

RECORD DREAMS

**50 HALLUCINATIONS AND VISIONS
OF RARE AND STRANGE VINYL**

WITH JOHAN KUGELBERG AND JON SAVAGE



**AT THE 50TH MEGA RECORD & CD FAIR
JAARBEURS UTRECHT, NETHERLANDS
NOVEMBER 17TH & 18TH, 2018**

YOUNG, GIFTED, BLACK AND FLURRY: RAMON & TED

My Way Or Else - Frank Sinatra

IT'S ALL OVER MY FRIEND - EARL K YOMIT AND THE MEATABOLIC PROCESSES

John, Paul, George And Ringo - The Davenport Brothers

Scottish Airs - The Hamish McFart Singers

HEET MY PAGOOLER IN SAN FRANCISCO - DR DEBARRY

More Songs from the Google and District Catholic River Wideners Club

BERNARD DELPONT LIVE AT THE BANK NEXT TO THE LONDON PALLADIUM

BRIGHT LIGHTS, SOFT MUSIC, LIVE GOATS: RAMON & TED

HOOLOOSE AND FANCY FREE - BRITT ECKLAND

ASPECTS OF THE VOICE - BRITT ECKLAND

SMILER - BRITT ECKLAND

GASOLINE ALLEY - BRITT ECKLAND

NEVER A DULL MOMENT - BRITT ECKLAND

AN OLD RAINCOAT WON'T EVER LET YOU DOWN - BRITT ECKLAND

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY - BRITT ECKLAND

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY - BRITT ECKLAND

ATLANTIC CROSSING - BRITT ECKLAND

HASTAMAN - SIR KEITH JOSEPH (Deleted)

I'VE GOT A BEER GLASS STICKING IN MY HEAD AND OTHER RUGBY SONGS

ACCOUNTANTS WORK SONGS

RULING SONGS AND BALLADS - H.M. THE QUEEN AND THE JORDANAIRES

Pat Smells - The Gauch Doves

MONTY PYTHON TRIEST IT ON AGAIN

BOEING BOEING (cast album)

BONG BANGV BINGI

BANG GOES BOING!

BACK IS BINGI

BING IS BACK!

Tom Jones Hite Frank Sinatra White Vic Damone And Mel Torme Grab Englebert Humperdinck, At Las Vegas

YOU AND THE NIGHT AND THE MUSIC AND THE CHICKEN: RAMON AND TED

Gat Bach - The Best Of The Welsh Beatles

RECORD DREAMS

50 Hallucinations and Visions of Rare and Strange Vinyl

Vinyl, to: vb. A neologism that describes the process of immersing yourself in an antique playback format, often to the point of obsession - i.e. I'm going to vinyl at Utrecht, I may be gone a long time. Or: I vinyled so hard that my bank balance has gone up the wazoo. The end result of vinyling is a record collection, which is defined as a bad idea (hoarding, duplicating, upgrading) often turned into a good idea (a saleable archive).

If you're reading this, you've gone down the rabbit hole like the rest of us. What is record collecting? Is it a doomed yet psychologically powerful wish to recapture that first thrill of adolescent recognition or is it a quite understandable impulse to preserve and enjoy totemic artefacts from the first - perhaps the only - great age of a truly mass art form, a mass youth culture? Fingering a particularly juicy 45 by the Stooges, Sweet or Sylvester, you could be forgiven for answering: fuck it, let's boogie!

But, you know, you're here and so are we so, to quote Double Dee and Steinski, what does it all mean? Are you looking for - to take a few possibles - Kate Bush picture discs, early 80s Japanese synth on the Vanity label, European Led Zeppelin 45's (because of course they did not deign to release singles in the UK), or vastly overpriced and not so good druggy LPs from the psychedelic fatso's stall (Rainbow Ffolly, we salute you)? Or are you just drifting, browsing, going where the mood and the vinyl takes you?

That's where Utrecht scores. Now that you can find anything you want and buy at the click of a mouse - eBay, Discogs etc - the mystery has been taken out of record buying. The drift, the random encounter was always a part of the experience: finding shops where the owner did NOT want to sell you anything - that dreaded phrase: 'what are you looking for'; hunting through bins, fingers thick with dust and grot; orienting through cities by record shop and record shop: something of that experience is reproduced in the chaos of the Jaarbeurs.

There is still something of the drift in the Record and CD Fair. Being systematic is a laudable but impossible goal. It's just overwhelming, so you have to go where your body and your mind takes you. Each stall has its own character: some are utilitarian, others minimally curated; some are ruthlessly professional - obnoxious in the old school style - while others are an extension of life and art: the pranksters who will engage you in impassioned arguments about so and so and this and that while selling you a Simon Vinkenoog spoken world album.

You go out looking for things and then you come back with something different. Utrecht is terrific for European only singles releases - often very different from those in the US and the UK, and with pictures sleeves - and for prime Nederbeat. The haul has included the two great N.V Groep '65 singles, Q'65's terrific Revolution, and the Outsiders' CQ. Then there are the surprises: a mint copy of Nolan Strong and the Diablos The Wind, an EX copy of one of Joe Meek's last productions, the bizarre Singing the Blues by Jason Eddie and the Centremen.

This is the way, step inside. Much human life is here. Almost all of us are bound by one thing: a love, indeed an obsession with music. There is a kind of democracy in this. What taste is better or worse? It just doesn't matter. That's not a bad place to start.

Those who are about to vinyl, we salute you.

Cover image:
Prjavo Kazalište, record cover, Croatia
(former Yugoslavia), 1979 © Design: Mirko
Ilić (Bosnia and Herzegovina/United States)



1. The Can *Monster Movie*

1969, Germany. Music Factory / SRS 001

A glorious absurd rarity – the extremely unlikely conglomerate of hi-brow and lo-brow musicians that came to be Can started their recording artist career by issuing a private press LP in an edition of 500 in an exquisitely designed album jacket. The jams contained within changed modern music as we know it, and original copies trade hands for the cash equivalent of a decent second hand car or a high-end brand new refrigerator.



2. Tintern Abbey *Beeside / Vacuum Cleaner*

1967, UK. Deram / DM 164

British psychedelia is a more fragile thing than its American version: less messianic, less to do with the wild frontier and the counterculture than a deep sense of loss, childhood traumas and a half forgotten mysticism of the English countryside. This has been well established as a classic of the genre since its rediscovery in the mid 80s, but it's still beguiling and mysterious - a sprite half seen out of the corner of the eye, a shadow momentarily passing over a high summer meadow. Its intangibility is its very point.

Fashionably named after Arthurian legend, Tintern Abbey made this one defining 45. A simple yet ambient production, *Vacuum Cleaner* is driven by flashing cymbals and David MacTavish's awe-struck voice. *Beeside* fades in and out of mellotron drones, swishing cymbals and languid vocals that chide the 'busy bee' for being too industrious. The group disappeared into thin air, leaving behind this double sided testament that sums up a fleeting, transcendent moment. Although compiled many times and bootlegged on 7", the original 45 is an object of wonder.



3. Atomic Forest *Obsession '77*

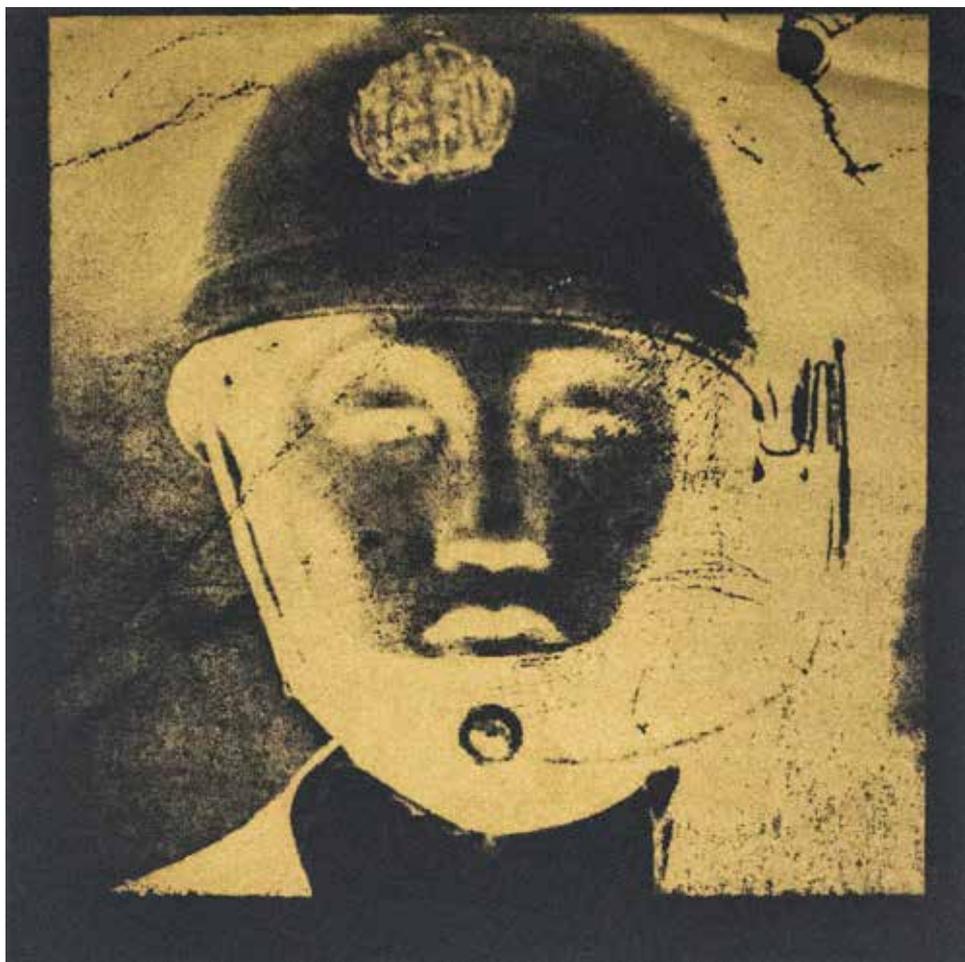
1981, India. Music India / 2392 580

The world of rare psych and rare funk collecting has long been a devoted cult of the obscure. Like Northern Soul, or recent coffee bean pretense, if it is obscure, it is better, if it is ultra-obscure it is fantastic. This sometimes results in hype, but sometimes records that stepped completely outside of time upon their initial release, get their revenge on Khronos and Kairos decades later with a lavish reissue, extended interviews, and a global lavish of respect for musical pioneership after decades of hyper obscurity. This LP, according to collectors of psychedelic funk, is the only truly great album to come out of India in the 1970s. The internet brought about its discovery, and the following frenzy lead to copies changing hands for thousands of dollars. It was reissued by the exemplary LA label Now-Again, who for some confounding reason decided to replace this masterpiece of a record sleeve with something more generic. The sounds, though, are far from generic and a mouse click away.



4. Staff Carpenborg and the Electric Coronas *Fantastic Party*
1970, Germany. Maritim / 47 102 NT

As a lifelong enthusiast and optimist, one can only think that there must be copies of this record in the cheapie bins on the floor of this very record fair, and if there ain't, I blame the internet as usual! This cash-in album, released by a German label specializing in sub-James Last supermarket music, is a baffling beast of outsiderdom: it reminds me of the Residents, of Faust and Can, of Renaldo and the Loaf or the Godz of ESP Disk fame. Ramshackle bang-n'-scrape and ebbs and flows of nascent musicality. The late 1960s and early 1970s were heady times, and we are still all playing catch up: to this day, no one really knows who the musicians are and what the circumstances were surrounding this sexily weird LP.



5. Zuno Keisatsu *Brain Police*

1975, Japan. Be-Witch Record

It is almost impossible to imagine how closed Japanese society was to the counter-culture of the late 1960s. Zuno Keisatsu were possibly the most provocative rock group of the Japanese underground, self-releasing this album in 1970. Featuring songs like “Declaration of Global Revolutionary War” and “Grab a Gun” Parts 1 and 2, this strange mixture of Marc Bolan and communal hippie psych jamming was wrapped in an oversized LP package featuring the identikit portrait and blank gaze of the Japanese equivalent of DB Cooper: the main suspect of a still-unsolved legendary multi-million dollar robbery.



6. The Eyes *The Arrival of The Eyes*

1966, UK. Mercury / 10035 MCE

Again from 1966, this is a perfect pop art product that collects the Eyes' first two singles on Mercury Records. All four tracks are exquisite Who rip offs, at once sincere, camp, ham-fisted and zeitgeisty: with their power chords, Mod lyrics and strange guitar scrapings, singularly redolent of late 1965 and early 1966.

When The Night Falls has a toggle switch break right out of Anyway Anywhere Anyhow, while My Degeneration alludes to 'a cup of coffee or two' - Mod slang for sex. With tumbling jangles, The Immediate Pleasure marks the change in Western society from deferred to instant gratification, while I'm Rowed Out mixes a definitive chordal stuttering riff to a lyric straight out of Shelagh Delaney: 'you've got a grey suede coat and a soul like fire'.

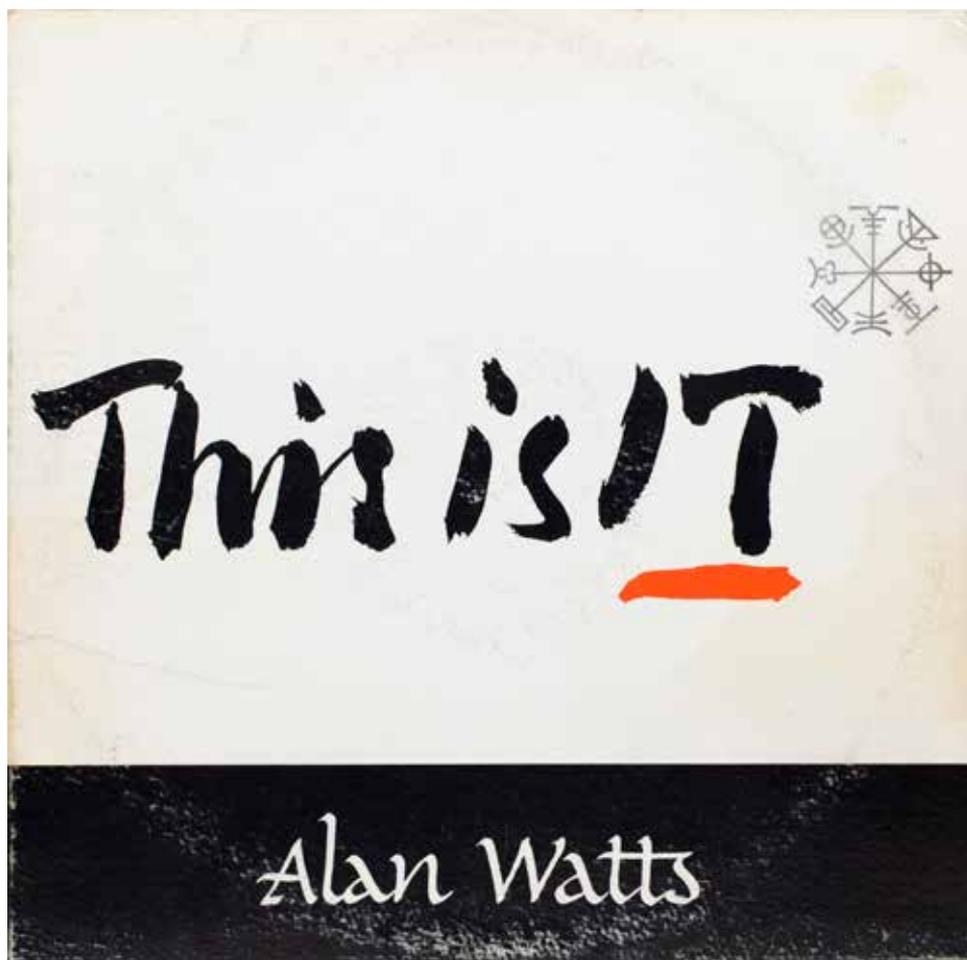
The Eyes came from Ealing, West London - right around the corner from the Who's stomping grounds of Acton and Shepherd's Bush - and worked out an image that revolved around rugby shirts each emblazoned with a large eye that contained a photo of each group member. Very meta. 'The Eyes Have Arrived' announced the back sleeve, but their moment was brief. By the time this EP was released in late 1966, no-one was interested at all, hence its rarity. Unlike many rare records however, it remains Top Quality Entertainment.



7. Ghetto Brothers *Power Fuerza*

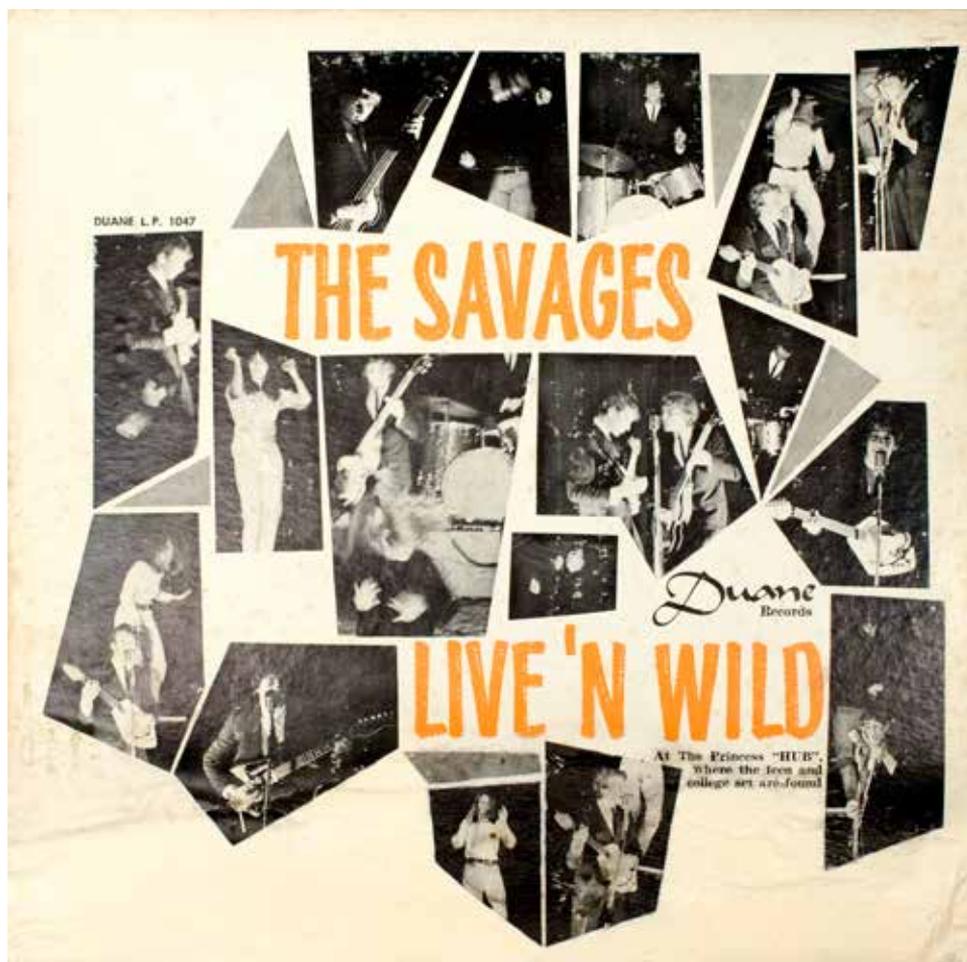
1972, USA. Salsa Records / SLP 2008

Among latin music collectors, the Salsa label is rated highly – killer albums like Willie Rodriguez *Descarga '71* and the *Salsa All Stars LP* have always been sought after once you've been seduced by the most powerful New York City music alongside hip hop. Salsa Records also released the only LP by South Bronx street gang turned community activists The Ghetto Brothers. The album manages to be an almost brutal funky statement of strength and identity a la flying cut sleeves and zip guns, and alongside that simultaneously exists as a gentle breezy pop album that fans of the Beatles and the classic Beach Boys or Curt Boettcher/Millennium sides could get behind. Up until its reissue ten-odd years ago, it was a whispered legend of a record. It simply never showed up, and if it ever did, it was snacked within an inch of existence: like Colored Balls LPs in Australia or Fela Kuti LPs in Nigeria, these records went to more and better parties than any of us ever did, so they would carry the scars, scratches and dents from really good bacchanalia. I was friends with Benjamin Melendez, the singer. He was a genuinely great man, and I would recommend his autobiography to anyone interested in community activism and gang life in 1970s Bronx. Once when we were talking, I was mentioning how rare and desirable his record had become with collectors of uptown New York sounds. "I got to show you something," he said. And presented me with a copy of *Power Fuerza* on 8-track!



8. Alan Watts *This Is It*
1962, USA. MEA / LP 1007

British ex-pat Alan Watts is well-known as an authority on zen, and as one of the people that did serious research into psychedelics many years before Leary and the Beatles co-branded themselves with inner space journeys. This LP, which has little to do with Watts book of the same name, seems likely to be the first ever recording done under the influence of psychedelics. It is not trippy, nor really “psychedelic” in the generic musical sense of the term. The record is tribal, murky, noisy, sometimes pastoral, and more reminiscent of say AMM or Kangaroo Kourt or Cro Magnon. It does not sound like something recorded and released in 1962. The original release is truly rare, and was always a calling card for hip psychedelic collector insiders like the late and legendary Patrick Lundborg of Acid Archives fame.



9. Savages *Live 'N Wild*

1966, Bermuda. Duane Records / L.P. 1047

Recorded live at the Hub Nightclub in the Princess Hotel in Bermuda on February 6th 1966, and pressed up by a local music impresario, this raging blast of garage punk hipness brought the world the ultimate nihilist glory of the teenage punk anthem "The World Ain't Round It's Square".



10. Bo Diddley *Spring Weekend 1959*

1959, USA. Checker

Recorded live in front of the Sigma Pi fraternity and their friends in 1959, this might be the ultimate live artifact of tough fifties rock & roll that I've heard to date – the raunch supersedes the mighty raunch-roar of *Bo Diddley's Beach Party* which is no small feat. The LP was published by the frat as a fund raiser, and was an almost unheard of rarity until its recent reissue. The story has it that Bo Diddley and the band had to stay at the house of a Cornell professor as there wasn't a local hotel that accommodated African-Americans, and that the demand of tickets was so high that the fraternity had to rent a local Veteran's Hall. The recording sounds like it took place in front of a huge roaring crowd, and Bo's band is 100% on fire this night.



11. The Dovers *The Third Eye / Your Love*
1966, USA. Miramar Records / 123

This is some kind of garage/ psych holy grail. The Dovers released four singles between September 1965 and May 1966 on the tiny Miramar label out of Los Angeles. Their second 45, a halting teen jangler called "I Could Be Happy", made enough waves to be picked up by Reprise in late 1965, but this was a quantum leap. Issued almost simultaneously with the Byrds' "Eight Miles High", this was one of the first pop songs to inhabit the LSD experience - taking you there in a maelstrom of spiralling, Indian influenced guitar, ferociously fundamental bass playing and words that speak of nothing less than a fundamental transformation:

Unlocked by the key
And now I am free
Magic curtains of green and blue lights pass by
Moon and sky

After this verse, the group crunch out of a brief improvisation into the song's tricky central riff, a jump-cut so jarring that it feels as though they've leapt out of their skins. The voice returns from high on the mountaintop:

No wings for my flight
I drift through the night
Understanding the secrets of space and time
The third eye

The song only lasts for 135 seconds, but it's so compressed and intense that it feels much longer. As an attempt to boil down a seven or eight hour experience into a pop format it's extremely successful. It's not an advert for a lifestyle but a sincere attempt to capture something shattering, if not fundamental: all the musicians are working at the limit of their capabilities - often an exciting moment in itself - in an attempt to explain the inexplicable.

Released in April 1966, the Dovers' "The Third Eye" is one of the earliest attempts at reproducing the LSD experience on record: it's also one of the most accurate enactments of how this extraordinarily powerful drug impacted on the youth and the youth culture of the time. In a raw and barely filtered form, the song enacts the overwhelming impact of LSD on the consciousness of those teens who took it in late 1965 and early 1966. Like many early acid records, it is not beatific - that would be a later gloss - but raw, wild and threatening.

Apart from an out of print reissue of the Dovers' four singles on Misty Lane Records (2001), "The Third Eye" has been unavailable since its brief run in spring 1966. Details - including photos - of the Dovers are very hard to come by. In the meantime this super rare single stands as a Mid Sixties pinnacle - and deserves wider exposure.



**12. Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Andrei Voznesensky
Poetry Reading at Architectural Association: Bedford Square London (6/15/1965)
1965, UK. Lovebooks / LB-0001**

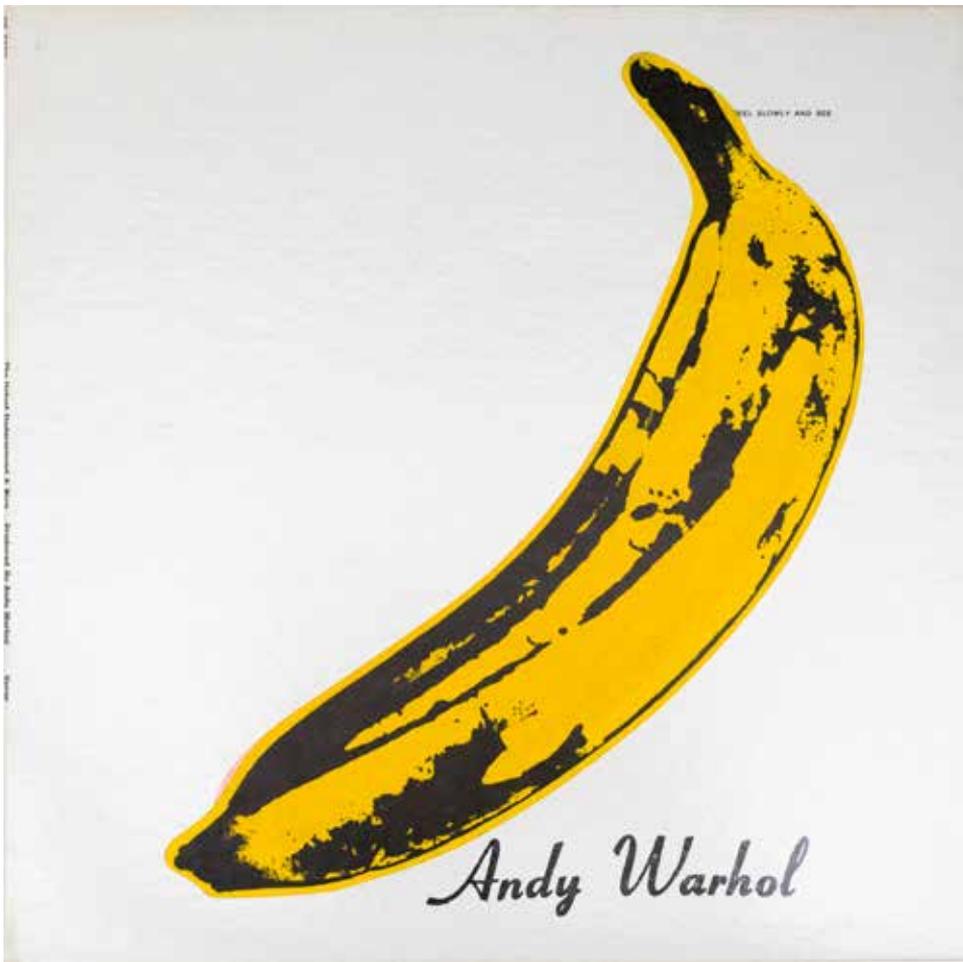
On Tuesday the 15th June 1965 key members of the beat generation descended on the library of the Architectural Association in Bedford Square London for a poetry reading, fresh from the International Poetry Incarnation held four days earlier at the Royal Albert Hall. These readings were recorded and can be heard here on this extremely rare LP. The Royal Albert Hall performance is generally considered the single most important poetry event in post WW2 Europe, and also generally acknowledged as the beginning of the British hippie movement, midwifed by American beats. That is nowadays. Back then Allen Ginsberg who was one of the main organizers said that it included "...too many goofs who didn't trust their own poetry, too many superficial bards who read tinkle jazzy beatnick style poems, too many men of letters who read weak pompous or silly poems written in archaic meters, written years ago." On top of this, the brilliant Russian poet Andre Voznesensky had been silenced, prevented from performing by his Russian government-sanctioned minder who warned him that if he read his poetry he'd never be allowed to leave Russia again. In contrast to this, the reading at the Architectural Association was clearly a laid back community event. All the poets are on the top of their game. The LP was recorded by John (Hoppy) Hopkins and Barry Miles, two of the main organisers of the International Poetry Incarnation, who formed the label Lovebooks, in order to publish the recording.



13. Café Bizarre *Assorted Madness, Beat Generation Poetry, Beat Erotica By The Beat And The Unbeat*

1959, USA. Musitron / M-102

From the serious, the legendary and the historical to the filthy lucre cash-in! With almost 2/3's of a century of perspective on the beats, the cash-ins seem like as a field of study - the trickle-down pop culture exploitation of the beat generation warrants some scrutiny, sometimes for scholarly reasons, sometimes for pure entertainment. In this case, the latter: Café Bizarre is ultimately going to be remembered as where Warhol met the Velvet Underground for the first time, but it had also existed for a few years as a Greenwich Village tourist trap where people from Long Island and New Jersey and Uptown could see authentic beatniks perform authentic beat poetry while sipping an authentic espresso or two. Sometimes the performers were bona-fide: Moondog played there, as did Tiny Tim and Brother Theodore, but most of the time a steady stream of no-name hopefuls would come through and perform identikit beat for the tourists. This LP is one of the most charming examples of beatnik cash-in I've seen. The packaging is hilarious and superb, and this copy even came with a Café Bizarre menu, illustrating the romance of the time that Lou Reed was quoted saying that the band were paid for their performances with cheeseburgers and milk.



14. **The Velvet Underground and Nico** *The Velvet Underground and Nico*
1967, USA. Verve Records / V-5008

It is hard to even have an opinion on this one huh? What a great and strange album. Let's not forget that at the point in 1966 when this record was conceptualized and greenlighted by Verve Records, Warhol was the biggest cultural deal there was in the USA. Bigger than Beyonce stapled onto Jay Z's head dancing on Kim Kardashian's grave with Taylor Swift trading yodels with Richard Prince and a reanimated Basquiat. Warhol was huge, and for Verve Records to have the opportunity to issue a Warhol pop art multiple made it not matter that much to the label that the noise racket art screech delivered by the band was not something that would play on the radio, as the record would still sell as an art multiple. Notwithstanding Verve A&R and legendary producer Tom Wilson adding a couple of spoons of sugar ("Femme Fatale" and "I'll Be Your Mirror") to make the rest of the album more palatable, The Velvets and Nico is outside of time and place, and far away from the boundaries of mainstream taste, even now, over 50 years after its release.

The album was delayed, for a myriad of reasons. A radio promo 7" was issued in September of 1966, but the album didn't hit the shops until late March of 1967. And then Eric Emerson tried to sue, and the album was withdrawn and reissued. Eno's quote that hardly anybody bought it has been disproven, as it had already sold around 70,000 copies by the time it was withdrawn. An original copy of *The Velvet Underground and Nico*, in mono, with Eric Emerson's image intact on the back cover is something very expensive. Not rare, but expensive. Like a Warhol multiple. Which is what the album is/was. Lucky for us it is also a rock & roll postcard from another world, transmitted to us by the perfect storm of time, place, people and skill.



15a. The Stooges *Funhouse*
1970, Japan. Elektra / SJET 8313



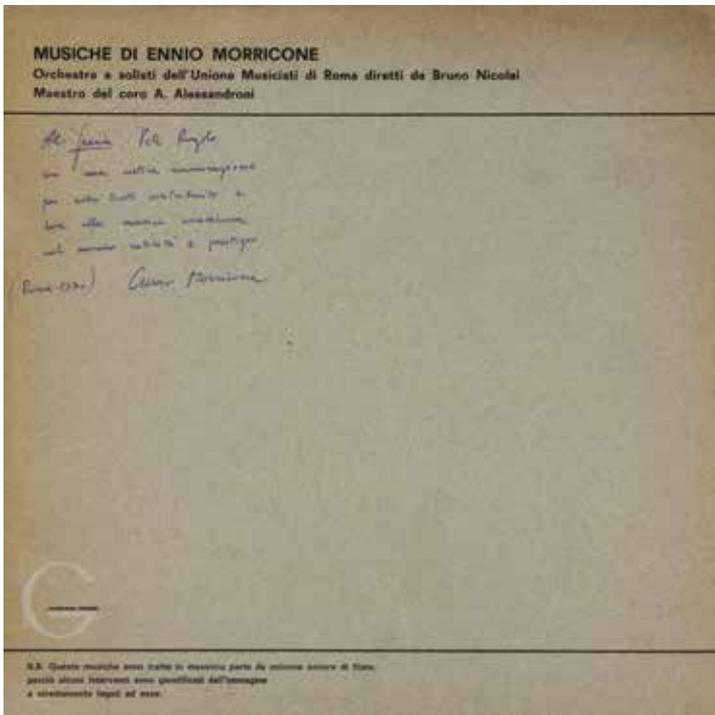
15b. The Stooges *Funhouse (excerpts)*
1970, USA. AFRTS / RL 15-1

Here's another one that it is hard to find anything to say about cuz it has all been said hasn't it? Well: The Stooges *Funhouse* is a true masterpiece and I dare anyone not to feel that icy dazzle of pure thrill when it lands on the turntable, for the first time, or for the thousandth. Then it gets weird: a few years back I heard a rumor that the Japanese original pressing was different. Gulp. Eh. Oh. I need to find one. A hard record to locate, and once located expensive as all get out. So: it is indeed different. Different mixes, different takes, stuff that the fanatic has already heard, certainly, as the fanatic obtained a copy of the *Funhouse* outtakes CD boxed set many moons ago and listened to it too many times for his/her own good. But nevertheless: *Funhouse* came out on vinyl in Japan back in the day with alternate versions. This is nuts. And we can add more nuts to those nuts: a few years back while helping my pal Jeff Gold with his splendid Stooges book, I located a copy of an American Armed Forces radio service LP. Someone, at some point, who provided American GI's with radio entertainment thought it would be a good idea to furbish "1970", "Fun House" and (yes) "LA Blues" for military radio play. Might as well have given the grunts full metal jacket ammunition and tons of amphetamines. Oops. They did that? Oh.



16. Lou Reed *Metal Machine Music*

1975, USA. RCA Victor / CPL2-1101



17. Ennio Morricone *Musiche di Ennio Morricone / Orchestra e Solisti diretti da Bruno Nicolai*

1973, Italy. General Music / GM/33-01/02

In the rarified world of rare book collecting, things get mighty rare. The minutia of the points of true first editions can get so fruity that the most obsessed Beatles completist would shake little baby now in disbelief: the point size of the copyright credit can be the only way that a true first edition is identified, and that point size difference can mean thousands of dollars. Historically, book collectors have obsessed over association copies, where one noted author would sign and dedicate a copy of their book to another noted author or cultural figurehead. In some instances, the prices of those kind of association copies can be absolutely astronomical. I never really dug 'em, I always thought that those kind of inscriptions indicated a certain distance. It is not like I ever sign copies of my books to my loved ones or my pals, I usually just toss them a copy and say "Here!". Well: that line of reasoning just went out the window as two of the most fetishized records I own are short on musical merit, but positively shimmer with contextual significance.

My old friend, the legendary record dealer Chuck Warner bought Lester Bangs record collection following his 1982 passing. Nestled in there was Lester Bangs' copy of *Metal Machine Music*. It is beat up, the sleeve is ripped up, and there is nothing about the artifact that illustrates that this was THE LESTER COPY except for the anecdote.

That is 100% cool with me. I can feel that the record was there, and as a lifelong fan of both Lester and Lou, that warrants the possession of this relic. I mean, there's a church in an unassuming suburb of Rome that claims the ownership of the finger of Doubting Thomas, so.

Years ago I obtained a copy of a promo-only Ennio Morricone double LP anthology. It concentrates on the Morricone compositions that excite me less: where he works in a pastoral, soundscapey towards atonal style, what would probably be described as "cinematic", and where the fuzz guitars and chants and bongos I've loved all my life are in short supply. I will, however, cherish this record forever: Ennio Morricone signed this copy for Pete Rugelo with a lengthy dedication. This is crazy: my favorite Italian soundtrack composer linked up with my favorite American soundtrack composer.

Fanboy commodity fetishism it is. All the way.



18. Love 7 And 7 Is / No. Fourteen

1966, UK. London Records / HLZ 10073

Famous record, UK release on my 13th birthday. Nice London A label, another variant on an all time classic sixties highlight. Superior UK pressing, backed with the bizarre fragment "No. Fourteen". This was Love's biggest hit, reaching #33 Billboard. The session lasted for two days on the 17th and the 20th June 1966: in the middle was the group's jarring appearance on Dick Clark's American Bandstand, miming "My Little Red Book" and "Message To Pretty". In the brief interview that follows their lip-sync, Dick Clark tries to get the band to talk about: neither Arthur Lee or Bryan MacLean are remotely interested, giving monosyllabic answers with a combative stance. The success of "My Little Red Book" turbo-charged the new single. Johnny Echols recalled that the song began as a basic, 'Dylan-esque' folk song transformed during a group rehearsal into a fast rocker: 'without much urging Arthur abandoned the sappy lyrics about his former girlfriend and started to recite these mind blowing lyrics about his childhood. At the time it appeared that this was spontaneous, and he was in effect 'freestyling'. I later learned he had been working on a poem for months'.

"7&7 Is" is a poem about Arthur's childhood. His father would arrive home from work at precisely 6pm every day. He would plop down in the overstuffed chair, and stare into the fireplace. Flash, the cocker spaniel who adored him, would sit transfixed, watching his every move. As a child, when Arthur misbehaved, Mrs. Lee would give him a time out by banishing him to his room, where he had to sit in the dark, wearing a cone-shaped purple hat'.

The session was fraught with problems. The group were determined to play loud and live, without any separation: the harmonics set up by the guitars overloaded their amplifiers - which was against every rule of recording. Echols told Holzman and engineer Bruce Botnick that he wanted the overload and leakage: 'This is about controlled chaos. The song is all about the sound'. There was one final touch. Holzman found an old Elektra sound effects LP, and slowed the recording of a gunshot right down so that it sounded like a hydrogen bomb.

Alex Chilton — Like Flies On Sherbert



19. Alex Chilton *Like Flies on Sherbert*

1979, USA. Peabody / P-104

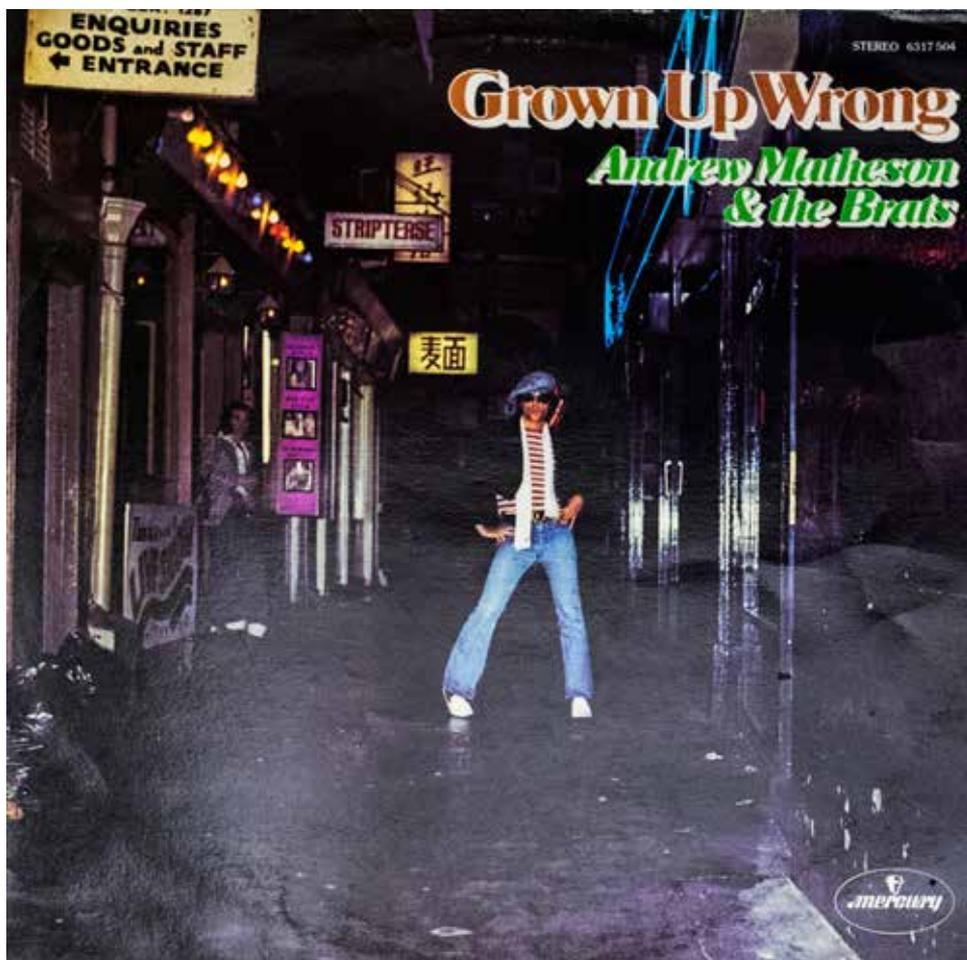
Alex Chilton was always the romantic hero for vinyl know-it-alls (brick to glass house: hello), his legacy as a teenage pop singer, a proto-punk icon with Big Star, and his subsequent mysterious, scattered and hap-hazard recorded legacy is truly dreamlike, hypnotic and often hallucinatory. His first solo album ticks all those boxes and more. Produced by also record collector secret handshake legend dude Jimmy Dickinson and pressed up in a mostly-lost micro edition of 500 copies, this LP is Jandek-esque in its pursuit of decadence and intentional messiness and failure. It almost oozes from the actual object. It vibes like a private press album so private that maybe all the copies pressed should have stayed under Chilton's bed. A beautiful and strange music: the logical follow-up to "Kangaroo" and "Stroke It Noel" from Big Star's *Third*.



20. Big Star *Third*

1975, USA. STAX / STXS 1078-1

Big Star's *Third* – boy oh boy. Here the vinyl history and legacy goes all Faulknerian if I may: After Big Star's *#1 Record* and *Radio City*, Ardent Studios gave this one a gargantuan promotional hustle of true substance: 250 white label test pressings were distributed to major record companies, radio stations, journalists, taste-makers and record biz insiders together with an extensive press kit, photos, and even a copy of the previous Big Star LP. But nothing happened. The record was not released until four years later to no great sales but a cultish fanfare that will continue to snowball evermore.



21. Andrew Matheson and the Brats *Grown Up Wrong*

1975, Norway. Mercury / 6317 504

The Andrew Matheson and the Brats album, released in Norway-only by Mercury Records in 1975, contains epiphanies of such pure punk rage, that it was re-released 3 years later by Cherry Red Records. A couple of the suave Hollywood Brats gents went on to form the Boys, who never really reached (or reached for) the blazing rage of "Sick On You" on this genuinely rare and superb album. Sometimes the copy is superior to the original: People say that Dylan's body of work outshines Woody Guthrie (which I don't agree with), but in the case of the dynamics and dichotomy betwixt Andrew Matheson and the Brats and the New York Dolls, even-though the inspiration for the former is purely the latter, the Hollywood Brats are better and more raw, like if the first Dolls album would've been all 'Jetboy' and 'Subway Train'.



22. The Stooges / *I Wanna Be Your Dog* / *Ann*

1970, Italy. Vedette Records / VRN 34101

Flipped on the Italian issue of “I Wanna Be Your Dog” is this sole 45 appearance of Iggy’s sincere ballad - one of the key tracks on The Stooges first LP. Pressed on 45, it sounds terrific.

In all the hyped-up posturing that seems to stick to any writing about the Stooges (most of which is very poor), what is unrecognised is just how much Iggy taps into male helplessness. “Ann” prefigures the passivity of “Dirt” and “Penetration”: ‘I looked into your cool, cool eyes/ I felt so fine, I felt so fine/ I floated in your swimming pools/ I felt so weak, I felt so blue’. Iggy’s flipping between fantasies of power and the reality of abjection undercuts the apparent machismo of the Stooges’ output and gives it much greater depth.

One of the great pleasures of Utrecht is finding European only single releases. Often they are cut louder and generally boosted, giving a different sound. It seems as though European licensees had a free hand about what they released in the sixties and seventies. For singles obsessives, finding issues of - for example - the Velvet Underground’s *Train Around the Bend*, the Who’s *Whiskey Man*, ELP’s *Lucky Man*, the Rolling Stones’ *All Down the Line* or Them’s *Square Room* makes all the rooting worthwhile.

PIEDMONT / TAKOMA C. 1003

DEATH CHANTS BREAK DOWNS & MILITARY WALTZES

Produced by John Fahey

PIEDMONT/TAKOMA RECORDS: Box 3138 Washington D.C. 20008, Box 2235 Berkeley, Calif. 94701

23. John Fahey *Death Chants, Break Downs & Military Waltzes*
1964, USA. Takoma / C 1003

Commodity fetishization time again, you know it'll always win when you collect records. The sublime American guitar player and writer John Fahey was also a record collector of the most obsessive grade, and was among the vanguard of people who collected original blues 78's back in the 1950s. Fahey started recording in the late 1950s, initially in small run 78's issued under a variety of pseudonyms by his friend Joe Bussard, another legendary 78 collector. By the early 1960s he had founded his own label Takoma, and started releasing LPs with the superb restrained packaging that this is an example of. For some reason or another, the John Fahey LPs released by Takoma, with their thick Folkways-esque sleeves and rather obnoxious liner notes are constant ravioli for the piranhas of my record collecting soul. Don't get me wrong: the music is superb, elegant, pastoral, hypnotic, but damn these sleeves are so cool looking.



24. Various Artists Yes L.A.
1979, USA. Dangerhouse / EW-79

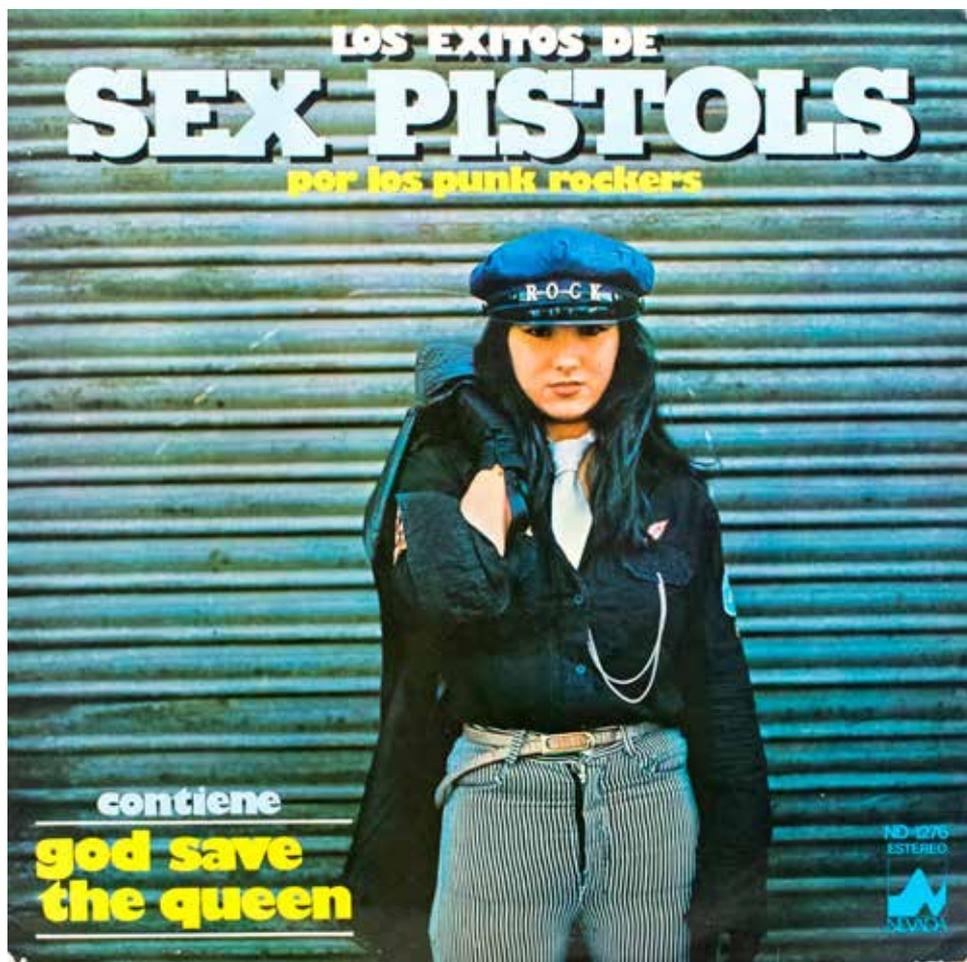
Trying to step into the same river twice here: 30-odd years ago, pre-internet and all that, holed up in Northern Sweden and a fanatical fan of American punk to boot, I dreamt many dream about Yes LA – the sounds, the look, the vibe. I didn't even know anyone who knew anyone who owned a copy at this point. Dangerhouse Records had a reputation among punk fans along the lines of how fans of 15th century books feel about the Aldine Press. The elegance of a one-sided clear vinyl disc with a silkscreened image on the other side was no news, as we had seen copies of Albert Ayler's 'Bells' on ESP, but that something like this was made by a tiny LA punk scene label in 1978 blew our fragile little minds when we finally got to see it and hear it. Black Randy, X and The Germs – even now the incantation of their names is mysterious and exotic, like the spice section of an Istanbul bazaar.



25. The Fall *Totale's Turns (It's Now or Never)*

1980, Italy. Go International / GILP 10

Older record collectors (ulp!) gain a perspective similar to how people fret about their buying or non-buying of Amazon stock, of IBM stock, of Bitcoin. Shoulda coulda woulda of record purchases. Everyone has stories: Misfits 45's in Manhattan dollar bins as recently as 1990, Ya Ho Wa records for a quarter a piece at the Tower Records on Sunset in the 1980s, Sun Ra records in every college town indie record shop, and (naturally) my own version which is how every goddamn legendary punk, post-punk, Swedish psych and krautrock LP was available for tops four bucks in used record shops in Sweden growing up. I remember seeing *Totale's Turns* in every used record store that I frequented back in the early 1980s. And never buying it. Not cuz I didn't dig the Fall, cuz I did, but I just didn't like it as much as *Live at the Witch Trials* or the *Slates 10"*. After Mark E. Smith died, like many-a-geezer, I found myself wanting to purchase a totem-object to celebrate my fandom. I found this copy of the record online. Cheap-ish. When the LP arrived in the mail I was stunned to see the lengthy inscription in Mark E. Smith's handwriting on the front cover. I was very pleased.



26. Los Punk Rockers *Los Exitos De Sex Pistols*

1978, Spain. Nevada / ND-1.276

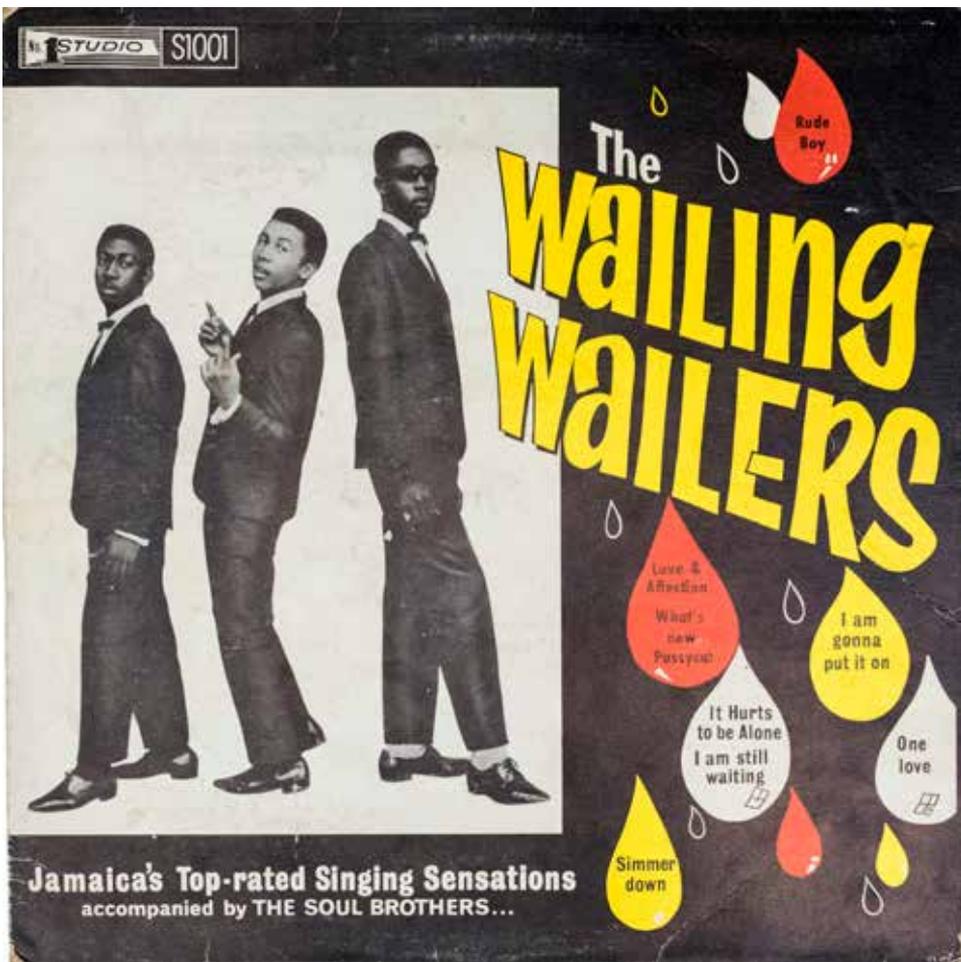
The greatest works of art sometimes are the most absurd: This Spanish supermarket budget LP with its glorious sleeve portrait of an anonymous hep-kittie is a relentless onslaught of primitive punk noise. The band might have rehearsed their Sex Pistols cover versions, but then again, maybe not. Released in 1978, at the peak of punk rock as a media event, someone at a rackjobber budget vinyl operation thought that there'd be enough curiosity surrounding the Sex Pistols to warrant an attempt to cash in. The result is completely glorious – barely-there ultra-crunchy versions of all the tracks on *Never Mind the Bollocks*.



27. Guided By Voices *Propeller*

1992, USA. Rockathon

Most copies of the Guided by Voices 1992 LP *Propeller* had hand-assembled collage sleeves. A numbered edition of 500 copies, selling at the time for, oh, eight bucks or so. It is a masterpiece: maybe my favorite GBV album in its capacity of glorious lo-fi/no-fi sound and amazing Swell Maps/Kinks/TV Personalities blasts of throwaway brilliance. This album now changes hands for several thousand dollars. I used to have 60 of them sitting in a box next to my desk when I worked at Matador Records a long time ago. I sold them. For 8 bucks a throw.



28. The Wailing Wailers *The Wailing Wailers*

1966, USA. Studio One / S1001

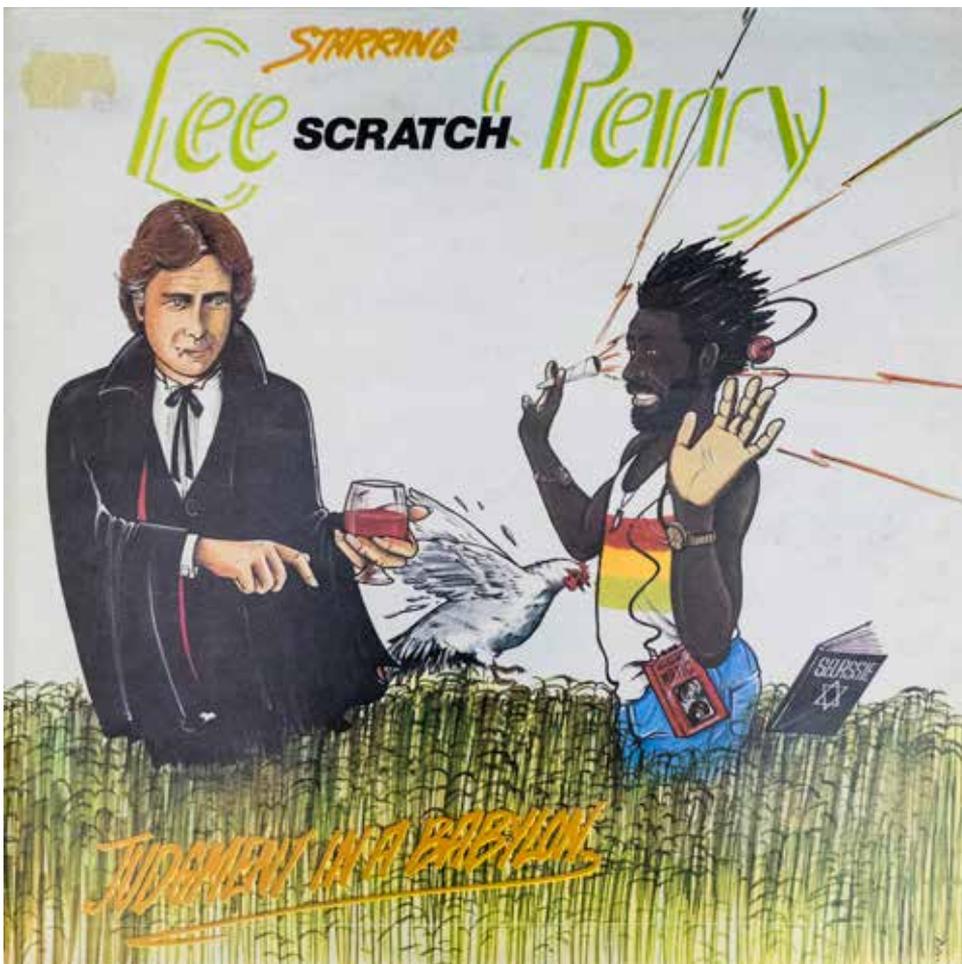
This is the second edition of Bob Marley's first LP. The sleeve is sublime: silkscreened, a masterpiece of simple elegant graphic design, and a band photo so iconic that the entire Twotone ska revival of the late 1970s based its central iconography on this image. The music is unearthly – so beautiful, opaque, transient but oddly permanent. The 1966 original LP is printed offset, with a different - not as amazing - photograph, and a pricetag in the thousands of dollars. Collectors of Studio One LPs will often notice that the ordinary identifiers of original versus reissue are completely out to lunch here: Coxsoné Dodd would sometimes do initial pressings with sleeves printed offset, and then subsequently use leftover vinyl from the original issue wrapped in the most stunning hand-printed glorious silkscreen sleeves, sometimes using leftover cardboard from food packaging. I have seen Studio One sleeves printed on the back of unfolded sheets of detergent packaging and cereal packaging. These pressings are not original editions as such, and can usually be purchased at a small fraction of the price of an original.



29. Slim Smith *Born to Love*

Year Unknown, Jamaica. Studio One / PSOL 004

This gets my vote for the most beautiful album cover art I know. Great spontaneous yet stylish graphic design, an intuitive use of color and a balanced and calming use of negative space. It gets extra toothsome considering the elegant irregularity of the silkscreen process, and that all this excellence is wrapping the music of Jamaica's finest sweet soul singer just makes it even better.



30. Lee Scratch Perry *Judgement In A Babylon*

1981, UK. Lion of Judah / LPD001

"I saw Chris Blackwell in Nassau, Bahamas, drinking the blood of a fowl from a rum glass at his new studio in Compass Point". The always mysterious and brilliant Lee Perry released this 12" in the mid-1980s to throw maximum shade on Island Records founder Chris Blackwell. According to Lee Perry, Blackwell's lawyer is also a vampire, his secretary is a satanic high priestess, and they all together killed Bob Marley and took away his royalty. "This is the truth and nothing but the truth" Lee Perry sings. For a record that was withdrawn immediately upon release, it is easy to find, not very expensive, and absolutely bafflingly entertaining. Do yourself a google to read Island Records rather amusing response.



31. Jimi Hendrix *Sky High*
1972, USA. Skydog / SGSH 2017378

Clearly I have a thing for silkscreened record covers. This circa 1972 bootleg consists of a 1968 New York recording of a furiously intoxicated Jim Morrison howling obscenities with Jimi Hendrix and Johnny Winter (who denies being on this recording) noodling in the background. The sound quality is a bit crap, the performances are pretty sucko, and the entire vibe of the thing is kind of smegmoid, whether you are a fan of Jim and Jimi or not. However: the entire artifact vibe of this record is nothing short of splendid! This was the very first release by the legendary proto-punk label Skydog Records, published at a point in time when the relative legality of bootleg records was not yet carved in stone. Also, as a lifelong fan of vanity pressings, I must say that this LP would be something I'd be pretty stoked about if it has been made by obscure no-names. Sort of like if you listen to the Doors with the history and the legend surgically removed; what then remains is a sketchy lounge band with rinkadink keyboards and howling lounge-lizard vox, belting out sub-par hippie lyrics, and something that would be the favorite band of private press outsider music fanatics.



32. Bob Dylan *Great White Wonder*

1969, USA. (Not On Label)

Widely considered the first ever bootleg LP published in late 1969, and the first release by LA bootleg stalwarts Trademark of Quality. The first edition was a completely blank gatefold double LP, with white labels, hence its nickname which became the title. One year after the initial release, numerous bootleggers had bootlegged the bootlegger, and added a rubberstamp of the title or in some cases just the initials "G.W.W.". This was an odd year for clandestine Dylan releases, as bootlegged editions of Dylan's logorrhea debut *Tarantula* copied from circulated galleys from an aborted 1966 publication were increasingly doing the rounds, selling briskly in headshops and alternative book stores around the world as a reaction to how a official publication date finally had been announced three years after the galley. I have never been interested in Bob Dylan, but following the publication of Clinton Heylin's exceptional history of bootlegs and bootlegging, "G.W.W.", like the Sony Walkman, the first Nintendo console, or *Rocket 88* by Jackie Brenston and his Delta Cats came to symbolize a seismic cultural shift, and therefore became a fascinating vinyl artifact.



33. Fela Ransome Kuti And His Africa 70 *Fela Fela Fela*

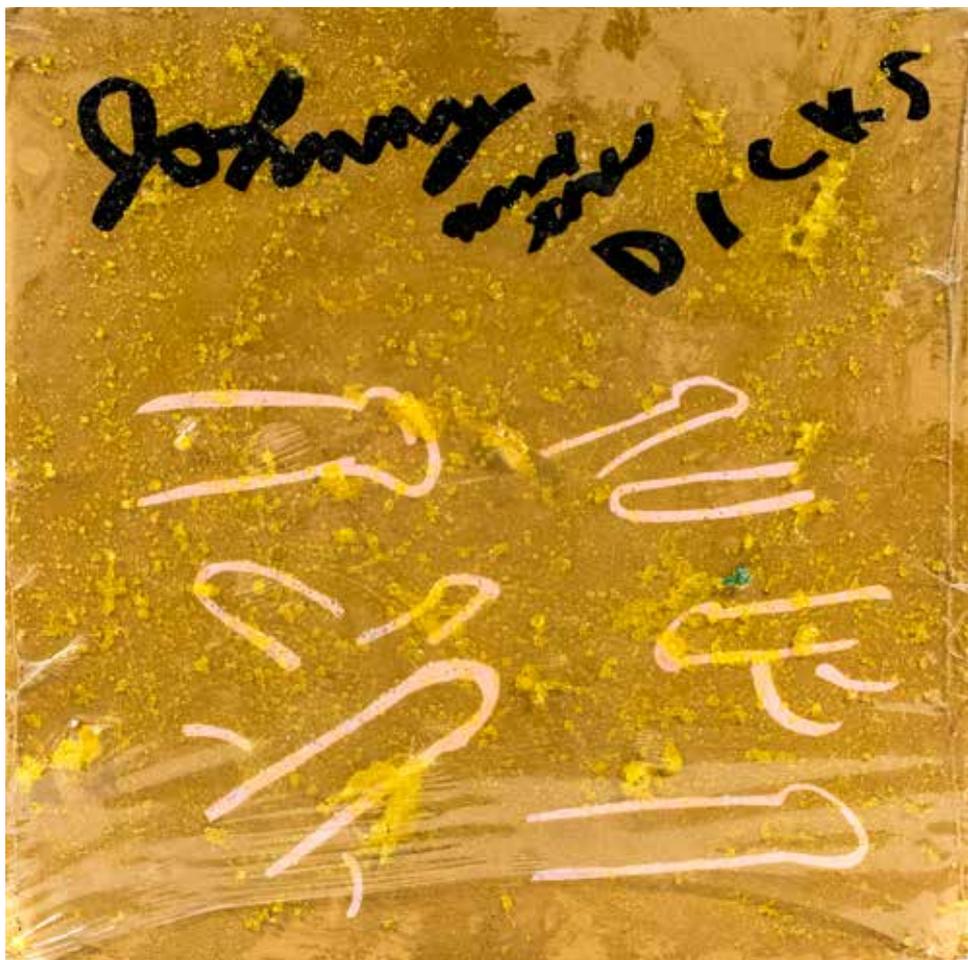
1970, Nigeria. His Master's Voice / HNLX 5033

The dumbest thing I've done to date as a record collector, was when I sold all my Fela Kuti LPs when I moved to New York in 1989. I just figured that I could buy them again cheap in New York. Fela played Sweden a lot, and it was always amazing: he'd be booked at the government-sponsored multi-cultural jazz and blues festivals and always completely kill it: for the duration of the set, all shapes, and colors and microtribes of people would come together and jam out. Nigerian pressed Fela Kuti vinyl would be available for cheap at the merch stand, and alternative Swedish music distribution outlets would regularly stock African music, so my Fela Kuti collection was pretty awesome, and the records were way cheap (in Sweden back then). It took me years, and years (and years) to get my collection back together. In the 90s and 00s, before internet record collecting had completely taken over, there were quite a few great dealers of African records in New York, and the records were still sort of cheap. The endless complexity of the Fela Kuti discography never ceased to amaze, and each record was a new revelation. This pre-afro beat Fela album is a perfect example of that insanely hard-swinging funky highlife sound that once heard will never completely leave your nervous system. Like most Fela Kuti albums, it is wrapped in a sleeve that is a masterpiece of understated graphic design.



34. K.Frimpong & His Cubano Fiestas *K.Frimpong & His Cubano Fiestas*
1976, Ghana. Ofo Bros / OFBLS 1011

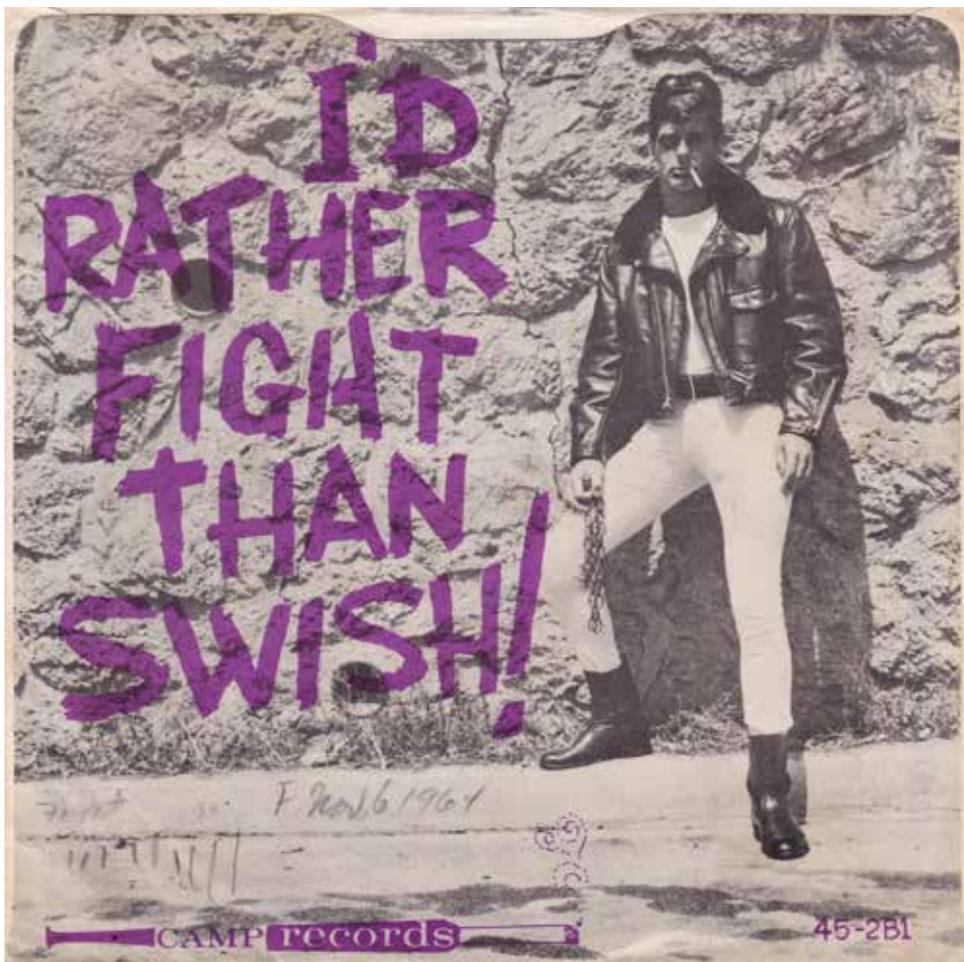
About 20-odd years ago, I found out about the Ghanaian highlife master Alhaji Kwabena Frimpong and got completely obsessed. I could not get enough of the hard-swinging lyrical highlife scene of the 1970s and tried to hear as much as I possibly could. When you collect West African records, any notion you have about mint condition goes out the window immediately: these records went to A LOT of really good parties, and when they show up they are often snacked beyond belief with the vinyl shredded and the sleeves sometimes containing actual bugs and beetles. Illustrating this, what we have here is the three consecutive copies I acquired of my favorite K Frimpong album. The first one I obtained was a Ghana pressing where I had to listen to the record while frying some fish in order to overcome the skips and the noisy snaps crackles and pops (knisper, knasper and knusper in Dutch) of the vinyl. The second copy I bought was a Nigerian later pressing, still pretty snacked, but infinitely more playable, and hey it didn't skip. And finally, in 2011 when K Frimpong had gotten on the American reissue label radar, a copy of said reissue. So what does this mean? Well: the Japanese have the concept of wabi-sabi, where the worn and faded and scratched and rubbed crustiness develops its own aesthetic merit, and becomes a source of contemplation and meditation on the transient nature of existence and all that. Sometimes when I go to record shops and record fairs, I derive a perverse joy of seeing (and sometimes buying) records that are absolutely trashed. Sometimes, because of the rarity of the record, the beat up copy is your only option, but once in a while, it is fun to pick up a snacked record in a shredded sleeve and daydream about all the places that disc went and all the turntables it landed upon before it found its way to the dollar bin.



35. Johnny & the Dicks *Johnny & the Dicks*

1978, USA. (Self-released)

John Morton is and remains an American master in this house. For the past, oh, 30 years or so, *Agitated* by his mid-70s proto-punk band the Electric Eels has been the first record I've played after setting up my turntable and stereo in a new home. For the uninitiated, the pure godlike goodness of the first Electric Eels 45 (midwived by Jon Savage and Jim Jones who convinced Rough Trade to release it in 1980) is one of those few and rare examples where a rock 45 can be compared to a triumphant natural setting, a perfect spaghetti, or a kiss from a loved one. Following the demise of the Electric Eels, John Morton brought his work to a yet higher pinnacle of clarity and formed Johnny and the Dicks. No instruments, no rehearsals, no songs, no lyrics, no vinyl no nothing. Just a record cover. That's it. And boy is that a good record (cover).



36. B. Bubba *I'd Rather Fight Than Swish / I'd Rather Swish Than Fight*
1964, USA. Camp Records / 45-2B1

There's always a new area to plunge into, and the secret world of Gay Ghetto records is completely fascinating. Gay oriented records were promoted within the emergent gay consumer market from the early 1960s. Many were by drag queens - no doubt to be sold at clubs or performances - but the most fertile label from this period was the CAMP label it is thought out of Los Angeles: they released about a dozen singles and two albums during 1964 and 1965, which were well advertised in the gay magazines and catalogues of the period.

All the singles had picture sleeves, and this example is the most pungent as well as the funniest, capturing it does the very basic binary gay code of butch and bitch on one single 45. On the A side, an obviously deep voice declares that he Would Rather Fight Than Swish, undercut all the time by an obvious flamer who sabotages such rudimentary machismo. The flamer gets to wax lyrical on the other side, where she declares that she Would Rather Swish Than Fight. The choice is yours.

Despite the sterling work done by J.D.Doyle at Queermusicheritage.com, very little is still known about who played and voiced - and indeed who released - these extraordinary documents. The butch/bitch dichotomy was explored a couple of years later on the album released on the Mira label out of LA, Teddy and Darrel's *These Are The Hits You Silly Savage* - including extremely camp versions of "Wild Thing", "These Boots Are Made For Walking" and of course, "Strangers in the Night".



37. Incredible Bongo Band *Bongo Rock*

1973, USA. Pride / PRD 0028

For a lot of New Yorkers, “Apache” by the Incredible Bongo Band is the true anthem of the city, and arguably the track (and break) the most central to the hip hop narrative that in turn is at the core of the New York City identity. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to organize the record collection of Afrika Bambaataa, as it became a part of the Hip Hop History Archive at Cornell University. At least 50,000 records in several storage spaces in several zip codes all had to be alphabetized and identified and described. It was a pretty monumental task. These records were the work tools of an active DJ, and also the real-time metadata research by Bam as he discovered and unearthed many of the breaks and tracks that came to be the foundation for hip hop, in my opinion the most important artform of the late 20th century. As a record collector with a disorganized collection (there is bupkis alphabetical order to be found anywhere in my house), I was pleased to notice that Bambaataa would buy multiple copies of his favorite records. He happily admitted that he’d often misplace a great record, and have to buy another one to gain access to it for a DJ set. This is one of several copies of *Bongo Rock* that we found in his collection.

DINAMITE FUNK MUSIC



38. DJ Cuca *Dinamite Funk Music*

1989, Brazil. TNT Records / LP DN 0101

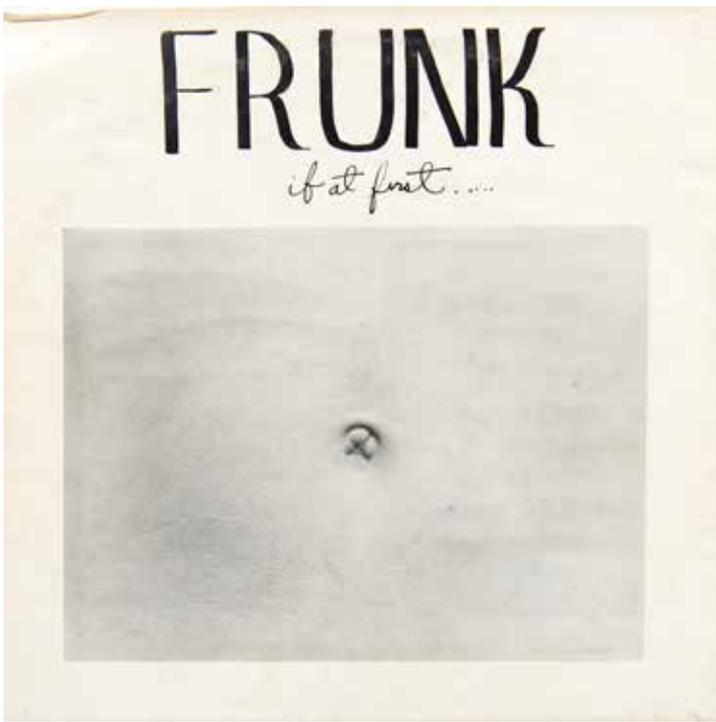
All is not lost: there are still amazing records that aren't on Discogs or Popsike or blogs or want lists. The exceptional collector and enthusiast Gregg Turkington who constantly tours as the comedian Neil Hamburger tells me that the thrift stores and goodwills and flea markets of America are still full of undiscovered gems. Friends who travel to Latin America tell me that the record stores there constantly blow their minds. This 12" by a late 1980s Brazilian hip hop DJ is absolutely shocking in its forward thinking, dynamic and crazy soundscapes and monster beats. If this record was made last week it would still be ahead of its time. I bought it for a euro at last years' Utrecht record fair.



39. Totenkopf *Ann Arbor*

1978, France. Agression Record / ARS 01

I'll admit it: the older I get, the less time I have for sloppy nihilistic noise on the gramophone. Ironic and all that, considering how much time I spent in my teens through thirties obsessing over primitive shit music. On occasion, I'll listen to Drunks with Guns, or the Fuckin' Flyin'A-Heads or (gasp) even Mahogany Brain or a difficult Nurse With Wound LP, but when I do, it seems like more and more often the context that the experience lands in, is more of amazement that the racket actually happened and ended up on vinyl than actual enjoyment. This one is so noisy that I felt my bourgie limitation halfway through the first song. It is an odd one: A French youth-man by the name of Bruno Rooke traveled to the Swedish small town of Karlstad in the late 1970s and recorded a screeching trainwreck of a rock-noise album with his cousin and his cousin's buddy. The result is a exercise in Stooges/MC5 filtered through Mahogany Brain/NWW-list free noise that truly stands outside of time and place. It is wildly unpretentious and quite childlike in its attack, but also mired in the absolute self-awareness of record collecting knowitall-ness: you can hear echoes of Amon Duul, Neu, Can, Les Rallisez Denudes, Cro-Magnon and the Godz, and in a way it doesn't really matter if Bruno Rooke was aware of any of these bands or their idiom or not. He made something amazing happen, recorded it himself, and released it himself. Outside of space and time like all great art.



40. Frunk *If At First*
1972, USA. RPC / Z69821



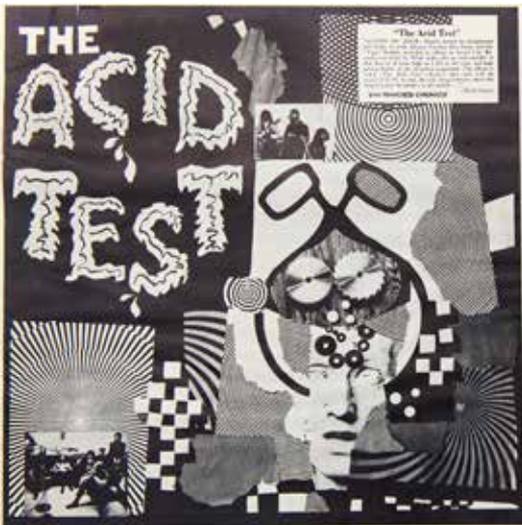
41. Culturcide *Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-Revolutionary America*
1986, USA. (Self-released)

Many moons ago, the visionaries and trail blazers at Re/Search publications produced a book called *Incredibly Strange Music* where record collectors and underground culture notables got to futz around in their record collection and talk about their most mind-boggling vinyl. This was decades before the internet, where all digging was archeological and physical. For neophytes and collecting youthmen like myself at the time, this book opened up the possibilities dormant in the used record shop, checking out sections previously ignored, and perusing the cheap section with great relish. Back then, the obscure, absurd and downright weird more often than not ended up in the cheapie section, as the dictatorship of obscurity did not generally rule yet, even if there was flickers of that in Northern Soul, psychedelia and punk collecting. Through legendary and brilliant record dealer Paul Major, a lot of us became aware of the Frunk album for the first time. This is karaoke rock at its finest or foulest or weirdest. A bunch of smooth-singing teenage girls in New Jersey sing on top of actual hit records of the time, expertly blended by an audiophile engineer who subsequently pressed the recording up as a microedition of 25 with handmade covers. The record is oddly uncanny and spooky, notwithstanding the prettiness of the vocals: Something is just not right. An oddly dark and weird listening experience, and a record where the very existence of it remains absurd.

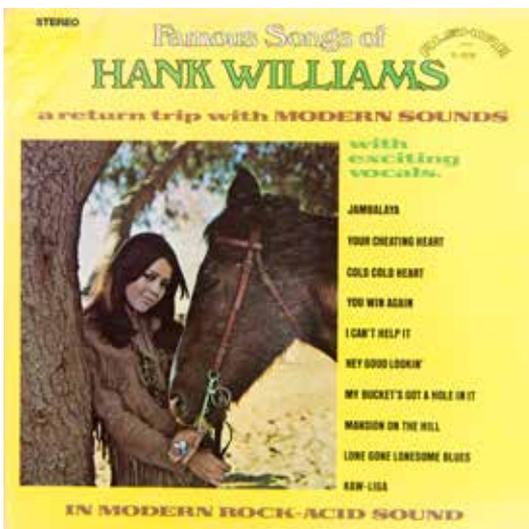
15 years later Perry Webb/Mark Flood, Dan Workman and Ralf Armin Kaethner recorded *Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-Revolutionary America* under the name Culturcide. This sublime LP is the mirror image: noise guitar and effects sit on top of the top 40 hits of 1987 alongside Perry Webb's scathing and hilarious situationist lyrics drowning out the original voices. Bruce Springsteen, Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney, Pat Benatar et al get demolished and detoured karaoke-style on this masterful LP.



42. LSD Underground 12 *LSD Underground 12*
1966, USA. (Not On Label)



43. Ken Kesey *The Acid Test*
1966, USA. Sound City

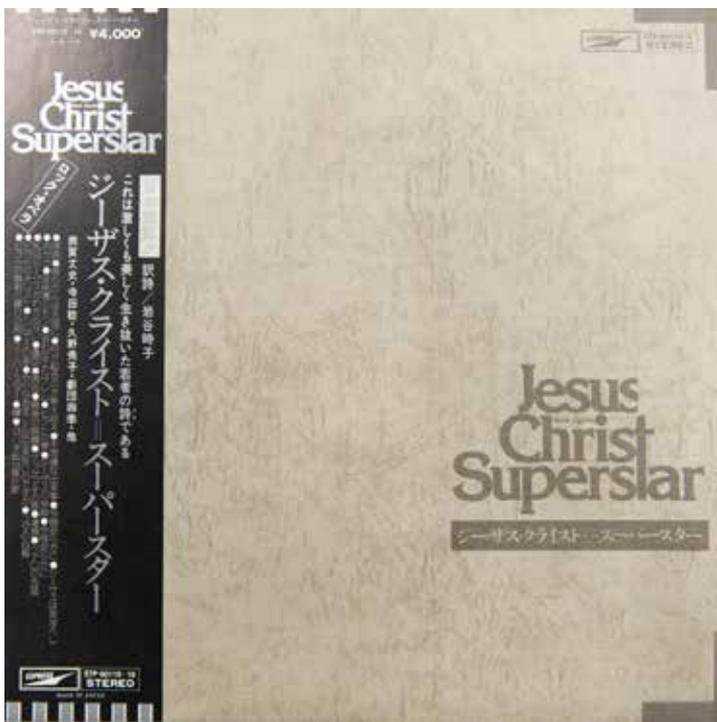


44. Modern Sounds
*Famous Songs of Hank Williams:
A Return Trip With Modern Sounds*
1969, USA. Alshire / S-5136

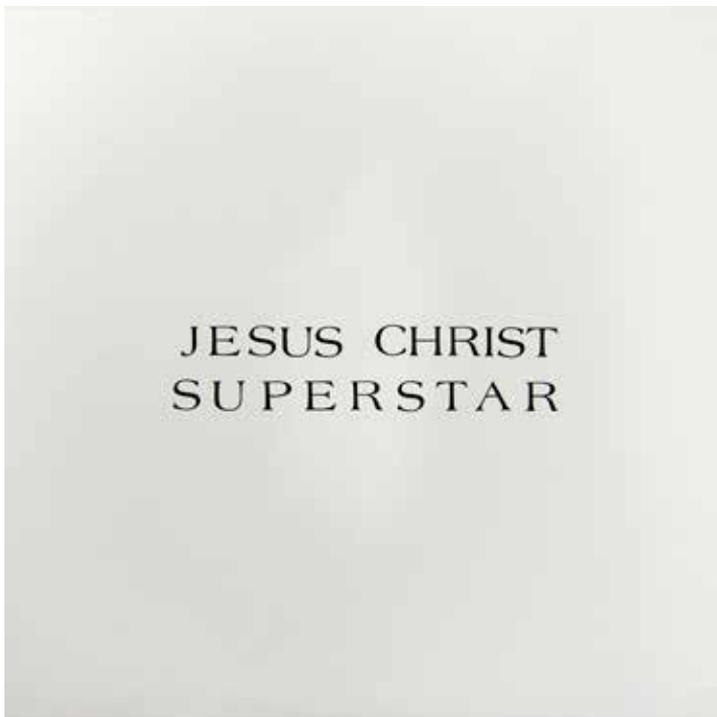
This LP of Hank Williams covers issued by the 101 Strings label Alshire contains some sort of hidden truth about hallucinogenic drugs, and also the 1960s counter-culture trickle-down that you might actually not have to trip balls in order to fully grasp.

LSD was still legal until the late Fall of 1966, and was a media event and a moral panic throughout that year that is difficult to understand these days when gourmet psilocybin chocolate bars are being passed around at upscale Hamptons summer parties. If you were young and hip, LSD was what you wanted to ingest, if you were old and out of touch, it terrified you. If you were in between, curious yet frightened, clueless but still with a rebellious sideburn length, well then by 1969 you might be the target market rube for an LP of Hank Williams covers recorded “in modern acid-rock sound” as the sleeve says.

The excellent chronicler of psychedelic culture Patrick Lundborg was obsessed with the LSD Underground 12 LP. He claimed that it was the first example of a LP recorded under the influence of LSD, and that it pre-dated the notorious Ken Kesey *Acid Test* LP. Far be it from me and my straightness to issue any opinion on this, but of the two LPs, LSD Underground 12 provides a true sense of the otherness of the psychedelic experience, in a similar fashion to the Alan Watts LP mentioned earlier. Ken Kesey as a psychedelic Tristan Tzara set against the lugubrious and didactic Bretonesque Timothy Leary is crystal-clear on the legendary *Acid Test* LP – these throwaway recordings of stoned insider jokes and Grateful Dead strictly b-roll bluesy noodling manages to provide a Folkways-esque audio insight to what was cooking in the hippie skillet before the grease had congealed. You get a sense of the non-formulaic nature of American hippie prior to Monterey, prior to Woodstock, prior to rebellious-length sideburns and the stale sounds of an acid rock Hank Williams covers LP.



45a. Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice *Jesus Christ Superstar*
(Original Japanese Cast Recording)
1976, Japan. Express / ETP 60115-6



45b. The Manasquan High School Chorus Presents *Jesus Christ Superstar*
1982, USA. RPC / 596071/2/3/4

I really can't go into this topic deeply here, and you sure as salt don't want me to, but start by considering that only a third or so of the Japanese population consider themselves religious, and among those that do, the split is pretty much even between Shinto (which to me as an uninformed westerner is more of a spiritual path and a belief in the world as organism) and Buddhism. Neither one of these faiths seem to have much at all to do with Christianity, and I am furthermore pretty certain that the depth of knowledge of Christianity among the average Japanese person is no more thorough than my knowledge of Shinto. So when the audiences streamed into Japanese theaters back in the 1970s to check out Andrew Lloyd Weber's blockbuster musical on the life of Christ, was the tale just a quaint backdrop to the rousing lightweight rock opera slash musical theatre?

Hard to say and hard to understand. We see so much spiritual kitsch everywhere these days, most of it being bourgeoisie water-downs of eastern thought via yoga or hippie or Gwyneth Paltrow, so as I drop the Japanese cast version of *Jesus Christ Superstar* on the turntable, is what I am hearing the sound of a Cargo Cult? Is this all just another layer of imperialist hoo-hah by the nation that conquered not only the Japanese nation, but also demoted its emperor from his god-like status? The cultural weirdness of this record is difficult to grasp, but really fun to think about. Especially if you used to watch the Japanese version of *Iron Chef* on TV. Chairman Kaga sings the role of Jesus.

Among the many, many phenomenal records Paul Major has introduced me to over the decades, this might be the greatest one. A mid-Long Island high school performing *Jesus Christ Superstar* in its entirety. Inept, heartfelt, unintentionally psychedelic, primitive, gorgeous – it ticks every box. I sometimes think about art made by children, as I have framed art by my own children all over my home, and I can't really think of any visuals that I respond to with more emotional urgency, and more of a Proustian reverb. Maybe music made by children and/or adolescents has some of that same immediacy, where you grab your musical crayons and color outside of the lines, or where it is OK for the sky to be green and the ocean purple, and only you decide how many legs an ostrich actually has. In the wake of punk, both the 60s garage variety and the 70s and 80s variety, there were quite a few bands who put out records with members in their early teens, once in a while even younger. That immediacy and spontaneous nature can be found on this delirious, mysterious central Long Island vanity pressing.



46. The MD's *Brain Damage*

1981, Puerto Rico. Surgeon Records / MD-001

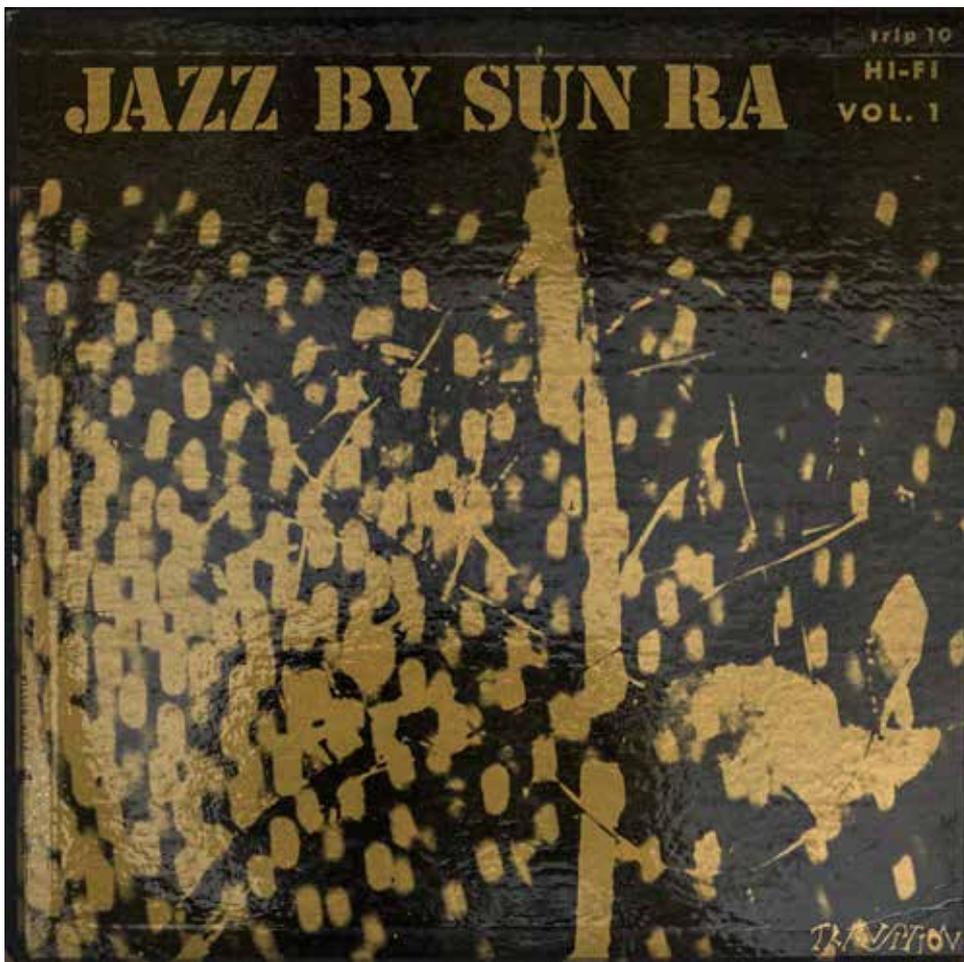
Some records are so perfect that they can come across as pre-fab; if someone would have told me back in the punk days that future me would completely plotz over a Puerto Rican pre-med student vanity/private pressing punk/wave record, I would have thanked them for their comment and rapidly moved to the other side of the room. Well: here it is though, and it is amazing. Punk ragers with that outsider stance of unpredictable non-formula does not show up that often as late in the game as 1981 unless the record stems from a non-obvious locale, like Puerto Rico. Top shelf stuff, with a similar fevered blaze to favorite Mexican punk bands of the same era, like Rebel D'Punk or Dangerous Rhythm.



47. The Sonics *Explosives*

1974, USA. BuckShot Records / BSR 001

This April 1973 compilation of The Sonics' best stuff is released a mere whiff of a whiff after the actual records. Eight years. What is that? So, the years between the original releases of The Sonics' albums and this reissue spanned all punk futurity in a sense: Mark Shipper writing the liner notes for this compilation quotes Wayne Davis: "It's like if delta blues oughta be played by old black men, and if fag rock oughta be played by real queers, then it stands to reason that punk-rock oughta be played by punks!"



48. Sun Ra *Jazz By Sun Ra Vol.1*

1957, USA. Transition / TRLP 10

Sun Ra's first full-length LP on Transition is a legendary rarity. Spotty distribution, a fragile sleeve, and a gloriously beautiful insert booklet where Sun Ra talks about his own future, which came to pass. I could have included any number of Sun Ra records on this list, as they are pretty much all magical talismans, whether they are privately released on his own Saturn label, or released by mainstream jazz imprints, or by obscure European labels, I have to date never come across a Sun Ra record less than amazing, as I never saw him put on a live performance that was any less than wonderful, and I must have seen him perform 40 or 50 times. His picture hangs over my stereo, and a week does not go by without listening to his music. It is extraordinary to flip through the little booklet that comes with the first edition of *Jazz by Sun Ra*. It is all there: his politics, his humanism, his open-minded and open-ended musicality, the mystery of Mr. Ra, in 1957.



49. Parabellum *Sacrilegio*

1987, Colombia. Discos Fuentes / Especial-001

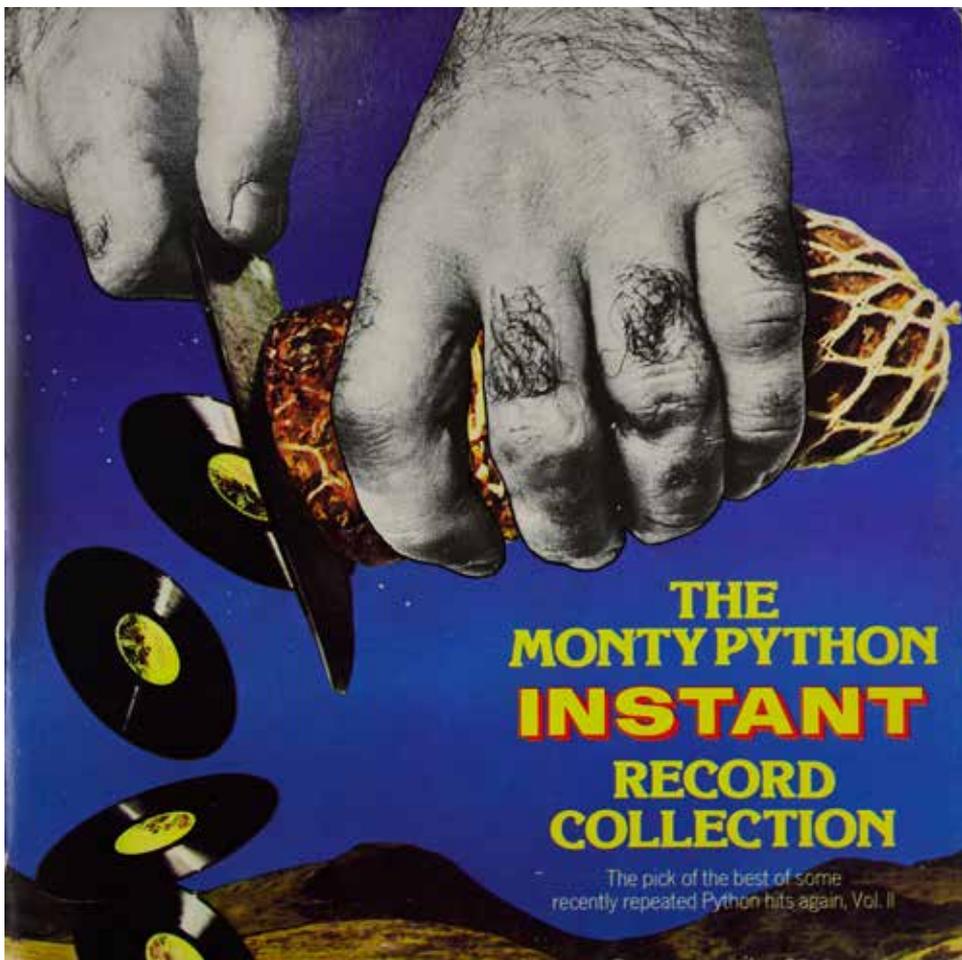
Oh Parabellum, how I love thee, let me count the ways... one – two – three – 668!*

The Void of black-proto-death-power-speed-metal, or maybe, uh, the Chronic Sick, these Columbian geniuses released two 12" EPs in the mid-80s that a lot of sort of post-punk post-hardcore post-industrial noise-clowns like myself got obsessed with. For a few years in the mid-1980s, it wasn't uncommon that people stoked on underground music would jump genres wildly, no contradiction between being into say Rock in Opposition and Skullflower and Slayer and Galaxie 500 and Hanatarash at the same time. Parabellum still sound absolutely extraordinary. Completely original, and masters of a certain kind of murky subterranean harshness that you have to look pretty far to find: Flipper's *Gone Fishin*, the first Drunks With Guns LP, the Mayhem *Deathcrush 12"*, and not much else. The music manages to simultaneously be completely chaotic and unpredictable and as meticulous as say Magma, who oddly enough they also remind me of. The geezer says: "I don't always listen to harsh noise, but when I do I prefer Parabellum. Stay metal my friend."

* The neighbor of the beast, natch.

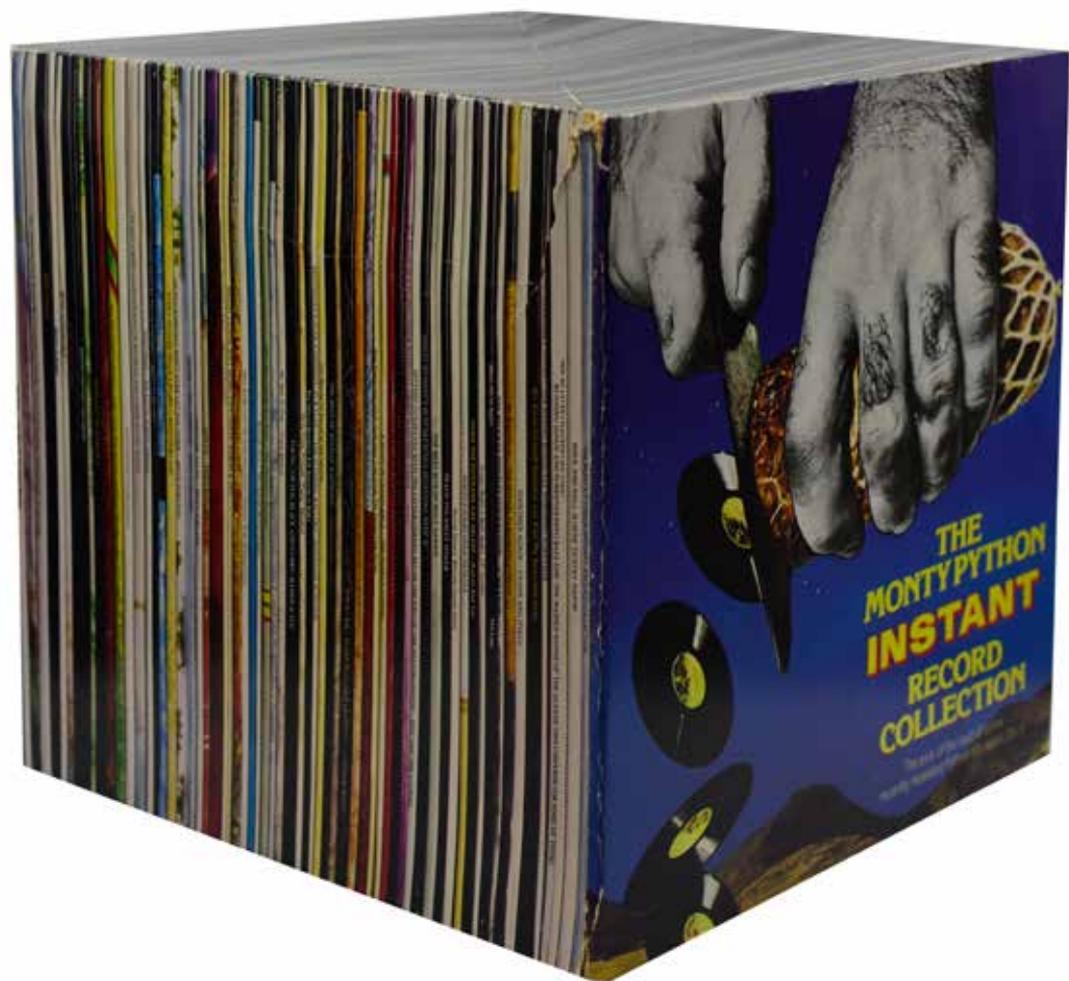
I became a Beatles fan at the age of 34 which is weird. Due to the year of my birth, and also to punk identity, alongside a contrarian inclination of some severity, and finally the fact that my parents played the blue and the red double album constantly alongside their respective ultra-whack favorite artists, (Helen Reddy and Neil Diamond) I never connected to the Fabs. Then, well advancing towards middle age it hit me pretty hard. I got obsessed with the craft of the Beatles, and following that, obsessed with the raging id and super-ego of the band. I read every Beatles book I could find, and listened to dozens upon dozens of Beatles bootlegs. It was fun. As far as ludicrous cultural rabbit-holes go, I can think of worse ones than the relentless amounts of gatherings of outtakes, rough mixes, incomplete takes, false starts, alternate versions etc. ad nauseum that inhabit the Beatle-bootleg universe. With some regularity you'll find works of art so splendidly fucked up that they could only have been executed by shackle-less musicians with limitless budgets, drugs and studio time. Backwards glockenspiel? Check. Tibetan monks flown in especially to breathe on the keys of a mellotron? Check. More industrial strength laboratorium quality LSD? Double Check.

Sometimes the results are as sublime as it gets: the 12" 45 rpm bootleg of two alternate extended versions of "What A Shame Mary Jane Had A Pain At The Party" is a masterpiece of unrestrained self-indulgence. A Fonthill Abbey of musical architecture featuring four William Beckfords. And the Beckford comparison holds water I think: there are plenty of examples of non-awesome people with the ability to create beyond the boundaries of taste and reason (hi Kanye) where the result is boring. With the Beatles, their most self-indulgent relentless and absurd material is completely fantastic and endlessly fascinating. I mean, even the parodies can become some of the best art I know: The Residents' first LP is a monument of incidental collage music and hyper-intelligent pop culture parody. It could not really have been wrapped inside of anything except a Beatles parody sleeve. Neil Innes' from the Bonzo Dog Band's Beatles pastiches and parodies as seen and heard in the 1978 Beatles mockumentary *The Rutles – Let It Rut* are the most phenomenal little inside-out deconstructions of Beatles tunes, an example of appropriation art that does not suck at all, for once.



BONUS. Monty Python *The Monty Python Instant Record Collection*
1977, UK. Charisma / CAS 1134

Lastly, a record that can be yours for less than a euro on Discogs, and which is an absolute conceptual masterpiece of packaging and content. I grew up on Monty Python, as did my kids, as will my grandkids. This instant record collection folds out into a perfect cube complete with vicious mainstream rock parody metadata and a precise, brutal and hilarious gathering of Monty Python greatest hits in the grooves. A perfect record.



The Psycho-Geography of Record Fairs by Johan Kugelberg

The commodification of all forms of culture – turning all its aspects into saleable things – and the rise of mass communications led to revolutionary potential easily being diverted, sometimes turned reactionary. – Guy Debord

I.

Do we collect records awake or dreaming?

Are we fueled by what the ancient Greeks called *enthousiasmos*: the ecstasy of the soul when it is communicating with a deity?

What does a record fair mean?

What happens at the record fair?

How do we feel while we are there?

How do we feel when we anticipate it?

Where does its powerful allure come from?

How have things changed as we nowadays fester in alienated consumption on Ebay and Discogs?

II.

Does it matter what time you get in to the record fair?

Whether you get in at four o' clock for an extra 20 bucks, or if you arrive with the average joe at six o' clock? Or for that matter, if you chum up to a dealer and procure a coveted pass in the guise of being his helper. You know: like Santa's little. What records are found during that first two hours? What records are found during load-in? Rifling through a half-open box as the dealer subdues his cardiac-arrest in mid-shlep -- powerlessly reflecting that the only exercise he's had since hauling boxes at the last record fair is hauling boxes at this record fair.

What records are found during load-out?

Who are those members of the true lumpen proletariat of record fairs who pursue the bins at a leisurely stroll in the last hours of the last day of the fair? Not only are they in true abject of the bump and grind of opening night, but blissfully indifferent to the feverish transactions fueled by existential urgency that in some cases took place before the dealer had even removed his records from the u-haul! There is a certain never-say-die panache of subtle one-upmanship when you spot someone you remember as a hardcore collector from way-back strolling into the WFMU fair at noon on Sunday (last day) carelessly flicking through a bin or two. Dark are the stories told around camp fires cross country of said careless stroller purchasing a copy of the Mystic Zephyr 4 album in the WFMU station-benefit dollar bin on Sunday afternoon. "True story" sighs the hobo-esque record dealer who told the tale, emitting air in small puffs from a pursed mouth.

Does desire get satisfied? Is the strife of this love inside a dream?

Does the record sell for more on Discogs? (the dealer dreads and the punter hopes)

Does the record sell for less on Ebay? (the punter dreads and the dealer hopes).

Has a bumpkin rented a table on behalf of his family, selling the personal collection of his recently deceased uncle, the editor in chief of a prominent hippie-era underground magazine, pricing all records and artifacts at two euros each, with the exception of the records that are unplayed, and come with the press kit, in which case they are four euros, or in case they are on a small label he has never heard of in which case he is selling them for one euro each?

Yes. Dare I say yes. And then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes, and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

And then we awoke. Alas it was only a dream.

All the world is a record fair, and we are rarely players, mere punters and portrayers.

I was sitting in a chapel, at the funeral of an acquaintance, noticing a long line of strangers cueing up to the coffin. The man at the front of the cue laid his hand on the coffin and exclaimed: "Excellent! Would do business again! Five stars!". He stepped away. The next man walked up: "Smooth transaction, great seller, thanks!" And the next one: "A great ebayer with great shipping and perfect communication! A plus!" This continued for quite some time. And then I awoke.

III.

The record fair with the most fear in the room is doubtlessly New York City's WFMU. There are plenty of unspeakably great and wildly rare records in the room, all haunted by the translucent scepter of pure paranoid angst. I whisper his name: Popsike, I whisper his other name: Ebay, and the other names: Discogs, The Most Unclean, The Little Whore, Beelzebub, Son of Partition, Lucifer.

This demon sides up to the dealer, who is holding a vanity pressing he just took out of his box of records that he has yet to price. He couldn't find any information on the record on-line, and not only does the record have a massive break on it, but also one song with a wild fuzz guitar solo, and one long tranced-out track with bongos and a flute.

A back-pack wearing crate-digger wrapped in Evisu and Visvim with his record bag on wheels in tow asks him how much he wants for it. He wipes the sweat from his brow.

How much do you want to pay for it?
I don't know. How much you want for it?

Well it is pretty rare...

The spectre is whispering in both ears simultaneously...

I hear Cut Chemist is looking for it...I need to look it up on Popsike to see how much it is worth...It is on a Japanese comp...Maybe I should put it on Ebay... Is it on Discogs...Has someone used that break... I shouldn't spend a lot on a record as the fair has just opened...

The complex inter-personal dynamic between these two gents could give Tove Jansson or William Faulkner a one for the money and a two for the record show.

Whether you believe that the Ebay/Discogs-demon is real, or assess him as a figment of our imagination, or for that matter, address the concept of the demon as a half-baked metaphor used by a slovenly writer for his pursuit of moral judgments, you gotta admit that M.R. James would have had something to say about the eerie and uncanny emotional landscape of the WFMU record fair. Guy Debord would have flailed and shouted about its abject psycho-geography, spilling his calvados. And Pieter Breugel would have pulled his pencil out and started sketching, and Jacques Brel would have written a lyric about lost souls mired in life-long paralysis. But I jest, just a little bit. A VG minus of jest.

IV.

This year, the WFMU record fair was less rugged than it had been for many years. I am trying to understand why. The reheated pizza was still miserable. You couldn't buy coffee. The live radio broadcast transmitting from the event kept the already nasty booming slap of the noisy room marinating in a constant of avant-improv and free noise. This was inter-spliced with the grating voices of the DJ's: 30- and 40- and 50-somethings who feel like they are 20-somethings. "Not that there is anything wrong with that", said the glass-house to the brick.

The dealers were in a particularly foul mood even prior to the commencement of the fair, caused by the record load-in, seemingly based on cattle-loading techniques originating in Chicago slaughterhouses. The additional cause of the dealers' collective irritation being the habit of European crate-diggers to unpack their boxes for them, and not stopping when yelled at, as the diggers were all listening to particularly slamming break-beats on their Beats By Dre headphones. There was also a fair share of dealers who were truly miffed that nothing was really selling, and that the quality and knowledge of the clientele had really gone down the toilet. This assessment of the record fair situation becomes formally executed earlier for each year that passes. Rumor has it that a northern soul dealer started bitching before the dealers were actually let in to set up.

Notwithstanding all this and that and more, as I said, this year the WFMU record fair was less nasty and I just realized why: The ultra-harsh fluorescent tube lighting of yore had been replaced by something slightly less harsh. Apparently the numerous fashion fairs that are held in the space had all complained that the light made the customers look grotesque. Oddly enough, with the splendid new lighting and all, some people at the WFMU fair still looked a bit on the grotesque side, a tad, a smidge. Like they'd stepped out of a drawing by Pieter Breugel. But I jest, I do jest.

V.

Utrecht, Utrecht, how do I love thee?

When I attempt to convince other New York dealers and collectors to just go buy a plane ticket already, and visit what I think is the best record fair in the world, my rap usually starts with the anecdote about the 6" 8" collector of Kim Wilde picture sleeves that sided up next to me as I was pouring over some bin at the Utrecht fair:

"Hallo! I am Dieter from Germany" he howled.

"Howyadoin" I mumbled.

"I am doing so good!" he bellowed. "I have found so many today! So many Kim Wilde picture sleeve 45's! I collect Kim Wilde picture sleeves! What do you collect?"

For a split second that nasty cultural cynicism almost overtook me.

You know the kind: Where you choose to ridicule the enthusiasm of somebody else because what they like doesn't fit your perception of what is cool. A powerful and dangerous mindset which rules many roosts of white middle class boys, an often applied survival kit for the person who was bullied in school, themselves becoming taste-bullies, or in worst case scenarios, taste-nazis.

I didn't fall into that trap.

"Kim Wilde! Cool!" I exclaimed. "I am looking for European disco 45's with ridiculous sleeve art" I told him.

"OK!" yelled Dieter, rainman-style. "I will tell you if I find some! Please tell me if you see really cool 45's by Kim Wilde!"

"Sure will" I replied.

Dieter wandered off, or rather, slanted off.

I watched his permed red hair bop down the record fair alleyway, disappearing behind a couple of Matrix-goths. I remember thinking how unbelievably psyched I was that I had met Dieter, and how Dieter's raging enthusiasm for an artist best described as marginal was exactly the kind of holy quest that acted as a solid counter-weight to the kind of besserwisser mentality that usually reigns at record fairs.

But then I started looking around: There were Dieter's everywhere. Even the sour British psychedelic fatso dealers had a certain *je nais c'est qui* of merriment that the very same dealers certainly were devoid of at the London record fair a couple of weeks later.

Why was this?

Well: It is Holland. The Dutch have an extremely old merchant class, and with that, they have the aspirational refinement and tolerance of said class. You don't want to piss off customers, notwithstanding who those customers are, what they believe or what color their skin has. You also want to make sure that the success of your business leads to your kids having a better life than you, which means that knowledge, or how knowledge is stored, is respected whether it is books or records or paintings or ledgers or museums. It can also bring about a cosmopolitan hedonism, which it too is good, international ideas of what is arousing, amusing or intoxicating brought to you by people from all over the world, trading in your most splendidly international ports.

VI.

The fair is tightly run, very professional. It is held in the middle of a ridiculously huge mega-complex that this very same weekend holds a giant sale of collectibles (Dutch kitsch rivals that of Ohio) as well as a book fair and a comic book fair, which means that if your attention deficit disorder is keeping you in check that day, you can wander away from the vinyl and Dieter, to enjoy the company of Dieter's friend who is the world's foremost collector and dealer of Rice Krispie box prizes (did you know that Snap, Crackle and Pop are Knisper, Knasper and Knusper in Dutch?). Look! His neighbor who will provide your life-span need for Italian erotic comic book figurines.

I am hard fetched to come up with a true downside to the Utrecht Record Fair. The closest I get to bitching is about the food, but the Dutch fast food also fascinates. It truly is in the spirit of Pieter Breugel and Hieronymous Bosch. It is grotesque: There are three foodstuffs avoided by the international record dealers, and eagerly gulped by the Dutch: Frikandellen, Kroketten and Waffles.

The Waffles are gigantic and drenched in syrup, powdered sugar, sugary preserves, chocolate and whipped cream. They are what you think people eat at the country fair. I'd argue that the smacked-out sugar OD would even intimidate an eleven year old boy.

Frikandellen are extremely fucked up: A rectangular chunk of minced mystery meat (pork? chicken? cow? alpaca?) are deep fried not so much to golden perfection, more to gray/brown grease-bombage. The dense rectangle is then sliced down its length, smothered in peanut sauce, and served on a bun. Fucked. There are rumors that the peculiarly Dutch curry-flavored ketchup is also utilized.

The Kroketten is or can be minced chicken or pork mixed with mashed potatoes, béarnaise sauce and vegetables, coated with a splendidly thick batter and then having its daylights fried out of it. The taste is oddly breakfast cereal-esque, with an added specialty flavoring of White Castle onion rings. Pretty damn scary.

The international dealers sustain themselves on French fries. But beware: If the Dutch are left to their own devices, and the lionshare of the fast food professionals at the record fair are Dutch, they'll smother your fries in what they call "frit saus". This is mayonnaise as we know it. Adding a layer of fat to the layer of fat. The never-say-die battle cry of junk food connoisseurship as your arteries are visibly hardening for each and every terminal bite.

VII.

There are records everywhere. Records records records. In the morning of the Friday, which is dealer day and setup day at Utrecht, the vitality of the airspace is positively shimmering. People from all over the world are unpacking their wares. Overseas dealers are pacing the floor waiting for their international expedited parcel full of rare vinyl from their home country. Records that aren't that rare in their home country, but that hopefully will fetch a fortune here in Utrecht. Plane tickets, hotels and meals are dear, so one must hope that the Peruvian, Brazilian and Mexican dealers have a mark-up of at least a few thousand percent.

I hightail it over to the Mexican dealers first. Almost every year, I've found something special: talismans of pure magic, that sort of thing, usually in scratchy VG- condition, with picture sleeves as distressed and faded as the bizarro-world denim of upscale boutiques. There are rare records and then there are rare records, and then there are fucking rare records: As my collection of Mexican 70s punk is completed by the acquisition of the 'Rock En El Chopo' triple-LP, I marvel at the absurd ecstasy of this endorphin-rush, set in motion whence internet rumors, old discographies and fanzine articles gel together on the ol' want-list, reaching acme as a scratchy and worn Moby Dick is harpooned by an Ahab with coffee-jitters, 8 am on a Friday morning in a sleepy Dutch town.

VIII.

As salted and peppered veterans of the internet all know, spend enough nighttime hours far from the bed of your loved one, bent over in front of the pale demon white glow of the screen, ebaying and discoging away in your undermost wear, and you'll find most of the records that were listed as 'top-wants' on that piece of paper tacked up on the bulletin board of the dorm room of your youth. All you need is cash, cash is all you need. Misfits singles, mint copies of albums by the Monks, the Sonics, the 13th Floor Elevators, the private press version of 'Strings of Life', a Beatles butcher cover, Velvet Underground and Nico in mono with unpeeled banana, easy as long as your paypal account can withstand a couple of grand. The ebay listings that utilize phrases like "impossibly rare" are plentiful, but how can the record be "impossibly rare" when it is right there, in front of you on the screen, with a buy-it-now of 1200 bucks? Popsike then tells you that five copies have been sold in the past year, so what is impossible is possible, even when the dealer tells you that it is de facto impossible, at least five times in the past year.

IX.

I witnessed a bit of what seemed like a healthy record gloat at Utrecht. Small packs of collectors, who had arrived at the record fair together, on a sacred quest as such, would upon finishing their 8-hour exploration sit down together for a show and tell, interspliced with bites of tenderly deep-fried frikandellen and kroketten. Their shimmering greasy fast food providing a pleasant visual counter-point to their cyber-goth clothing, or their original Sisters of Mercy 45's. This seemed healthy. It gave the record fair a natural end- zone, a coda, a moment of reflection before the spoils of war were brought home to the turntable. Oddly enough, at WFMU, I didn't see a lot of the sharing and gloating of spoils. Certainly, the lack of a café, and the general lack of space (this is NYC after all), didn't provide a physical locale for the end game, but I sensed that some of the collectors did hoard like lost children, lacking in this aspect of the situation.

I imagine that a couple of pirates would have shown each other the sum of their pillage after they had sacked and burned some Caribbean shore town. Or maybe this too, is the demon/spectre up to no good, whispering "Hush! Keep your records to yourself! They don't need to know! You got the record, your precious!" This truly mirrors the alienated consumption of the internet. Your selection is anonymous, you bid under a pseudonym and you unpack your precious treasure alone.

So thank god for record blogs, where you can hype your recent finds, and attempt to increase their worth through the osmosis of the sound-file. This sometimes back-fires as records described as KBD punk monsters on the blog have sounded a bit like poorly played REO Speedwagon to these ears, and records described as "Acid Folk masterpieces" have come across like even worses James Taylor or maybe the hippie couple in Mike Leigh's "Nuts In May".

Pure gloating is also an option. An obsessive Swedish psychedelic fatso collector posts photos of his latest rare record finds, like others post photos of their cats or their grandchildren. This comes across as a bit sad, lonely and unhealthy. I'd rather hang with the goths and their frikandellen.

X.

At record fairs, with portable turntable in hand, and if God and the dealer allows it, you have the opportunity to sample the wares, like you can do at all excellent used record stores, and never at the bad ones, a useful yardstick. The same yardstick can be used at the fair: The dealers who won't let you drop the needle, for some reason, are usually the ones devoid of bargains. I couldn't find one dealer at London's Olympia record fair that readily and willingly let me sample their wares. This might possibly be as British dealers and collectors seem to be the vanguard pathfinders in the rarified field of the struggle against the second law of thermodynamics. In this world-view, the strife towards mint condition, counter-acts our natural world of entropy, gravity and how mint becomes VG becomes G as in grave. A spurious moment along these lines was when a European record dealer listed a copy of the first Jefferson Airplane album in the Mint Plus condition in one of his catalogues. Was it Gods own copy? Had someone snatched it from the Platonic idea of the pressing plant?

When it comes to original copies of popular 60s rock records, it seems as if the importance of the condition of the vinyl is contradicted by the physical well being of the people who are safe-guarding their sixties memories through the collecting of artifacts. The records, posters and Beatles autographs are doubtlessly relics of the time of their lives, infused with such a potent voodoo of nostalgia that the psychotic amounts of emotional projection that is fixed on them is starting to be reflected by the stars themselves. One needs only to go to the grotesque Who documentary DVD "Amazing Journey" to hear a bunch of propped-up geriatric rockers inflict godlike self-importance upon the viewer, comparing their stage ass-wriggling and studio knob-twiddling with the people who actually did something actually important during the same era.

That the sixties survivors believe steadfastly that what they did was for the better good of the world, instead of a commodified expression of the spectacle is probably what happens when one pill makes you larger and one pill makes you smaller and the pills are original and in the Mint Plus condition.

Autographs, posters, vinyl records in mint condition, saleable things infused with nostalgia, are not necessarily a bad thing. We drink a vodka drink and sing songs that remind us of our good times, where the problem lies is where a period of time in your life is pin-pointed as the only one directly lived, and the remainder of your days being devoted to a representation of said times. That the trickle-down of the 1967 yippie attempt to levitate the pentagon in 2018 is the attempt of a sizeable crowd at a Rolling Stones concert to elevate a truly leaden sixties rock reenactment.

The Spruce Goose won't take off, but we can pretend that it will. Even if the performance of the aging rock dinosaur is VG minus at best, his haberdashery isn't, his conduct isn't and his appearance on a mint copy of Get Yer Ya-Yas Out isn't. The mood at the Olympia Record fair was defeatist. It was as if the collective dealers and punters had woken up in May of 1945 and found out that they were lieutenants in the SS. There were murmurings that amazing finds of extremely rare records had occurred during the first half hour of the fair, but all this had happened to other people. Besserwisser psychedelic fatso and blog-toad records were legion, but they were all priced within an inch of the Discogs or the Popsike. I couldn't help but notice that the equivalent of the Utrecht punter show and tell, herein dwelled within a dealer showing another dealer his fanciest stock before he took it home again. Like a livestock competition, except that the holder of the most beautiful steer or the largest pumpkin would take home a blue ribbon, where the record dealer had to make do with a bit of upmanship and gloat before the mint copy of Odessey and Oracle was put back into the box for another year.

XI.

History has ended, and what was once directly lived, has now receded into a representation. Be it the nightly civil war reenactment of 40-year-old gigs at the Mask, the Mabuhay, CBGB, or the 100 Club that take place in most major cities as we speak, or the Facebook pages of 60-something punk legends who hung out at the Mask, Mabuhay, CBGB or the 100 Club back then and won't let us forget it. They'll never die, as they are punk rockers, and as punk will apparently never die, neither will they. What do we do then? We gossip about Black Randy on our blog. We glance at pictures of Penelope Houston from 40 years ago and sigh. And back those same forty years ago there was a name for it and it was called camp. People looked at photos of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks and sighed. Susan Sontag wrote a good book about it. This was while the Seeds, Velvet Underground and the Thirteen Floor Elevators were having brand new records out.

The people who were sighing over Pickford and Fairbanks weren't swooning over the Velvets or the Seeds. Rather the opposite. And us, we never die, we collect those records, immersed in the sweetness of obsession aimed at a time and place that we certainly participated in with our breath, but certainly not with our bodies. It is not uncommon among fanatical record collectors to spend the span of their collecting career immersed in the years they just barely missed.

Some collect the romanticized trickle-down experiences of their older brothers and sisters, some collect the sounds surrounding the years of their actual birth, and some collect what they felt immersed in the zeitgeist of, but could not follow through as lifestyle, usually due to age, sometimes due to geography.

This is bittersweet: It is possible that the collecting instinct stems from an attempt to reconnect to the very moment when art opened your mind to the endless possibilities of human expression for the first time. I think it started for me around the age of five, a la "Rock & Roll" by Lou Reed and then kept gaining strength (momentum) up until the catharsis of puberty brought punk rock seven-inchers within the general ballpark of Dogtown skateboards, Levi's 501's and Vans sneakers in commodity fetishism.

Three events particularly warped my fragile little mind: The son of my nanny, Swedish rocker Peter Torsen leaving his copy of the Velvet Underground and Nico and his issues of Zap Comix within my reach when I was very small. Attending the Don and Moki Cherry children's jazz workshop at Stockholm's museum of modern art circa 70/71, and listening to a radio show called "Asfaltstelegrafen" commencing broadcast in Sweden circa 1976, where the sandwiching of pub rock, 60s punk, punk and 50s rock & roll was presented as if that was a natural thing, which at that point in time it certainly wasn't. This led me directly to the mind-blowing lifeline of rock & roll fandom, since I spent a chunk of my teenage years in a village of a few hundred people close to the arctic circle. Between rock fandom and skateboarding, an outsider status was acquired that unlike that of science-fiction fandom wasn't necessarily anathematic to success with girls, and it branded me (some would say scarred) for a life of record collecting. Skateboarding I gave up after a particularly nasty fall in 1999, but I still miss it though.

XII.

Our emotional projection on the artifacts that remain of our youth's cartoon rebellion, is supposed to necessitate our belief system of extended adolescent self-worth. The hedge-fund lower- upper- management aging hardcore kid spending upper four figures on Misfits test-pressings is battling the same laws of gravity that middle-aged women struggle against at the plastic surgeon or the cosmetics counter.

This battle, masking as against grave and aging process, and against gravity itself, constitutes one of the most necrotic abrasions into the body-fabric of our very existence: This perpetuated falsity that only certain years in our life-span really truly matter. That life in our youth is worth so much more as a commodity, that once youth passes us by, we are obliged to forfeit what we directly lived and recede into a representation of said years for the remainder of our actual duration. Our choice of appearance, our choice of the most meaningful artifacts we surround ourselves with, our choice of the record we place in double plastic bags in alphabetical order, all representing time we address as lived in qualitative actuality.

XIII.

What sounds stream through our ears in our homes is very important, but more important is our choices of what sounds are to be streaming. The significance of the sound-event superceeds the experience of the sound-event.

Whatever you do, don't sell the records. It might be tempting to buy a Volvo station wagon or a bigger apartment that can hold both your dog, Iggy, and your first-born, Syd.

Don't do it. Look at your stereo, stare into the vortex of your turntable and remember that silence equals death. Even if you don't listen to your vinyl anymore, the idea of being able to spill that copy of 'Love At Psychedelic Velocity' you once thieved onto the turntable means that the disc isn't gathering dust on your record shelf; it is levitating. Wicked gravity can't hold it down, as it can't hold you down, so the rare record or the botox injection as elixir of youth certainly does do the job you intend it to, but beware, the urge for a fix gets quicker and quicker, and you need more and more!

We all enter the labyrinth and we build our own maze as we venture further into it, and such can the metaphor for life and/or record collecting reverberate. But does it have to be a labyrinth? Can't it just be a repast, a good thing, a source of strength, a means of meditation? Sir Toby's hobby-horse in Tristram Shandy, utilized by us all as a source of order when that is in short supply in our everyday life, or for that matter, as a source of disorder when we need some more of that to get through our book of days.

I could think of worse use for empiricism than record collecting: Once the choices have been made of what sounds are to stream through our ears in our home, they can commence to stream, at least after the mailman has arrived and before we place them in double plastic bags.

XIV.

I wonder if Utrecht, WFMU and London Olympia are entrances to the labyrinth, or if they are milestones within it, or mill-stones around our neck, or (gasp!) exits or perhaps tool booths? Are we lusting for death, death itself? Are we incapable of considering the passing of time? Or is it the opposite? Are record fairs well and truly Limbo, now that the catholics have given up their copyright claim, or should that be territorial claim?

Have we brought Limbo into our homes? Does the instant graft-grift or grift-graft of an Ebay-win and the gratification we hope for not ever arrive at all? Camus' Sisyphus is only ever stoked about the rare KBD-punk 45 he just won as he is logging on to bid on other records, the physical arrival in the mailbox of the actual record only reminds him of rolling boulders (his day-job) in order to afford to win other auctions.

XV.

Sometimes the map is on the territory and sometimes the map is the territory. As a turntable thrill-seeker, I will doubtlessly be going to plenty of record fairs for the remainder of this mortal coil. With the self-inflicted music biz disaster of digital downloading and streaming, vinyl is going to be collected and the Rolling Stones are going to symbolize rebellion for another century at least.

Is this an ecumenical matter? Maybe.

As I haven't really answered any questions in this whiff of an article, I might try to do so now, at the very end. So here:

Q: Do we collect records awake or dreaming?

A: We collect them awake, but we hope that the records will make us dream.

Q: Are we fueled by what the ancient Greeks called enthousiasmos: the ecstasy of the soul when it is communicating with a deity?

A: No.

Q: What does a record fair mean?

A: It means that alienated consumption isn't that great.

Q: What happens at the record fair?

A: A lot of men venture further from their goal of having plentiful sex by looking for records that quite often sing about plentiful sex.

Q: How do we feel while we are there?

A: We salivate as our head gets struck by a mallet.

Q: How do we feel when we anticipate it?

A: We certainly salivate less.

Q: Where does its powerful allure come from?

A: The physical impossibility of death in the mind of someone living.

Q: How have things changed as we nowadays fester in alienated consumption on the internet?

A: Finding a copy of the Spunky Spider 45 for less than 100 pounds means going through vast quantities of Utrecht bargain bin 45's.

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The Utrecht record fair is going down for the 50th time.
We can't even begin to think about how many insane and rare records have passed through this room. How many wallets have been emptied, how many have been filled.
How the room has positively shimmered with the raging howl of enthusiasm 'I luv rekkids!' as it has also reverberated with its dark twin, the Golem-gloat of 'my precious it is mine all mine.'

BOO-HOORAY

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Record Dreams: 50 Hallucinations and Visions of Rare and Strange Vinyl

1. The Can *Monster Movie* \$4000
2. Tintern Abbey *Beeside / Vacuum Cleaner* SOLD
3. Atomic Forest *Obsession '77* \$1500
4. Staff Carpenborg and the Electric Coronas *Fantastic Party* SOLD
5. Zuno Keisatsu *Brain Police* \$2000
6. The Eyes *The Arrival of The Eyes* SOLD
7. Ghetto Brothers *Power Fuerza* SOLD
8. Alan Watts *This Is It* \$1000
9. Savages *Live 'N Wild* \$1200
10. Bo Diddley *Spring Weekend 1959* \$2000
11. The Dovers *The Third Eye/Your Love* SOLD
12. Allen Ginsberg et al. *Poetry Reading at Architectural Association* \$2000
13. Cafe Bizarre *Assorted Madness, Beat Generation Poetry, Beat Erotica* SOLD
14. The Velvet Underground and Nico *The Velvet Underground and Nico* SOLD
15. The Stooges *Funhouse & The Stooges Funhouse (excerpts)* \$2000
16. Lou Reed *Metal Machine Music* NFS
17. Ennio Morricone *Musiche di Ennio Morricone* \$2000
18. Love *7 and 7 Is / No. Fourteen* SOLD
19. Alex Chilton *Like Flies on Sherbert* SOLD
20. Big Star *Third* \$2500
21. Andrew Matheson and the Brats *Grown Up Wrong* SOLD
22. The Stooges *I Wanna Be Your Dog / Ann* SOLD
23. John Fahey *Death Chants, Break Downs & Military Waltzes* SOLD
24. Various Artists *Yes L.A.* SOLD
25. The Fall *Totale's Turns (It's Now or Never)* \$1000
26. Los Punk Rockers *Los Exitos De Sex Pistols* \$750
27. Guided By Voices *Propeller* \$2500
28. The Wailing Wailers *The Wailing Wailers* SOLD
29. Slim Smith *Born To Love* SOLD
30. Lee Scratch Perry *Judgement In A Babylon* SOLD
31. Jimi Hendrix *Sky High* \$100
32. Bob Dylan *Great White Wonder* SOLD
33. Fela Ransome Kuti And His Africa 70 *Fela Fela Fela* \$900
34. K. Frimpong & His Cubano Fiestas *K. Frimpong & Cubano Fiestas* SOLD
35. Johnny & the Dicks *Johnny & the Dicks* \$3500
36. B. Bubba *I'd Rather Fight Than Swish / I'd Rather Swish Than Fight* SOLD
37. Incredible Bongo Band *Bongo Rock* NFS
38. DJ Cuca *Dinamite Funk Music* SOLD
39. Totenkopf *Ann Arbor* \$750
40. Frunk *If At First* \$350
41. Culturcide *Tacky Souvenirs of Pre-Revolutionary America* SOLD
42. LSD Underground *12 LSD Underground 12* \$2000
43. Ken Kesey *The Acid Test* \$3500
44. Modern Sounds *Famous Songs of Hank Williams: A Return Trip With Modern Sounds* SOLD
- 45a. Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice *Jesus Christ Superstar (Original Japanese Cast Recording)* SOLD
- 45b. The Manasquan High School Chorus Presents *Jesus Christ Superstar* \$400 SOLD
46. The MD's *Brain Damage* \$300 SOLD
47. The Sonics *Explosives* \$100 SOLD
48. Sun Ra *Jazz By Sun Ra Vol. 1* \$2500
49. Parabellum *Sacrilegio* \$650
- 50a. The Beatles *Yesterday And Today (Butcher Cover)* SOLD
- 50b. The Beatles *What A Shame, Mary Jane Had A Pain At The Party* \$150
- 50c. The Rutles *The Rutles* \$50
- 50d. The Residents *Meet The Residents* \$750