

THE DESCENDENTS: ME!



ME IN 1982!

A FORMER CALIFORNIAN'S WEIRD CONNECTION TO THE DESCENDENTS, BY BRIAN WALSBY, 2005. HERE WE GO: THE FIRST PUNK ROCK FANZINE THAT I EVER BOUGHT WAS A LATE 1982/EARLY 1983 ISSUE OF FLIPSIDE MAGAZINE, WITH A COVER STORY ON THE DESCENDENTS. THERE WAS A PIC OF MILO ON THE COVER. IT'S A WEIRD PICTURE: WITH HIS HEAD ALMOST SHAVED, NO GLASSES AND A BAD BRAINS T-SHIRT, MILO LOOKS MORE LIKE A TYPICAL HARDCORE SINGER OF THE DAY. AL FLIPSIDE CONDUCTED THE INTERVIEW AFTER THE BAND'S DEBUT ALBUM "MILO GOES TO COLLEGE" WAS RELEASED. MILO WAS LONG GONE DOWN IN SAN DIEGO ATTENDING... DUHH... COLLEGE, HENCE THE NAME OF THE RECORD. THE BAND'S REMAINING MEMBERS, GUITARIST FRANK NAVETTA, BASSIST TONY LOMBARDO AND DRUMMER BILL STEVENSON WERE JOINED BY RAY COOPER, WHO WAS BROUGHT IN TO REPLACE MILO BUT WAS QUICKLY SWITCHED TO SECOND GUITAR FOR THE LAST SET OF SHOWS THE BAND DID WHEN MILO CAME BACK UP FROM SCHOOL... SO FOR A BRIEF TIME THEY WERE A FIVE PEICE. BUT THE BAND NEVER FOUND ANOTHER SINGER, AND BILL HAD ALSO REPLACED CHUCK BISCUITS IN BLACK FLAG, A FULL TIME JOB FOR ANYONE. SO THE BAND MORE OR LESS BROKE UP.

ME. I WAS BUMMED I LOVED "MILO GOES TO COLLEGE". THAT RECORD HELPED ME GET THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL... HARDCORE MEETS POP MUSIC WITH BIG HOOKS, GREAT BASS PLAYING, Gnarly GUITAR, INCREDIBLE SINGING AND DISTINCTIVE DRUMMING. IT WAS REALLY AHEAD OF ITS TIME. THE LYRICS WERE JUST AS GOOD. BEING A NOBLE AND NAIVE NERD, I REALLY RELATED TO THE LYRICS ABOUT IDENTITY, RELATIONSHIPS AND LOVE. EVEN THE BRATTY "FASHING OUT" LYRICS WERE UP MY ALLEY. TOO BAD THE BAND WAS NO MORE.

HOWEVER, A FEW YEARS LATER BILL HAD LEFT BLACK FLAG AND MILO WAS ALMOST DONE WITH SCHOOL. AND WHILE READING A PEN PAL FROM IOWA'S FANZINE WITH A PRE-REUNION INTERVIEW WITH MILO IN IT, THE SCOP AT THE END STATED THAT THE DESCENDENTS WERE POISED TO REFORM. MY FRIEND WROTE THAT HE STARTED DOING CARTWHEELS WHEN HE HEARD THIS NEWS FROM MILO.

...ANH, THIS IS JUST TYPICAL SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POP PUNK CRAP!



I ENDED UP IN RALEIGH NORTH CAROLINA BY THE SUMMER OF '85 TO HANG OUT. SUDDENLY, "I DON'T WANT TO GROW UP" CAME OUT, AND C.O.C.'S REED MOLIN (WHO WAS A BIG FAN) GOT A COPY AND BROUGHT IT OVER TO SCOTT WILLIAM'S HOUSE SO A BUNCH OF US COULD CHECK IT OUT. I NOTICED THAT FRANK WAS REPLACED BY RAY. THE FIRST SIDE CONTINUED THE ROCK STUFF. THE SECOND SIDE WAS THE BIG SURPRISE. A HANDFUL OF AMAZING PURE POP SONGS. I TAPED IT AND LISTENED TO IT FOR THAT WHOLE HOT AND HUMID RALEIGH SUMMER.



THE REAL TREAT WAS A WEEK LATER WHEN THE DESCENDENTS PLAYED IN RALEIGH AT THE BREWERY WITH C.O.C... IT WAS GREAT THAT TWO OF MY FAVORITE BANDS WERE PLAYING ON THE SAME BILL AND BOTH BANDS SEEMED TO LIVE EACH OTHER. THE DESCENDENTS GOT ONSTAGE WITH THIS MASSIVE GREY COLORED GEAR AND OPENED UP WITH "KABUKI GIRL". THE PLACE EXPLODED. I NOTICED THAT TONY LOMBARDO WAS REPLACED BY THIS LITTLE DUDE NAMED DOUG CARRION. HE SEEMED TO FIT IN PERFECTLY. I USED TO SEE DOUG PLAY IN THIS WEIRD BAND CALLED INCEST CATTLE. THEY WERE REALLY GOOD, ANYWAYS. I THINK PEOPLE IN RALEIGH WERE REALLY INTO SEEING THE DESCENDENTS. A BUNCH OF US EVEN SHOWED UP EARLY JUST TO WATCH THEM DO A SOUND CHECK.

I HUNG OUT WITH THEM. LOOKING BACK, I PROBABLY HAD BUILT UP THIS IMAGE. I HAD OF BILL. HE WAS MY GUARANTEED DRUMMER. HE WROTE THESE SONGS THAT SEEMED TO MAKE A BIG LINE INTO MY SOUL. SO I WAS A LITTLE SURPRISED WHEN I NOTICED THAT HE WAS A AGGRESSIVE GIRL HUNTER. MAN, IT WAS KIND OF FUNNY AT THE TIME BUT, WELL... SO WHAT. I WISHED I HAD THAT COURAGE. HE WAS A REALLY COOL GUY, AND SO WAS MILO. I REMEMBER WALKING DOWN THE STREET WITH THEM AND BOMBARDING THEM WITH ALL KINDS OF QUESTIONS. WE TALKED ABOUT D. BOON A LITTLE. THIS WAS FIVE MONTHS BEFORE HE WAS KILLED. I KNOW THAT I ASKED A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT SET RECORDS AND BLACK FLAG, WHO WERE STARTING THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL NOW... THE FUNNIEST THING WAS BILL TALKING ABOUT HOW FAT HE USED TO BE. HE SAID THAT HE WAS A REALLY BIG GUY WHEN I ASKED HIM HOW HE LOST ALL OF THAT WEIGHT. HE JUST TURNED TO ME AND STARTED TO FURIOUSLY AIR DRUM WITHOUT SAYING A SINGLE WORD. HAHA...



A FEW WEEKS LATER I WENT UP TO NEW YORK AND BOSTON AS "ROADIE" FOR C.O.C... WE MET UP WITH THE DESCENDENTS IN NEW YORK AND SAW THEM AT CBGBS. THE NEXT DAY, C.O.C. WENT TO PLAY BOSTON, & THE DESCENDENTS TAGGED ALONG. WE ALL CRASHED AT ALQUINT'S PLACE...



WHEN I CAME BACK TO L.A. THAT FALL, I SAW THEM A COUPLE MORE TIMES. THE LAST OF WHICH WAS A SHOW WHEN MILO WAS LATE, AND IT WAS DECIDED THAT I WOULD FILL IN TILL HE ARRIVED! WHAT A RUSH! I BECTED OUT SIX OR SO SONGS UNTIL SOMEONE TAPPED ME ON THE SHOULDER AND I HANDED THE MKO TO MILO. I REALLY DON'T REMEMBER ANY OF IT. IT WAS A BLUR.



THE AMUSING CATCH-PHASE "RASPBERRY MOOL-AID" STARTED HERE WHEN C.O.C. ROADIE WAYNE TAYLOR KEPT BUSGING MILO, WHO WAS TRYING TO SLEEP IN. WAYNE KEPT HOLDING A BRAN MUFFIN INCHES FROM MILO'S FACE WHILE CHANTING THIS STUPID MANTRA THAT SPREAD AROUND LIKE WILDFIRE... IT EVEN MADE IT INTO A FEW NATIONAL MAGAZINES.



SINCE GIRLS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A BIG DICAL CONCERN, I SHOULD MENTION THAT SYLVIA QUALLS I.E. "D. SPAIN" (HER PENNAME) WAS THERE. IF YOU REMEMBER, SYLVIA WAS PRETTY MUCH THE FIRST GIRL THAT I REALLY FELL HARD FOR, AND I RUINED OUR FRIENDSHIP BECAUSE OF IT. LOOKING BACK, I WAS AN INCREDIBLE JACKASS ABOUT IT. AND I THOUGHT ABOUT HER WHEN I WAS IMPERSONATING MILO ONSTAGE AND HOW I REALLY GUESS IT. WHEN I LISTENED TO DESCENDENTS SONGS LIKE "SILLY GIRL" AND "HOPE", SHE HAD ALWAYS BEEN ON MY MIND BACK THEN. SO WHEN I WAS SINGING SOME OF THOSE SONGS WHILE SHE WAS SOMEWHERE IN THE CROWD, IT WAS HIGHLY IRONIC.

AND OF COURSE, NOTHING HAPPENED AT ALL.



THE GENERIC SKULL LOGO. GETTING BURNED. EMPTY PROMISES OF CHEESE PIZZA... IT'S:

MYSTIC RECORDS!

BASED ON SELMA AVE. IN HOLLYWOOD DURING THE BULK OF THE EIGHTIES, MYSTIC RECORDS WAS OWNED BY A FIFTIES-ISH BRIT NAMED DOUG MOODY. DOUG MOODY WAS THIS SOMEWHAT MYSTERIOUS CHARACTER. HOW DID HE END UP HERE ANYWAYS?

THERE HE IS! GET HIM!

SETTLE DOWN, YOU CHAPS: HOW ABOUT A BOX OF "SUPER SEVEN" INCHES AND A SLICE OF PIZZA?

THERE'S A LOT OF STORIES... DID HE REALLY RELEASE BLUES AND DOD-WOP RECORDS IN THE FIFTIES? AND DID YOUTH BRIGADE AND THE LATE ROGER ROGERSON OF THE CIRCLE JERKS INTRODUCE MOODY TO THE PUNK ROCK WORLD? DID HE MIX THAT HILARIOUSLY INFANTILE WASTED YOUTH ALBUM? IT SOUNDED CRAPPY... A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME?!

DOUG MOODY

GURU, WE'VE BEEN A BAND FOR OVER A WEEK! WHEN DO WE RECORD A SEVEN INCH FOR MYSTIC RECORDS?

PATIENCE, YOUNGLING...

WE GOT POWER... I MEAN... PARTY!

WE'RE GOING THROUGH YOUR PURSE, BITCH!

I GOT IT! LET'S CALL OUR BAND THE GRIM! AND THE INITIALS WILL STAND FOR "GETTING REVENGE IN 'MERICA." IT'S JUST LIKE "AMERICA!"

HMMM... IT'S SO STUPID THAT I LIKE IT!

DOUG MOODY AND HIS MYSTIC RECORDS SEEMED TO REAR THEIR HEADS IN 1983 OR SO... EARLY MYSTIC RELEASES WERE STRANGE ACTS LIKE VOX POP NOISE GOO AND FUNNILY ENOUGH, THE MENTORS.

BUT BY 1984, THEY STARTED A CONTINUOUS ASSAULT OF YOUNGER MORE HARDCORE BANDS LIKE BATTALION OF SAINTS, DR. KNOW, ILL REPUTE, DON'T KNOW, MANIFEST DESTINY, RKL, DOGGY STYLE, AND THE LIST GOES ON AND ON AND ON.

STRANGELY ENOUGH, EVERY VENTURA COUNTY "HARDCORE" BAND RECORDED FOR MYSTIC: PRETTY SOON, I WAS IN ONE OF THOSE BANDS AND SOON WE RECORDED A RECORD.

NARD-CORE!!

LOOKING BACK, IT'S CLEAR THAT OUR BAND WAS KIND OF PREMATURE AND GENERIC. NO ONE WOULD'VE PUT OUT OUR MUSIC... MYSTIC DID. WE TOURED OFF OF OUR SEVEN INCH. AND KIDS KNOWN ALL OF OUR SONGS. DESPITE MYSTIC'S LOUSY REP, SOMEONE OUT THERE BOUGHT THOSE RECORDS.

GUYS... AFTER LISTENING TO YOUR PRACTICE TAPE... I'M SOLD. THE SONG TITLES: "UNITY," "BADGE," "DRUG FREE." I WANT YOU ON OUR LABEL...

YEAH! ALRIGHT!

(THIS NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED...)

THAT DOESN'T MEAN THE HORRIBLE REPUTATION WASN'T DESERVED. I REMEMBERED DRAWING THE ARTWORK FOR THE "NARD-CORE" COMPILATION ALBUM, AND WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THAT. NO ONE SEEMED TO GET PAID, EXCEPT IN FREE COPIES OF YOUR OWN RECORD TO SELL. SOME BANDS KNEW OF THIS ARRANGEMENT, SOME DIDN'T. EVERYTHING SOUNDED TERRIBLE. SOME BANDS EVEN HAD ALBUMS COME OUT AGAINST THEIR WISHES AND SOME TIMES WITHOUT ANY SORT OF KNOWLEDGE...

...WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO GET YOUR NUMBER SO PHIL HERE TRACED OVER IT. SLICE OF PIZZA, MATE? I DREW OVER IT ON ACID... WITH A CRAYON!

TOO MORTIFIED TO SAY ANYTHING!

UH OH... JOHN, REMEMBER WHEN WE ALL SWITCHED INSTRUMENTS THAT ONE TIME?

YEAH... HEY TONY... HERE'S ANOTHER ONE.

ILL REPUTE WHAT HAPPENED TO BE RELEASED NEXT.

ILL REPUTE OTHERS EVERY SONG THAT EVER EXISTED. PAGE 3!



Gather round, kids! I'm here to tell you about an incredible record label based out of Southern California in the beginnings of the eighties...

...they put out years of incredible music and rose to a highly respected level of achievement!



...and just as quickly, fell from grace and never again reached its level of brilliance it once had...

...golly, happens... was it "WAX TRAX"??

...he he... not even close, Billy! It was...



Harder, Faster & Louder. Since 1978

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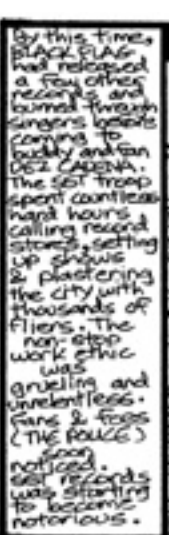
SST was the brainchild of one Greg Ginn, a tall, bawky nerd who operated and built ham radios and played guitar in his own band, BLACK FLAG. Greg started SST as a means to get his band's music released.



The first SST release, the BLACK FLAG seven inch, "Nervous Breakdown" (featuring KEITH MORRIS on vocals) established the soon to be notorious band as a potent force to be reckoned with. But this was just the starting point for SST records...



Soon afterwards the band played with the SAN PEDRO band THE MINUTEMEN, three good balls who also had a highly original approach to music. Ginn asked them if they'd like to record for SST. They soon said "yes" and soon the "Phantom Limb" seven inch was released. It was a great debut record.



By this time, BLACK FLAG had released a few other records, and burned through singers' labels coming to Los Angeles. The SST troop spent countless hard hours calling record stores, setting up shows & plastering the city with thousands of fliers. The non-stop work ethic was grueling and unrelenting. Fans & foes (THE POLICE) soon noticed. SST records were starting to become notorious.



WHO THE HELL DID THIS? WHO IS THIS BLACK FLAG?

DUNNO, MAN...

THEY MUST BE STOPPED!



SACCHERINE TRUST & their ongoing "Asian Icons" became the third SST band. The records started getting distributed nationally through the word work of the SST folks...

NO ONE... NO ONE IS GOING TO FILL THIS BOY WITH LIES!

Man JAN... these BLACK FLAG records are the coolest!

You definitely have to keep in mind the time period. All of this may not seem like such a big deal now, in the era of MTV and the internet, but back then, there were no alternatives for getting your music out there, no short cuts. They had to do it all themselves, & had no help from anyone...



...and on top of that, there was non-stop police harassment from cops who considered them a threat, forcing them to move several times in this period.

THEY ARE RECORDS, OFFICER... JUST RECORDS!

WE'VE BEEN TIPPED OFF THAT "SST" IS LINKED TO A "DRUG RING"! LET ME SEE YOUR WRISTS!

THE BIG BANG CONTINUED. BLACK FLAG ADDED D.C. GUNBOY, HENRY ROLLINS TO THE GROUP, MAKING THEM A TWO GUITAR FIVE PIECE & SOON RELEASED "DAMAGED", A TWISTED ROCK CLASSIC TO THIS DAY...

Arizona's MEAT PUFFETS and their brand of psychotic thrash meeting WILLY YOUNG/CRAZY HORSE, became the label's first out of town act with their howling debut release.

And the MINUTEMEN & SACCHERINE TRUST continued to play shows & release music, continuing to spread the SST gospel...

RIDE THE BUS... WE'RE GONNA RIDE THE BUS!!

AGHHRAHRRGHRR!!

SACCHERINE TRUST VS. THE MINUTEMEN! JOE BIAZA VS. D. BOON FOR TEN ROUNDS! WE CAN'T KEEP THESE GUYS APART!!!

