CHEWBACCALYPSE

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ISSUE NUMERO UNO!

INTERVIEWS WITH:
+ ATOM
+ JOE FRANKE

PLUS...
POETRY THAT RHYMES
STORIES ABOUT GOD
COFFEE-FUELED RANTINGS
BORN AGAINST

I was hoping to get ideas for a memorial concert that we, Heritage Christian School, participate in. This is not fit for humans, much less children!

HYMNS FOR CHILDREN

A short reflection of being seventeen and wired on bot-tom-of-the-pot coffee Trusts

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GOOD FUCKING COFFEE. 6/25/01

GREAT ROLL OF PAPER!
X: So this is your second trip out here?

A: No, actually this is probably my 4th. This is the third time I've played at Gilman as Atom and His Package.

X: Let's get the specs on the package.

A: I use a Yamaha QY700, a Yamaha RM1X, and a sampler I used to say "Go" on the new record.

X: Why did you start using synthesizers?

A: I didn't really intend on doing this as a band, it wasn't like "oh, I'm going to start this one man whacky whatever." My old band broke up, and a friend played me a song he wrote on his sequencer, and it was perfect because you can write, record, and arrange the music all self contained without anyone's help. So instead of me writing songs on the guitar and not having anyone to play them with, I can write all the songs and arrange them and play them on this. I started writing songs just to make friends laugh and stuff just for fun, and then I started playing shows and stuff, and it just kind of went from there.

X: What's the best place you've played?

A: There's a couple places I really like to play. A place in Redmond, Washington that's a youth center by the Redmond firehouse and every Friday they have shows with live bands and it's really and awesome institution. It's open during the week and there's a lot of stuff for the kids to do, and the people who run it care about the kids a lot. It's nice to know the people who are setting it up and where some of the money is going to.

X: Did you have any bad experiences when you first started out (with the package) or even now?

A: Bad like?

X: Bad crowds, or just bad individual reactions?

A: Even when people hate it it's still kind of fun. I don't know, I can hold my own if I'm being heckled if I'm in the right mood, so it's fun for me in that case too. No, I don't think I've had any terrible experiences. People scream at me and tell me I suck, but I'd rather have that than people just stand there and not care or be bored. So it's fun for me when people hate it too. It's not like I get angry or my feelings hurt. I mean, it's not for everyone, it's like "okay, that's fine if you don't like it, but let's verbally spar."

X: Before the package you were in a band called "Fracture," and you still have some CDs from that project. Why did they break up?

A: We're from Philadelphia, and our singer moved to Washington state, so that was kind of the end of it. I mean, I still like the guys.

X: Would you ever want to go back to playing with a regular band?

A: I don't know, I do miss playing with other humans, and I do miss traveling with other humans some times. It's still fun, but it's a different kind of fun. I kind of miss that "you and four friends vs. the world" feeling.
but it's a lot easier to be productive when I'm by myself. If I want to go on tour, I just go. I don't need to arrange a schedule between five people. I don't need to pay for five people, it's just me. It's a lot easier to be very self-reliant and you don't have to deal with anything that comes with having a large group of people.

X: So what's the strangest thing that people have done at your shows?

A: There've been some really funny shows. One in Lawrence Kansas where this band called "Killed in the Face" just ran up when I was playing and just started playing the snare drum and trombone and they were all dressed in costumes and they played a couple songs, and that was pretty strange and awesome. In Redmond there were a few people who dressed up in "Prophets of Atom" t-shirts and had fake beards and signs that said "the package is near." and they were yelling at people and getting rocks thrown at them, which is pretty funny.

X: You actually have a Mad Lib song, right?

A: Uh huh.

X: And Worm Quartet did a version of it. Is this a thing where everyone can do a Mad Lib song and play it?

A: Sure. I definitely don't think I'm one who can say "don't play MY song" after ripping off countless people.

X: So there could be a whole bunch of people doing their own Mad Lib songs?

A: In theory that could happen.

X: So we mentioned Shoebox and Worm Quartet earlier. They've been getting airplay on "Dr. Demento." Do you see a bright future for chubby people with synthesizers?

A: Why?

(This is about the point where we started blabbering about how Atom could be mean to me and Ryan, or what we could possibly do to provoke him. It would have taken up too much space to be entertaining.)
I fumbled with the top button of the starched white shirt. My hands trembled with guilty pleasure as I smoothed the shirt over my stomach and pulled up the black slacks from around my knees. There was a strange glow throughout the room, perhaps my actions were actually being smiled upon.

I frowned a bit as I passed the incense burner. I didn't particularly like it at all. In fact, I thought it was a bit absurd. To me, the soul purpose of the incense was to cover the foul "mystery smell" that seems so prevalent in the room of every adolescent male. I shook the thought from my head and continued towards the dresser. Clearing a few stray CDs from the top, I pulled open the top drawer and dug through the pile of socks until my hand emerged with the black silk tie. I smiled and flipped up the collar, tossing the tie over the back of my neck. As I tied it, I glanced over and made eye contact with my favorite Jack Nicholson poster. Head peering through the door, his face twisted in the famous mix of rage and dementia.

That was what I was doing now. I was hacking a big hole in life, sticking my head through, and giving the world a great big "heeeere's Johnny!" I chuckled a bit at my own metaphor as neatly finishing the knot and flipping my collar down. I made my way back across the room. The computer stuck out from the corner. It was a gaudy mixture of bright blue and white plastic. Shining with the pride that only a 350mhz / processor, DVD, and an ATIRage 128 Graphics Card could provide. But this was all irrelevant as I reached around the machine and pulled off the book that was taped to the back of it.

I giggled with anticipation as I traced my fingers over the raised gold letters—"The Book of Mormon." I took a deep breath, clutching the book to my chest. Pulling another piece of tape off from the back of the book, I freed the named tag and gingerly pinned it onto the shirt.

I read the handwritten words of my homemade name tag out loud: "Elder Tole: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." I finally bounced over to the mirror to admire myself. Realizing I had made an error, I let down a groan as I pulled the forgotten bike helmet from under the bed and gingerly placed it upon my neatly combed blonde hair, leaving the chin strap unfastened.

As I stood there in the mirror, helmet upon my head, practicing my "Jesus and I love you"s, I was oblivious to the fact that I could never tell my friends. Nor did I think about what my parents would do if they caught me like this, or any of the other prejudices that modern society held towards transreligites. No, at that moment, all I knew was one thing: I was a boy who was happy to spend a Thursday afternoon dressing up like a Mormon.

This story was nearly banned at Alameda High School.
ALL AGES: REVIEWS

(The majority of the music reviewed in this section is NOT new. I figure that and old
album you haven't heard is just the same as a new one. This policy will be discarded as
soon as people decide to supply me with free
and/or affordable shit to review....

Yeah, that's what I thought.)

Dead Boys- "All This and More" (1977-78)

I've always wondered why the Dead Boys weren't mentioned in the same breath as the
Ramones, Pistols, and Clash. It is said that to really understand just how revolutionary
those early bands were, you have to compare them with what was around at the time. I
tried this, and those people are absolutely right. Compare the Dead Boys with other punk
bands of the time, and you begin to see just how incredible they were.

Replacements- "Sorry Ma, Forgot to take out the Trash" (1981)

Yes, fifteen years before Paul Westerberg sank to the "Singles" soundtrack, we have the
debut release from the Replacements. Which, as it turns out, is a damn fine punk album.
Whether you're a youngin' looking for a history lesson or an old-timer feeling nostalgic, this
one's worth a dust-off and a listen.

Fracas- "Always Drunk and Incapable of Love" (2000)

Reminding everyone that music still, in fact, exists in Alameda, we have Fracas. Like
any good hardcore album, "Always Drunk and Incapable of Love" gives you that insatiable
urge to break shit. It's also quite cheap: 5 bucks at Axis.

Beat Farmers- "Loud and Plowed and LIVE" (1990)

Are you a Mojo Nixon fan? Have you not heard of the Beat Farmers? Shame on you, ass-
hole! The late great Country Dick Montana co-
wrote "Are You Drinkin' With Me Jesus" and the
final song on this album, "King of Sleaze,"
features Mojo helping out with singing. All
Nixon fans need to grab this one and prepare
for one hell of a ride. Beware! only four or
five songs on this CD have Dick doing vocals,
the rest are quite classic rock/country-ish.

Toy Dolls- "Dig That Groove Baby" (1983)

What sad sack of shit doesn't love the
Toy Dolls? This may have been their best
album, with "Nellie The Elephant", "Firey
Jack", "Douggy Giro", and without a doubt the
best rendition of "Blue Suede Shoes" ever
made. Buy it, listen to it, live it, and
remember just how much fun Punk Rock can be.

The Queers- "Today" (2001)

The newest EP from Joe Queer & Co. Like
pretty much every other Queers release, it's
melodic, catchy, juvenile, and a bit raunchy
all at the same time; a combination that never
fails. "Today" is more or less a sampler of
everything the Queers are doing these days,
complete with the perennial Beach Boys cover.
I'm anxiously awaiting the next Full-Length
I've heard it may be out in the fall?)

Fay Wray- "I Love Everyone" (2000)

I found this Florida band while looking
through the No Idea website last summer. I've
been hooked ever since. It's basically melodic
punk without the ska-ish swingy crap or the
emo-ish whiney shit. So, "I love everyone" is
pretty much what pop-punk should be. And it
gets better every time I listen to it.
X: So how long have you lived in Alameda?

J: Three years.

X: And where did you move here from?

J: I was raised in southern california, but then I moved to the bay area about 8-10 years ago.

X: So Plan 9 just did their last show, and you're still in Fracas.

J: Yeah. We've had a few lineup changes, but we feel we're at our strongest now.

X: Why did Plan 9 break up?

J: The same reason the Misfits did.

X: What's going on with Fracas?

J: Well, we've got a split 7 inch with the Eddie Haskels that should be out soon. Then we're gonna have a new CD out and there's a couple compilations we're probably going to be on. We just did a two week tour, and in August we're going to tour for about a month.

X: How has Alameda and the east bay in general changed since you've been here?

J: I don't know, it's different from San Francisco, like the shows and stuff. In San Francisco they're much older and people aren't quite as excited about stuff. I like Gilman more because people dance and jump around. They like a band they buy stuff, put stickers and patches on themselves. That's exciting to me, whereas you go to San Francisco and people just stand there with their arms crossed.
I like. The weird thing is, a lot of stuff I like sells really well. People will come from all over to buy it. Most stores don’t stock that stuff.

X: You think part of that is kids looking up to you?

J: Maybe, and that’s great. Because in punk rock years, I’m an old man. I’ve seen a lot of the bands that kids here wear the shirts of that broke-up years before they started listening to music, or were born even. That’s what makes you feel dated. When I got into punk rock, I was thirteen, and I was thinking I missed out on certain bands. I remember reading about stuff in the paper and wishing I could go to that, but I didn’t have a car, or there were no busses where I lived. And now, it’s the same. You get a weird perspective when you see all that stuff come and go.

Like, you’re wearing a Teen Idols shirt, and there was a band with that name that spelled it differently, a guy from Minor Threat was in that band, so it seems kind of absurd that they would call themselves the Teen Idols. Do they know? Do they care? I dunno, it gives you a strange perspective.

X: I heard you had an accident with a gun. You apparently shot or something?

J: Uhh, no comment.

X: You did meet Danzig, right?

J: I know him. We hung out with him a few times. At a store. We used to work there, did an in-store appearance, and I’ve met him at comic book conventions. After one comic book convention, we went to dinner and stuff.

He came to see Plan 9 once.

X: What did he think about it?

J: He didn’t say much. I think he gets embarrassed. People are always talking about the Misfits stuff, and I think he’s kind of over that past. But he’s a cool dude.

X: I was reading an issue of Urban Guerrilla where you said everyone in Alameda is crazy.

J: They are. Unless they’re really young, or unless they moved here from elsewhere. But even then sometimes they’re crazy.

X: What about us?

J: You’re not crazy, but you’re still young. You see, in fifteen years, you get warped by the soil. Since Alameda’s an island, there’s an undercurrent of weirdness. Some of it is artificial, in fact, so by not living on actual ground for a long time, it loosens your brain. That’s my theory.

X: So, pretty soon, everyone in Alameda just loses it?

J: They do, and I don’t know why. Because Alameda’s so close to Oakland and Berkeley and San Francisco, and Berkeley and San Francisco are known for being filled with loonies, and Alameda seems to be more upper crust, but for some reason it’s just nuts. You’ll see if you hang out here for a while. The older people, there’s people that are just bonkers. I don’t know why. You think they’d just be conservative, but I have this older woman coming in here asking about a giant dragon or
X: Joe, if you could rename any disease after yourself, what would it be?

J: Wow, that's scary. Because, if you name a venereal disease after yourself, then, good luck. Does it have to be one you have?

X: No.

J: Umm, Mad Cow would be good. Hydrophobia, I guess.

X: Rabies?

J: No, that's a good name. I wouldn't change that one. Maybe Jungle Rot? No, wait, that's a tough one. I dunno. That's a tough one.

X: What's the best show you've ever been to?

J: God, I don't know. There's all these factors that make a show good. How you feel going into it and stuff. I mean, I've seen bands that nowadays I don't really like. Like I saw the Reverend Horton Heat at the Paradise Lounge, and there were not that many people there, but it was crazy. Everyone was into it. Same with the Mighty Mighty Bosstones at the Stone. It was just the right vibe that day, those were not my favorite bands. Other bands like Motorhead, the Cramps, Black Flag, Descendents, I've those bands and they were just amazing.

X: What do people tend to do in the store that

J: Just really pisses you off? (in the House)

X: In Search

J: I'm not a really big fan of when they move shit around. Like, I'll have a stack of comic books, or a stack of t-shirts or something. Like, the same one stacked on the shelves, and it's pretty obvious that of you put it front of something else, it looks like you have twice as much of one thing and none of the other. Or when they take CDs and but them back in upside down or something like that. That's just like them asking you to slap them. Or when they drop sunflower seeds on the carpet. One day I'm gonna kick someone's ass for that. And I'll get an assault charge, but that guy will be all the people that have even dropped sunflower seeds on my floor. Some times I don't think people really know what's going on. Like when something's priced kind of high, they think I'm just kind of making up the price, and that's rarely the case. Most of the time it depends on what I paid for it. If a CD costs 16 bucks, it cost me 12. The ones that cost 10 cost me less. I don't get them all for three bucks and pick which one I'm going to sell for more.

X: What would you like to see coming out of Alameda, or the East Bay, or just in general in the next few years?

J: A movie theater, and a place where bands could play. There should be more, kids shouldn't have to travel an hour to do shit. The only guy I know who's trying to organize an all ages thing wants to do it under the auspices of a church, so it would be cool if ideally there was a movie theater and a place where bands could play.

(The rest of the tape is mainly Joe following the local crackbaby and talking about his cat named Assworm.)
As it turns out, coffee makes a pretty good replacement for my girlfriend. In fact, if they could just figure out a way to put boobs on a styrofoam cup, I'd be set. On the other hand, Sam doesn't stain or make me shit.

Scientists: Tape Screams of the Damned on Satan's Planet!

She hates coffee. I'm not sure just why...

What the Experts Heard:
"Help me, Momma!" "I'll fire's in my bones." "Remove the sword from my bowels." "My eyes -- give me back my eyes." "Water. I thirst." "I'm crushed underfoot." "My eye melts." "Oh, my God!"

Chewbaccaclypse
Issue Number One

was conceived, written, laid out, and utterly destroyed by Shaun. Many thanks to Joe Ryan helped with the interviews.

Contributions will make #2 much easier, so send them in. Add's are still under consideration. Send all yer shit to: Shaun Nichols 3570 Washington St. Alameda CA 94501

E-mail: sni@mac.com

P.S. Sam is the sweetest, nicest, best girl ever. She is in fact much better than coffee!
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