NonGrata | Grave Corps | Dig Up a Hatchet

Safe Space | More Cheese | Dark Agenda | Brotherhood of the Mudkat

Interviews

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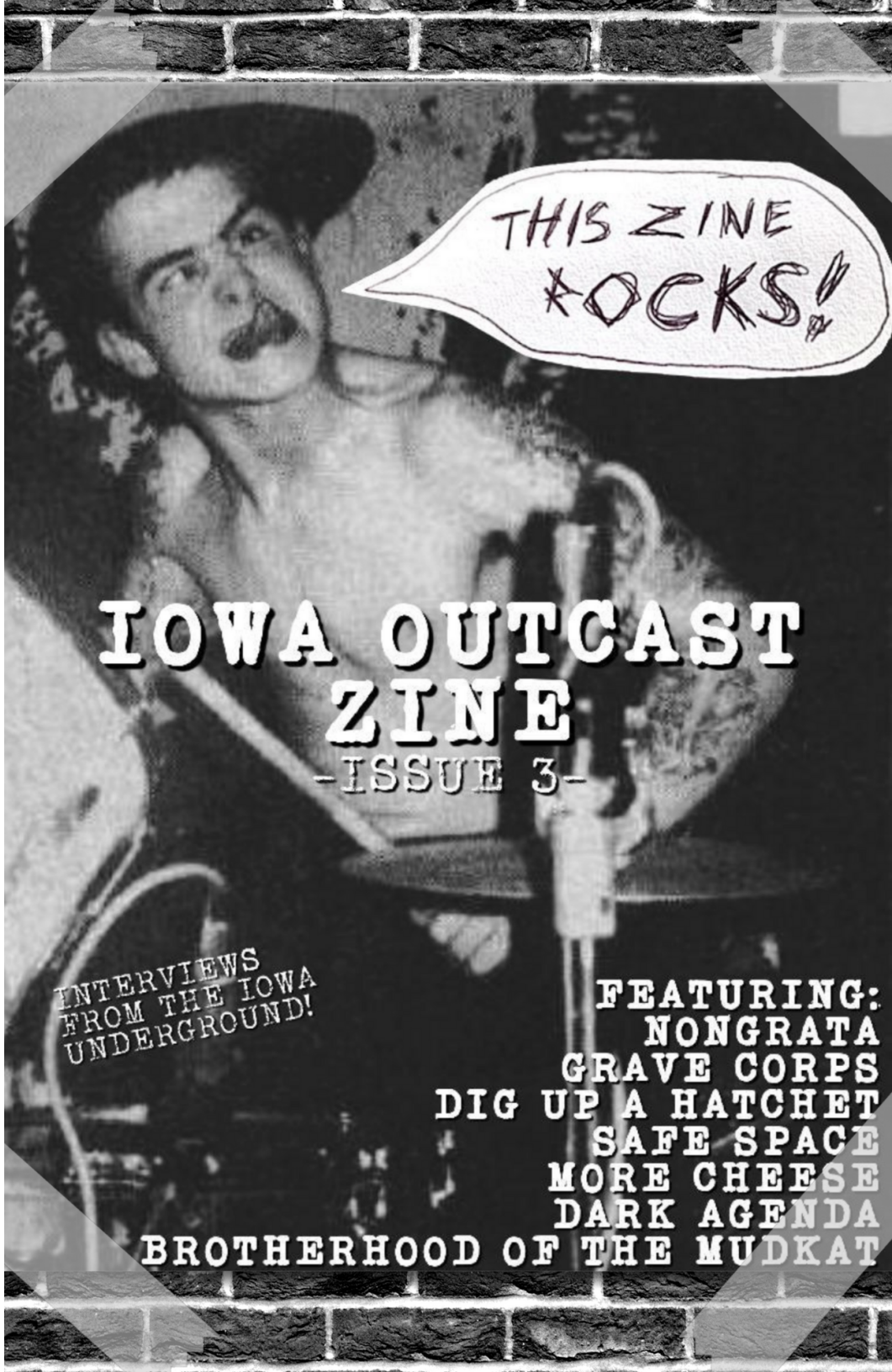


NON
GRATA

RHYTHM GUITARIST AND SINGER WANTED IN WDM AREA

Coin, a rock band based in the West Des Moines area is seeking a rhythm guitarist and a lead singer. Contact them using the email below!

therealcoin573@gmail.com

Hayes Noble "Head Cleaner"

Hayes Noble is an alt-noise band out of Illinois, near the Iowa border who released "Head Cleaner" on Febuary 17th, 2023. "Head Cleaner" opens up strong, with "I'm So Tired", a wonderfull wall of noise. Track three, my personal favorite, "Sprawl" which is a wonderful song. It starts with a beautiful melodic intro, and then transfers later into the song it becomes a wonderful, chaotic noisy mess. Overall, "Head Cleaner" is a fuzz driven album with everything you could want: feedback noises (from the bass and guitar!), calm moments, intense moments, and just general noisey-ness juxtaposed with calm vocals.

NonGrata

Alt Metal

This interview is with Joe (Vocals) of NonGrata.

Oliver: How did NonGrata form?

Joe: Originally we formed while we were college students at the University of Iowa. Most of us had been in cover bands before but never had written original music. It was something we all wanted to do and finally had the opportunity. As life goes, people get jobs, start families, and move away which makes it difficult to continue being in a band. In 2021 we had a complete overhaul with an almost entirely new lineup and have been grinding forward ever since.

Oliver: NonGrata means not approved, not welcome, etc. Why did you decide to name your band NonGrata, and in what ways does the word NonGrata apply to you all?

Joe: Obviously coming up with a band name that fits is one of the most important aspects to starting a band. When we started in Iowa City there was no real “scene” for us to fit into. We weren’t heavy enough for the thrash/death metal scene and we were to heavy for the college rock/alt scene. We didn’t really feel that we fit in anywhere. We had to carve our own path, make our own connections and branch out to places we didn’t really plan on. This feeling of being ostracized wasn’t new for me. I grew up in several small rural schools. We moved around a lot and I got really used to being the “new kid” who didn’t really fit in anywhere. I had a few close friends but never really felt like I had found my tribe, until we started NonGrata. This is what connects the rest of the band, it’s all about finding the people who make you the best version of yourself. Having each other’s back and conquering the world together.

Oliver: In November of 2022, you released “Frontlines”. What inspired it?

Joe: If it’s not obvious from the lyrics, Frontlines is an extremely political song. That song was written about 6 months into the global shutdown during the Covid-19 pandemic. Like many people in the country, I was pissed off, I was confused, I was scared. When I wrote those lyrics, I was channeling all those feelings of frustration at the fact that we live in a country where our leaders are so hellbent on personal gain that they choose to neglect the people and what is best for the country. “Frontlines” is very much a theoretical middle finger that says, “you know what? We’re tired of the corruption and lies. If you want something done, do it yourself. Because we are over it. “

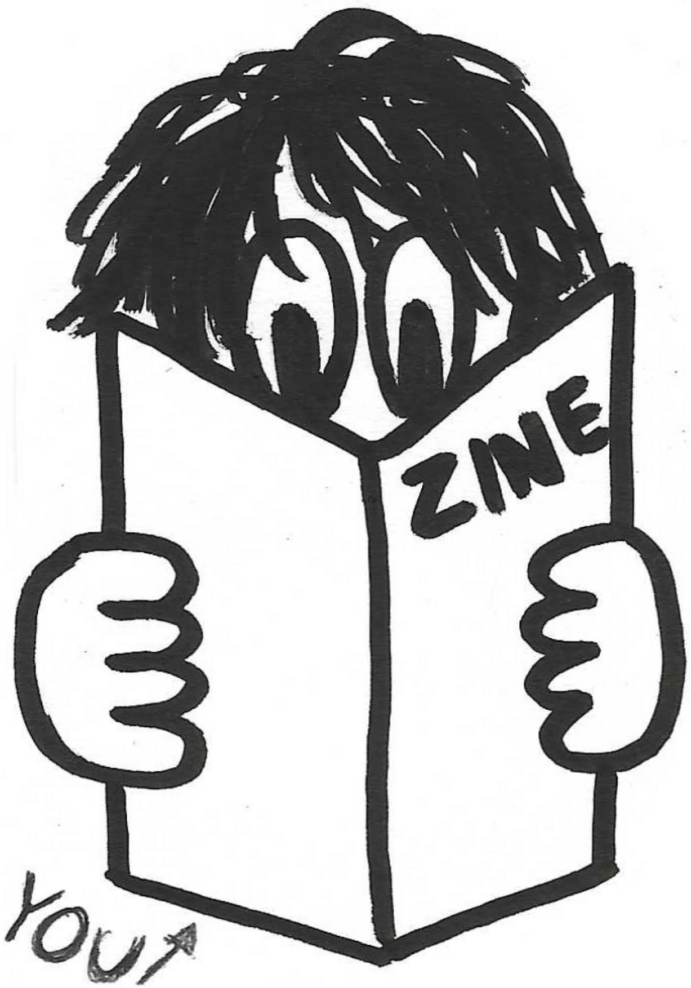
Oliver: Onto a few of my final questions, you’ve released 4 singles in the past 12 months, can we expect an EP or LP from you any time soon?

Joe: That’s definitely on the horizon this year! We have some really amazing things coming. We’re planning to finish recording this spring and have a bigger release planned for late summer/early fall. It seems like a long wait but we have some great stuff coming out before that bigger release as well that’s going to be a bunch of fun.

Joe: Over the last couple years there's been an incredible resurgence of heavier styles of music that's really going to put Iowa back on the map. I honestly believe some of the most diverse and incredible talent has been coming out of Iowa recently. Everything from the extreme metal side with bands like Guilty of Treason and Plea of the Sword, to the more rap/rock styles of Safe Space and Widow 7. Iowa doesn't mess around and if we keep growing the way we have, no one is gonna be able to stop us.

Oliver: And finally, is there anything else you'd like to say?

Joe: I want to say thank YOU for such a great interview and giving back to the Iowa Scene by doing this for all these amazing bands. I also want to say thank you so much to everyone who continues to support us in living our dream by coming out to shows and listening to the music that we love to create. It takes a village and I think we've got a pretty damn strong one.



Brotherhood of the Mudkat

Metal

Oliver: How did Brotherhood of the Mudkat form?

Bill: Craigslist list add winter / spring of 2009 after the flood of 08.

Oliver: Mudkat has been around for a long time, I really respect the dedication you all have had to this project. Why do you think you all have managed to stick around for so long?

Mudkat: Too stubborn to quit at this point. We have been diy and never fit any of the molds so to speak. We put out all our own stuff and just do what we want.

Oliver: What initially got you all into making music?

Bill: Following the path of my father myself. Unfortunately the rest of the guys are not here to answer that one as well, but of course fame and fortune too. Still looking for that.

Oliver: Fair enough, were there any influential projects you were in before Mudkat?

Bill: Oh I have been playing since the early 90s here in iowa. Another of south east iowa bands around Keokuk, up here I was in Beg in late 90s. Put out 2 or 3 releases. Greenlight Hooker was another flavor, Motorhead tribute called Kilmister, Gwar tribute called Scumdogs, and I'm also in Space Virus. Oh and dad to 2/3rds of Frontal Assault. I also run a "record label", Hall Records.

Oliver: Nice! What are your top three songs to play live, and why?

Bill: Oh wow, that's a good one. We have so many songs now, forgotten some of the olds ones. But since shows have come back, In Hell is our opener it just gets too it, 3 Legged Dog because it been in the set since the old days, Hungarian Gypsy gets a good crowd response, but our new one Fuck It All has been getting a response as well.

Oliver: Onto a few of my final questions, what are some of your hopes for the Iowa scene?

Bill:That it doesn't eat itself again and pulls its head from its own ass

Oliver: Is there anything else you'd like to say?

Bill: We are always ready and open to all and any bands. We have played with everyone willing to give us the opportunity to share stages with us. The scene has become separated and divisionalised much like our country and world. But fuck it all don't care anymore. We will continue to do what we do.

BROTHERHOOD
OF THE
MUSKET

GRAVE X CORPS

Grave Corps

Horror Punk Rock

This interview is with Kodie Krypt (Bass) of Grave Corps.

Oliver: How did Grave Corps form?

Kodie Krypt: I first came up with the band name and Coffin & Crossbones logo in 2004. I felt it was a special idea and didn't want to waste it on anything until I met the right people. About a year later I found Scott A.D. (Rhythm Guitar) and Arly Von (Original Singer). I had never really met anyone in our area before that loved The Misfits as much as I did, so it was a no brainer to pitch the concept and get the ball rolling. We brought in my best friend, Erich Allan Poe on keyboards to give it a unique sound. He was primarily a guitarist/bassist and literally learned how to play keys just to help the cause. Then we brought in Daniel DeKay from Iowa legends, LyinHeart, because we needed a powerhouse drummer. That pretty much solidified the beginning of the band. Since then we have had multiple lineup changes, with each person influencing the overall sound of the band.

Oliver: Grave Corps released it's first album in 2009, called "Blood Soaked Serenade". What does it take for a band to be around for over a decade, and why do you think Grave Corps has stood the test of time?

Kodie Krypt: We're actually in the midst of our 16th year as we speak. Even though the first album didn't come out until 2009, we claim 2007 as our official start date because that's when we began playing live. There were a couple of rough demos that predate "Blood Soaked Serenade" as well, but those are pretty hard to come by nowadays. I think patience, persistence, flexibility, and drive are the primary reasons that we're still going today. Plus, Grave Corps is kind of a unique thing. I use the word band, because technically that is what we are, but I look at it more like an ongoing art project. In fact, there are hopes of doing a comic book someday as there is a concept behind the band with an entire fictional backstory already in place. We create that world with our songs and by adding a very intentional visual element to our image. We also try to extend this world into our merchandising, and by making our live performances a spectacle as often as possible. All of that said, I ultimately think that our staying power comes down to fun. Our goal is to deliver a big over-the-top arena rock experience with our stage shows. When writing, we keep the sing-a-long factor in mind while trying to not necessarily lean into any specific trends that may date us musically.

Oliver: Your song "Collateral Damage" really stands out to me, musically and lyrically. What happened to inspire the lyrics, and what inspired the musical aspect of it?

Kodie Krypt: That song starts with our new singer, Traci Von Krypt. Before joining the band officially, she was doing something she referred to as "Grave Corps Light" in the form of acoustic sets. They were primarily comprised of cover songs from bands that influenced us that you might not hear a performer doing acoustically, but she brilliantly adapted them into something very unique. She also wanted to start adding in some original

Dark Agenda

Metal

Oliver: How did Dark Agenda form?

Josh: Jesse & myself (Josh) began jamming together in 2015. After Jesse approached me asking for vocal lessons and I didn't know the first thing about giving lessons. Then in 2018 to 2019 we sort of came full circle as a band.

Oliver: You all have a decently large listener base, what does it take to maintain that?

Josh: In large part doing shows and promoting. We try to provide our fan base with the freshest merch as well. We also get out and meet people at shows which helps form bonds and relationships

Oliver: What was your most influential show that you've played?

Josh: For me I'd have to say Turkey River Music Festival it was pretty magical out there and it is every year. I know for the guys opening for Sepultura was huge! As well as Mushroomhead & Jinjer. However its hard to truly narrow it down because each show we walk away with great memories to treasure.

Oliver: What came out of this band that you are most proud of, musically or personally?

Bill: Probably the bond and brotherhood we formed. Personally this has been a tremendous outlet for us all. It's an incredible feeling to put together a piece of art that others enjoy and relate to

Oliver: Hopes for the Iowa scene?

Josh: Keep kickin ass, we've all worked hard to create this scene, and hope to just keep seeing everyone support each other's journey. It's always really cool to see bands in the scene do big things.

Oliver: Anything else you'd like to say?

Josh: Thank you to everyone for the continued support and rocking out to our music. It's been a blessing to be able to do this and it's the metal fans who make it happen. So please keep showing up for these bands, sharing their music and spreading the word.

tunes. As such, the two of us began to work on a couple. She took them out live and they went over very well. We decided to record them, but wanted to make them more than just a voice and a guitar, so we brought in our friends to help. Those friends were Zacky Massacre, Scott A.D., JJ Wolf, and former Grave Corps keyboardist, Erich Allan Poe. As we were in the middle of that session, our original singer shared that he was ready to step down and focus more on his personal and family life. At that point, it was clear that it was time for Traci to take up the mantle. The predicament then became — under what banner does it make the most sense to release these songs?? Our producer, Travis Huisman at Catamount Studios, said "You can call it whatever you want, but these are definitely Grave Corps songs". Heeding his advice, we decided to claim the release under the banner it was hiding behind the entire time — Grave Corps. I love that you picked up on a difference in writing though! What you're hearing is a new cowriter into the process. Traci's addition to the lyrical side of things shift things to a darker, more emotional focus. I'm the primary lyricist in the group, but I love collaborating. What she brings to the table helps keep it fresh and introduces a new perspective into the storytelling. Inspired by the "Fear Street" series, Traci wanted to tell the tale of a woman being falsely accused of witchcraft and getting her revenge. Together, we brought a very cool story to life.

Oliver: Grave Corps started off as a more Horror Punk band, but to me it feels like it's evolved into a Horror Punk/Rock n Roll band, still with elements of punk but with it being less prevalent. What prompted this change?

Kodie Krypt: I think that's part of the natural evolution of a band. We have always had a broad range of influences. Yes, The Misfits are kind of always the biggest, but we also come to horror by way of Alice Cooper, Rob Zombie, Murderdolls, Ghost, W.A.S.P., but we have a healthy love of many other things like Slayer, Mötley Crüe, Kiss, My Chemical Romance, Shooter Jennings, Prince, Hatebreed and a bunch of other stuff. Varying talent levels, increased songwriting abilities, and several line up changes ultimately opened the door for us to make adjustments musically. Additionally, none of us have side projects. This level of attention and focus allows us to bring all of our ideas to the table, put it through the common theme of horror, and really make any kind of song we want. This approach has also helped us cultivate a very unique and diverse catalog. We've heard people compare certain songs in our catalog to The Misfits, Slayer, Meatloaf, Monster Magnet, Elvis, Rob Zombie, Avenged Sevenfold, and even Fleetwood Mac. It doesn't always make sense on paper, but totally does in our heads. There is an ongoing joke in the band that we often think about when playing live— We're too punk for metal shows, too metal for punk shows, and too rock n' roll for everything else. That, in essence, is what you get with Grave Corps— a little bit of everything. We wear that like a badge of honor.

Oliver: Hopes for the Iowa scene?

Kodie Krypt - Same hopes as always— for it to continue to grow and prosper. There are so many talented artists in this state. Getting to see the up and coming bands is one of the many reasons we love to play all over. Seeing everyone with such different influences come together to put on an event and uplift each other in the process is something we love

being a part of. As we close in on our 20 year mark, I don't know how much time remains for us to be as active live as we are now. Seeing this scene we've been apart for so long in good hands with the next generation does our cold dead hearts good.

Oliver: Anything else you'd like to say?

Kodie Krypt: Just continue to support live music. Go to the shows. Buy the merch. Hang the flyers. Interact on the socials. Do all of the things! Also, buy stuff in physical formats. Streaming is great for the ease, but that may not always be there. One of my all time favorite records just got pulled from streaming this last year. I have actually been listening to a lot more CDs since then. It really brought me back to a time where I would really listen, but also take in the art, read the booklets, and would even have the special thanks section memorized. (Because I go full nerd like that.) Other than that, for us specifically, please follow us online, buy a CD (we will ship them out to you), come see us live and most importantly, please help spread the word! Oh, and thank you for all of the support over the years!

More Cheese

Pop Punk

Oliver: How did More Cheese form?

More Cheese: Much like other cheeses, we were formed by accident and refined over time! Seth was already playing bass for The Eleanors when Jared joined them on drums and eventually Dani picked up a guitar for the first time and joined learning rhythm. When the singer parted ways with the band, we already had shows lined up and made the decision to start out fresh with a new name and began learning covers and writing new music together.

Oliver: Was there any specific event or person that inspired your song, "Jerk"?

More Cheese: You hate to give credit to any one specific jerk because more than one gave inspiration here, but this song was mainly written about a jerk who likes to talk mad shit about local musicians and people in the scene just to seek conflict for attention.

Oliver: What inspired your name?

More Cheese: The name was Dani's idea and kind of a joke but also stems from a string of nicknames Jared and Dani have for their daughter Madi (mo>mojo>moji>moshiska>mocheeska>morecheesegirl) and... We love cheese!

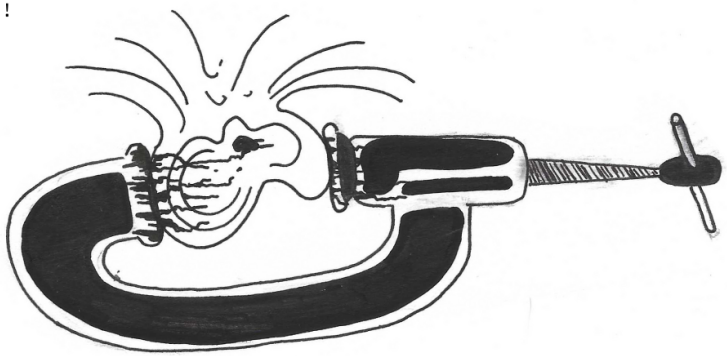
Oliver: What's your favorite song to play live? Why?
It's a hard tie between "Some People's Kids" and "Fine Details" for all 3 of us because both songs have a lot of energy and are fun to play.

Oliver: What are your hopes for the Iowa scene?

More Cheese: We definitely want to see it keep growing, it's been great seeing more shows of all kinds happening and we would love to see more opportunities for all ages events as well!

Oliver: Anything else you'd like to say?

More Cheese; We are really proud to be part of the local music scene and hope to keep bringing cheesy punk to the scene for years to come! Thanks for including us!



ATTACKS
MORE CHEESE
DISTILLERS

DIG UP A HATCHET

Dig Up a Hatchet

Melodic Hardcore

This interview was with Shaun (Guitar) and Drew (Drums).

Oliver: First off, how did Dig Up a Hatchet form?

Shaun: We have been playing on and off together since we were like 15, we met in drivers Ed class.

Oliver: Nice, what was the most interesting show you've ever played since you two met and started playing together?

Shaun: Getting to play with one of the sickest Midwest HC bands ever! Mahkato killed it on a different level!

Oliver: Hell yea! You have a few videos up on your YouTube channel, each containing a few songs, each of them being very good. When can we expect officially recorded music from you?

Shaun: We are gonna start recording in a few weeks! We are recording with one of our good friends who also played bass with us for a bit. Shout out Murmur studio!

Oliver: Nice! Super excited for that, how long can we expect that to be, and can we expect physical releases for it?

Shaun: It should be on the world wide web and cd by May. We are gonna get some vinyl made this summer also.

Oliver: I've noticed that most, if not all of your songs don't have vocals, was that a intentional choice or just a lack of being able to find a singer?

Shaun: We were going to have a singer but nothing worked out but we are definitely accepting applications, that goes for bass as well!

Oliver: Sounds good! Onto a few of my final questions for you all, what are some of your hopes for the Iowa scene?

Shaun: We think it's just where it should be, there's a lot of sick bands out there! There's even a rad zine now!

Oliver: Thank you! My last question for you all, is there anything else you'd like to say?

Shaun: Thanks to all the homies. Thanks for the interview but it's time to flip the Blondie album over.

John: Nothing but hope.

AJ: I think the Iowa music scene is one of the biggest in the area honestly, Minneapolis is pretty great, Omaha is too. But when you think of the hardworking bands, Iowa outshines everybody.

John: I feel like we have a bigger local standout as opposed to Minneapolis or Omaha, they get so many touring bands. People would just rather go to shows that are bigger. In Des Moines, you get screwed over by some of the national acts that don't come through to Iowa.

AJ: Yea, it forces you to step up and make your own shows, and the Iowa scene does not lack to bring in all the bands.

Safe Space

Rap NuMetal

This is a edited interview that was recorded and uploaded to ThrashPandaMedia's and the Iowa Outcast Zine youtube channels.

This interview is with AJ Williams, Joey Denton, John Denton, and Grant Walters.

Oliver: How did safe space form?

Joey: I lived in Minneapolis and moved down here for the pandemic and then we had to quartine for month and I was like "I'm gonna learn bass or I'm gonna be really good at video games at the end of this, and I chose to learn bass." And John, he's always been doing his rapping stuff and wantedd to be in a metal band. We knew a lot of guitarists, we knew a lot of drummers and we needed a bassist so I learned bass. SO as soon s that happened, I was playing around with some System of a Down and I came up with a lick that turned out to be Amythest, all the riffs for Amythest came in one day and John was like "Oh, whats this?" And for three hours, we basically made this entire song and took it to our producer Reed (Reed Warren), and we had one song done and we were like: Lets keep making more songs, and about three months later we found Grant, and then we got the idea of doing a duo vocalist after seeing a show of Dropout Kings and we were like, this is exacly what we want to do. Rap, screaming, singing, we want all that stuff.

John: and the first band we all loved was Linkin Park. and so it was kinda just natural push to to emulate them in some way, so its kinda a natural push for people who listen to us in some way to say , "Oh, you're kinda like a heavier Linkin Park." And I will take that compliment till the day I die.

Oliver: You've released a new single. when can we expect a EP or LP from you all?

Joey: Actually, we're working on the first album, its gonna be about 9 songs, its called Human Nature. We haven't had a release time yet, we're hoping sometime in the summer. The main origin of it is to show and compare what its like for our envoirmental sake, and that our Earth needs a lot of help

Grant: SO were working on our first studio album now, and the title of it is called "Human Nature", and its all about raising awareness for our planet, which is kinda going down a downward spiral just in terms of climaye change and pollution, and how we all need to play our part in saving our planet for future generations. We're also tying in specific natural disasters with specific issues of human psycology and sociology. For example, Tidal Wave is all about depression and Earthquake is all about anxiety, actually we named the song "Fractured". That's our first single. The record is coming together really well.

Oliver: Do you have any hopes for the Iowa scene, at the moment?

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