

= Ian Svenonius =

Ian F Svenonius is an American musician , notable as the singer of various Washington , D.C.-based bands including Nation of Ulysses , The Make @-@ Up , Weird War , and Chain and The Gang . Between his numerous projects , Svenonius has released more than 19 full @-@ length albums and more than 20 singles , EPs , and splits . Svenonius is also a published author and an online talk show host .

His first band , Nation of Ulysses , formed in 1988 , was influential in the Washington D.C. punk scene , dissolving in 1992 after failing to record their third studio album . After a short @-@ lived side @-@ project called Cupid Car Club , Svenonius formed The Make @-@ Up in 1995 , who combined garage rock , soul , and liberation theology to make a new genre they dubbed " Gospel Yeh @-@ Yeh " . The Make @-@ Up dissolved early in 2001 , and a year later , Svenonius formed the band Weird War , who were also known briefly as the Scene Creamers . Svenonius ' solo work includes the 2001 album Play Power under the fictional pseudonym of David Candy , the book The Psychic Soviet , and as host of Soft Focus on VBS.tv. Svenonius ' projects and writings have all shared an anti @-@ authoritarian , Marxist political rhetoric .

= Musical projects =

= = Nation of Ulysses = =

Svenonius ' first musical group was Nation of Ulysses . The band formed in spring 1988 , initially composed of four members , Svenonius on vocals and trumpet , Steve Kroner on guitar , Steve Gamboa on bass guitar , and James Canty on drums , and known simply as " Ulysses " . In late 1989 , Tim Green joined the band as a second guitarist and the band was renamed to " Nation of Ulysses " . The Nation of Ulysses described themselves not as a rock and roll group in the traditional sense , but " as a political party " and as " a shout of secession " . Explaining their intent , Svenonius said " it 's basically a new nation underground for the dispossessed youth colony . It 's all about smashing the old edifice , the monolith of rock and roll " .

In 1991 , before the band had released any official recordings , Svenonius was featured as teen @-@ oriented Sassy Magazine 's first " Saggiest Boy in America " . He was interviewed in the magazine 's October issue , detailing the band 's sound and political motivations . Svenonius stated that the Nation of Ulysses ' intent was " to create a space of liberation where anything ? s possible " . He criticized " traditional rock @-@ and @-@ roll " groups as a " corrupt medium " . The contest was reportedly a " nationwide search for the most perfect boyfriend material a girl could ask for " , and Svenonius was among 150 entries .

Nation of Ulysses was known for their extremely physical performances , during which Svenonius recalls many injuries , including breaking his arm , his leg , and his skull on numerous occasions . Audience members were also hurt during some performances .

The group disbanded in the fall of 1992 having failed to complete their third album ( the finished tracks were later released as The Embassy Tapes in 2000 ) . In a later interview , Svenonius explained the reason for the split : " Nation of Ulysses broke up because the epoch changed with the advent of digital music and the Nirvana explosion . We were faced with what 's now known as indie rock , a sort of vacuous form . We had to determine our next move and this [ the forming of The Make @-@ Up ] is it " .

= = The Make @-@ Up = = =

The Make @-@ Up formed in 1995 , consisting of Svenonius , Canty , and Gamboa from Nation of Ulysses , and with the addition of Michelle Mae on bass guitar . The Make @-@ Up were joined in late 1999 by a fifth member , Alex Minoff , who played guitar with the group until their dissolution in 2001 . In the band 's five years of activity , they released four studio albums , two live albums , a

posthumous compilation of singles and B @-@ sides , and a number of 12 @-@ inch singles and splits . The Make @-@ Up combined garage rock , soul , and self @-@ styled " liberation theology " to make a new genre they called " Gospel Yeh @-@ Yeh " . The Make @-@ Up were highly influenced by bubblegum music , particularly the French variety called Yé @-@ yé music .

As the Make @-@ Up 's frontman and mouthpiece , Ian Svenonius often contextualized the band 's music in terms of larger socio @-@ political themes , typically describing the band and its gospel attitude in Marxist and socialist terms , in opposition of what he saw as the capitalist , bourgeois , machismo paradigm of rock and roll . The band 's aversion to American culture was expressed through their self @-@ styled musical genre " Gospel Yeh @-@ Yeh , " a belief system through which they advocated to their audience to " get theirs " and to " off the pigs in all their forms " . The Make @-@ Up intended to create ad @-@ lib performances to re @-@ energize what they saw as the stale , bland and formal ritual of rock and roll . Appropriating gospel music 's use of the congregate as a " fifth member , " the Make @-@ Up incorporated audience participation through call and response vocals , lyrical " discussion " techniques , and destruction of the fourth wall by physical transgression .

The Make @-@ Up dissolved in 2000 , reportedly " due to the large number of counter @-@ gang copy groups which had appropriated their look and sound and applied it to a vacuous and counter @-@ revolutionary forms " . Between projects , Svenonius released a solo album under the pseudonym David Candy .

= = = Weird War = = =

After The Make @-@ Up disbanded , Svenonius formed the group Weird War in 2001 , joined by Make @-@ Up members Michelle Mae and Alex Minoff . While the current lineup appears on the group 's first release I 'll Never Forget What 's His Name , the group 's first full @-@ length , eponymous release featured Neil Hagerty and Jessica Espeleta on guitars , and Steve McCarty on drums .

These collaborators soon left to pursue other projects , and the band briefly changed its name to The Scene Creamers , with Svenonius on vocals , Michelle Mae on bass , Alex Minoff on guitar , and Blake Brunner on drums . In this incarnation , the band released I Suck on that Emotion , through Drag City . After being threatened with a legal suit for the name Scene Creamers by a French graffiti artist collective of the same name , the band reverted to the name Weird War . Since then , as its membership has become static , with the addition of Argentine Sebastian Thomson on drums , its intent has become more cosmic . Weird War claims that they are " the sole answer to the hype @-@ based careerism , empty formalism and vacuity which has infected what was once a genuinely creative underground rock ' n ' roll scene " .

= = = Chain and The Gang = = =

Svenonius ' latest musical project , Chain and The Gang , released the albums Down With Liberty ... Up With Chains ! , " Music 's Not For Everyone " , " In Cool Blood " on K Records , and " Minimum Rock ' n ' Roll " on Radical Elite Records . Some of the musicians featured on these records are Calvin Johnson , Brett Lyman ( Bad Thoughts / M 'Ladys 's Records ) , Fiona Campbell ( Vivian Girls / Coasting ) , Sarah Pedal of Seahorse Liberation Army , Katie Greer , Faustine Hudson ( The Curious Mystery ) , Brian Weber ( Dub Narcotic Sound System ) , Veronica Ortuño ( Finally Punk / Carrots ) , Nicolaas Zwart ( Desolation Wilderness ) , Karl Blau , Chris Sutton ( Hornet Leg , The Gossip ) , Sixx ( The Vibrarians ) , Arrington de Dionyso , Aaron Hartman , and Benjamin Hartman ( Old Time Relijun ) .

= = The Psychic Soviet = =

In July 2006 , Svenonius released a book of 19 essays entitled The Psychic Soviet ( ISBN 0 @-@ 9656183 @-@ 9 @-@ 0 ) , published by Drag City Press . Pocket @-@ sized and bound in bright

@-@ pink plastic with beveled edges , its form is similar to " The Little Red Book , " a Bible , or a foreign @-@ language dictionary . The book serves as an anthology of past articles and essays by Svenonius previously published in periodicals , edited for readability and flow , with a number of new essays included .

The " Instructions " that preface the book state that it " should clear up much of the confusion regarding events of the last millennium - artistic , geo @-@ political , philosophical , et al . " and encourages the reader to " refer to the book in case of ethical quandaries , arguments , and social feuds " . The writing addresses topics such as the ascent of the DJ as a " star , " the " cosmic depression " that followed the defeat of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the Cold War , and the status of rock and roll as a religion . To date , The Psychic Soviet is the most complete collection of written material by Svenonius .

= = Other projects = =

Throughout his career , Svenonius has disc jockeyed at clubs such as Cold Rice in Washington , D.C. In 1993 Svenonius and Nation of Ulysses / Make @-@ Up members James Canty and Steve Gamboa were involved in the short @-@ lived project Cupid Car Club , which released only one EP on Kill Rock Stars Records entitled Join our Club . In 2001 Svenonius collaborated with the English conceptualist / producer Mike Alway of If .. Records to create the record Play Power under the pseudonym David Candy . The album was released through Jet Set Records , Siesta Records , and If .. Records . Play Power was part of a series of " Magazine @-@ Style Records " which included other imaginary acts such as Death by Chocolate , Maria Napoleon , and Lollipop Train .

Svenonius wrote an afterword for Glen E. Friedman 's 2005 photography book Recognize ( ISBN 0 @-@ 9641916 @-@ 6 @-@ 0 ) , as well as the introduction to Friedman 's 2007 book Keep Your Eyes Open ( ISBN 0 @-@ 9641916 @-@ 8 @-@ 7 ) . As host of the VBS.TV online show Soft Focus , Svenonius interviews guests such as Ian MacKaye , Genesis P @-@ Orridge , Adam Horovitz , Cat Power and Will Oldham in front of a live audience at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City . Soft Focus has recently moved to London , England , where Svenonius interviews British artists such as Mark E. Smith of The Fall and Billy Childish . In 1994 , Svenonius had a supporting role in the independent film Half @-@ Cocked . In 2001 , Svenonius appeared in the documentary Plaster Caster about the plaster casts of Cynthia Plaster Caster .

= = = Saggiest Boy in America = = =

In 1990 Sassy magazine conducted a search for the Saggiest Boy in America . Over 150 entries were received with the eventual winner being Ian Svenonius . In the story highlighting his selection Sassy founding editor Jane Pratt states " He 's going to be a big deal . I 'm sure he will be and we 're going to be so proud that we were the first ones to discover him . "

= = Discography = =

= = = Nation of Ulysses = = =

13 @-@ Point Program to Destroy America ( Dischord ) ( 1991 )  
Plays Pretty for Baby ( Dischord ) ( 1992 )  
The Embassy Tapes ( Dischord ) ( 2000 )

= = = The Make @-@ Up = = =

Destination : Love - Live ! At Cold Rice ( Dischord ) ( 1996 )  
After Dark ( Dischord ) ( 1997 )  
Sound Verite ( K Records ) ( 1997 )

In Mass Mind ( Dischord ) ( 1998 )  
Save Yourself ( K Records ) ( 1999 )  
I Want Some ( singles compilation ) ( K Records ) ( 1999 )  
Untouchable Sound ( Drag City / Sea Note ) ( 2006 )

== = Weird War == =

Weird War ( Drag City ) ( 2002 )  
I Suck on that Emotion ( as Scene Creamers ) ( Drag City ) ( 2003 )  
If You Can 't Beat ' Em , Bite ' Em ( Drag City ) ( 2004 )  
Illuminated by the Light ( Drag City ) ( 2005 )

== = Chain and The Gang == =

Down With Liberty ... Up With Chains ! ( K Records ) ( 2009 )  
Music 's Not For Everyone ( K Records ) ( 2011 )  
In Cool Blood ( K Records ) ( 2012 )  
Minimum Rock n Roll ( Dischord Records ) ( 2014 )

== = David Candy == =

Play Power ( Jet Set / Siesta / If Records ) ( 2001 )

== = Cupid Car Club == =

Join our Club ( Kill Rock Stars ) ( 1993 )

== = XYZ == =

S / T ( Mono @-@ tone Records ) ( 2014 )

== = Filmography == =

Half @-@ Cocked ( film ) ( independent release ) ( 1994 )  
Plaster Caster ( Xenon Pictures ) ( 2001 )  
Soft Focus ( VBS.tv ) ( host , 2008 ? present )  
The Seduction of Paolo Hewitt ( Ooga Booga ) ( 2008 )  
The Launching of the Dream Weapon ( Ooga Booga ) ( 2008 )  
What is a Group ? ( Strawberry City ) ( 2013 )

== = Writings == =

Afterward of Glen E. Friedman 's Recognize ( ISBN 0 @-@ 9641916 @-@ 6 @-@ 0 ) ( Burning  
Flags Press ) ( 2005 )  
The Psychic Soviet ( ISBN 0 @-@ 9656183 @-@ 9 @-@ 0 ) ( Drag City Press ) ( 2006 )  
Introduction of Glen E. Friedman 's Keep Your Eyes Open - The Fugazi Photographs of Glen E.  
Friedman ( ISBN 0 @-@ 9641916 @-@ 8 @-@ 7 ) ( Burning Flags Press ) ( 2007 )  
" Supernatural Strategies for Making a Rock ' n ' Roll Group " ( ISBN 978 @-@ 1 @-@ 61775 @-@  
130 @-@ 1 ) ( Akashic Books ) ( 2013 )  
" Censorship Now ! " ( ISBN 1617754099 ) ( Akashic Books ) ( 2015 )