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# Royal Poverty

Metal has always been small town poverty's own soundtrack. Still, Monarch aren't your usual acne-scarred, faux Satanists from the sweaty, hairy armpits of Northern Europe.

By [Tony Wilson](#)

Oct 31 2006, 7:00pm

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Photo by Manuel Galan

Metal has always been small town poverty's own soundtrack. Still, Monarch aren't your usual acne-scarred, faux Satanists from the sweaty, hairy armpits of Northern Europe. Like Thor's Hammer (which was basically the younger, poorer version of Sunn O))) Monarch are fronted by a cute girl rather than a caveman. But while Hammer's Runhild Gammelsæter was Norwegian, Emilie and the core of Monarch are from the southern French town of Bayonne, a place that has its own history of mistreated peasants. During the mid-seventeenth century peasant rebellion, after running out of gun powder, the towns people simply rammed long-bladed hunting knives onto their muskets and kept fighting, thus inventing the bayonet, still used in modern combat. We decided to check up on what it's like there today.

**Vice:** Do you make a living in Monarch?

**Emilie:** I wish... and my parents too...

**Michell:** We're all in school an plan on staying there as long as possible so that the French government and the honest tax-payers can continue financing our artistic creation.

**Shiran:** We make just enough to buy a little bit of equipment, or going to a Mexican restaurant. I don't know how we could be earning our living through music considering what we are playing. But if we can afford Mexican restaurants it's enough for me!

**How has being broke affected you and your music?**

**Emilie:** That doesn't concern me personally; I just need a cheap microphone. Maybe if we could afford a van we could play with our own backline and have our real sound for live performances. Until then we'll just keep on blowing up other bands' amps.

**Michell:** Being broke has definitely taught us how to optimise the little studio time we can get and it has given us a keen eye and ear for second hand amps. Since we've never had any money it's not like we feel that we lack anything.

**Do you think metal is still small town, working class music? It seems like even brats are listening to stuff like Wolf Eyes and Sunn O))) right now.**

**Guillaume:** Real poor people don't listen to music, I mean real music. And the only aim of the upper classes is to distinguish themselves from others, by the music they listen to for instance. Sunn O))) and those bands are just alibis for rich people who want to manifest their "superiority."

**Shiran:** Bands like Sunn O))) or Boredoms are an experimental alibi. They fit the way the upper classes think about what is art or not. They'll only listen to what you call "art-metal" and I don't think that they'd ever listen to Kreator, Sodom or Dio.

TONY WILSON

Monarch's as yet untitled split with Moss should be out on Rise Above any day now. The album follows in January.

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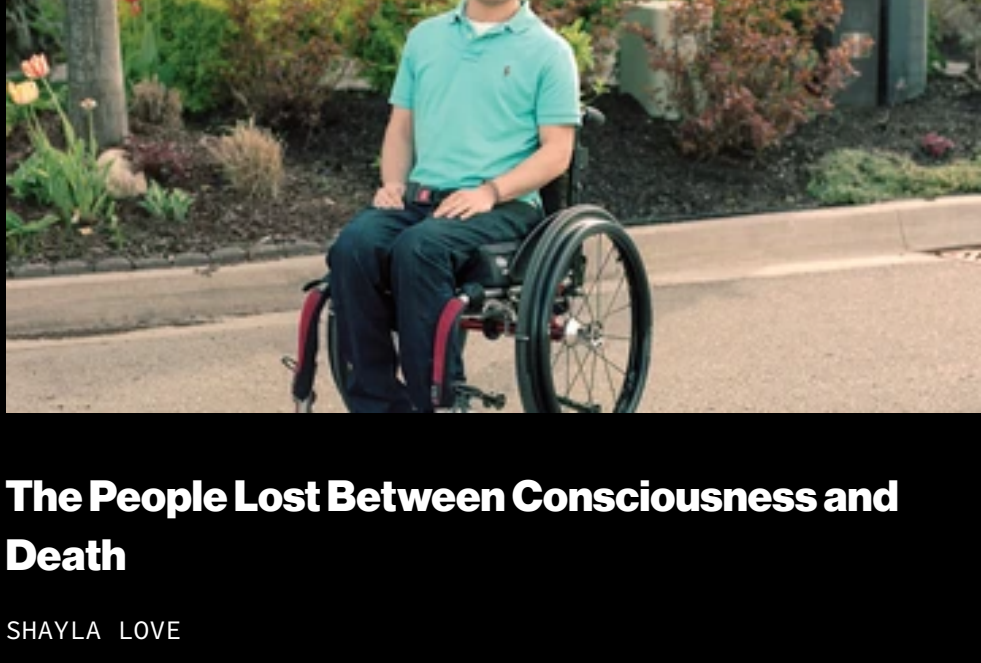


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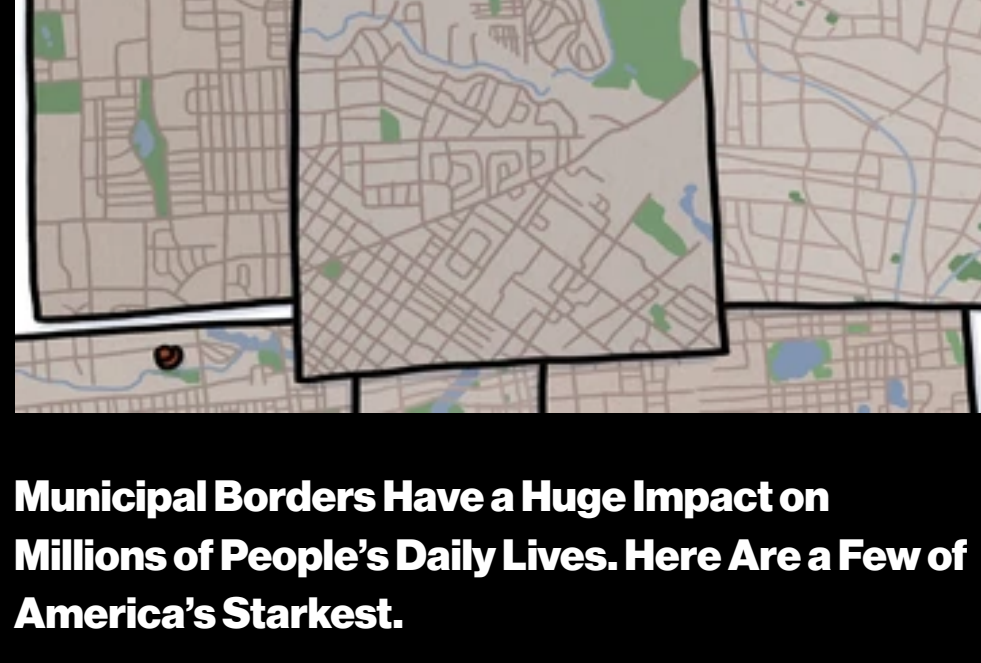


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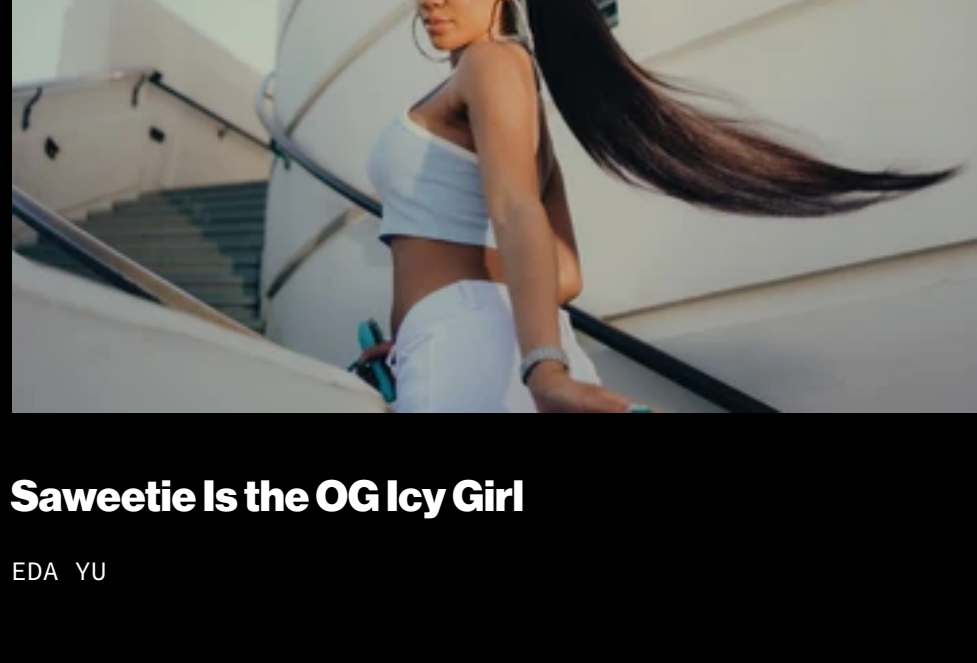
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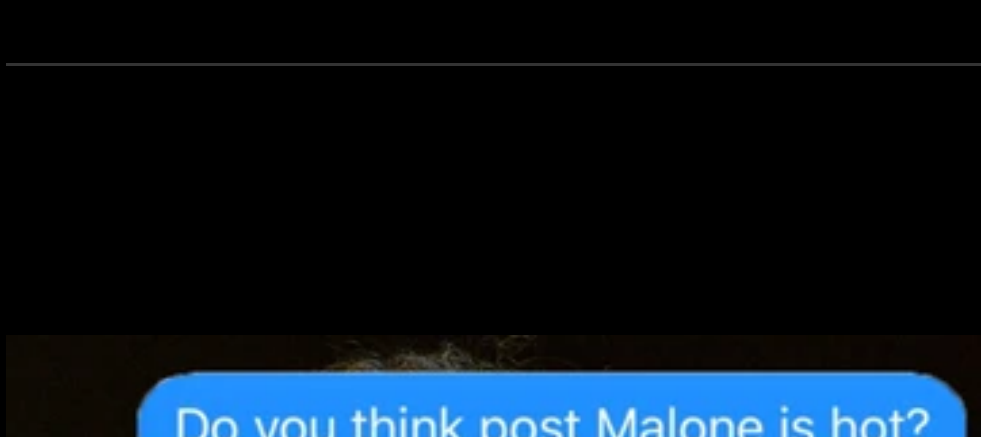
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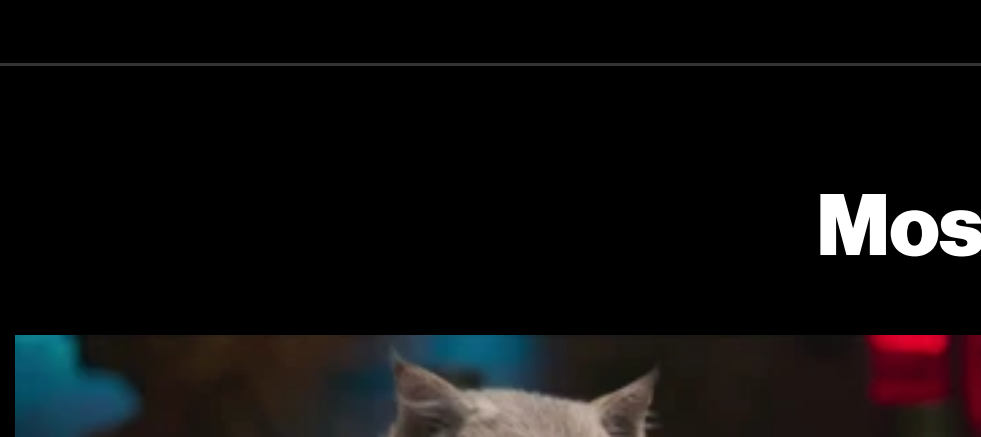
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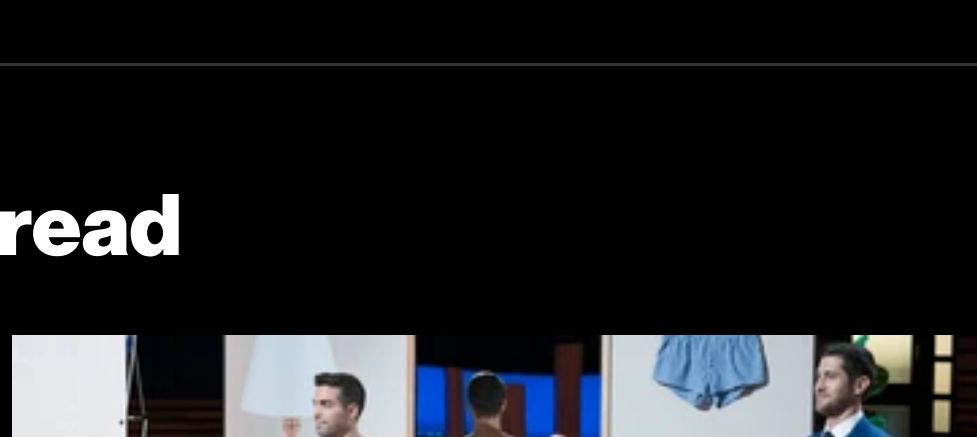
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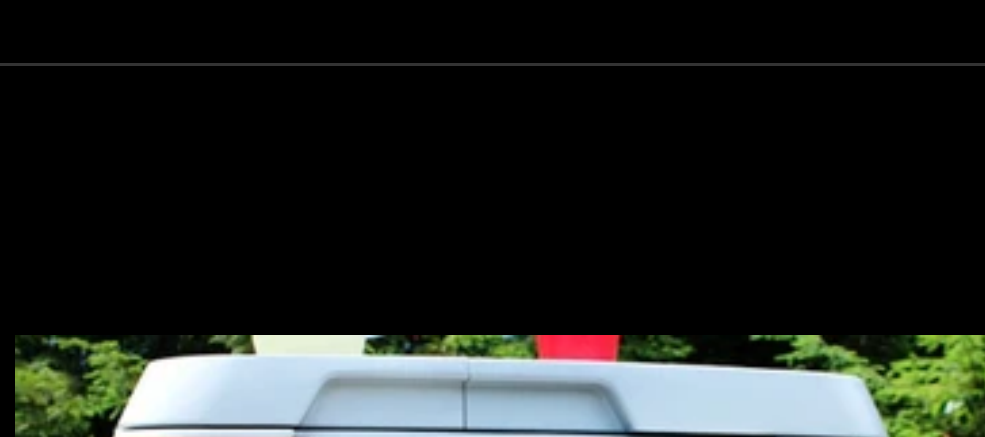
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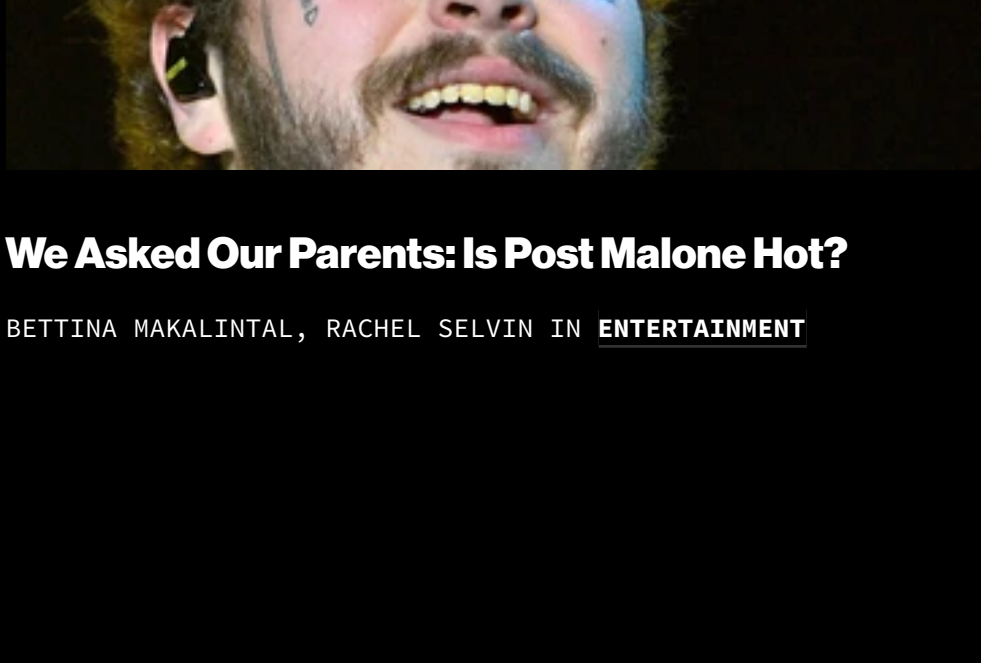
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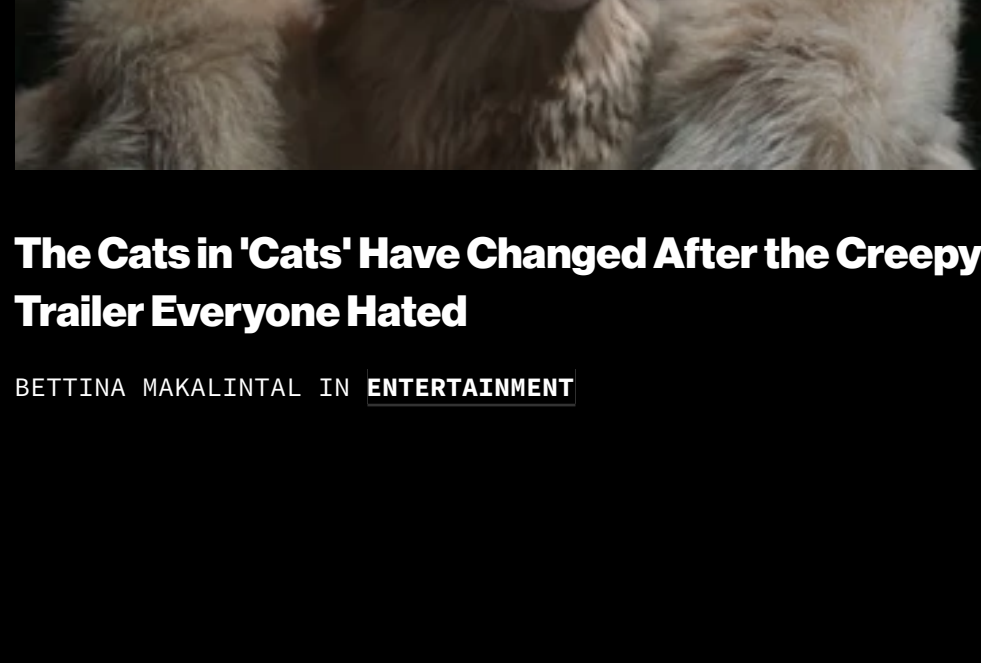
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By [Samuel Gilbert](#); photos by [Adria Malcolm](#)

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