBP comps are more of a documentantation of canuk scenes and timeframes. All the comps did well. The Dirty Bird tape was called A Good Burn. Adam who was in Crisis Of Faith was a good friend and thats how FOBP came to release the tape. 200 copies were made. 1000 EPS were made of the 7".

-At this point you moved to Victoria, B.C. You then released "Fuck the Commonwealth". How did this massive compilation come about? Why did the LP and CD feature different bands?

I moved to BC in 93...Fuck the Commonwealth came out on shortly afterwards. The commonwealth games were taking place in Victoria at the time...which is how the name came about. First of all the LP format came out and I wasn't planning a CD version at the time. The record sold out quickly and I decided to do a version on CD... the format allows for more material so I added stuff.

-Bands like M Blanket actually changed song on the CD version... why was that?

M Blanket's Bangles cover was deleted for legal reasons... We

were just afraid of potentially getting sued for the use of a cover song. Kid Collision replaced In Your Room. Kid Collision could possibly be the first unofficial Ache Hour Credo song...

-There were a lot of bands that became pretty important from "Fuck the Commonwealth" and "Go!". Were all songs exclusive to the comps to begin with?

Not entirely. but this was still at a time when bands put out tape releases... so some of the stuff on those comps were previously only available on small run cassette releases. Lots were exclusive to the comps though.

-Did you come to work with Dave Brown of Slow to Burn when you moved to BC?

Victoria is a very small town and the punk community is very close knit and incestuous. My first ever show on the island was in a small town up-island from Victoria called Duncan. Dave brown and Wade from STB picked me up in their van and we went to see M Blanket and Shutdown and Slow Children Playing at a place that was a convenience store in the front and a small room in back w/ a half pipe and the bands played on the floor. It was SO COOL i can't even convey how rad it was. I became great friends with Dave and Wade and we started a band called TEN DEAD MEN. The STB roster at this time was only a SHINER EP which those two guys were in.

-And you would both end up working with a lot of the same bands...

Yeah... Goatboy, M Blanket, Ache Hour Credo, Daddy's Hands, Render Useless, Gus, Benchwarmer, Black Market Fruits, Dillinger Mob, Hudson Mack, Submission Hold and Ten Dead Men.

-"GO! 50 Canadian Punk/HC Bands" (vinyl version) & "GO! 47 Canadian HC Bands" (CD version) is the release you are the

most remembered for. It was a massive compilation, and featured a lot of bands that are stuck in the importance of Canadian hardcore and punk. how did you get all these bands together? was it just from collecting demos or did you contact them about new songs for this comp?

So the idea as I recall was to do a Canadian comp to end all comps. The CD version had 47 bands... the double LP had 50. I would ask bands to contribute an unreleased song (at the time) but if all else failed and it was an important band to me i would take anything just to have them represented (example the Propagandhi song had been released on a split 10" w/ I Spy but fuck i had to have them!). This was at a time before internet..it was a ridiculous challenge! Also VERY FRUSTRATING! But so worth it.

-How long did it take to put this together?

Lots of letter writing and phone calls. Inside a year i guess. Lots of formats were mailed to me everything from tapes to DAT s and some CDs. Gathering art was another massive hurdle. The 2XLP format of GO! was released after moving back to ontario in 97. 1000 of each format was made and i still have copies of the 2XLP! I always like to tell people it was the first time Danko Jones was released!

-What differed between "Go!" and "The Street Enters the House"?

When I moved from Victoria to Kingston in 97 i wanted to do another canuk comp... another coast to coast thing w/bands happening at that time... but more of a release that was easier to compile and easier to digest as a consumer.

-Because it featured more mainstream bands?

Not not more mainstream... just something that wasn't as massive because Go! was SO much work... i tackled another 50 band comp a few years ago with killed by canada which was

much easier due to the internet. It had some repeat appearances from bands like Submission Hold and Goatboy but some newer bands like Led By Regret and Manner Farm.

-How many copies of that comp were made then? Where did you sell most of these?

I could also put The Street comp out fast and cheap and sell it really cheap. 1000 were pressed and most were sold in Toronto and Montreal... a bunch in Kingston and through the mail. Bands got a bunch to sell in their towns too. I still have copies left.

-What came next was two collaborations with Drunk from Sweden. Why did you decide to step away from the Canadian scene and go straight to Northern Europe? How had you come across the band before?

Drunk were from Oslo, Norway. I was a pen pal with Roger from Drunk when he was in a previous band called LIFE BUT HOW TO LIVE IT. Roger is in my opinion the best guitarist ever. Anyway when LBHTLI broke up and Drunk Had a few EPs out in Europe I offered to do a CD release of all the songs. That's how it started.

-So it was a compilation of all the already released material?

The Drunk ...again... CD was a collection of four separate 7" previously released on various european labels. The SPLIT LP w/GOATBOY came next and those songs were new and unreleased.

-Was it already then pre-planned that Drunk would come do a Canadian tour with Goatboy?

There was talk then about them coming to Canada yes... but Goatboy didn't go on the tour. Drunk came to Canada in August 2001 for 2 weeks and played in Ontario and Quebec only. Most of the Quebec shows were with Born Dead Icons. Ontario shows were with 2 Pump Louie and Frenetics. We used

the BDI house as a base..it was a lot of fun! Drunk is now broken up... they put out a third release called Company Tie and then broke up. Roger and 2 other Drunk members are now in a band called Danger!Man.

-Lets talk about the Frenetics/Nakatomi Plaza split. Where were each band from and what made this split happen? Was it done due to the success of the previous split, or what?

The Drunk/Goatboy split sold poorly... still have copies. It was a bad decision to pair those 2 bands... basically it's cause both bands had material but not enough for an album for each and so they were put together. As for the Frenetics/Nakatomi Plaza split, Malcolm from Frenetics played w/Nakotomi Plaza and suggested them for a split 7". I agreed. The Frenetics track called Countdown radio is probably the best song on all their FOBP titles. The Nakatomi Plaza track is forgettable in my view. In hindsight i would've done that differently too.

-Did that sell better?

A bit better but still not great...still sitting on a 100 copies or so.

-About four years later you went back to compilations with "Killed by Canada". Yet again another massive compilation spanned over two discs. What was the wait in due of?

10 years had gone by since the GO! comp and there were so many great canadian bands that I felt it was a perfect time to do another 50 band huge comp... a good time to document what was going on from coast to coast in the form of another collection. It came together really fast compared to the other comps. It was really well received and sold really well.

-Did you find it sort of put FOBP back on the map?

Well my intent was really not to make a comeback but to more out go out with a bang... I don't have the time and desire to continue doing releases all the time... the label is on the backburner in my life right now.

-And the next release (and last at the moment) was Velvet Claws ep, which you played in.

Yeah we wanted to do a seven inch and Sticky, my bandmate, and her husband run a label called Music Maul so we split the costs etc and did a co-release. I played drums in VC, it was a drum and bass duo. Sticky's claim to fame was as a member of Weeping Tile.

-Did you have any plans to release full length or ep material from any of these bands? Anything that came really close to happening but fell through?

I wanted badly to do an M Blanket discography and a Ache Hour Credo 10". I put together an un-official M Blanket discography that i make available on CDR for traders. It's all over the internet now. It includes the first demo and a great sounding live show w/unreleased stuff. It would have made a great LP. I also wanted to do a series of re-releases of older canuk bands but things never worked out. Bands like Youth Youth Youth and Sudden Impact. Schizophrenic Records outta Hamilton is having more luck on that front.

-And the label is now completely inactive? How many of the releases do you still have available?

Basically i still have a handful of the Velvet Claws EP, The Frenetics/Nakatomi Plaza split, the Drunk/Goatboy split LP and the GO! 2XLP. There is a myspce site for the label and a facebook page and through those and some consignment in stores in Toronto. The label is not actively doing releases at this time... as for the future who knows! The Summer Squash tape came out 20 years ago ! thats a long time to do a punk label! I feel like i did my part ya know.