

SOUNDCHECK

VOL. 3

FALL 2025



\$3

SCENE STUFF

WRITING

NONSENSE

COMPILATION CD!

Intro

In classic Soundcheck fashion, I meant to have this issue published at the end of last semester... so it goes. Anyways, if you're new to this most esteemed publication, it's a collection of things by and for the people of Purdue/West Lafayette's music scene, its got upcoming shows, stuff about the bands, and a whole bunch of other stuff people added! I don't have nearly enough to say on my own to fill all these pages so if you have thoughts about the scene, some art, or another creative endeavor you want to put in the next one, email soundcheckwl@gmail.com.

Moving on: it's been a pretty bountiful past couple months for the ears of West Lafayette's music fans; there's been a handful of EPs and singles (Joybuzzer's new EP might be some of the best music to ever come from this scene in my opinion (interview with them later in this issue!)) and certain sources are saying that a couple bands have full length albums in the works... I can neither confirm nor deny these claims. There are also more houses hosting shows than there have been in a long long time which is really refreshing seeing as it means the cops can't ruin our fun with one unfortunate noise violation.

Also! In case you don't know, Soundcheck has a website which can be found at soundcheckzine.com. Its got the zines, a band/venue/photography directory, as well as a couple general posts. I'm not entirely sure what direction to take it but bookmark the page and stay tuned if you'd like!

That's all for now, hope you like this issue more than the last one but less than the next one.

- Rio (Editor)

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Art by Lucas Paz

Thoughts and Opinions

Don't Read the Room

By Bennyboy

Don't Read the Room. In fact, when in doubt, ignore it. Your early hominid ancestors passed down to you a brain that automatically reads the room and instinctively clamps down on anything that would come out of your mouth to disturb its peace. Perfectly good neural technology, in a time when room-illiteracy got your sleeping skull bashed in with a rock, or perhaps (if your offendee was feeling crafty) a wooden club. Nowadays all your autofilter does is keep you small, keep you quiet, keep you, in its estimation, SAFE. But SAFE from what? Not from hostile cavefolk, nor, in the case of anyone privileged enough to be spending their leisure time reading a self-published literary zine, the ever-watchful eyes and ears of an authoritarian state, in which any failure to espouse the party line spells at best a loss of privileges and at worst a transgression of rights. All your filter keeps you SAFE from is the incarnation of a phantasm of rejection, an imaginal vignette of status-loss and social isolation that preemptively haunts

any attempt at honesty. The only thing that's SAFE is your ego - the only thing protected from nocturnal destruction is common falsehood. Human reason is capable of arriving at something like Truth, but has spent so many eons being punished for doing so that the gray meat in which it resides has defaulted to looking around, deciding what words will make other people pleased with it, and automatically spitting those out as quickly and convincingly as possible. If you're always falling over yourself to make people happy, you'll never be able to stand telling them the truth. So don't read the room - blurt out whatever comes to mind, before the terrified little bibliomaniac homunculus in your forebrain gets the chance to pump the brakes. Feel your tongue loosen as earnest words dance across it like fresh, undammed water. And if what comes out really is wrong, then GOOD - now your thoughts, dark as they may be, can be cleansed in the light of everyone else's eyes. If it stings, then GOOD - that's the tearing pain of your internal falsehoods, no longer SAFE inside your skull, being cut away in

bloody chunks from the rest of your mind-meat. Don't just read the room. Allow it to consume you.

An Unwarranted and Unrequested PSA to Purdue's Bands

By Frontseat Hater

If you're starting a band, please, for the love of god, don't cover Kilby Girl by the Backseat Lovers. Every show there's always one band that does it and I can't take it anymore, I can't stand this goddamn song. It's not just beating a dead horse, the horse is nothing more than a pulp begging to have the bands power cut. I think maybe I'm the problem here...



squish: a meditation on fish.

By Squilliam

Not a big fan of fish... squishy. "Something fishy is going on here." Says the detective when he notices something bad. This is evidence of society's moral failings. They smell bad.

There is no world in which someone smells like fish and you are pleased. They are too dumb to eat; there is no art of war in killing a fish. Unless a fish learns how to wield a firearm, much like humble bovines, it will remain a stinky and bad thing. Cows, of cow-boy fame, can fight back with snappy quips and unique jargon. Fish, ever ignorant of society's norms and values do no such thing. They just run into nets and die. That blows.

Sincerely,
Your friend.

Mosey on to Maryland

by The Silver Tinted Shrew

I rode upon a horse, sideways, in the dead of night. Sod-heavy and in the throws of repeating tremors, my broken soles dangle as their shaking seems to mock the slowing steps of the sickly steed. His right side marred from trying to stand on firm ground, certain of an ideology and in a surly disposition. Those days were long since passed and with all work he had grown lazy in his now haphazard tread, leaning to whatever side the wind now felt smoother, or at least a little less dry. I, for one, couldn't seek to stop him. I, for once, was just along for the ride. And as I sat on the golden mare gazing at the daily, cyclical death of the hemisphere I knew, I

only once considered all that was behind me. What the other eye of my ride could see. But the beast never mentioned it, so I never asked. After all, the barren sands offered great mesas in bold aesthetic. At a time I considered them a distraction, but I knew it was only to hide their embarrassment for they had no life nor nothing worthwhile to show. The greatest of friends when the earth was silent, the fiercest of enemies when the arroyo offered a cactus fruit. My horse and I sunk our teeth into each other, then into the anomoly, not questioning how it had gotten there.

Through the broken spikes in our gums, we'd laugh through it after, blood tastes better with old pals. I don't know why we never stop.

Perhaps the mystery ahead is enough to satisfy thirst and pains of hunger. But when I wake, the morning birds have already ceased their call, and millions other continue the search for an answer never to be so simple in conclusion: who is the specimen known as Benjamin D. Schultz.

what the fuck guys - a message to my roommates

by frances

seriously, what the fuck guys? I will admit, you are greedy. I think back to the times. the times you would smile. Instead of yell about mana, or destruction... perhaps. I miss the times you would laugh...the light in your eyes.

oh the light in your eyes it was mesmerizing. The memories are beginning to fade. When we would gather, BREAK BREAD, TOGETHER. I woke up one day ready to smile. I walk to the kitchen, once a communal space. A space to hug, to cry, to laugh, to sing dance. I see the first shuffle of the cards and I am devastated. I try to cover up the discourage. Those who were once my friends are now fighting against one another. It breaks my heart oh my heart! At the end of the day, Who cares about winning? Who cares about Magic The Gathering.

Want to submit a thought or opinion for the next one? Don't find these amusing? Let us know at soundcheckwl@gmail.com!



There Will Always Be Another Show

By Connor

Hello!
Heeeeyyy
How'd it go? I'm sorry I
missed your set

Oh you're fine, it was great. Oh
don't worry, you're good.

Oh! Thanks

Here, give me your hand.
Haha, thank you

Yo! What's up?
Hiya!

Hey! Go get 'em!
Haha, Thanks

Hi!
Oh my gosh hi! I'm so sorry
I don't remember your name

Don't worry it's-
Katie!

Close! It's katydid
Oh, of course! I was close

What's your name again?
Haha it's Connor. I'm glad
to see you out here again

Yep!

Okay, I'm gonna go over there

...Where do I go now? I'm lost,
lost again. There's nothing here

to help me now. I fucked up, I
fucked up again...

Hey! That set was tight as fuck
Oh, that was not me, I just
got here

Oh. What's your name?

I'm Connor

Cameron

Nice to meet you! Mind if
I slip past you?

Excuse me
Sorry!

Where did you get those?
Oh hi! They're right up the
stairs just by the door

Sick. Hey when do you guys play
next?

Not this coming weekend, but
the one after

Okay dope! I'll try to be there
Hell yeah

Pardon me, Coming through, what
the fuck your shirt is sick!

Thank you!

How's it hanging broski? Put 'er
there

Haha what's up James?

Don't ever let anyone tell you
chivalry is dead. I'd hold a door
for you any day, Connor. I love
you man. I am inebriated
Thanks James, I love you too

That's a nice fire

Yep

Hey, what's your name? I've
seen you around a lot

Brian

Pleasure meetin' you Brian
I'M Con-

Connor! Come over here!

Hey Recs, what's up?

Do you remember who the
roommates were my freshman
year? The current two and who
else?

Oh yeah it was Sam

Ooohh that makes so much more
sense

I know, right?

That's right because we had
physics together

Yeah!

Okay, now I can totally envision
him saying that to...

Song lyric credits to...

Cat's Pajamas

Dan Scans

Sequel!

right here is fine
for now

Hi Connor!
Hi Connor!

Haha, that set was incredible!
Thanks, thank you very much!

Hey, when's your next show?

Uh, I don't even know, I'm so
hands off now

I'm sorry I missed the last one
Haha, don't sweat it. There's
always another show

Yeah
Go get some well earned
fresh air
Bye Connor!

...Or go back to the party where
you don't know anybody, and act
like you're having the time of
your life...

Connor!
Connor, come here!
Hi! Good to see ya, mind if
I duck under-
Connor! Slow down. Stand still.
Stay here with me
Yes, okay. Thanks
You are welcome

...And so I took a look around me,
and I saw the best people of my
life. Oh this is the life...

AN INTERVIEW WITH

JOYBUZZER

OK, we're here with Joybuzzer! Can we do some introductions?

Cole: My name is Cole Bushell. I play pedal steel and banjo for Joy Buzzer.

Luke: My name is Luke Darland. I play guitar and I sing for Joy Buzzer and I play Organ on the recordings

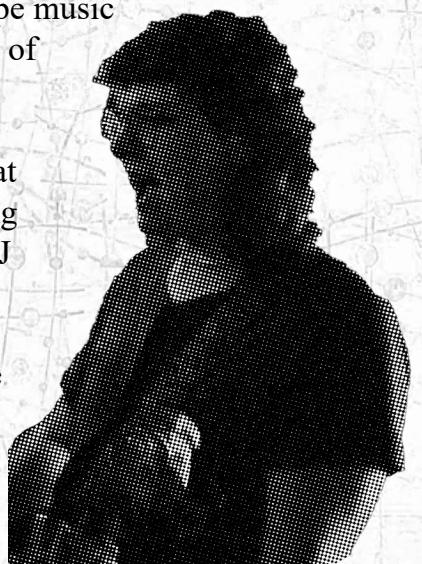
Jayden: My name is Jayden Kennedy and I'm the trumpet player in Joy Buzzer.

Connor: My name is Connor Klein and I play bass in Joy Buzzer.
(Their drummer, Parker, was gone when I did the interview)

How would you guys describe your sound and how it's evolved?

Luke: I think we've kind of refined it a little bit to be a nice cross between like country and folk type music plus Midwest emo and a little bit of shoegazey type stuff.

Cole: I see it as like you have that whole Asheville Sound happening right now with like bands like MJ Lenderman and like Wednesday where it's like indie mixed with country. But I think we also have a lot of noise rock influence which shines through and makes us a little different from that scene.

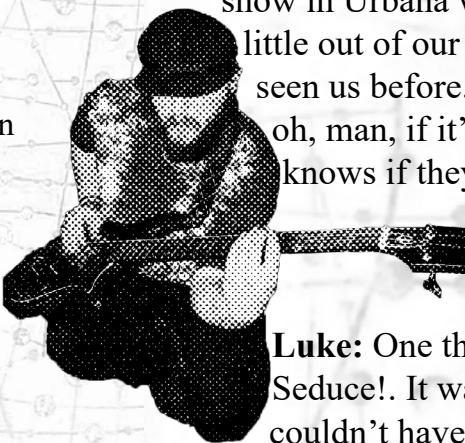


Where do you guys songs come from and what's like the songwriting process kind of like for you guys?

Luke: It's usually I write a song and I give it to them; We do a lot of work together to get the instrumentals right, but the lyrics I mostly do beforehand.

What's everyone's favorite show that you've played?

Cole: To be honest, I don't remember them all, but I think our last show in Urbana was really, really cool because we were a little out of our element and it was a crowd that had never seen us before. And that's always scary because it's like, oh, man, if it's not all my friends there, it's like, who knows if they're actually going to like it. But it was a bunch of strangers and they seem to really dig what we had going on.



Luke: One that sticks out to me is our show with Seduce!. It was their last show ever at The Nest. We couldn't have the full band there unfortunately, but we still had a great time and energy was just... it sticks to me to this day also.

Jayden: I think my personal favorite was the one in the PMU South Tower, the reschedule from the Nest that we were going to perform. I just think there was a really nice sense of community there and just everyone was just really nice, really chill. Everyone's having a good time and it was just really fun being on stage in that environment.

Connor: I think my favorite was the country night at The Nest.



Who do you guys listen to and like who's like influences/what you guys listen to on a daily basis.

Cole: MJ Letterman is currently my goat. I listen to him the most, and then it's a lot of classic country and a lot of like some like newer alt country guys like Sturgill Simpson is a new guy that I listen to all the time. But all the old stuff too, Hank Williams is Great.

Luke: I listen to a good bit of Wednesday, some Ezra Bell and then Ani DiFranco has been a pretty big influence on me lately in terms of some of my newer writing.

Jayden: A little bit different, but lately I've been kind of listening to a lot of like T-Square, Casiopea style music. My personal favorite trumpet player is Roy Hargrove, and that's where a lot of my initial original inspiration comes from.

What does Joy Buzzer do outside of music? what do you guys get up to?

Cole: I'm a student here currently, so I'll be finishing up classes in May and graduating and trying to find a job and stuff.

Luke: I've been doing a lot of graphic design stuff lately and just getting my reps in on that. I [also] spend a lot of time getting our merch together.

Connor: Speaking of getting reps in, I've been hitting the gym mainly.

Jayden: I'm a regular at the movie theater.

(Terra walked in and asked this next one)

You're one of the most eclectic bands on campus and most creative ones because of all the different instruments -- How?

Connor: We're all a bunch of weirdos.

Cole: I gotta attribute all my weird instruments to my dad because my dad's one of those dudes for as long as I've been alive, he's just been trying to learn like new shit. You know, the banjo I play was his crappy banjo when he decided to get a better one, and he played a little bit of slide guitar so I picked that up from him. It was just the idea that you should just always explore and always try and find new things to play.

Luke: Yeah, a big part of it for us, and a big part of our identity, is that we all come from different musical backgrounds. I was/am in a jazz band with Jayden for the last two years. Parker and I had a long term gig playing classic rock covers. These guys (Cole and Connor) come from the Cat's Pajamas and Lunar Diamonds, so plenty of stuff to go back and pull from.

Cole: Dare I say campus super group!

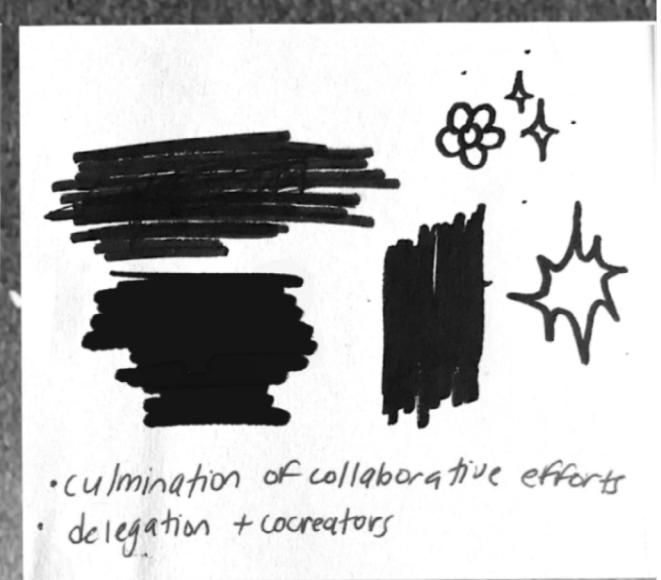
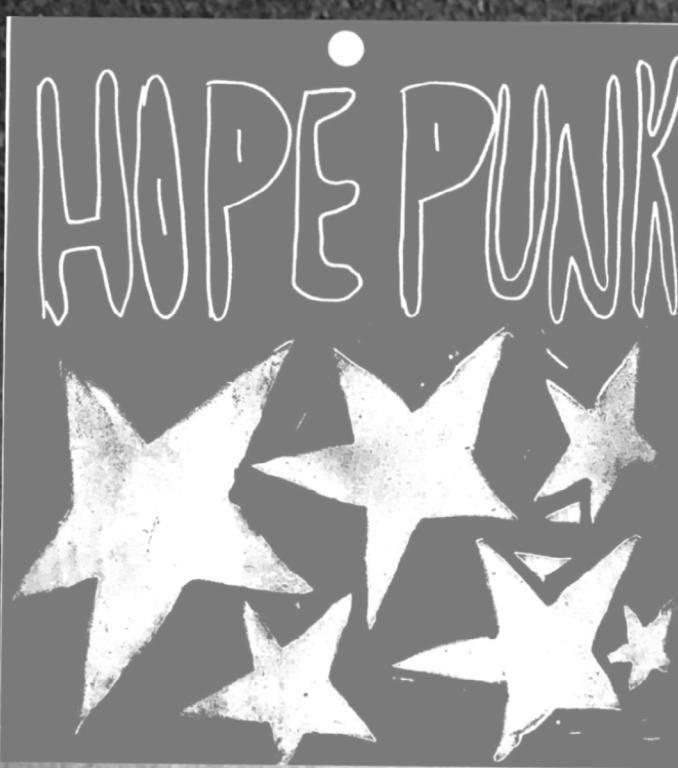
Is there anything else you want the people to know?

Luke: All our merch is DIY! All of our T-shirts I thrift myself and I print myself, I make a big day of it. All of our CDs are hand assembled. We got them risograph printed, we paid our people plenty to provide their art and to contribute to our work.

Go buy some of that Joy Buzzer merch next time you catch them at a show! Also they've got a really great EP out right now called I Know Where the Bones are Buried if you haven't gotten a chance to hear them.

--Favorite song: Tell The Good Lord--

I know where the bones are buried



FIXTURES

carton cigarette smell, before we've lit and ashed them
the sink doesn't turn off unless you wiggle it right
and i love you all so dearly

-terra

Cornerstones by Annie Babie

This place that I call home
Foundations laid
Many years
A long long time ago

Stones from the sand
A navy blue romance
Am I still hanging on
Needing you
To give me a chance

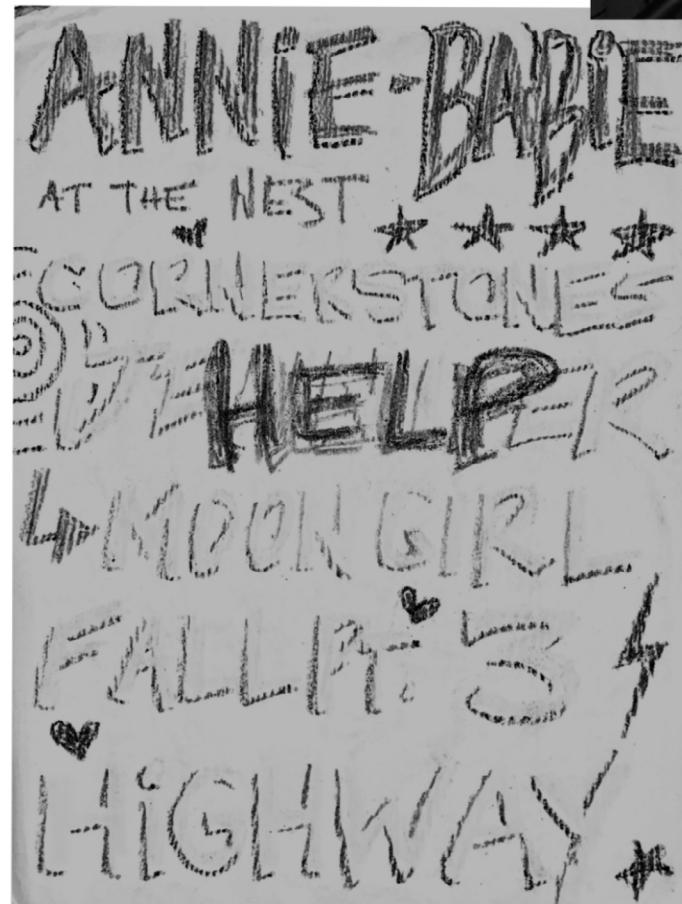
A look over my way
Nothing that you'd need to say
That you remember me
In all those little ways

A drop of honey
The sunset's final ray
Down from your eye
To my cup of earl grey

I think it's funny
It fuels my jealousy
Who gets to look you in the eye
Everyone but me

Does it lie in you
The hurt that people do
Do you mean to do it
Or are you just doing you

For I think you know me
I don't need to be anything
That you would ever see
An elbow
Your right knee
I don't need to be anything
Your heart could ever reach



Annie Babie hails from a mixture of Indy, B-town, and Muncie, having graced us, in West Lafayette, many times and hopefully more. Including Skye, Zach, Sarah, and Carson, they have one album out and more in the works.

Come Join Us 207

R.I.P. Nest

2023 - 2025

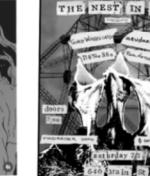
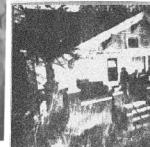
The Nest (2023-2025)

Theseus "The Nest" Nestington of West Lafayette, Indiana, died of terminal landlord intervention-itis on March 10th. The Nest was born in West Lafayette in 2023 to Johnny, Dam and Will, and loved to host live music and go on long walks on the beach. The Nest was preceded in death by ABC House, Lady Mars House, Hill Club, and many others, and is survived by The Dungeon and Yard Haus.

"I can't believe we haven't gotten shut down yet"

- All of us for the last two years

Nest not over



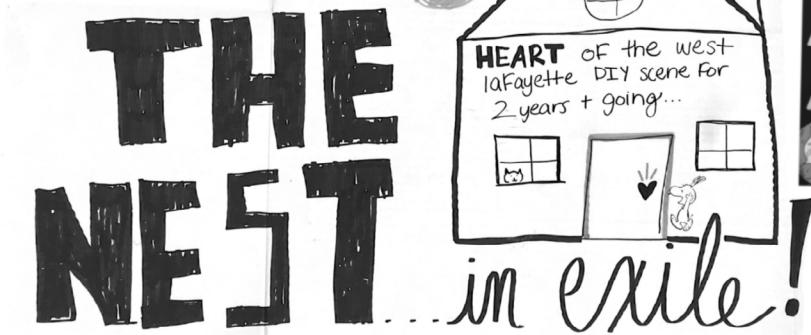
aks.pa 25w
RIP Nest I loved you bird life was for me I feel like my wings have been clipped this is trumps America having a couch out here I say we need to storm the west Lafayette police department my soldiers do not buckle or yield when faced with the cruelty of this world! My soldiers push forward! My soldiers scream out! My soldiers RAAAAGE! Type shit this cannot be cannot sit nor stand for this bamboozling basement blasphemy



THE NEST

CURRENT EVENTS

OUR MISSION: set up a brick + mortar ~~venue~~ after our 2+ year diy venue got Shut down - we've been working with Pride Laf all summer for Fundraising. Stay tuned... Plug in... Please donate or help how you can! We will be community based. We need you!!!



THE BEST OF THE WEST

(LAFAYETTE)

Bats Outta Hell - Ice Plants

Blackheart Gypsy - Here On Out

BMORE - LOVE BOMB

Caleb Brothman - Bruxism

Cat's Pajamas - Bigger Pants

Concrete Chicken - Long Trek in a Short Wood

Crisis on Campus - Withdrawal

Electroflyers - Don't Come Calling

Joybuzzer - Tell The Good Lord

Lawn Darts - Rusted Armor

Lunar Diamonds - Treads

Nellie Bly - Lenny, Your Shoes Are Too Small

Ozium - Child of War

Psychosis - SLVS

Seduce! - Wash

Settling the Score - Centuries of Heartbreak

Sixer - Dragster

Whirly Birds - Cherry Sours

If this circle is empty, someone stole your CD or you're playing it. Hopefully it's the second one.

Here's a treat for all you people who still own a CD player: eighteen new(ish) releases from West Lafayette bands coming out of your speakers in alphabetical order! This isn't all of the bands in town but we figured this would give a pretty good mix of what we've got going on here. Happy listening!



Uncle Dave's Corner



Running a show isn't that hard. All you need is the space to do it, and the right equipment. If you're thinking of doing it, even just every once in awhile, you can easily put together everything you need for not much at all.

You'll only want to focus on the basics — nothing that you can't move in and out or set up in a basement in about twenty minutes.

For most applications, the minimum viable PA will either be 1. a powered mixer head and two passive speakers, 2. a mixing board and powered speakers or 3. a mixing board, power amp, and passive speakers. Don't use a powered mixer with powered speakers, you're asking for trouble.

Your powered mixer or mixing board should have a minimum of four XLR inputs. Don't consider anything with less — you'll see cheap mixers with two XLR channels sometimes, but these are for solo performers and not viable for bands. Don't use them, they won't be enough. 32-channel boards pop up pretty cheaply, but unless you plan for this to be a permanent installation, that many channels is impractical, and you'll have to coffin-carry it up and down stairs every time. And anyway, if you have a 32-channel board, you'd better be using as many inputs as you can. I once played a show at a venue that bragged about the utility of their in-house 32-channel board and only used one channel for a vocal mic for the whole show.

Good, reliable mixers that are about twenty years old can be found cheaply. If you're just occasionally putting a show together, grab an old Peavey powered mixer head because they're cheap, indestructible, and everywhere. If you want a mixing board, look for a Mackie 1202 (four XLR input, eight $\frac{1}{4}$ " input), or better yet, a 1604 (16 XLR and $\frac{1}{4}$ "). Old ones are reliable and cheap - regularly under \$100.

You don't have to get a Mackie, but something in that neighborhood is what you should be looking for. If you need a power amp, just look for one that fits your budget and is designed for live sound applications.

Pay attention to the rated output of your power amp; it's possible to destroy your speakers if there's an output/rating mismatch and you drive them too hard. Look up the manuals for everything you buy (or ideally, before you buy it) and make sure everything's compatible. If it isn't quite from a hardware perspective (connectors, inputs, outputs, etc.), you might need a little bit of help from an adapter kit.



For speakers, the minimum size that will keep up with drum and amp volumes is 1x12". I wouldn't get anything larger than a 1x15" for the space you're probably working with. Just get a matched set of two, and speaker stands if you think you need them. Speaker cabinets can sit on the floor if they have to, just keep people from setting their drinks on them or abusing them. Some guy once peeled the tolex off one side of one of my speaker cabinets; I don't care if it was a terrible sounding 10" cab I got for free, I'm still mad. Things like this will happen to you too.

Keep in mind, you'll need speaker cable — speaker cabinets have $\frac{1}{4}$ " jacks that will accept an instrument cable, but instrument cables are unbalanced and will not hold up when transmitting high-power signals, such as from a power amp to the speaker. If you use instrument cables for this, you'll kill them and things will sound bad quickly. Powered speakers, on the other hand, can be used with instrument cables without a problem, and are very easy to set up and run a show with — with a disadvantage of being generally more expensive. Powered speakers and a board are probably a more sound investment for a basic rig, especially if you expect to frequently move it around. A cheap board and decent powered speakers are a good way to go.



You need wedge monitors. Just get whatever's cheap. Playing without monitors is miserable. One is better than none. Two is ideal. Bad, muddy sound on stage sounds like rocks are falling down a mountainside behind you, or like you're paddling a canoe in a hurricane. Prevent this.

Get decent microphones. Look for used Shure, Electrovoice, or Sennheiser mics, or just buy new Behringer — or cheapest yet, used Behringer. Two or three is fine. You don't need to be mic'ing drums, it's absurd. There is no reason to mic the loudest instrument in a 300 square foot basement. Keep a couple DI boxes on hand — again, Behringer is fine. Buy decent XLR cables too; the Amazon Basics branded ones are generally pretty good. You can play with fire if you want and buy big lots of cheap used cables, just expect them to be disposable. When a cable dies, cut it in half and throw it away. Mic stands are so cheap as to be basically free. Old school mic stands with round cast-iron bases are more stable than ones with tripod bases (at least for vocals) and you can move closer to them because they're vertical and not an articulated boom.

If you have the channels to spare on your board and enough microphones on hand, you should be mic'ing amps. You can run an amp at a lower volume this way and frontload all the work on the PA. Soundcheck is much harder if only one or two channels of a board are being used for vocals and everything else is raw amp volume. It's not the end of the world if that's what you have to do, though. Learn to work with what you have and what you know. Hit the ground running and figure out the rest as you go.

When you budget for equipment, know that it's unviable and impractical to buy everything new. Only a fool would do this. Give yourself a few months to target what you need and determine what's available to you. Your guiding principles should be "What is the best gear I can get for the least amount of money?" and "What works for me?" You should primarily look on Marketplace and Craigslist; eBay and Reverb are only good if you're searching for something specific. Guitar Center and Sweetwater have good used sections and they tend to sell things very cheaply, since used gear is only a secondary concern of their business model. If you need something immediately, spend an afternoon visiting pawn shops, music stores, surplus electronics stores, Goodwill, and the Salvation Army. I've found exceptional deals on campus at University Surplus. If you know older musicians, talk to them and see what they have that's collecting dust.

This is all within your abilities and can easily be within your means.

David's venue: *Sun House*



Upcoming Shows:

10/28 - People's Brewing (21+) | The Minks

10/31 The Spot Tavern | Kiefer Ian, Urban Essence, Winnie, DJ Karabella + Drag Performance

10/31 - Duncan Hall | Operators, Moon Goons, DJ Circle T

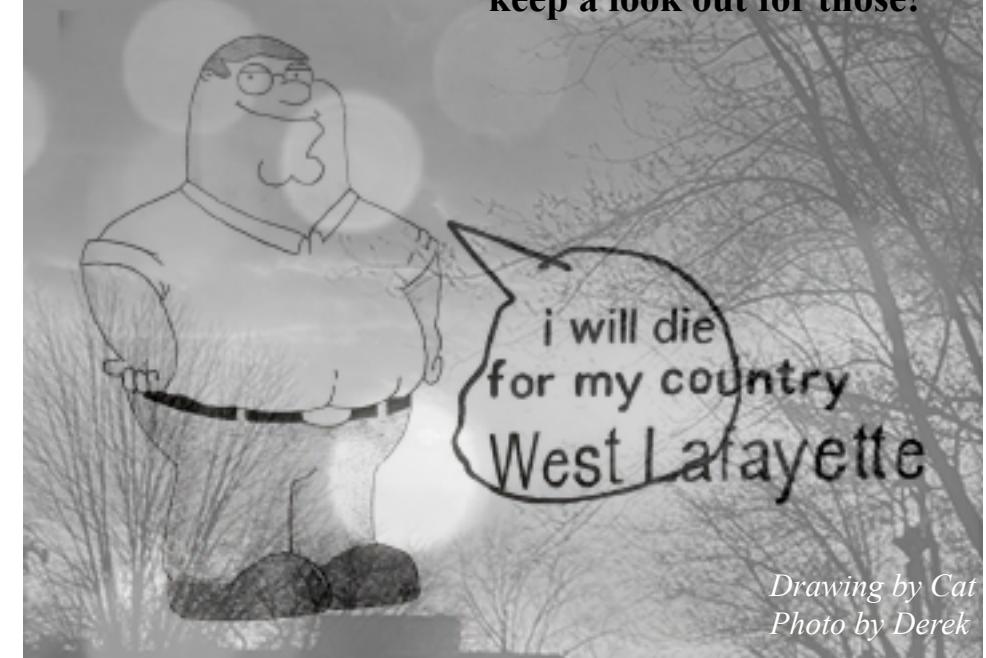
10/31 - Sun House (336 Oak St.) | Silver Wizard, Blackheart Gypsy, Concrete Chicken

10/31 - The Casket (620 Dodge St.) | Ample Hearts, Third Wheeling, Settling the Score, Lyra, Joy Buzzer`

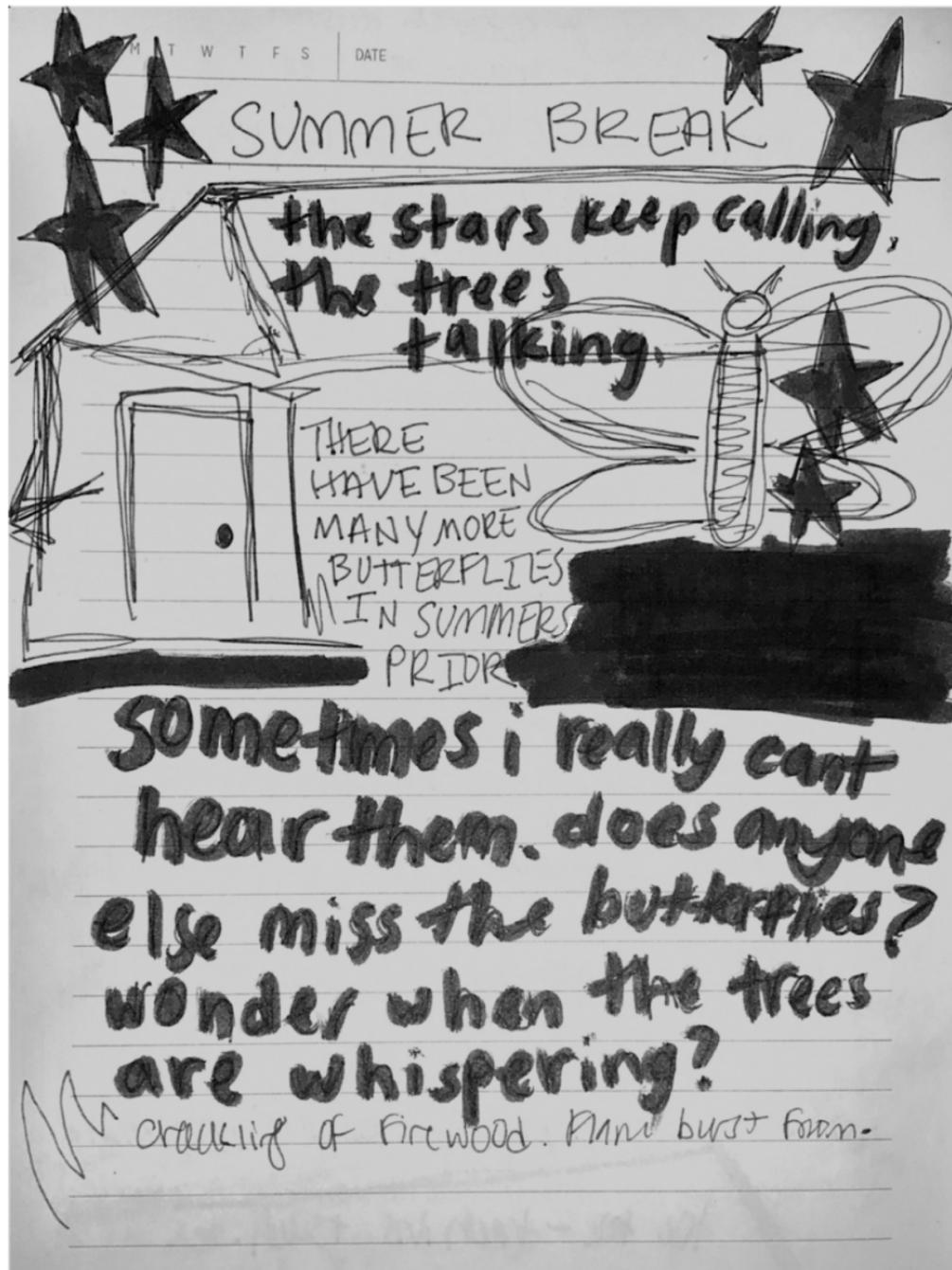
11/1 - Jimmy's (110 E Stadium Ave.) | Bands TBA

11/8 - Location TBA (Ask the bands) | Aelia, Edward Abbey, Whirly Birds, Inward Heal

... and many more shows in the works for November so keep a look out for those!



*Drawing by Cat
Photo by Derek*



what does it mean to be immersed?
jaw bone on the river floor
the tiles singing
the ripples the bubbles the sunlight
riveting, reflecting rainbows
the dragonfly coitus,
all communicating,
dialect of the fairies
walk along the bone of a tree
the fingers reaching
to you, to me



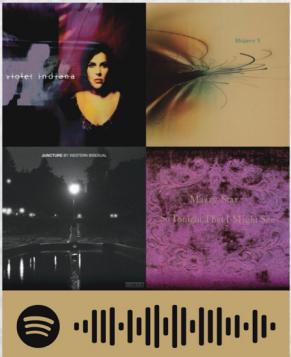
-terra

SONG RECS

by Gracee
(contributed to by many friends)

A Lot's Gonna Change by Weyes Blood
Andromeda by Weyes Blood
Army Dreamers by Kate Bush
Becuz by Sonic Youth
Bird Song - Live by Grateful Dead
Blue Light by Mazzy Star
Bold by Jackie Cohen
Buckets of Rain by Bob Dylan
Buckskin Stallion Blues by Amy Annelle
Catch n Release by Joy Buzzer
Dark Hollow - Live by Grateful Dead
Doe by The Breeders
Do you Like What You See by My Sister The Heron
Do You Love Me Now? by The Breeders
Evening In Paris by Lois
Gone Sugaring by Mirah
Heart of Gold by Neil Young
Helpless by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young
Hey Babe by Neil Young
In The Back Of My Mind by that dog.
I Shall Be Released - Live by The Band, Bob Clearmountain
Kind Woman by Buffalo Springfield
King Harvest (Has Surley Come) by The Band
Lady Elect by Unwound
Little Wing by Neil Young
Love Songs on the Radio by Mojave 3
Luna by Bats Outta Hell

listen on spotify:



[hairy] grrl legs

By Lily

tldr: my legs are for dancing, hiking, walking, exploring, running, swimming, surfing, swinging, skateboarding, spinning, tattooing, and whatever i else i want. not to make people comfortable. so long, i've grown attached to the hair on my legs.

i haven't shaved my legs since june of 2023 (besides tattoos). i'll be honest, it started because i asked the man i was dating at the time what his preference was and he told me he didn't care, that he actually preferred more hair. but now that it's been so long, i've grown attached to the hair on my legs.

i know that it bothers some people, but i hadn't had someone be vocal about their issue until a few weeks ago. nothing too crazy, just some passive aggressive comments to me and some more direct comments about it to someone close to me. i don't think that anyone deserves an explanation for what someone chooses to do with their body, but this did get me to think on it and list out exactly why i don't. i thought i'd share in case anyone has been too shy to ask, because i like to share things about myself i can't lie, but also because i want other women to reevaluate why they remove the hair from their bodies and who it's really for. if it's for you, then great! otherwise, maybe try the dark side. i promise i have no issues finding men that like me, even if they think i'm a lesbian (they thought this before i stopped shaving anyway).

[note: this isn't about men and what they want, it's about embracing what makes you happy, smooth or not. men i loved happened to push me to learn to love myself and stop caring about others. i do want to be attractive to others, like most people do. i was lucky that i found people that pushed me to love myself for who i am. i mean that's all we can do right?]

i also am sharing this for my teenage self, who hated her hair so much that she was planning on laser it off as soon as she had the funds and was old enough. now, instead of paying and spending my time to change my body from what it was supposed to look like, i get to travel the world. yeah, i do wish it was lighter and more feminine, but my momma told me that whatever my body looks like is what it is supposed to look like and i should just embrace it. she's really smart so i listen.

reasons why i don't

- cool women i know don't
- it's soft, i like to pet it
- only prepubescent children (and people with alopecia) don't have hair

- naturally
 - people i've dated haven't cared, have even preferred it
 - i don't care
 - my father supports it, he tried so hard when i was little to stop me from ever doing it
 - i like how it feels when it blows in the wind or moves around in water
 - it keeps people i'm not interested in (especially men) away
 - it makes them uncomfortable
 - it's my body and my choice. my body is for me. i do what i want. i like it this way
 - it's curly like my hair :)
 - i haven't since june of 2023 and i dont want to break the streak
 - when i shaved everyday before it was painful and and itchy and scratchy within hours, now its so soft
 - i have naturally long dark and curly leg hair lol, like more than a lot of cis men i know. all the women / feminine presenting people i know that don't shave have way less visible hair than i do so i want to show feminine people that having hair like mine that it's also fine for them to grow theirs too.
 - i save sooooooo much time
 - i would rather put my time that would be spent shaving into many other things that give me joy
 - i already sink a bunch of time into more important self-care tasks like my hair, nails, teeth, etc
 - i get compliments on it
 - once a girl said i was so brave for not doing it and that it was inspiring
 - it feels nice under loose pants
- drawbacks
- wearing long socks or leggings or tights hurts and itches from pulling
 - i've only received a rude comment once, but he wasn't direct about it
 - only a few times i recall seeing someone look at my legs and get a scrunch on their face with disgust, but this is more funny than anything

"Hieronymus Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights"

Jace Ditto

- Noon
Or noon thirty,
- What's the hurry,
We've seen it all before.
- The coffee gets cold
Like the flesh.
- Everything dies in a flash,
Yes.
- Day after day
Without salvation.
- Growing.
- Impatient.
- They say
We were bathed
In grace
All along,
- Don't you taste it?
- Wet
Stepping stone stairs
Overgrown
With grass,
- Tiptoeing
down
To a creek
Made of broken glass,
- A cicada spoke my name.
- My heart cleansed
By a gentle flame.
- I'm not afraid of being alive
I just don't always like
Looking into eyes,
- Purgatory I guess is fine,
- Beautiful some of the time,
- It's the not knowing
If you're gonna be saved,
- Not knowing what you'll find.

Here it is and maybe it sucks or maybe it's just like gas in my stomach that makes me feel like I'm having a heart attack and I think to myself "let it come"

You should look up Hieronymus Bosch's Garden of earthly delights tho it's an old painting of purgatory that I find fascinating

On the LA Overman

By Bennyboy

He's beautiful, and he knows it. He's got the impeccable confidence of someone totally (and accurately) sure that they have no bad angles. He doesn't speak too often, and he doesn't laugh too hard — but when he does, his teeth are exactly as perfect as you'd expect. He lets his friend — subtly less beautiful, though you'd have difficulty picking out a particular feature to explain the difference — do the bulk of the laughing.

He never brags, but his latest film seems to come up anyway, as if the topic is latent in the conversation, draped over the space like an ornate tablecloth, just waiting for one of the guests to use it to plug a conversational gap.

When the party leaves the dining room the LA overman recedes into the mass. Deprived of the familiar mirrors of friends' relatives and grade-school buddies his contribution to the energy shrinks and disappears. He becomes one beautiful, but otherwise unexceptional face on a composite organism, one inhibited appendage on the many-limbed circle of overgrown teenagers shiveringly piecing a conversation together outside a decidedly non-college bar.

When the last bit is played out and this is no longer The Place To Be he says his goodbyes, takes enough steps back to be sure of his shot, and expertly withdraws a heretofore unseen camera from the pocket of his Carhartt. A click, a flash, a turn, and he and his friend disappear into the night. One gets the sense that his parting photograph — singular, sudden, epitomically candid — has captured more than just the ambient, amputated organism before him, that every look & word since he walked through the door has been reduced to its essential photons and carved into the camera's all-seeing eye.

You only wish you might have been informed of his coming, so that you might have had time to prepare.

There's no escaping it — you will be captured as you really are when you least expect it.

response to 'On the LA Overman'

By Naomi

the digi cam flash got me too, just like home
superstar present with us
of the boys, a real chiller
we were so focused on making dinner for our hosts,
they slipped in
dad of friend, dad,
embarrassed 'Overman' in jest
teased of a bit, revealed his dad ways of knowing (saw redacted at the
redacted show)
friend, dear friend
shared space

they made the journey with us to thee LA dive bar, legend.
questioned it, asked if i was having fun
dawg they wondered about it
disillusioned by hometown hot stuff
maybe not deep, i guess i could to. made for a funny exchange

except when i'm with the boys,
it's magic
malleable
mercurial
myriad

or magic
meteor
moonbeam
mirrored
regardless, awesome.

Split Gums: ‘Tender’ can describe a wound or a touch

I accidentally shave a chunk of my calf off.

It looks like a slice of unripe cantaloupe wedged between razorblades.

I am watching the final chapter of Lars Von Trier’s Dogville on a laptop and hearing, for the first time, that mercy can be egotistic. The concept makes me sick.

Karen Finley’s Shock Treatment is the closest thing I have to Dramamine: “I’ll tell you why I only feel comfortable around the collapsed, the inebriated and the broken — because they look like what I feel inside. They look like what I feel inside. They look like what I feel inside.”

I’m obsessed with this. Things that appear, or we’re conditioned to see, as ugly, undesirable, gross, broken.

I love things bloody and violent.

I love broken glass, like my own moonlight clotting in the grass.

I love horror movies because I am constantly molting — sometimes I feel as if I am trapped in my body, as if my soul has turned over to a new, bright green-eyed version of myself, and I have to wait for my body to catch up.

If I looked like what I felt inside, would you be horrified? I set the pink plastic razor on the sink and it slides into the bowl. I leave strips of hair on my left calf.

My fascination with “undesirability” is most obvious when applied to art — the films I watch, the songs I listen to, the performance art I see.

But it also seeps into what is considered the “ugly” parts of people, traits considered “unattractive” by a different connotation.

I write: *I want to know what you hate. I want to know what annoys you. I want to know what embarrasses you. What makes you anxious. What you’re like when you’re anxious. I want to know what makes you cruel. How you wear cruelty, like a veil or velvet blanket. I want to know what your wanting looks like. I want to know what loneliness drives you to do, or what it takes from you. I want to see you jealous. I want to see you irrational.*

I want to know what you’re ashamed of.

Two things I believe to be true: shame is rot and shame is beautiful, like the mold on blackberries reminds me of snow or gauze.

Shame makes us act in ugly ways. It eats away at us and leaves ugly bite marks. But there are shapes in those bite marks, pastorals and portraits.

~

I am listening to Cameron Winter sing “Love Takes Miles” while I straighten my hair. My hair is falling out. Each dark blonde strand is a piece of my soul attempting to escape my body; even my soul is split with imperfections.

He sings, “She’s alright, lonely as hell / walking around, without moving,” and I put on my tennis shoes to go on my third walk of the day.

I’m marathoning Happy Hollow again to grasp some kind of metaphor that can turn my “I want’s” into something eloquent or at least subtle and disconnected from its core.

Winter has a better understanding of love than I do. And I thought I knew love.

I keep making the same realization over and over, and that is that I am a hypocrite. What I want I won’t give.

I’m ashamed to admit I do not trust you to love me once you know me.

And I want to leave you before you leave me.

Despite my obsession with the Adrianne Lenker lyric, “I don’t wanna be the owner of your fantasy / I just wanna be a part of your family,” I am terrified of being seen as anything other than perfect.

I keep on leaving. Like he said, walking around without moving.

I’m ashamed to admit I feel like I need permission to stay. I need permission to feel ugly around you.

The problem with “you better start a-walking babe,” I think, is that everyone has to do it. Even ourselves.

I think about Nicole Kidman and Dogville when I remember once sitting in the University of Evansville parking lot and confessing that I don’t cry in front of people I care about because I don’t want them to hold any of my suffering or ugliness.

I remember the cutting words said to me in response, as if sitting in that car with James Caan and a handgun, “You believe you have a greater capacity to love than everyone else. You think that makes you noble, but it just makes you selfish.”

“You have to let your friends love you. You have to let people love you.”

I am looking at the splatters of blood on my bathroom tile. My blood blooms like peonies.

Dust

pre-fossilized puppy

neck-deep in the muck

gloomstruck with more muck to come

give up and gaze

up the mudsliding mountain

remember that you are

dust

By Kelton

Chill world by strube the elder

how does the chiller chill in a non-chiller world

the chiller chills

the non-chillers outpace the chiller as they find no value in chilling

is the chiller behind or is life increasing her speed

fierciously devouring the chillers precious chilling

the wizards that the chiller once watched are no longer spell

they are wild and merciless

like the non-chillers

the elder chiller warns of the non-chillers for they hold no quarter

but the elder chiller also sings that

mother nature is a chiller

father time is a chiller

and they too hold no quarter

to chill is to aggravate, to ameliorate, to sanctify

for chilling is not missing life, it is life



extensive on
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resources



THANKS
to Our Readers!



Drawings by Talia