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AUGUST 84
Free

PARTING COMMENT

DEAR READERS,

Hi there! No doubt many of you are wondering where I am and what I'm doing. I can just imagine the rumors, so let me set things straight. No, I did not run off to Atlantic City with the Benefit money; I was not kidnapped by roving gypsies; and I have not been the victim of a fatal sexually transmitted disease. I am alive and well and living in Chattanooga, Tennessee, my hometown, which is not as bad as you might think, but is still pretty bad after three years in exciting Nash Vegas. See, I graduated from Vanderbilt Law School and took the Bar Examination at the end of July, but was unable to find a job in Nashville. This, coupled with the expiration of my lease and possible eviction from my apartment (owned by Vanderbilt), left me few options but to move back home to my folks. Rest assured, however, that I do intend to return to Nashville as soon as I can find a legal sort of job there (if you know any lawyers who are looking for a bright young associate, mention my name).

Rest assured as well that the N.I.R. you've come to know, love, and expect once a month will continue to come out as Rick Champion and Gigi Gaskins have taken over the editorial duties. I will continue to write articles on interesting bands I encounter and review independent releases you should know or be warned about. You may even encounter me at Cantrell's or the Rock Arena some dark night when there's a band I couldn't miss playing...

So, that's about all I've got to say, except that I hope everyone who wants the N.I.R. to continue will get in touch with Rick and Gigi and offer to help in whatever way they can. I could go into a lengthy list of people who've helped make the N.I.R. and the Nashville scene what they are today, but there have been so many I'm sure I'd forget some. Instead, let me just say thank you to our readers, advertisers, and all the great local bands (past and present) who've made the N.I.R. a lot of fun to do. My address and phone number are below in case anyone wants to contact me (for whatever reason). Any bands interested in playing down here should send their press kit and a tape, and I'll see what I can arrange.

ROCK ON,
Andy

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THE TWISTED FATE OF The Rock Arena

Everyone talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it according to the old cliché. The same thing might be said about Cantrell's and the Nashville

new music scene. Ever since it began to book new music bands and attract their fans, people have been complaining about Cantrell's. While it's easy to complain, someone usually always noted that, for better or worse, Cantrell's was the only place in town to regularly book new music and put up with the antics of the local scenesters attracted. Thus, most of the complaining and discussions ended with the realization that what was needed was a new club.

Well, now we've got one. Located at 2600 Nolensville Road, a scant 1 1/2 miles east the Fairgrounds, where once there was a country music honky-tonk, there is now the Rock Arena. It opened its doors July 28 with a three band extravaganza

featuring some of Nashville's best bands: Ring Of Fire, Practical Stylists, and Factual. I went and am happy to report back that the Rock Arena has got almost everything you could want in a club.

First, it's big, really big (about 3 times the size of the music room at Cantrell's). This means the club will be able to host shows featuring national acts (such as Little Steven or Dream Syndicate) and you'll be able to attend without feeling like a sardine in a can (as at the Violent Femmes). There is ample seating as well as a fairly large dance floor. The entranceway and area in front of the restrooms are both spacious and make for good places to hang out and talk. (Speaking of the restrooms, your personal hygiene buffs should note that they're fairly clean) The club also has such niceties as wall-to-wall carpet and an effective climate control system. The lighting for the stage is very effective, lots better than Cantrell's four floodlights. The sound system and soundman should both be familiar; Jeff and his system were lured away from Cantrell's (note, due to the larger room your ears won't ring as much the next day). Other items I was impressed with included the two phone booths in the back, pool tables, and (something every club needs) a Sex Testor machine.

While the Rock Arena isn't exclusively a new music club, they intend to keep booking in new music acts as long as people will keep turning out to see them. I also understand that they'll be working with Cantrell's to co-ordinate bookings so they won't end up splitting up the crowd and cutting each other's throats, which I think is nice.

All in all, I really don't have anything bad to say about the Rock Arena. I do wish it had a hipper name (Rock-A-Rama maybe?), but that's a minor complaint. By whatever name, it's a great club all music lovers should welcome and support. If it closes down due to lack of support, it will be a long time before a comparable place comes along. You should go there, alone
---Andy

turns out moody.
Doors meet Talking Heads rock.
Robert Payes—Trousers Press

... a successful blend of many late '60s styles brought up to date with just the right touch of modern tech... the songs are interesting... the guitars are innovative and very clean

Jeff Bates—OP

CIVIC DUTY

LONG WAY TO HEAVEN
RED WING BIRD

LIVE AT CANTRELLS
SEPTEMBER 22ND

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ITALIAN STREET FAIR — ANNUAL LABOR DAY

Sure most everybody is aware that the annual ITALIAN STREET FAIR is coming up this Labor Day Weekend and we've gotten word that Laurie George has a booth there—the Street Fair is always full of interesting arts & crafts, entertainment and lots of fun—wish there was a greater variety of interesting food, however; still, go by and have a beer or two (or three) and say hello to Laurie and do a good deed for the Nashville Symphony.

WHAT WE'VE GOT HAPPENING THIS WEEK-END IS A
ROCK MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA

Friday-Aug. 31--The WHITE ANIMALS start the party with their show at Cantrell's.

Saturday-Sept. 1--Vandy Concerts offers their first show of the new year with ELVIS COSTELLO, The STRAY CATS and NICK LOWE. One of Atlanta's hottest new bands, The NIGHTPORTERS will be playing a special post-concert gig at Cantrell's.

Sunday-Sept. 2--Cat's Records will present their Last Chance Dance Party at the West End store with The MOVEMENT, PRACTICAL STYLIST and Atlanta's SWIMMING POOL Q's. After this free show, The GUN CLUB and RAGING FIRE will continue the holiday celebration over at Cantrell's.

Monday-Sept. 3--Sound Seventy presents The THOMPSON TWINS and BERLIN at the Municipal Auditorium.

Rarely have Nashville rock fans been treated to such a week-end of total stimulation. 12 bands in 4 days and a holiday to give us all the time we need to take it all in.

Everything Andy reports about the opening of Rock Arena is true. It was an incredibly good club. Most unfortunately it closed down after the show with PRACTICAL STYLIST and LOVE TRACTOR on Aug. 18. The details seem to be very sketchy at this time. However, there are some facts which indicate that the sudden closing of the club was totally "uncool!" The fact here is that club manager Butch Appling told Jeff Levy to get his PA out of the club because this particular night was the last. Other information obtained from the club's booking agent, Leslie Manier, reveals that Butch has indeed left town and seems to have done so owing several people money. Apparently the financial partner in the club pulled out his support and Butch obviously went into a panic. Quite honestly this all stinks! The club had a great potential to offer Nashville rock fans many enjoyable nights as well as providing a good showcase for local and national talent. In short, however, it seems that we've all been had and the manner in which the club did close is unforgivable. The only person who is loving this entire soap-opera affair is Terry Cantrell; like him or not, he has indeed been able to one way or another maintain some sense of stability at that concrete-enclosed Burger Boy on Broadway. Oh well, the names may change but the story still seems to always remain the same.

Andy:

I think your paper is great. It keeps me up on talent in Nashville. Could you please put me on your mailing list.

Also, I'd be interested in taking a listen to Ring of Fire. Could you please have them contact me, or send me a cassette.

Thanks very much.

Best,

Michael Barackman
A&R Director

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COURSE ANDY.
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TERRIE
SHIELDS

WE NEED ALL THE HELP
WE CAN GET!!!!!!

NIGHTPORTERS



you have the right to be WRONG

by Duana Callahan

The WRONG BAND has received their share, or even more than their share of criticism. Labeled "bubble-gum new wave or syntho-pop" by many, they were voted Worst Band of the Year in the '84 NIR Reader's Poll. That means that you, our readers, said that. You, the self-professed non-conformists and sheer party animals. Whatever happened to having fun? Is that what slam-dancing to 150 db's of feedback is supposed to be? Oh well.

Anyway, the band's lead vocalist and bass player Ric Harman doesn't seem to worry about such criticism all that much. Says Ric, "Criticism is all a matter of personal taste. I think of criticism as someone else's opinion and that's all. I'm not offended if someone doesn't like us." A necessary attitude in this business, I'd say. "Of course you take it personally at first," Ric continues, "because music is very personal. You put everything you've got into it. Then you realize, well, I'm doing what I enjoy. If what we're doing doesn't turn you on, fine."

If you've ever seen the WRONG BAND on stage, you'll probably agree that they don't look too worried about whether people like them. Ric leaps about the stage unselfconsciously; keyboardist Dr. X pantomimes while he sings; guitarist Jack Cord stands off to the side, smiling shyly; and drummer Jeff Danley laughs along with the rest. They obviously enjoy what they do, and the audience senses it.

They are serious about their music, but at the same time they don't take themselves too seriously. They like to have fun, and they don't care who knows it.

Ric likes to describe what they play as "New rock/pop—but we're still trying to find our niche. I think 'new rock/pop' is fun, it's danceable. Sometimes it's very frustrating when someone comes up to and says 'Oh, you're bubble-gum pop.' It makes you really mad, and then you say, 'Well, have you ever seen us play?' Nine out of ten times they never have. They rely on word of mouth. A lot of people who've seen us have changed their mind."

If you have been to see the WRONG BAND and did not have fun, that's too bad, because I'm sure the band did. And after all, for some of us, that's what music is for. And for those of you who disagree, when was the last time you REALLY worried about El Salvador on a dance floor?

—DESSAU—

Review by Allen Green

Dessau is a city in East Germany that figured prominently in the architectural movement known as Bauhaus. The Bauhaus style was angular, and lacked unnecessary ornamentation. This is also an apt description of the music of Nashville's newest synth-based band...appropriately known as "Dessau": John Elliott's regular electronic pulses and clean block chords are Dessau's synthesizer sounds, set against Kevin Hamilton's dynamic yet subdued guitar, James Horn's steady stream of funk-flavored bass, and emotional and unpretentious vocalizing from Kevin and sometimes John.

Dessau's second local performance, opening for Civic Duty at Cantrell's, Aug. 17th, was promising of good things to come. Despite a snaky start, when at times the electronic and human elements of the band didn't seem to want to get into sync, Dessau delivered a good set. If they had had a bit more stage presence and been a little tighter, it would've been a great set. Their material drew upon the sound of less mainstream European synth-rock such as Simple Minds and John Foxx and infused it with new vitality. A less inhibited audience would've had a good time dancing to Dessau's straight ahead beat.

Credit must be given to Dessau's hired drummer for the evening, Bryan Talbot. His drum parts added a spark that may have been lacking with another drummer... which brings me to the fact that Dessau has no regular drummer, but chooses instead to work with drum machines and hired drummers. It is my observation that if Dessau were to either add a permanent drummer, or stick exclusively to drum machines, they would then be free to pursue their music unencumbered by the necessity of having to teach their set to a different drummer for every show.

Nashville has few bands that are trying to do something other than standard guitar-based pop rock. That's why I'm glad to see Dessau come onto the scene. Let's hope that they stick it out and find the success they deserve.

The WHITE ANIMALS will be back in Nashville this coming week-end after a trip which took them out to LA and back. They'll be at Cantrell's this Friday, Aug. 31 to kick off the Labor Day Rock Bonanza.

DESSAU recently showcased their sound at Atlanta's 688 Club on Tuesday Aug. 21. John Elliott described the video concept 'Electronic Music Night' as being "kind of neat getting the whole stage to ourselves" and indicates the band is currently moving through some changes.

PARTY GOBLIN is looking for a new element to add to their sound. Keyboardist take note and get in touch with a goblin.

SUBURBAN BAROQUE indicates they are shooting a video at Viacom studio produced by Seth Ritter of Digital Images Co. It can be viewed on Viacom cable 29 later this fall. They will be playing next at the World's End come Sept. 20 with ROCCO.

MEDIA

REPO MAN

by Steve West

When can you find a hardcore/punk soundtrack to a sci-fi/comedy video? On Pacific Arts "Repo Man." Iggy Pop's "Repo Man Theme" kicks off the 93 minute movie centered around an unemployed punker Otto (Emilio Estevez) and a mysterious 64 Chevy Malibu with four aliens in the trunk. Not illegal aliens, extraterrestrial aliens.

The movie opens with a state trooper pulling over the Malibu enroute from Utah to LA. The trooper then gets zapped for being a little too curious and looking in the trunk. All that's left, as the Chevy pulls away, is two smoldering state trooper boots.

Meanwhile, in an LA suburb, Otto responds to constructive criticism of his supermarket job with "Fuck You" and walks off to his first encounter with Bud, a repo man who works for Helping Hand Acceptance Co. Otto gets suckered into helping Bud repossess a car; but, when he's offered a job, Otto replies with "Fuck You. I ain't gonna be no Repo man. He later changes his mind, however, when he finds out his hippie hungover parents (who just get high and watch Rev. Larry on TV) have given all their money to ship Bibles to Salvador.

Otto discovers that he and repo men have a lot in common. They speak the same lingo, such as "Fuckin' ay we took your car, asshole...fuck you." This movie is full of great lines like: "I hate average people, Average people spend their lives avoiding tense situations. Repo men live for tense situations."

Whenever Bud tells Otto, "Let's fo get a beer" they go get a drink. Every product mentioned is generic: Drink cans say 'Drink'; Beer cans say 'Beer'; Cornflake boxes say 'Cornflakes'; Probably a touch of producer Michael Nesmith.

The '64 Malibu and Otto cross paths when the car shows up on the computer at the Helping Hand offices with a reward of \$20,000. The Repo men, a mysterious government agency, and a gang of car thieves are all in pursuit but the only man who understands it all is the trashman at the repo car lot, Miller.

Combine these situations with music by the CIRCLE JERKS, SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, BLACK FLAG, the PLUGZ, JUICY BANANAS and BURNING SENSATIONS and you've got a film definitely worth checking out. One more thing—The film credits run backwards.

Faction Records announces that it is gearing up for some serious movement in its independent status and is making plans to produce other local bands--Faction is the business wing of FACTUAL. Immediate plans are to release a DESSAU 12 inch 45 sometime in late September.

FACTUAL will be hitting the road again on Labor Day week-end to close down Birmingham's Cavern Club in high-tech style on Friday Aug. 31 and then on to Tuscaloosa for a Saturday show at Chuckkers. Local fans can also look forward to a Sept. 28 release of a new album.

Bard looking for a bass player: would like to play high-energy hardcore pop! Original material and are very serious. The Enemies: call Joey @ 868-0746 or Lee @ 385-6653.

Billy Stickers tells us that JUST ROUTINE will be taking time off to work on a forthcoming EP. They'll be playing again in September with 45 GRAVE.

Atlanta's SWIMMING POOL Q's, who will be playing at this year's Last Chance Dance Party, have just released a new album on A&M Records.

Andy.....
THANKS FOR EVERYTHING....


Seth Bill John
Jimmy

EVERYONE AT →

→ PYRAMID

Electrically Recorded
PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

WE WELCOME
ROCK CHAMPION,
WELL KNOWN LOCAL
INTELLECTUAL AS
NEW EDITOR OF THE
N.I.R.



local news

One of the new bands in town is the COLOR FLAG. They are a neo-psychedelic band consisting of Pam Poe on lead vocals; Steve Goodhue on guitar, keyboards & vocals; Ben Letson on guitar & vocals; Steve Poe on bass & vocals and Johnny Plush on drums & vocals. The COLOR FLAG play a mixture of 60's psychedelic and folk rock with a jangly guitar sound that makes you want to get up and dance all night long.

SHADOW 15 has been working on an 8 song mini-LP. So far 4 songs are complete and there are 4 to go. Their Aug. 25 show at Rock Arena was going to help carry the financial weight but alas, not now!

The WRONG BAND has spent several days this month out of town. They played in Memphis on Aug. 13-15 at Stage Stop and they journeyed down to Birmingham to play the Nick back on Aug. 4 to a crowd that included RED RIDER. They will be playing in Murfreesboro Aug. 30 at the grand opening show of the new Cat's Records. Also featured will be local rockers BURNING HEARTS and DANNY TATE AND EAST OF EDEN.

We'd like to welcome Kim Bue, formerly with Enigma Records, to the Praxis Records staff; also congratulations to Nashville's Laurie George for becoming a full time staff worker as well. Kim, who will be in charge of publicity and such, relates that the Scorchers are currently engaged in 2 weeks of studio work here in Nashville, cutting the tracks for their upcoming new release in January.

CLOVERBOTTOM and RING OF FIRE will be making an end-of-summer trip down to Pensacola, Florida for a week-end of fun and music on Sept. 7 & 8. RING OF FIRE just finished their summer "Life of Riley" tour with visits to Chicago, Newport, KY, Louisville and Lexington and will be out this month under their new name RAGING FIRE (see article this issue for details) traveling to Columbus, OH on Sept. 12 and down to Athens to play with LOVE TRACTOR on Sept. 30.

IN PURSUIT has obtained a new drummer, Jeff Boggs. During the summer they've been touring Cincinnati, Newport, Louisville, Lexington, Memphis, and Tuscaloosa and are planning to travel soon to Athens, Atlanta, North and South Carolina. They have just finished mixing a single at Castle Studio "Too Much F.V." and "Same Old Game". Produced by Mike Joyce. The project will be pressed up in the near future.

Although some may hold him responsible for closing down the club (I do not), Rudy McNeely did not play the last show at Phrank'n Steins. That honor went to CLOVERBOTTOM and JAP SNEAKERS with a special guest appearance by PURPLE GIRAFFE's. Just to set the record straight.

CIVIC DUTY reports a switch in their line-up with the addition of Gary Rabasca playing bass guitar. Ed Fitzgerald informs us they are putting the finishing touches on a 10/12 song LP and will be out shopping it around for a deal in the coming months. They'll be playing again at Cantrell's on Sept. 22.

Word has it the SCORCHERS were very pleased with their second European tour—seems that the band felt they played their strongest shows ever—shows that were played to sold out audiences everywhere and received international press as well.

The only good band from Knoxville to ever play here in town, the ARBITRARY, have broken up.

Patrons at the Bluebird Cafe got a special treat at WILL RAMBEAUX's Aug. 18 show when Warner Hodges and Jeff Johnson of the SCORCHERS joined him on stage to make a hot night even hotter.

After getting off to a rip-roaring start and a summer full of success, RING OF FIRE has suddenly encountered a bit of a set-back. It seems that Tom Gray of Atlanta's defunct BRAINS, has resurfaced with his own RING OF FIRE complete with silver lame suits, a new record, and lots of national press to go along with it. This set-back is going to be temporary, however, for our local rockers will be continuing onward with a slight name change and will be initiating their new name, RAGING FIRE, when they open for the GUN CLUB on Sept. 2 at Cantrell's...The name may change but the sound will remain powerfully the same!

WELCOME BACK 91 ROCK!

91 Rock

CAT'S WEST END

LAST CHANCE DANCE PARTY

SUN SEPT 2 7PM

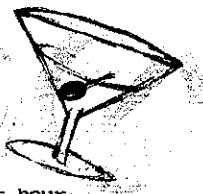
FEATURING SWIMMING POOL

PRACTICAL STYLISTS

FREE THE MOVEMENT FREE

A REVIEW OF NASHVILLE'S NIGHTTIME HAPPY HOURS

by Les and Terree



*World's End
2 for 1 daily from 10 to midnight

The World's End gets our vote for happiest hour. They offer good drinks at reasonable prices and tasty appetizers (although some are overpriced) and a great atmosphere—very interesting yet relaxing. This is a wonderful place to go for conversation. Live music is sometimes available in the listening room and recorded music is always available in the main room. Booze-Food-Atmosphere, Eat/Drink and be Merry.

*Southwinds
\$1.25 drinks on Monday; ladies night (free beer from 8 till 9 and 50¢ drinks for ladies) on Tuesday; 50¢ Michelob draft on Wednesday; 90¢ beer in cans & 75¢ well drinks on Thursday.

Southwinds is fun. Dance floor, loud music, cheap drinks. It often gets too crowded and obnoxious guys are usually on the prowl but if you can live with or avoid these faults, it is a neat place to hang out.

*B. Palola's
2 for 1 daily from 10 to 1 in the morning.

B. Palola's is a close runner up for the happiest hour. It is similar to the World's End, not quite as atmospheric but a little more fun. Sometimes the bar crowd gets a little wild but you can drink in the dining room if that's not your cup of tea. Being just a few blocks away, and being an hour later makes B. Palola's an excellent stop after last call at the World's End.

*Spinnakers
2 for 1 from 10 till midnight except Saturday which is 3 for 1.

Definitely a good place to go for drinking cheap on Saturday nights if drinks are your main interest. Decent sized drinks especially at 3 for 1 but the atmosphere leaves a bit to be desired and it's just not a fun place. Excellent for cheap drinking and conversation.

*coming: Faison's, Close Quarters, Spats, Cabaret and the Warehouse.

Saturday night Aug. 18, much to the surprise of Nashville rock fans, PRACTICAL STYLISTS and LOVE TRACTOR closed down the Rock Arena. The STYLIST played a strong set—their current line-up projects a pop sensibility that is new to their sound. However, they have paid for this so-called professionalism. The older material retains much of the spunk that made them the rock band they were, witnessed by the packed dance floor during these numbers; yet, they are missing that certain raw power which defined their special sound. Actually, some of the new material is a bit too wumpy to be coming from a band with the reputation that the STYLIST's have developed. Any time a band changes their line-up there are going to be some shifts in their sound. Let's hope that these shifts will soon settle because PRACTICAL STYLIST has offered Nashville rock fans too much good music to just 'shift away'.

LOVE TRACTOR's unknown farewell to the Rock Arena crowd was quite stunning. LOVE TRACTOR is a band that is either on or off. Their gig with the no-show DREAM SYNDICATE was pretty good, but then, so is the Rockford Files. This particular Saturday night they were HOT—people were jumping all over the dance floor. Right from the beginning they tore into their set with a passion I'd never before seen these guys play with—and I've even seen them play on Holy Ground in Athens before! When they are this good LOVE TRACTOR projects a unique mannerism that's much like NEW ORDER meets CREDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL. They are a nonintentionally psychedelic instrumental band with vocal interludes that serve as stunning sub-ordinate clauses. Their professionalism was highlighted when the power to their amps failed and they filled the space with a rousing rendition of "Ghost Busters" accompanied by drums (and the drummer is great). LOVE TRACTOR has just released a new 5 song EP on DB Records entitled 'Til the Cows Come Home. If the record is half as good as this show was then it'll be worth twice the price.

There were two major no-shows in town this past month. AGENT ORANGE was supposed to play at Cantrell's but it seems as if their tour was a bit misarranged. They were to play here on a Tuesday night after playing above Chicago on a Monday night and having to head back up north the following Wednesday. They want to reschedule the date sometime so that it falls into place with a southern tour—possibility-late September. The DREAM SYNDICATE cancellation at the now cancelled Rock Arena is a bit more complicated. According to Leslie Manier, ex-booking agent for the ex-club, their road manager, who was about to leave the band, called the night before their show and demanded a major concert-type monitor system. By the time on Wednesday that any arrangements could be made to try and accommodate this demand the band was allegedly spread all over Athens, GA and could not be rounded up in time to get here. The story from various Athens sources seems to indicate that the bands' own ego might have been the cause of the problems instead of the road manager. Whatever the gossip there remain two basic facts: A&M Records was not too happy with the situation and Nashville rock fans missed seeing a band which many of us wanted very badly to see again.