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Volume 1, Issue 1



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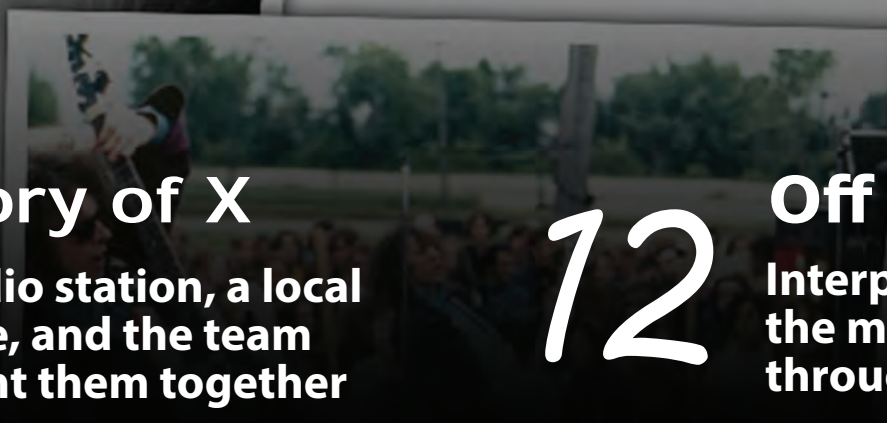
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The Story of X

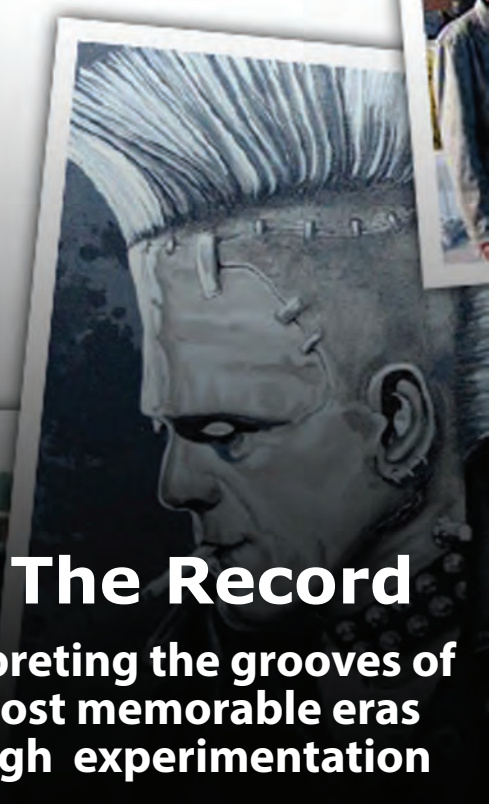
A rogue radio station, a local music scene, and the team that brought them together



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Off The Record

Interpreting the grooves of the most memorable eras through experimentation





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INSIDE



Finding himself

Founding member Joe Kulewicz of Skeeter Creek shares his thoughts on today's country music, finding his birth father and losing 200 pounds.

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Telling her story

Peggy Legee shares her travails as a transgender person in a pair of comics produced with artist Raymond Lowell.

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Courtesy Jessica Micelli

RadioradioX owner and general manager Art Fredette, left, unveils the Internet radio station's banner during a 2018 event at Hangar on the Hudson in Troy.

'X' marks the spot

RadioradioX promises never to be boring

By Art Fredette

2018 started off as a promising year. I was working for a radio station that I was programming, sales were coming in and the future looked bright.

Then the Empire crumbled.

By April, everything I had worked for since June 2017 had ceased to exist. What do I do now?

Drink? Ok, a little. Get pissed off? A lot! Get going and do something about it? Damn straight!

I decided I would not give up on the format I had worked so tirelessly to bring to the area. People liked what we were doing and I believed in the power of good music.

The answer ... RadioradioX.com.

First thing you do is throw a funeral..... The old station was gone. There was nothing we could do to change that. So, why not throw a party?

As always, the local music community stepped up and helped out. The funeral for the "X" was not only a way to say goodbye to a beloved station, if short lived station but a chance to let everyone know the would be a re-birth!

No group of old style "radio" guys were going to stop this format. They were/are the problem with what radio has become and we are/were the solution. The answer to 300 song playlists, heavy repetition and mindless on-air drivel. The idea that radio should be more than a spot vehicle, radio should be exciting.

RadioradioX.com began "broadcasting" on July 15, 2018, keeping the format alive and taking it to a new level. Local music is a staple in what we do. Every hour features at least two local artists and the lunch hour weekdays is devoted to only local music. The rest of

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RadioradioX offers unique experience

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the format is comprised of great songs by artists both familiar and obscure. The mission is a simple one, provide something to listen to, break the corporate stranglehold on radio, and do it without begging for contributions. **NO EASY TASK!**

The stream has been running and there have been hiccups but we soldier on. Working on the technical problems and striving to get better at what we do every day.

In October, RadioradioX held a series of concerts called, "The October Explosion". The shows featured The Plimsouls, The Split Squad, The Fleshtones, Trailer Park Moonlight, Knock Yourself Out, Smittix, Blackcat Elliott, The Jagaloons and The Lawn Sausages. It made for a hectic and amazing month of great music.

On December 7th, we hosted a concert with Big Frank and The Bargain Bingers, Blasé Debris and Joe Mansman and The Midnight Revival Band. A great night of celebration to kick off the Christmas season. Every band involved played a stellar set to a great crowd and helped spread the gospel of live, local music and the abundance of talent right in our area.

The following week RadioradioX presented "Xmas Strings" with Michale Graves, Ike's Wasted World, Bad Mothers and The Tradition. A benefit concert and food drive, this show delivered on every level. Food was donated to help the hungry, money was raised for veterans suffering with PTSD and once again, local musicians were the key.

On the programming side we have been very fortunate to be able to offer not only a unique and varied

format but some amazing specialty shows. Jim Barrett has been kind enough to throw his years of knowledge and talent into the mix and host Kaleidoscope every Monday night from 8 to 10 pm.

Kaleidoscope in many ways has been the inspiration for RadioradioX. The longest running show of its kind, over 51 years, it is a musical journey that is always enlightening and entertaining. Ralph Renna came on board early and is our production director, afternoon on-air personality and every Friday night Ralph brings us Shuffle. Shuffle is a genre blending 3 hour tour of all the things get Ralph fired up. With over 30 years of radio on his resume Ralph never disappoints.

Tuesday nights, I host Tuesday Tributes, a show that devotes a full hour to one particular artist. We have featured Tom Waits, Jimi Hendrix, The Buzzcocks, The Smithereens, The Grateful Dead, and John Cale to name a few.

In early 2019, RadioradioX will be turning things up on Thursday nights with The Loud Hours featuring a healthy dose of metal, punk, hardcore and everything LOUD.

Weekends on RadioradioX features Sassy from 10 am – 2pm on Saturday and Sunday. Sassy is a former sports talk radio host who is thrilled to be back on the air talking about one of her true passions.... music. A true woman for all seasons,

Sassy is also a blogger, model, fashion expert and tattoo culture expert

We continue to add content to the website and are very proud to have local author Liam Sweeny as a blogger-in-chief. Liam's approach to a band interview is anything but same old same old. If you haven't checked out Liam's work on our site, do so, then go buy his books.

It has been an eventful year to say the least. The work put into RadioradioX by myself and Ralph has been a labor of love but above all the culmination of a dream. We realize this a completely different approach to local radio. We realize that old habits are hard to break and that listening on-line is new to many but we believe in RadioradioX and above all, we believe that music lovers are starving for something different.

I would like to thank our sponsors for sharing that belief. I also, want to thank all the local bands that have shown us so much support and most of all, I am deeply indebted to our listeners. You guys make it all worthwhile.

2019 is going to be a huge year for RadioradioX and we promise to keep true to our word and never be boring radio!

Stay tuned!

Art Fredette is the owner and general manager of RadioradioX and publisher of Xperience.



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Xperience is published monthly by RadioradioX and can be found at locations around the Capital Region.

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Change of perspective

Skeeter Creek co-founder seeing life differently after finding birth father, dropping weight

By Paula Marks

One of the biggest country music fans I had ever met friended me on Facebook soon after I opened the mic for the first time on WGNA seven years ago. Sue Bogucki was the biggest cheerleader for all local country bands and supported new artists coming out of Nashville.

She invited me to join her at a local venue to see Skeeter Creek, and I instantly became a SK Creek Freak. During a break in sets, I was introduced to Joe Kulewicz, the lead guitarist, who was extremely down to earth and the next day accepted my Facebook friend request.

In discussing our life experiences over time, we discovered a few significant things in common, the biggest of which was our shared desires to find our birth parents. Joe, who was born and raised in Hagaman, was gracious enough to take some time and talk about some of those experiences.

RadioradioX: When did you get bitten by the guitar bug?

Joe: I started playing casually when I was about 12. I played through high school. I took some lessons, but that didn't go so well. I played until I was around 20, then I kind of gave it up when I got married and had kids. Then around '97, '98, I found my guitar again and just started messing around with it.

Then in 2001, I met another gentleman and that's when we started Skeeter Creek. I had split with my ex wife, and that's when I



Provided by Skeeter Creek

Skeeter Creek co-founder and lead guitarist Joe Kulewicz is shown playing an outdoor gig with the popular country cover band.

started spending more time with my guitar. My ex and I still had a good relationship and had a daughter together. The man who my ex started seeing after we broke up, and who she eventually married, (Tim Seboldt) actually became my best friend. He played instruments, and I played instruments, and that's how we started Skeeter Creek. Skeeter Creek is actually named after a

creek in West Virginia where (Tim) was from and where he used to fish in growing up.

Initially, Skeeter Creek was a bluegrass band. One of the members lived in North Carolina and once the band took off in popularity, he would fly up every weekend to play with the band. Once he left the band, Skeeter Creek moved into country music.

We were approached by a local radio station to participate in a contest at the Saratoga County Fair. The first year, we did it as a 4-piece bluegrass band, and we did OK, but didn't place or anything. A singer from another band, who was quite arrogant, approached us and put us down and said we never had a chance of winning or anything. So it kind of lit a fire under me, and I decided the next year we were going to do it in a surprise way as a country band because nobody knew us that way. They knew us as a four-piece bluegrass band.

So we added a drummer, another guitar player, and we formed a country band just for that competition. We practiced religiously for three or four months just to beat this band, who was very well established. We went to the fair, and we won the competition that year. It shut everyone up. We did it under a totally different name. We went back the following year and won it and then went for a third year and won it yet again. At that point, we decided to switch from bluegrass to country, and the phone started ringing. People wanted to book us. It worked out better so we just rolled with it.

RRX: Skeeter Creek has been voted by many different sources as the area's best cover band. Have you ever written your own material?

Joe: As a bluegrass band, we did perform some original material. Tim, who started with me, was a very good songwriter. We took some of that and transposed it into the country realm, and it was good. It sounded good, but we learned very quickly that when you play country at 99 percent of these venues, the country crowd does not want to hear originals. When we would play

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Courtesy Skeeter Creek

Skeeter Creek's Joe Kulewicz and Renee Lussier-Ahl perform.



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something original, that's when they would go to the bathroom or to get another drink, so we ditched the original material for the most part. You have to be either an original band or a cover band. There's no in-between here.

RRX: It's ironic that you and I have a few things in common. One special thing is that we were both adopted and we both went on quests to find our birth parents. Your search became quite public when a local TV station picked up on your search for your birth mom. How long did it take to get leads from that publicity?

Joe: Almost immediately. Nichole Hart from News Channel 10 did a whole interview with me, and then it went nationwide. It's amazing how far it went. People from all over the country were calling me - from California, Florida, all over- hundreds of calls in the first week. I tried to follow up on as many as I could, but many turned out to be nothing

I followed the leads for a long time. I went on what my adopted mom told me - she passed before this. Some of what she told me was true, and some wasn't. That made it difficult. Sometimes I almost gave up because I was spending a lot of time following leads that were nothing.

Then my wife got me a membership to Family Tree. It told me the origins, but it didn't tell me

any family members names. I got nothing from that, so I let it go for about a year. Then a good friend of mine got me Ancestry.com for Christmas the following year. I sent the DNA in, not expecting anything back, but when it came back, it told me who my father was.

There it was. Prior to this, I had done more looking and followed more leads. I kind of knew who some of my relatives were, but then Ancestry told me who my aunt was, who my uncle was, and told me who my father was. That was a huge relief. We have had communication, but we haven't met yet. He is in a rehab hospital in Florida, and I am planning to go to Florida to meet soon.

RRX: Having found my birth mother and brother, I can tell you it's really a weird experience to finally see people who look like you and have some of the same likes and dislikes and mannerisms. We get to experience something that most people do not. We get to see the whole nature versus nurture process.

Joe: Exactly. We look a lot alike. His main interests are also playing the guitar and riding motorcycles and it's kind of crazy how that works you know?

Me: The other journey that you have taken is the commitment to get healthy and lose weight. You are so busy with work, your family, your band. How do you fit it into your schedule?



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Joe: It's kind of a weird story why it started. Obviously I was tired of being unhealthy. My main hobby at that point was eating. I was diagnosed with diabetes. I had gone to the doctor and he said I needed to be on all these medications: insulin, glucophage and all these other things. I told him I'm not going to do it. The doctor said if I didn't, I was on a path that could lead to my death. I told him to give me three months. If I'm not showing any improvement, then I would do it.

Well, in three months, there was considerable change. Then, at six months, there was a tremendous difference. I was then showing few signs of diabetes. A year later, I was showing no signs at all.

I had been up to almost 400 pounds and didn't care. Eating was my hobby. A year and a half later, I was 142 pounds lighter and no signs of diabetes whatsoever.

RRX: Wasn't one of your hobbies a motivation to lose that weight as well?

Joe: There were actually two motivating factors; one is kind of funny. Riding motorcycles again wasn't really a thought at that moment. One of the events we play at every year is at a clothing-optional resort in the Berkshires, so we go to this nudist resort, and the first year, we played there, there were 400 people and everyone was naked except for the band. I'm watching all of these people and I'm thinking if it ever came down to it, would I have the self-confidence to do this - not that I would. I said to myself I wouldn't. I would be a million times over embarrassed to do this because of the shape I'm in.

So I turned to the guys in the band and I said that next year, I'm going to have the confidence to do what they do - but not that I actually would. My bandmates said there was no way I could do that, but that's when it started. That was my initial motivation.

I'm getting older now, and if I want to ride a motorcycle again, I'm going to do this. That's what got me



Courtesy Skeeter Creek

Skeeter Creek has opened for many top country music stars, with guitarist Joe Kulewicz, left, naming Darius Rucker and Mark Wills as two of his favorites.

into the gym at 5:30 every morning. That's what got me to go to the gym every day, twice a day, for a year and a half. As you know, time goes quick and you only get one chance to do what you want to do. And I did it. That inspired some of the other band members to also lose weight.

RRX: So are you telling me that you all actually will be naked next time you go to that resort?

Joe: Ha, no. We are booked there again, but we're probably not going to be naked.

RRX: Speaking of the band, if you had a chance to play with any band or musician, alive or dead, who would it be?

Joe: Believe it or not, the one person I would have loved to play music with would have been John Denver. I saw him in concert maybe five or six times from the time I was 8 until I was 20. My godfather was a

patron member of SPAC, and he used to take me to concerts all the time, and he had front row seats.

[Denver] just really impressed me. My mom had every John Denver album and used to listen to him all the time. Some of his stuff was some of the first songs I learned how to play, like "Country Roads," "Sunshine On My Shoulders" and a whole bunch of other songs of his.

RRX: I know you open for some big names. Who has been your favorite band or musician to open for?

Joe: Darius Rucker and Mark Wills were two of the best to open up with. They were the best to interact with and the both have really good stage shows. But Darius Rucker spent the whole morning with us. His wife is a sweetheart and our kids all played together. It was just like we knew one another for 20 years...just a real down to earth nice guy. He may be higher up

the corporate ladder than us, but he is just a really decent person.

RRX: I always like to ask musicians who they are listening to right now.

Joe: I listen to artists you don't hear on the radio now. I like listening to some of the new stuff, but I like listening to some of the older stuff: Gary Allan, Marshall Tucker, some of the southern rock and country from the '90s and early 2000s.

Me: So what's in store for Skeeter Creek this year? Any major opening gigs?

Joe: We usually don't know those until very close to the shows. There's some talk, but nothing solid yet. We are booked out two years in advance because we do a lot of the same venues and events year after year, so we'll be busy for sure.

For the latest on the band, visit www.skeetercreek.com.

In her own words

Struggles of transgender people shared through comics

By Liam Sweeny

I first met Peggy LeGee at a show in Troy. We talked music, art, writing and the local scene, which she's been a huge supporter of.

Then she went to her car and came back with two comics, "Moochie the Dumpster Kat," which was issue one, and the second issue, "Enter the Shopping Kart Man." They're on my desk next to me as I write.

Peggy and artist Raymond Lowell have created a revolution in orange and yellow card stock and are taking it to the streets. Drawing from her own struggle as a transgendered person in a culture that offers



LeGee

few friends and allies, Peggy is establishing a name for herself.

We sat down with her to talk shop.

RadiatorX: When I had "Moochie the Dumpster Kat" and its following issue, "Enter the Shopping Kart Man," I knew I had some-

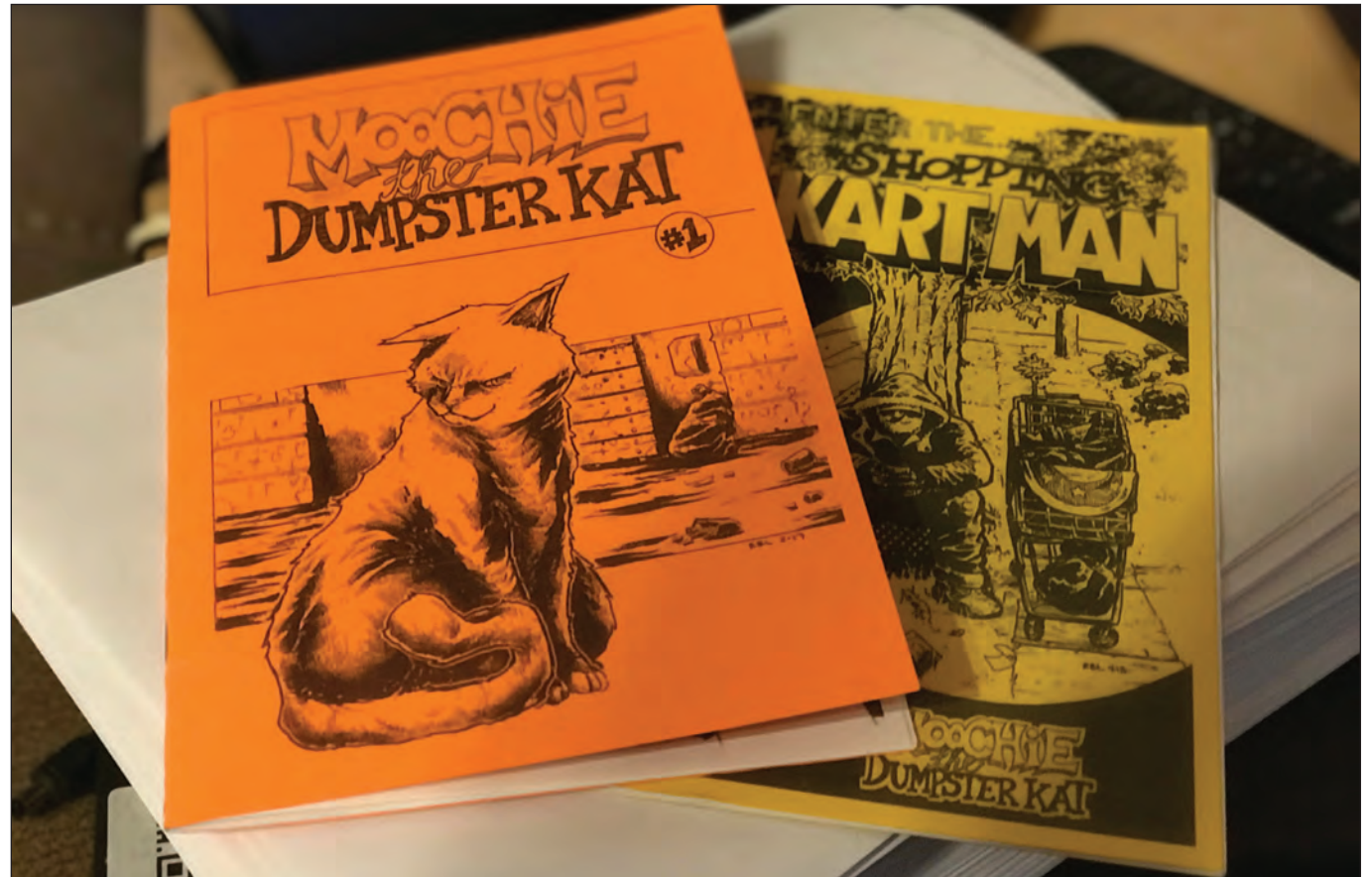


Photo by Liam Sweeny

With help from artist Raymond Lowell, Peggy LeGee has produced a pair of comics, "Moochie the Dumpster Kat" and "Enter the Shopping Kart Man" that draw on her struggles as a transgender person.

thing in my hand that was uniquely "here." And after reading them, I can't wait to get my hands on more. So let's start with a simple question: Who is Moochie the Dumpster Kat, and why do people need this story?

Peggy: Moochie is a metaphor based on a true experience. It is about compassion and selflessness. So often we do not help situations in this world, especially when we are in a position to make a difference. We need Moochie The Dumpster Kat to show us that good if not great things are possible if we help others help themselves

RRX: You were introduced to me as one of the biggest local music fans in the Capital Region. Your resume includes such things as actress, model, comedienne, singer, dancer and, of course, writer. You're also transgender, and "Moochie the Dumpster Kat" is a work that comes from your realization and transfor-

mation. Would you like to describe that?

Peggy: Yes, I do singing, modeling, dancing, comedy, writing and love music. These comics encompass all of these elements. The confidence I have from my transformation from Paul to Peggy has opened up my mind to its unlimited creative potential.

RRX: Being transgender in the Capital Region, as in most places, means being surrounded by people with strong opinions and maybe no direct experience with anyone who's transgender. In fact, there may be people who stopped reading this the moment they say the word "transgender." What is something you wish you could tell the people who would've walked away from this article by now?

Peggy: Yes, transphobia comes from ignorance from society. People who run from me do not concern

me. The people who have talked to me, especially those who never met a trans person, have not been disappointed. My message to the people who will not listen is, it is your loss. We will not be silent or erased.

RRX: You've used your writing to create this badass comic to help express what you go through with your gender identity, yet I feel that Moochie is going to be so much more than one perspective, or any one thing. What do you want people to walk away with after they read the two issues you have now, and future issues?

Peggy: These comics are expressionistic in nature. I try to create feeling and emotion by abstract techniques such as limiting dialogue and existential poetic wordplay. Raymond captures this brilliantly with his highly detailed illustrative genius.

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'Many surprises' planned for third issue

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People who have read it multiple times have seen different nuances every time they read it. I leave it up to the reader to put their own experience in their comprehension of the story. Every comic will have a slightly different vibe to it, I have to keep the readers on their toes, like my artist Raymond said. The third comic will have many surprises.

RRX: One of the things I like about Moochie is that it's not commercial. No high-gloss paper, not the standard comic book size. It's very punk rock, both in the art and in the composition. What is your game plan for getting it out there? Is there any guerilla marketing in your future?

Peggy: No, these zines are about the content, not the package. Their simplicity has been cost-effective, which allows us to raise money for charities like the Humane Society. Market Block Bookstore is the main vendor for this.

A hardcover edition of the first three comics was suggested by Raymond. I'm constantly promoting it, and Raymond has it on his website [www.deviantart.com/stockmanray], along with his awesome illustrations. I'd love to travel across the country and make it a phenomenon.

RRX: I really feel like there's an insurgency of people who are struggling in this area, either physically or mentally, emotionally or economically, and the

creative world is picking up on it. "Moochie the Dumpster Kat" is a superhero in this kind of world. Do you think there's something about the struggles of life that are attractive to art?

Peggy: Yes, there is a hidden world of struggle in every age. The great creative minds will display this in their works. It shows us how to survive the hostile and unforgiving world we exist in.

At the local level, we are very needy, and the institutional versions of remedy do not always work. LeGee and Lowell will give them back their heroes from the most unlikely characters.

RRX: We like to give our guests a chance to give shout outs to people, usually other bands. Since

you're here as a writer and artist, would you like to bring our attention to anyone else out there?

Peggy: I'd like to thank my family, Raymond Lowell, Becky and family, Phil Caizzo for bringing me to his Argyle Art Gallery, where Ray and I met. The support of the talented artists there, the Troy Kitchen Poetry Vibe, D, Liv and Corey, Dan and Nancy and all the great writers of 2nd Sunday.

All the local musicians. The Hangar, Artie and Liam from RadioradioX, Stanley from Market Block, Jane Wells Dave and Annie. and Moochie and everyone else who supported Raymond and I in our instant classic.



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Photos by James Wertman Jr.

Singer Ray Mazzola and guitarist Mike Valente lead Brick by Brick, which will celebrate the release of a new album, "Hive Mentality," at a party Feb. 22 at Upstate Concert Hall in Clifton Park.

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

Hive Mentality spotlights Brick by Brick's hard-knuckled style, brutal, honest energy

By Liam Sweeny

One thing I'm learning from doing interviews is that you come up with lots of good questions that you don't want to repeat, because every question is a fragile little gem, then you get a band that makes you dust out the best of those questions and beat them into service. Meet Brick by Brick.

Brick by Brick has a long and storied career which reads like a documentary on all that's upstate and heavy as fuck. With five CDs and three 7" records out, (and a baby on the way,) they've opened for metal legends and became legends in the process. We sit down with Mike Valente, guitarist, promoter and, soon, secret Santa.

RRX: So Mike, million questions to ask. Let's start with a roll call. Who plays what, and what

gets everybody out of bed in the morning besides the need to pay the bills?

Mike: Well, we are all proud, blue collar guys. Working class schmucks. You got Jameson, our drummer. He's a psycho. He teaches martial arts and is a barber. Then there's Andy that plays bass. He's mellow on the outside. He's very technical in his approach to writing. Very versatile and talented. He does HVAC and has a family. Then there's Ray, the nomad. He's been fronting the band for four years now and is a powerhouse on vocals. He does cyber security in his spare time. Lastly there's myself. I have a love for music that is unparalleled. I sacrifice money, time and sanity for it. I am a so-so guitarist that catches shoplifters as a trade. We like to have fun, bring the fun and ensure fun for everyone.

RRX: February 22nd. Hive Mentality. Sounds

like it's going to slam. Now I know you put out the vinyl for last year's Thin the Herd earlier this year, and the compilation Upstate Records. But you guys are lining up a little heat for the late winter icebox. Tell us about the upcoming studio album. What can we look forward to?

Mike: It's metal. We have always been the odd man out on Hardcore bills. We are metal band with the Hardcore attitude. We never claimed to be anything else. This record has the best production to date that we have done. All thanks to Jason Bordeau. We have guest spots on this record from Tony of Municipal Waste, Vincent of The Acacia Strain, and Jessica of Alekhines Gun and she's on the Netflix TV show Orange is the New Black as well.

RRX: I've also seen a lot of collaboration in your videos that are so definitive of the hardcore/

metal scene here. What are the benefits, and maybe even the challenges, of working “across borders” like that?

Mike: It’s all about the attitude. There are some bands and some genres that are not Hardcore but have the Hardcore mentality. Take Johnny Cash for example; Hardcore as a motherfucker. The best part about having a hardcore attitude is that there are no prejudices. A lot of metal bands failed to embrace an open mind mentality. It seems that the more underground the bands are the more receptive they are to all genres. I never want to lose that.

RRX: Everyone in the scene knows you are one of the promoters of record here in the 518. What do new bands need to know about the old order? What do old bands jumping back in need to know about the new game?

Mike: Music is what you make it. If you’re lazy you’re gonna get lazy results. I rarely see bands going out and promoting their own shows. I am slowing down with booking shows because agents ruin friendships. It’s difficult to make money

in this scene. Everyone thinks that there’s a boatload of cash to be made and there’s not. Bands need to realize that there is a process called paying your dues. What that means is you’re supposed to promote your shows, build up your fanbase, while cultivating friendships with out-of-town bands and trading shows. No one seems to get it.

I have tried numerous times to help bands and it just doesn’t happen. The only way to ensure that the Metal and Hardcore scene thrive is to keep bringing younger and newer people into this culture. Young bands just starting out, be prepared to work. Don’t expect anything to be given to you. I’m sick of the self-entitlement bullshit of social media. Paying your fucking dues like everybody else is done.

Older bands that are jumping back into the scene, you have a sense of responsibility to the younger kids to help them and guide them.

A majority of the bands that I book, I’m friends with, and they know what capability that the 518 has. It’s not New York City, so a

thousand people are not gonna show up for Madball, However, in New York City they will. So why should I have to pay the same amount that they’re charging in New York City? So the help of the band is detrimental and can make or break a show.

RRX: I’ve noticed you guys are always doing something to help people out, whether it’s supporting family through a rough patch or putting in for the Smash Cancer benefit last year, you guys give back. Can you talk about the role benefits have in metal/hardcore culture?

Mike: The Madeline Hardcore scene is very family oriented. All the kids that come to shows, or in bands, or promote all have a sense of responsibility to those less fortunate. I am no better than the next person. We just have different paths in life. Someday I may need help and I would hope that’s someone would give me a hand in succeeding rather than kick me when I’m down.

The Acacia Strain and Brick by Brick have raised over 10,000 toys for underprivileged kids in the past few years. We have raised thousands and thousands of dollars for kids ... that need money for the help. We have donated literally a ton of food to shelters. These are the people that are in our scene. These are the people that need help.

I do whatever I can to have a positive reflection on music that is looked at as so negative. The lyrics may be negative, the pits may be violent, the riffs may be heavy, but do not be fooled, this is a real music. With a real message.

Mark Feb. 22 on your calendar for the release of Brick by Brick’s “Hive Mentality” at Upstate Concert Hall, with Dying Fetus, Ramallah, Iam, Snapmare, Assault on the Living and Close to Nothing. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 at the door.

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Soundtrack of Second Chances

Off The Record sparks memories and rekindles lost love against the winter chill

The pastel lights ricocheted off the disco ball, focusing magic and mystery upon the dance floor. Susie was incredible, in a dress both elegant and lush, both her friend and her lover, and all the young men at the prom were competing for either of those titles.

It was such a wonderful time. I guess. I don't know for sure. My friends and I had just found a bottle of rotgut vodka in the maintenance shed, of the collection stashed by our alcoholic dump truck driver. So that, a carton of cigarettes, plus I think a case of Molson Ice, and we were clear across town from the prom that night.

I mean, I think it was at the gym, no clue. But last night, myself, along with the good folks gathered at Il Faro Italian Restaurant in north Albany, got all dressed up for our Second Chance Prom. Hosted by RadioRadioX, people dressed (or didn't) in their classic prom gear and worked up a little magic, with very groovy rituals performed by Off The Record Trio. Good times. Great times.

But since "what happens at prom stays at prom," let's blab about Off The Record!

Music for a lifetime

Interpreting the grooves of past generations, Off The Record set apart as pioneering cover trio

By Liam Sweeny

Music is life. It encapsulates a moment, and a note or two of a familiar song can draw up our best days, sometimes our worst.

It is the soundtrack to our dreams, the strength in our footsteps, and it makes me proud to be here once in a while, giving credit due to the people turning the knob up for us all.

Off The Record is a vivacious exploration of the words 'classic' and 'retro' that singer and frontwoman Joanna Peterson Palladino-Resnick, guitarist Geo Doody and percussionist Bob Resnick lead with unparalleled energy and fearlessness.

I sat down with Joanna to discuss the finer points of time travel.

RRX: I first saw the Trio play at the RadioRadioX open house. What impressed me was the energy you were able to project out into the crowd. It reminded me that, in so many ways, music is a visual performance as well. Can you comment on how Off The Record blends sight and sound when the lights go on?

Joanna: OTR definitely has a point of view or "look" but our performance does go beyond the red beehive and vintage clothes. At the crux of it all is just a simple passion for the music, and that ends up

propelling our entire show. I think there's authenticity to what we do- which is ironic since we are decked out in 60's inspired garb with our show personas. That passion and honesty resonates with the audience and we feed off of that as well.

Next thing you know, I see video footage of a show and had no idea we were moving and shaking with so much ferocity!

RRX: You all play such a range of styles, very rooted in the '60s. Rock and roll, soft rock, pop, jazz... and everyone in the band has such a versatile repertoire. So I must ask; will we ever see some Off The Record original vinyl (Because we all know it would be cut in vinyl)?

Joanna: HA! It's funny. I always see our band as a cover band but other bands are always telling us to write our own music and that it isn't that hard. I don't know. I have incredible respect for songwriters and don't profess to be one. I do imagine that if we do, it'll be a collaboration with some of the area's best pop songwriters (like Jeff Sohn), and then from there we'll see where life and skill development take us. Though Bob, our percussionist, has written an original song- so maybe we'll cover that first. (smile) Either way, this is great food for thought and I should chat with Geo about this. In the meantime, I think we are going to



Photo provided

Offthe Record is made up of, from left, percussionist Geo Doody, singer Joanna Peterson Palladino-Resnick and guitarist Bob Resnick.

release a CD of 8 or 9 of our songs we just recorded in the studio with John Chiara. (But now I am thinking that maybe it should be vinyl.)

RRX: Working good covers is a difficult task. Bearing in mind that music is the metronome of history, you have an amazing opportunity to revive cherished moments in people's lives. On the other hand, screw up one note, everybody knows it. Can you comment on how you select what moments you want to bring to the stage – what songs, what anthems?

JPR: I feel that pressure right before a show- but I have found that audiences can be quite forgiving. Bob always says that there are hundreds of good songs out there, so why torture yourself getting one perfect, when you can select one that is more suited for your own style (voice, range, instruments, band make-up, etc.). We start off seeing if everyone in the band likes the song. We all get a veto chip- where if 2/3rds of the band loves the song, but for some reason you really

dislike the song, you can use your veto power and we don't do the song. That's rarely, if ever, happened. Each song should make sense for us: Does it stand the test of time or if not, is it at least humorous or fun? Does the song tell a story and is it a story we want to share? Is this song so iconic and our arrangement and orchestration will do it no justice? There have been songs that, because of the lyrics, we haven't done. Some of those old 60's songs really perpetuated some intimate partner violence or abusive relationships and it's just not anything I personally want to promote. From there, Bob actually does the set list, with input from the band. At the actual night of the gig, all bets are off- we really try and respond to what the audience wants. Are they in to a show or do they want to dance? Should we skip the ballad and replace it with a song with a dance groove? Every once and awhile we do have to slow things down for a moment or two so I can catch my breath, regroup, and then power through the rest of the show.

RRX: Now you have a theatrical background, which shows for anyone who has caught Off The Record's act. The theater scene and the music scene seem fairly insulated from each other, but it seems like there's probably a lot of connective fiber they share. What do you think each scene could learn from the other?

Joanna: I think committed artists are always learning, and stealing, from each other – across all art forms. I know from the theater perspective, music and sound, are integral to a play or a performance and that the theater has always been deeply influenced by music (look at the Broadway musical). I have often felt that musicians, especially front men and frontwomen, understand that the theatrical, the physicality of telling a story and the connectedness with the audience, is an important aspect of their performance. I think of people like Roger Daltrey, Robert Plant, Janis Joplin, Cher, Nico/Lou Reed, etc. – they all understood this. Sometimes the theatrical may not be in the performance, but may be in the “script”- it's amazing how an incredibly written song holds its own- regardless of who sings. Not all songs can stand on their own though, and a performer can really bring new life to the song. The wonderful thing is, much like a script, each performer has the ability to interpret the song differently. I always say there's a thousand and one ways to cook chicken and a thousand and one ways to read (or sing) a single line. So much opportunity and so much variation available and this keeps music, and theater, fresh.

I think we have learned a lot from each other already. Though if the theater community could continue to appreciate the simplicity of a short 2-minute 60's rock n' roll song- that would be great. And if the music community would appreciate a show's actual start time, versus rock and roll time, that would also be cool. I am sure the

audience would appreciate that too. I always hear, what time are you really starting- and it cracks me up. In theater world, it drives us crazy to hold the start time and wait for the house lights to go down. An 8 pm show – means an 8 pm start. That's not always a shared value in rock and roll land. □

RRX: Woodstock. The big Five-O. Two festivals; one, Watkins Glen, Michael Lang, one of the original organizers, versus Bethel Woods, the site of Yasgur's Farm, the original location, by LiveNation. They both call Off The Record and want you to play. Are you all heading west to Watkin's Glen, or south to Bethel?

Joanna: I have to go to Bethel. Not only is it closer, but historically more women played at Bethel than at Watkins Glen – so I think we'd fit better there. OTR is more Sha-Na-Na and Sly and the Family Stone and less the Allman Brothers (though I love the Allman Brothers). And Watkins Glen happened in 1973 and Woodstock was 1969- a little more our speed.

RRX: I like to ask about influences, because most of the bands we've had on are working solely off original songs. So, maybe a twist; in '60s music, a lot of unique sounds have been brought up by uncommon (in America) instruments. And you all don't just rock a three-piece yourselves. So can you name an instrument, something off the beaten path a little, that has influenced your sound?

Joanna: Good question. What 1960's rock and roll lounge band do you know that plays with a djembe and a converted tom-tom as the bass drum? I think our sound, and music selection, is heavily influenced by percussion and that makes our band sound just a little different that other 60's bands out there. We aren't replicating the music necessarily- we're playing it slightly differently so we tap into nostalgia but are deeply rooted in the here and now.



Photo provided

Off The Record features frontwoman Joanna Peterson Palladino-Resnick, guitarist Geo Doody and percussionist Bob Resnick.

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Members of Bendt work on new material in the recording studio.

BEAT SORCERERS

Bendt brings new atmosphere to area festivals, small clubs

By Liam Sweeny

Ralph Renna told me to get bent the other day. I figured he was pissed at me, but we he texted me ‘get Bendt...’ I did just that; I got Bendt. Describing themselves as ‘a face of modern rock,’ Bendt delivers a sound with a smile, gaining a following and carving its own niche in the Capital Region, and for good reason.

With lead vocalist/rhythm guitarist Matt Plummer, lead guitarist Carl Blackwood, bassist John Longo and drummer Cody Bingham, they’re putting out strong melodies and elaborate, textured movements with a pulse and a beat that drive hard and hang fast, long after the album’s over.

I sat down with Carl Blackwood to catch up, and talk Bendt.

RRX: In the beginning, you were my upstairs neighbor and we all had fun, and now I hear this incredible band and lo and behold, you appear in my inbox. So, origin stories. How did Bendt form, from notion to motion?

Carl: We formed in 2015 with our first single “Immured” hitting in early 2016. At that time I played drums. Originally I was a hired gun and the project had a different lead singer and different songs. That lead singer eventually left due to some bad circumstances beyond our control. Matt (Vocals, guitar) John (bass) Sam (Lead Guitar) and myself found it very easy to write together and we wrote our self-titled EP within just a couple months together. Once we were in the studio

laying down the tracks we ended up parting ways with our guitarist Sam. We rearranged our line up at that point switching me guitar and hiring Cole Mead on Drums. At that time the whole record was completely tracked except the lead guitar. I spent a lot of time woodshedding the songs to eventually lay down the lead tracks. I mixed the record then sent it out to Carl Saff to master it direct to lathe. Album art was a combination of graphics from Patrick Stephenson and Brian Morgante at Flesh and Bone design. After the record was done and almost exactly a year ago we had a blow out album release party at The Hanger on the Hudson. Prior to the release we won the Schenectady county Battle of the Bands which put us in the opening spot for Schenectady County Summer night which featured The Spin

Doctors. We kept getting better shows due to this notoriety, Hope Rocks Festival in Saugerties, Jammin on Jay Street, Lark Fest, Jupiter Hall, we headlined the Schenectady County Battle of The Bands in 2018 and we will open up summer night again in 2019. During this time we had another lineup change. We added a new Drummer Cody Bingham who is an old friend and the best fit in that slot so far.

RRX: One of the things I love about your sound is how you play with time signatures. It's a very distinct thing that sets you guys apart from a lot of bands. Now that's hard to do in a studio, much less pull off live. How do you keep the live energy in focus when you're time traveling?

Carl: The band puts the time and the work in, we practice a minimum of twice a week for no less than 5 hours a session. We record a good number of rehearsals and more recently our own click tracks, which really streamlines the ability for each member to practice at home. Giving us the ability to come into a live show and be very comfortable with the material so we can be more energetic on stage.

RRX: There's a lot of nuance in your grooves. As I listen to your songs, I'm transported to a bunch of different places. I know, as a writer, that we develop a 'voice' in our craft, a message written between the lines of the music (or stories) we write. If your songs are your stories, what do you feel is your 'voice.'?

Carl: It's hard to identify just one voice in our music, our songs are composed mainly as a group. Each song has a different voice, depending on who came up with what part. Some songs you can identify one overall tone or "voice" but for the most part we cover everything from heartbreak to ecstasy.

RRX: I find myself wanting to look under the hood here a bit, but since I'm not a mechanic, I'd just assume leave every nut and bolt unloosened. So take us to your practice room. Give us that video presen-

tation of how a groove becomes a song, Bendt style?

Carl: We have quite a set up in our space. Looking at the room from left to right, first would be our PA system. You wouldn't think much of it looking at it from afar, but in our small rolling rack we have a Behringer X-air 18, which is a digital mixing board that is controlled by an I Pad. This feeds into our monitoring system, Carl, John and Cody all preform with In Ear Monitors and Matt uses a small personal wedge, by doing this we can greatly reduce our live performance volume, giving sounds engineers at live shows an easier time mixing. To further help our live show engineers we also carry a 16 channel snake and a splitter for every input, so we can walk into any show, and control our own monitors, again making it easier for engineers.

RRX: And hell, let's follow up on that last question. Take us to your practice room for real. What kind of place houses the magic? Are there any things that have got to be handy? And are there any honorable mention locations?

Carl: Our practice space is truly one of a kind. It houses all of our monster rigs, a plethora of tools and parts to fix or build just about any audio equipment and it's where we feel the most comfortable being goofy and creative. Unfortunately we can not disclose the physical location, but a select number of people who have donated to our GoFundMe campaign will be invited into our space to sit down and "watch the magic happen". Our Honorable Mention would be North Albany Studios, they were our first home and will forever be in our hearts.

RRX: I haven't seen you guys play, but I see images of you all rocking out to some impressive backdrops. So share with us a really great show you did – you know, the kind of show you only have to say the name of, and you're all on the floor, or you get misty. Do you all have that show?

Carl: Another hard question, especially this year, we have had some really incredible shows. Opening up Schenectady Summer Night with the Spin Doctors headlining. Also we played Lark Fest on the main stage, it's kind of a rite of passage in the local scene playing on Lark Street. It was also super convenient since ¾ of Bendt, live in Albany's Center Square.

RRX: I always leave the last question to give each band a chance to shout out to other bands or venues. We also want to know what you have lined up. We're all about giving you the power of the press. So who's out there? Who should we put on our watch list, and what's on Bendt's calendar this year...

Carl: We love to support local and regional acts. Who come to mind immediately would be Girl Blue, Good Fiction, Zan and the Winter Folk, Talia Denis, Stellar Young, Becoming a Ghost, Candy Ambulance.

Favorite venue? Gugs in Glens Falls probably has the audience that pays the most attention and is truthfully there for the music and features the infamous Sweaty GUG drink.

As for upcoming shows we will take a residency this year at The Excelsior Pub for five shows. And again we're opening up Schenectady Summer Night 2019 with our friends Hasty Page. We love playing outdoor gigs and festivals so we're hoping to get on as many as we can this spring/summer. But our big news is our upcoming album. We just finished tracking 11 songs in 6 days at Sonelab in Easthampton, Mass. with the amazing Justin Pizzoferratto. He is currently mixing the record to be produced for another Vinyl Release in 2019. Once we have the master disk in hand we will book our album release party and a small tour to get the word out.



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MONSTER MASHUP

Blasé Debris makes every day like Halloween with unique mix of punk, metal

By Liam Sweeny

Punk to me is a raw force that pushes back against the tide of bullshit that seeks to suck the sand from beneath our feet. And metal, which I'll admit is my favorite of the two genres, hate mail be damned, is like that razor's edge that carves through all the garbage bags to show the world what it's throwing away. Okay, these analogies suck, but imagine finding a band with the raw angst of punk and that technical, melodic savor of metal, pretty boss, right? That's Blasé Debris.

Blasé Debris, currently composed of singer and guitarist Duane Beer, lead guitarist Patrick "Ginsu" Ginnelly, bassist Charlie Munroe, drummer Bill Ketzner and saxophonist Justin Birk, has been an established name in the Capital Region and elsewhere since 2002. Kids born to Blasé Debris's first jam are just now getting their learner's permits, for perspective.

We sit down with Duane Beer for a few questions.

RRX: I read your bio, and it said that you set out to close the gap between classic metal and punk rock. One of the first things I noticed, when I watched the video for *Collecting Stares*, was that it had a really full sound, something I thought was missing in some of the music I've heard from either genre. Can you talk a little bit further about how you all met, and how you all were put on this musical quest?

Duane: Jamie, Tony, Rob, Earl, Karl, Billy, JJ, Charlie, Patrick, Ketzner, Justin and myself make twelve. A dirty dozen different members over the years. I remember telling Tony (aka Sewers) that no matter what happens, no matter how many different members, it is Blasé Debris from this day forward. We "all" have known each other prior to playing together.



Photo provided

Lead singer and guitarist Duane Beer fronts Blasé Debris, along with lead guitarist Patrick "Ginsu" Ginnelly, bassist Charlie Munroe, drummer Bill Ketzner and saxophonist Justin Birk.

In the beginning we were looking to do double kick punk rock with a Broadway-esque style live show. Something with sort of a Oliver-meets-Rocky Horror vibe. We were a wild live band that felt right at home within the Horror Punk genre. We signed to Altercation records fairly early on, released the "collecting stares" video you referred to, and hit the road in support of our 1st full length album, entitled *Creep Cool*.

We played some really cool shows and burned the candle at both ends. Driving from state to state in a van with one tire in the grave is nerve wracking. There were breakdowns and boozed filled nights that would make nearly anyone question their sanity.

Duane: Being as how you all exist in a bit of cross-genre, do you have any issues with metal purists or punk purists in your fandom, like those music trivia arguments that happen around the music? Have you hybridized your fan base, or is there a state of friendly rivalry between metal and punk?

Duane: We have transitioned fairly smoothly from our horror punk beginnings into a "this is DeBris" rock band with a solid old school punk and classic metal foundation. I love what we are

doing now, and I like what we had done and had attempted to do in the past. We had lofty aspirations and carried on despite countless setbacks.

Our fan base locally is mostly made up of friends and fellow musicians. When you have been around as long as we have you will see "the scene" change multiple times. I feel like most musicians do a real decent job of supporting each other.

I highly doubt we would be near the top of any punk or metal "purist's" playlist. The majority of folks I find myself talking to at our shows enjoy listening to the Ramones as much as they do Black Sabbath. Really, that's us, our band, our friend, s, and hopefully our fan base.

RRX: You all have played in monster venues and festivals, and you'll be playing in smaller spots like the show coming up here. What do you guys see as the benefits and drawbacks of big stages vs. little stages. Is one preferable? And which type of venue, real-world or dream-world, do you all think is the perfect vehicle for your sound?

Duane: Larger stages tend to have better monitors and sound systems. Smaller stages force the band to be closer to each other. It's kind of cool to feed off of each other's energy.

Personally, I like to be able to move around on stage. Give me a big stage and a crowd that is hearing us for the 1st time, and for me, that is exciting. That being said, I am “most” comfortable in a well air conditioned, smaller club with a cool stage and rockin lights. The old QE2 setup (downtown Albany) with its stage, cage, sound, lights, artwork and eclectic clientele was what dreams are made of. Simply put; it was the coolest hang out.

RRX: You have Justin Birk on sax in your latest line-up. You don’t expect to hear sax in anything metal or jazz. What do you all see it as bringing to the sound your putting out there? And are there other instruments you’d like to see brought in to the blend?

Duane: Loving the current lineup with Justin on sax. [He is] a sax player with a solid background knowledge of classic punk and metal. Why didn’t we think of this sooner? There is a time and place for everything I suppose.

When putting our latest album together in my head I could hear horns on a handful of songs. Did I know it would work on everything? Nope, I did not hear that coming. It’s good to be surprised.

Gimme piano, gimme cello, trumpet, xylophone, fiddle and endless imagination.

RRX: On your Facebook page, in About, it says that you guys are “greaser punk meets classic metal in a rocky horror hypothesis...” I like that. It’s very visual. If you can, can you take a song, or a favorite album, and tell us what it is, and give us a visual description of the world you all put into that song or album?

Duane: I will gladly elaborate on the song “up in smoke” off of our latest album. It is a song of reincarnation and immortality. You can draw parallel lines between the life of Christ as it is most often perceived and the mythical lives of the phoenix. Musically it was important to be open and comfortable in the verses.

I wanted the vocal to feel like it was landing on a hotel collection soft



Photo by Richie Sorenson

standard pillow. It tightens up and gets more resounding in the chorus and closes with a fury of chaotic drum fills before landing on the pillow once again for the finale.

If given the choice between reincarnation or immortality which would you choose?

As the phoenix, you would live a solitary life. As it is written, only one phoenix can exist at one time. It is endless reincarnation. Both Christ and the phoenix (sometimes referred to as God’s pet) have the ability to heal. Christ chooses to heal others as the phoenix can heal itself.

When the phoenix reaches the end of its life, it sets the nest and itself on fire and is burned to ashes. Only to rise again and begin its life anew. It just sounds lonely to me. To be the only one of your kind. I choose immortality. To lift a line from the chorus, “immortality is worth the wait”.

RRX: I just had a chance to check out your new CD, “The Gauze.” Such a great mix of songs you got there. How about I shut up and let you all talk shit about how your CD can beat up everybody else’s CD?

Duane: “Beat up everybody else’s cd”??? Nah, I just don’t approach music that way. It is certainly us against us. I visualized hearing this album

settle, and then make peace with the recording.

I can’t even begin to tell you how many times I said to the engineer/producer (Arthur Scott Verner, DMS Studios) I know no one will hear the difference here except for myself. But, I can assure you that no one will listen to this recording more than myself. Art gets it and is great to work with.

Now that I am able to step outside of myself and listen to the album as a whole I love it. From start to finish it just flows well. From the artwork to the tom drum outro, it is all DeBris.

We have created a signature album that deserves to be heard. Go out of your way to give it a listen and get out there and catch a live show. Until then, Thank you for your time and attention.

And keep your eye out for a vinyl version of Blasé DeBris’s latest album The Gauze with two bonus tracks (via Cacophone Records)

“the gauze” long before beginning the recording process. It was always a, “see this through”, you must “see this through” sort of thing. Try not to




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Confessions of a keyboard warrior

By Liam Sweeny

I have a pile of papers on my scanner, about three-hundred-and-fifty of them. On top is a nifty, but temporary cover with an Uncle Sam graphic and the words “Troy Love Story.” On the very bottom is a page completely blank, except for two words; “The End.”

My favorite page is the last one.

Everywhere I go, which admittedly is not many places, I encounter two common reactions when I mention that I just finished writing a book, after writing a hundred-thousand words over a few months (or in this case, weeks.)

Let’s get the first reaction out of the way. That would be “Oh.” There are variations of that, which are “that’s cool,” “nice,” and “good

Liar's Almanac

for you,” (the initials of that last one, GFY, I associate more with “Go f**k yourself” and have to see the two phrases as synonymous.)

The second reaction I get is the old, “God, I have so many stories,” “I should write a book,” “I could write a book...” See, this one gets to me. Could anybody write a book? You could write “My swampy ass” thirty-thousand times in a row and guess what? You’ll have a pile of pages as big as mine. So yeah, anyone could write a book. And these people are not usually the ones who will sit down and read a book.

It’s funny that if I compare getting a zit on my face next to completing the first draft of my novel, seventy percent of the people that I know will be more curious about how I got the zit. That’s just how it is.

Don’t get me wrong. I have peeps who want in on the magical journeys I weave at four-thirty every morning until breakfast (yeah, that’s me,) but most people don’t give a crap. This isn’t me boo-hooing, I know it probably sounds like that, but I love writing, and I’ll rock pages even if I gotta do it in a basement and bury every damn one.

But it seems odd to me, in an age where the amount of media you consume is the measure of how cultured you are, that so few people engage with those of us out here creating media. And this isn’t just me, or writing. We love music, but how many people (who aren’t musicians) want to hear a drummer talk shop? Or any other musician? Like how we make fun of bass players, but if you’re in a band, try not having a good one, right? Bass drives sh*t.

I think it’s unfortunate, where we’re at right now. We’ve grown into such a DIY culture, between YouTube videos and the way production platforms exist now, that anyone can do anything on the

cheap. And that isn’t bad; hell, it’s how I can exist. But the chef who went to school and spent decades in hot kitchens now competes against the step-by-step videos of every dish they’ve ever made broken down by someone in a home kitchen. Music that once needed insane amounts of practice can be done with free apps online. Artist: meet Photoshop. Sculptor: meet 3D printer. Creative storyteller: meet reality programmer.

None of it’s as good as what the people who make the arts their lives can do, but it’s horseshoes and hand grenades. Close enough.

Now is this bad? Not really. Art isn’t defined purely by experience, and it’s not some dictate: it expands and adapts, and there will always be someone pushing the bounds of the medium and burning through the tools, no matter what they are. But as for how people who only consume media view the people who produce that media, it can be disheartening.

I am going to pull back the creative “fourth wall” in this segment. Advice, bitching, and guest word-smiths. Buckle up, folks.

Liam Sweeney is an author who serves as blogmeister for RadioradioX.com and associate editor of Xperience.

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Tips to make your first tattoo memorable

By Sassy Autum

A new year can bring on a lot of new ideas, new goals, new purchases. One industry that always gets busier around February is the tattoo industry.

People begin picking out a new piece or even their first piece when they get cash or gift certificates for the holidays. Plus, tattoo conventions are starting to hit the circuit and people are curious.

If you have been tattooed before, you most likely know the drill. But if you are setting out to get your very first piece, I have a few suggestions that might be helpful as you set out on your ink journey. We will start with the basics and work our way down.

First piece of advice? Do your homework on who you want to do your tattoo. Give yourself several weeks (possibly even months) to find an artist you feel comfortable with.

Ask friends who have tattoos that you like. Look for recommendations on the internet. Stop in without an appointment to visit shops you might like. If they are good, clean and reputable, they will not hesitate to show you around.

Look at portfolios of the artists. Ask which styles the artists are most comfortable with. (Some artists specialize in traditional, realism, Japanese, etc.) Not only do you want the best artist for the piece you want but you want to make sure that their shop is neat and clean. If you don't feel comfortable ... trust your gut and keep looking.

Next, you need to remember that a tattoo is permanent. You are selecting a piece of art that represents something that means a lot to you. Don't do it on a whim.

Make sure you have the time and money to get exactly what you

Sassy Says...

want from the artist you want to do it. Also make sure that the artist has the time and experience to give you what you want. A licensed shop should be able to accommodate those things for you. You don't want them to feel rushed.

And without getting preachy, remember that kitchens, basements and garages are not places where you should get ANY tattoo.

Make sure you have the standard items that most tattoo artists will want you to have when taking care of your tattoo. To start, you will need an unscented anti-bacterial soap. Dial Gold (non-foaming) is the best. Even when you are done using it on your tattoo, you can use it as a standard bathroom soap.

You will not want anything with dyes or fragrances, which can irritate the skin and the tattoo. If you can't find Dial Gold, look in the baby section of your drug store and find something comparable.

You will want to wash the tattoo two or three times a day for the best healing results. Dry with a paper towel to avoid the transfer of bacteria and keep lint out.

When you leave the tattoo shop with your jazzy piece of ink, your artist may give you some packets of A&D ointment. If they don't, you can pick up some at the drug store. Some artists recommend using Aquaphor, which is fine as well. This will give you a layer of healing ointment which will protect the open skin of the tattoo as it heals.

You only need a SUPER THIN amount over JUST the inked areas. Using too much can cause the

pores around the tattoo to clog and delay healing. Apply the ointment right after each washing.

After a few days, the tattoo will begin to flake and scab. This is completely normal. Do NOT pick the scabs. If it itches, "pat" the tattoo with your hands to avoid scratching the scabs off.

Picking the scabs can cause you to lose color in the tattoo. This is the time you will want to stop using the ointment and transition to an unscented lotion. Whenever you see the skin becoming dry and flaky, apply some lotion. Rub it on until it absorbs. If it doesn't absorb, you are using too much.

Use this until all the flaking stops and the scabs are gone. You can continue to use the lotion whenever your tattoo feels dry or tight.

The last thing you will need to pick up is a damn good sunscreen, then use it. This is where things get a little tricky. Because your skin is essentially burned when it is tattooed, it can easily burn more when it is exposed to direct sunlight.

Wearing a good sunscreen over your ink is essential, especially if you can't cover it with clothes. Again, you really want to avoid dyes, fragrances and any alcohol-containing product.

You want to get a broad-spectrum sunscreen of SPF50 or higher. You need to reapply it frequently, especially when you're in water or sweating.

Don't cheap out on your sunscreen and use a decent amount. You should apply a shot-glass worth all over, whether it be oil, cream or spray. My favorite is Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Lightweight Sunscreen Spray, SPF 70.

Now? Get prepared. Take any photos or reference materials, go out and find your favorite artist (remember, it's about quality, not price), make your appointment, then go get your supplies.

After you get your new tattoo, keep it looking great and protect it from sun damage. Then show it off. Artists love getting business from referrals.

Sassy says be selective, be safe, be prepared, be protective and be yourself. It won't be long until you get the "tattoo bug" and start planning your next piece.

Sassy is a former sports talk radio host and a blogger, model, fashion expert and tattoo culture expert. She can be heard from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays on RadioradioX.com.



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To have your band or club included in these monthly listings, email your information no later than the 21st of each month to xperience@radioradiox.com.

Friday, Feb. 8

Heavy Traffic, Dirt Church and Forever Autumn, Pauly's Hotel, 337 Central Ave. Albany, 518-426-0828

The Square Pegs, 9:30 p.m., Pearl Street Pub, 59-61 N. Pearl St., Albany, 518-694-3100

Saturday, Feb. 9

The Tradition, 8 p.m., Corcoran's Towpath Tavern, 33 Saratoga Ave., Waterford, 518-326-2739

Sunday, Feb. 10

Erin Harkes, 5 p.m., Patrick's Pub, 606 3rd Ave., Watervliet, 518-238-3687

Wednesday, Feb. 13

Dr. Dog with The Nude Party, 8 p.m., Upstate Concert Hall, 1208 Route 146 Clifton Park, 518-371-0012

Making The Scene

Friday, Feb. 15

Beers and Beehives on the Farm, featuring Off the Record, 7 p.m., Indian Ladder Farms, 342 Altamont Road, Altamont, 518-655-0108

Saturday, Feb. 16

Brian Kane, 8 p.m., Corcoran's Towpath Tavern, 33 Saratoga Ave., Waterford, 518-326-2739

Friday, Feb. 22

Brian Kane, 8 p.m., Patrick's Pub, 606 3rd Ave., Watervliet, 518-238-3687

Skeeter Creek, 8:30 p.m., The Upper Room, 59-61 N. Pearl St., Albany, 518-694-3100

Saturday, Feb. 23

Dolan Brothers, 8 p.m., Corcoran's Towpath Tavern, 33

Saratoga Ave., Waterford, 518-326-2739

Katie Louise, 7 p.m., Indian Ladder Farms, 342 Altamont Road, Altamont, 518-655-0108

Andrew McMahon, 7:30 p.m., Upstate Concert Hall, 1208 Route 146 Clifton Park, 518-371-0012

Locked In A Vacancy, Tentacles and Sledge Wolf, 8:30 p.m., Pauly's Hotel, 337 Central Ave., Albany, 518-426-0828

Monday, Feb. 25

The Kooks, Barns Courtney, and Future Beats, 8 p.m., Upstate Concert Hall, 1208 Route 146 Clifton Park, 518-371-0012

Wednesday, Feb. 27

August Burns Red, 6:30 p.m., Upstate Concert Hall, 1208 Route 146, Clifton Park, 518-371-0012

Friday, March 1

The Mountain Carol, pencildive and Pony In The Pancake, 8:30 p.m., Pauly's Hotel, 337 Central Ave., Albany, 518-426-0828

Saturday, March 2

Dublin Train Wreck, 8 p.m., Corcoran's Towpath Tavern, 33 Saratoga Ave., Waterford, 518-326-2739

The Tradition, 9 p.m., Patrick's Pub, 606 3rd Ave., Watervliet, 518-238-3687

The Wheel, 9 p.m., Dinosaur Bar-B-Que, 377 River St., Troy, 518-308-0400

Timbre Coup, 9 p.m., The Hollow Bar + Kitchen, 79 N. Pearl St., Albany, 518-426-8550

Tuesday, March 5

All That Remains and Attila, with Escape The Fate and Sleep Signals, 6:30 p.m., Upstate Concert Hall, 1208 Route 146, Clifton Park, 518-371-0012

Thursday, March 7

Xperience Live, featuring Let's Go Daylight and Bleak Little Duo, 6 p.m., RadioradioX Performance Studio, 35D Saratoga Ave., Waterford, 518-326-1673



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Variety should be the spice of radio

By Mark Robarge

If you've read a local newspaper in the Capital Region over the past 30 years, you may have seen my by-line a few times, but few may know I wanted to get into radio when I first got out of college back when dinosaurs walked the earth.

Though writing has always been my first love, talking was always a close second (a runaway first to most of my family and friends), and when I arrived on the UAlbany campus all those decades ago, I found myself joining the campus radio station, the legendary WCDB, as a news and sports guy. Over the next four years, I called football and basketball games, did regular newscasts and even pulled an air shift or two, all while making friends I still hold dear to this day.

Circumstances led me back to my first love after college, but radio was never too far from my life. When I decided to take a break from the newspaper business, I twice found my way back to radio, doing everything from co-hosting a morning show (with a teenage Kevin Richards piloting the ship) and doing the 7 to midnight shift to hosting a daily talk show, calling high school football games and even producing a weekly stock car racing show.

As an on-air personality, I was ALWAYS in trouble with my program director for not sticking to the format. The one and only Dr. Jay Richards was my program director at WMYX, a small country station that was on the air for about

Between the Lines

a half-hour back in the early '90s, and the 6-foot-8 man was constantly threatening the 5-foot-9 me with bodily harm if I stopped replacing My Country's classic hits with harder-edge, outlaw stuff.

I always had the same argument, that people want to hear more than just the same group of songs that rotated endlessly from hour to hour, day to day (if I EVER hear Achy Breaky Heart again, I will throttle the person who plays it). The problem I've always had with the industry is that the formatting is so rigid that those of us who like more than one genre of music were left to jump from one frequency to the next.

When I first met Art Fredette (through my wife, who herself has a 30-year career in radio and whose voice you can currently hear on commercials all over local radio), I knew right away he was anything but ordinary. One of the first stories I wrote for The Record in Troy was a profile of his band, The Lawn Sausages, and I immediately found not only a shared sick sense of humor, but also a kindred musical spirit, as anybody who has listened to RadioradioX since it started streaming last year can attest.

Like myself, Art sees no boundaries to music, which is obvious from listening to RadioradioX for even a

few minutes. When you have a playlist that includes everything from Fish and Metallica to Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley, you pretty much have everything covered.

Art also isn't afraid to play obscure artists who have been all but ignored by commercial radio, and RadioradioX is a strong backer of local musicians, featuring their music on the air and hosting shows that spotlight the great talent that can be seen weekly in bars and clubs around the area.

So when Art offered me the opportunity to come out of "retirement" to help launch Xperience, I was immediately all in. The concept of a paper that would share the same eclectic philosophy as RadioradioX, spotlighting not only the local arts

and entertainment scene, but also the people who make the region more interesting, excited me to sit back down at a keyboard for the first time in nearly a year.

I hope the pages of this premiere issue reflect that philosophy, but we also want to hear from you, the reader and listener. Know an interesting person or a hot new band? A great new place to eat or an interesting upcoming event? We want to know about it. Email me at mark.robarge@gmail.com or Art at waxarttt@gmail.com with your comments or story ideas, and help us to continue to share more of the region's gems in coming months.

Mark Robarge is a retired journalist and editor of Xperience.

Talk to us!

Got a story idea for Xperience? We want to hear about it. Visit our website at radioradiox.com or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RadioRadioX or email xperience@radioradiox.com.

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