

= The Make @-@ Up =

The Make @-@ Up was an American post @-@ punk band from Washington , D.C. formed in 1995 , consisting of ex @-@ Nation of Ulysses frontman Ian Svenonius on vocals , James Canty on guitar and organ , Steve Gamboa on drums , and Michelle Mae on bass guitar . The Make @-@ Up were joined in late 1999 by a fifth member , Alex Minoff (of the groups Golden and Extra Golden) , who played guitar with the group until the band 's dissolution in early 2000 .

The Make @-@ Up combined garage rock , soul , and a self @-@ styled liberation theology to make a new genre they called " Gospel Yeh @-@ Yeh " . This style led to an emphasis on live performances and interaction between the band and their audience , incorporating the audience into the performances as a " fifth member " , creating what one reviewer described as " " highly energetic and participatory live shows " . Parallel to the band 's gospel musical stylings , the Make @-@ Up produced music under a communism @-@ influenced political philosophy that they saw as counter to the capitalist form of modern rock and roll and pop music .

The Make @-@ Up released four studio albums , two live albums , a compilation release collecting several singles and B @-@ sides , and a number of vinyl singles , all released on independent record labels such as Dischord Records , K Records , and Southern Records . Svenonius , Mae , and Minoff are now part of the group Weird War . Svenonius has since released a solo album under the pseudonym David Candy . Canty went on to play with Ted Leo and the Pharmacists and French Toast . The Make @-@ Up , after much prodding by Les Savy Fav , reformed in 2012 to perform at I 'll Be Your Mirror .

= = History = =

Before the formation of the Make @-@ Up , Svenonius , Canty , and Gamboa were members of The Nation of Ulysses and the short @-@ lived Cupid Car Club . Before joining the Make @-@ Up , Mae played with the Northwest group The Frumpies . In a post @-@ Nation of Ulysses interview , Svenonius explained the formation of the Make @-@ Up from the ashes of his former band : " 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 Make @-@ Up] is it " . The Make @-@ Up released records through many independent record labels , most notably Dischord Records , K Records , Southern Records , and their own Black Gemini Records . On their numerous releases , the Make @-@ Up recorded with a number of producers , including Brendan Canty , Calvin Johnson , Guy Picciotto , Royal Trux (" Adam and Eve ") , John Loder , and Ian MacKaye . They toured extensively with many groups such as Dub Narcotic Sound System , Royal Trux , Sonic Youth , Fugazi , Ted Leo , Slant 6 , Lungleg , Mr. Quintron , Les Savy Fav , Blonde Redhead , among others .

In 2000 , after releasing their fifth studio album , the Make @-@ Up dissolved , reportedly " due to the large number of counter @-@ gang copy groups which had appropriated their look and sound and applied it to vacuous and counter @-@ revolutionary forms " . Svenonius also added in retrospect , " [The Make @-@ Up] went on for five years . We had a five year plan like Stalin . It was becoming redundant and people were copying us . That 's fine . We don 't have to do it anymore because they can " .

= = Recordings = =

During the Make @-@ Up 's five years of activity , they released four studio albums , a live album , a compilation of singles and B @-@ sides , and a number of singles and splits . A posthumous live album was also released in 2006 . The band was also the subject of the short film Blue is Beautiful by James Schneider , later repackaged as part of In Film / On Video in 2006 .

While the Make @-@ Up released both " live " and " studio " records , their recordings were all created with an eye to spontaneity . Most studio songs were cut as they occurred to the group at

that moment . Therefore , the Make @-@ Up 's studio records were in a sense , quite " live " .

The Make @-@ Up 's first release in 1995 was " Blue is Beautiful " , a 7 @-@ inch single released on the band 's own Black Gemini Records ? a label which only released a handful of the Make @-@ Up 's releases , many of which used a characteristically simple single @-@ color album sleeve . Their second and third releases were also 7 @-@ inch singles : a split with the Meta @-@ Matics , again on Black Gemini , and another split with Slant 6 on Time Bomb Records .

The band 's first full @-@ length studio album , Destination : Love - Live ! At Cold Rice , was released in 1996 . The album was touted as a live release , though it was actually recorded in a studio with " live " sounds added into the mix later . In 1997 , the band released two more albums less than a month apart : After Dark , a live @-@ recording from London , and Sound Verite , a studio album . The two albums shared a number of tracks , recorded either live or in @-@ studio . The same year the Make @-@ Up released " Free Arthur Lee , " a 7 @-@ inch single promoting the release from jail of Love singer Arthur Lee , who was incarcerated in 1996 . Also in 1997 , the Make @-@ Up were the subject of James Schneider 's fictionalized tour @-@ documentary Blue is Beautiful .

The following year , The Make @-@ Up released their fourth studio album , In Mass Mind , as well as a split 7 @-@ inch with Scottish band Lungleg . In 1999 , the Make @-@ Up released I Want Some , a compilation album of previous singles and B @-@ sides . A month later , the band released what would be their fifth and final studio album Save Yourself .

A posthumous live album , Untouchable Sound , was released in 2006 by Drag City and Sea Note . The album included the addition of Alex Minoff on guitar . The same year , Dischord Records released In Film / On Video , a DVD collection of live performances , music videos , and Blue is Beautiful .

= = Politics = =

As the Make @-@ Up 's frontman and mouthpiece , Ian Svenonius often contextualized the band 's music in terms of larger socio @-@ political themes . Svenonius typically described 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 . This political position was typically presented during live performances and interviews with Svenonius , rather than in the music itself or its lyrics . Svenonius compared the Make @-@ Up 's ideology to the Situationist International group of the 1950s and 1960s , since both presented a critique of the modern , capitalist lifestyle , specifically of capitalism 's effect on popular and consumable culture , such as rock and roll and pop music . When asked if , in line with the title of The Nation of Ulysses ' 1991 album 13 @-@ Point Program to Destroy America , he still hoped to " destroy America " , Svenonius responded simply : " Of course " . This aversion to American culture was crystallized through their self @-@ style 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 's aversion to capitalist American culture was echoed in the 1998 short film Blue is Beautiful , in which the band starred . The film follows the band 's fictionalized escape from America as " cultural refugees " , where they are hunted by mysterious government agencies and find refuge in coffeehouses and underground night clubs . Much like the assumed personae and personalities of all of Svenonius ' bands and projects , a make @-@ believe mythos and back @-@ story surrounds the Make @-@ Up , primarily based on the band 's gospel approach and its pseudo @-@ political , socialist aesthetics . The political identity of the Make @-@ Up was ideologically and semantically similar to Svenonius ' other bands and projects , all of which culminate in his collection of essays , The Psychic Soviet , published through Drag City Press in 2006 .

= = Musical ideology and style = =

The Make @-@ Up intended to create ad @-@ lib performances in order 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 .

Discussing the appropriation of the form of gospel music (as opposed to its content) , Svenonius said :

One concern of the group was to keep their music " stripped down " and minimal . This was indicative of the Make @-@ Up 's aversion to letting communication be upstaged by technology . Svenonius explained that " the problem is that the high creatures are the server mechanisms of the technology and the system they have created , meaning that we 're dictated to as much by cars . We 've turned the world into a parking lot . Similarly we use musical technology that we create , and it finds a use for itself " .

Due to the Make @-@ Up 's consideration of the audience and the special techniques they applied to performing , their live shows exhibited a convergence of soul , surf , and punk ? an example of which is their single " I Want Some " from their 1999 album of the same name . Citing the Make @-@ Up 's soul influences , one reviewer stated " If you didn 't know it , you 'd swear that the four members of The Make Up had stolen the soul from James Brown himself " . The Make @-@ Up were also highly influenced by bubblegum music , particularly the French variety called Yé @-@ yé . The factory style of production Yé @-@ yé music had interested the group , who were interested in expanding the labor force involved in the production of pop music , a movement which they saw as in opposition to the rock and roll trend (begun by The Beatles) toward self @-@ sufficiency and " downsizing " labor . Through the synthesis of these two disparate and contradictory forms ? gospel and Yé @-@ yé ? the Make @-@ Up devised a hybrid style they called " Gospel Yeh @-@ Yeh " . Live interpretations of this style can be found on the Make @-@ Up 's two full @-@ length live releases , After Dark and Untouchable Sound , including " They Live by Night , " a song recorded both in studio and live , on Destination : Love - Live ! and Untouchable Sound respectively .

= = Live performances = =

The Make @-@ Up 's gospel attitude was related to utilization of the audience as a group member , which Svenonius likened to the rise of the 90s dance music scene : " We 're not interested in countering it . It makes sense to me that techno , rave and dance music should go over in the face of rock and roll because it 's democratic for everybody to express themselves . Whereas a lot of rock and roll isn 't even entertaining at all , let alone allowing people the voice for expression . That 's what the Make @-@ Up has come to remedy . We want to be at once entertaining and inclusive in terms of using the gospel form to sort of breathe life into the old Frankenstein monster " . Svenonius would often interact with the audience in a number of ways , including call and response lyrics , direct address , and leaving the stage and going out into the crowd .

Despite the band 's " gospel " and " ad @-@ libbed " approach to recording , the Make @-@ Up 's live performances were often quite structured , as opposed to the typical " jam session " . Svenonius explained that " there 's a skeleton that we create and the form of our shows is unchanging - there 's an intro , an outro , a middle break . It 's very vaudevillian in form " . The Make @-@ Up always wore matching uniforms on stage . Like most of the Make @-@ Up 's identity , the uniforms were an ideological statement , meant to " [destroy] individualism . Instead of there being this person [or] this member , and them having their separate personalities , or having them as separate entities . We 're trying to create a unification . A one @-@ ness . That 's basically what it is : they 're uniforms " .

= = Discography = =

= = = Studio albums = = =

Destination : Love - Live ! at Cold Rice (Dischord) (1996)
Sound Verite (K Records) (1997)
In Mass Mind (Dischord) (1998)
Save Yourself (K Records) (1999)

= = = Compilations = = =

I Want Some (singles compilation) (K Records - 1999 , M 'lady 's Records - re @-@ issued 2012)

= = = Live albums = = =

After Dark (Dischord) (1997)
Untouchable Sound (Drag City / Sea Note) (2006)

= = = DVD / video = = =

Blue is Beautiful (included on In Film / On Video) (Dischord) (1998)
In Film / On Video (Dischord) (2006)