

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=834>

Basement Jaxx

Crazy Itch Radio (XL Recordings)

\*\* 1/2

With over six years of creating dance-floor anthems under their belt, Basement Jaxx (Simon Ratcliffe and Felix Buxton, to music snobs) are back with a dog-shaped party piñata called Crazy Itch Radio. Although it's filled with the quirky sounds of banjos, jazzy house, bubbles, whistling, mariachis, and a radio announcer that could double as a phone-sex operator, when the album is busted open, what's on the floor is less than something to grab for. The highlight is the first single, "Hush Boy," which sounds like it could be performed as a fabulous drag number at Fiesta Cantina; but unfortunately the itch is scratched after the first chicken fajita. —AARON MONTY

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=1193>

## NEXT BIG THING

### Grizzly Bear

Ed Droste, the lead singer of Brooklyn-based Grizzly Bear, joins bandmates Chris Bear, Chris Taylor, and Daniel Rossen at the Troubador this month. Their critically acclaimed new album *Yellow House* is available now.

—AARON MONTY

On his favorite bear

Well I don't have a favorite. I mean, I love Pooh Bear, but my earliest favorite was a pretty faggy favorite—the Care Bears. I sort of obsessed [about] them when I was young. It was a clear indicator of things to come, I suppose. I was a Care Bear for Halloween once. My grandmother made me the outfit. It's pretty humorous to see the pictures. It's been so long—I collected the figurines, but they are long gone now.

On what he likes most about L.A.

I like people's houses and backyards, and grilling in the sunshine or by a pool. That part is so nice. I like the people. I like the sun.

On his dream smoothie

I love smoothies. Did you read that somewhere? Jesus, I love smoothies, for the love of God! I like smoothies with berries: blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, and raspberries. No sorbet or juice, just fruit. I like Jamba Juice, but they add too much sweet stuff. I like it totally natural, so I try to tell them nix on things, but they have their formulas and aren't super-pumped to change them.

On playing Coachella

I'm excited and nervous. I heard just today the day we are playing is sold out because scalpers bought all the one-day tickets, because they knew they could sell them for buckets to the Rage Against the Machine fans. So now I'm wondering, will we play to an empty tent because it's all Rage fans? Also, sound at festivals is notoriously crappy and you get no sound check, and we are sort of a band that really needs one. So I'm nervous about that. In terms of playing in front of lots of people, I thought I would be, but the festivals we've played in the past [once in front of almost 10,000 people in France] were really fun. I found it exciting to be in front of such a crowd. It was like, "So this is how it feels to be a rock star—not bad!"

On his fantasy songwriting partner

Björk. That was easy. I have an undying love for her music. I think she is utterly

incredible. I'd beyond love to work with her in some capacity. I can't even stress that enough. Does Björk read Frontiers? Call me, Björk.

On writing a song about Dad  
"Colorado" is about my father and a move he made [our family] make there. Other than that, I've steered clear of writing about him.

Grizzly Bear plays the Troubador Wed., Feb. 21. Tickets: [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=1216>

## **CHILI SCOT CRU**

### **A Survivor's Tale**

Chili Cru was working as a travel manager at King World Productions (Wheel of Fortune, Oprah) when he decided he would rather be making reservations than taking them. It was a morbid stroke of fortune for Cru to find out that the assistant to the president of CNN at the time had died suddenly, and that the exec had Cru in mind to fill the position. He was happy to start his career at CNN, but did not want to dance on a grave.

In 1999, Cru moved back to Los Angeles and over to Sony Pictures Television International. It was while working his first Eco-Challenge in Malaysian Borneo that he first met reality-television powerhouse Mark Burnett. Cru and Burnett struck up a close friendship. At the close of Eco-Challenge: Fiji, Cru found himself a victim of cost-cutting (a nice word for Hollywood backstabbing) measures at Sony and was unemployed.

Cru took whatever work he could, including a short stint at a local network-affiliate station in Los Angeles. He was asked to convince corporate America to take their charity money and spend it on station advertising in exchange for a 10-second mention of the charity. It was at this point, with his integrity still intact, that Cru propositioned Burnett for a job.

At Mark Burnett Productions, Cru oversees the distribution of such monster television hits as *The Apprentice*; *The Contender*; and soon-to-air shows like *On the Lot*, a reality show for filmmakers with Steven Spielberg; *Pirate Master*, coming this summer to CBS; and *Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?*, a new game show that will air on FOX in late February.

Cru also has a production company of his own with which he is currently producing a scripted comedy show known as *Funny Fags*. Think Cheech and Chong meets AbFab and they are gay. It's the hazy and hilarious adventures of two queens who suddenly find themselves with more money than they know what to do with and enough celebrity party invitations to give Paris and Nicole a run for their money. *by AARON MONTY*

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=1466>

## Summer Homo Musts!

Heat up the season with film, music, and more

### READ GAY SUBTEXT INTO SUMMER BLOCKBUSTERS

#### Live Free or Die Hard

The fourth installment of the Die Hard series will make you wonder what would happen if the world were attacked by Internet terrorists. (June 27)

GAY APPEAL Hot Daddy Bruce Willis and his hot hacker sidekick Justin Long will make this one hard not to watch. Let's hope for some shirtless scenes!

#### Hairspray

John Travolta, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Queen Latifah lead the star-studded cast in this remake of the musical version of the camp classic. (July 20)

GAY APPEAL You'll be sitting next to a theatre queen, a hairstylist, your mom, and a hot guy, and you will all be loving it. Please don't sing along too loudly.

#### The Simpsons Movie

The much-anticipated full-length movie finds Homer on a mission to save the world. Expect to see all your favorite characters and a random guest appearance by Erin Brockovich-Ellis as herself. (July 27)

GAY APPEAL We heard a rumor that there is a full-frontal nude shot of Bart Simpson, but you didn't hear it from us.

#### Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End

The mateys travel to the ends of the earth in order to save Captain Jack Sparrow. (May 25)

GAY APPEAL Orlando Bloom. Johnny Depp. Do we need any more? The ladies will be happy to know that Keira Knightley is looking butcher and tougher than ever, too.

#### I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry

Adam Sandler and Kevin James are two straight dudes who commit fraud by pretending to be a gay couple in order to receive domestic-partner benefits. (July 20)

GAY APPEAL This one is a must-see if for no other reason than to watch those two kiss and to have a reason to feel totally exploited by the film industry.

#### Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

The next Harry Potter movie shows Harry's troubles at school as he tries to prove the return of evil Lord Voldemort to his fellow wizards and witches. (July 13)

GAY APPEAL There's grass on the pasture, and we know some of you want to take Daniel Radcliffe horseback riding. —AARON MONTY

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=1023>

## Talk the Pain Away

Peaches lets loose on Los Angeles

BY AARON MONTY

From her home in Berlin, Frontiers snatched some time from disco-punk superstar Merrill Nisker, aka Peaches, and asked her for her opinions on music, politics, and places to eat in Laurel Canyon. She wanted to let all the readers know that she offers up her condolences for the "Arnie" situation:

FRONTIERS: Today is press day for you. What do you like most about press day?

PEACHES: Oh. Hmm. When they're over. Sorry.

Where is a good place to eat in Laurel Canyon?

Four and Twenty. Do you know that place? It's like a diner.

What was your favorite thing to eat there?

Well, you know I live in Berlin, so I want to eat bacon and cheese and sloppy eggs and stuff.

You wrote some songs with Greg Kurstin. How was that experience?

Thank you for asking about this. No one ever asks about anyone else, and I wrote mostly with Greg. He's fantastic. He's like a genius, but he's also liquid. So if you have an idea for a song, he can totally realize it. We wrote some songs like in a day. It was so great. We also did some extra Weird Al work together.

Weird Al?

Yeah, we made some Weird Al kind of parody songs.

What do you think of the Bird and the Bee?

I think it's really sweet. I like it. The remix of "Fucking Boyfriend" is going to come out soon.

Are people starting to know about the Bird and the Bee over there?

What's the next level for Peaches?

Well, you know I got this level going on now with the live band, and we're going to see who's with me. Then we'll jump a level. I've got a few ideas, and we'll see what happens. How noncommittal of me, huh?

Are you ever going to be done exploring sexuality in your music?

I don't know. No matter what song I write, people are going to see sexuality in it. So we'll see.

If you could have someone remix one of your songs, who would it be?

If I could get a remix for free, I'd ask Missy Elliot. I also like Timbaland.

What do you think of Vitalic?

Oh, I love Vitalic. I asked him to do a remix for me. He was on my five top choices for sure. Do you like Simian? He remixed "Downtown" and I was really happy about that. I really love it. I wanted Simian or Justice or Vitalic or one of the regular greats.

What do you think of Meryl Streep?

She spells her name wrong.

Why didn't you put "Hanky Code" on the album?

This is a gay magazine, right? It just didn't fit in when I listened to all the songs, but I love that song. I'm sure people think, "She didn't put it on because it's such a gay thing." It just didn't fit on. I put it on the 12-inch. I'm glad you like that song. I played it live on the last tour.

Will you play it when you come to Los Angeles?

I might just do that.

MySpace: Do you know how many views your MySpace page has?

No. Do you know how many you have on yours?

If you had to name some of your heroes, who would they be?

[unintelligible] [loud noise] [silence] [dial tone]

I had to hang up and dial up my MySpace page to check how many views I had.

Tell me about your political endeavors.

I'm a responsible Canadian, and I just felt that I agree with "no seal clubbing." It was quite a clever campaign, to say that the "club scene sucks in Canada." It was an easy thing to do, rather than do what others have done and not play Canada at all. That makes the whole country suffer.

What do you like most about Whitey?

When they play "Leave Them All Behind." It's one of their songs. They're good. They should be known by now.

Who would win in a cage match between you and Princess Superstar?

Ooooh. She's pretty big. I think she's got more muscle than me. She doesn't drink, so if I had a few drinks in me I might just win. I have the secret Vulcan grip. Well, I think we'd probably end up having a hug-of-war, not a tug-of-war.

Peaches plays the Avalon Hollywood with special guest Whitey on Wed. and Thurs., Dec. 13 and 14. Tickets: [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=651>

## Go Underground!

### The best dance-music parties in town don't hand out fliers

BY AARON MONTY

One Saturday last month, I told my friend Chili, a regular circuit boy, we weren't going to Reflex like he's used to. After the sheer glam of our White Party 2006 trip, I decided I needed to initiate a dance-party intervention. I wanted to show him places that existed in this city where the fun wasn't simply drawn from being gay and wild; it was drawn from being you. Straights, gays, trannies, and freaks alike gather together and sweat out some tension to music that you will eventually hear in the gay discos, but probably not for at least four months.

I told him we were going to either a run-down warehouse or an artist loft downtown, and that I wouldn't have the exact location of the party until after 9 p.m., so he threatened not to come, in fear that there wouldn't be enough homosexuals present to have a bona fide dance party. Then I went into more detail and began to describe the world of underground dance parties, a world where booze, boogie, and boys don't stop flowing till after the sun comes up.

There's an underground network of people connected to what's going on in Los Angeles that is deeper and harder to find than any bulletin post on MySpace. Secret bulletin boards and e-mail lists exist out there on the great wide-open Internet where people pass information on parties like they are notes in sixth-grade history class. Chili and I sat in front of the computer and I showed him my favorite source, Dynagroove ([www.dynagroove.com](http://www.dynagroove.com)), an e-mail and discussion list for underground events in the L.A. metro area. About twice a day you get about ten e-mails grouped together that digest all the events happening around the city.

We waited till after 9 p.m., when the e-mail with the directions to the party was sent out. At last the e-mail came, and we both read the first two directions: "Take all alternate routes to the 101 south, exit Alameda—"

"Are we going to a rave? I don't want to get arrested tonight," Chili whined. I explained that although there's a mystique created by not releasing the venue information till the night of the party, most events are in fact permitted and fully legal.

Chili and I arrived at the location, parked the car a couple blocks away, and walked through the cracked streets of Downtown to the warehouse. Inside, we were greeted by an overweight woman with acne who asked for our 20-dollar cover with a no-nonsense attitude. A hired security guard patted us down to check for weapons. We wove through a dark hallway toward the pounding bass we could hear nearby.

Chili's jaw dropped when we entered into the party and he saw about 400 people dancing, strobe lights, a disco ball, and enough gay boys to man a float at a parade. We proceeded to buy a couple four-dollar Cape Cods and dance like Solid Gold Dancers all night.

In Chili's words: "It was unlike anything I have ever experienced in my 36 years of living. The energy in the room was overwhelmingly positive; there were people from all different walks of life. Gays, straights, femmes, butches, thugs, and hookers were all there for one reason: to listen to music few had heard before and dance. I remember dancing next to a guy that looked like he was straight out of South Central. We ended up smiling at each other and doing the chin nod, the universal code for 'Isn't this f-ing great?'" By the end of the night Chili asked me, "What was that Web site again?"

We made it back to the car in the morning and luckily it had not been broken into. Chili thanked me for introducing him to something he didn't know existed in Los Angeles: a party that isn't just a scene.

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=868>

## **Meds for Pleasure, Meds for Pain**

**Placebo's out bassist, Stefan Olsdal, on their L.A. appearance—and his love of transvestites**

BY AARON MONTY

For over 10 years, Placebo has been selling out shows around the world with a dark blend of electronica and androgyny-rock. Their newest album, *Meds*, is a return to a more traditional, bare rock sound. At the start of a European leg of their world tour, lead singer Brian Molko took ill with tonsillitis, and Placebo had to reluctantly cancel a few tour dates. This gave us a chance to chat with their bassist Stefan Olsdal, who just happens to have a weakness for a great pair of heels.

FRONTIERS: Do you know how many hits your MySpace page has?

STEFAN OLSDAL: Oh, it's a lot, yeah. It kind of took us by surprise, and a lot of it is from fans from the States. It's actually one of the reasons we decided to come back and tour the States. We love the personalized messages from fans. It's a phenomenon, that whole thing, and it's amazing how it has just taken off.

In the U.S., what cities do you like to play the most?

We like playing in the Bible Belt, actually. When we played there the first time, it was actually kind of interesting because we felt we were going to get queer bashed. That was a period when we were wearing dresses, but I think there was so much repression there that the crowd had a chance to release it, you know? We had some amazing times there and met some pretty interesting people. But apart from that, we always have good gigs in Chicago and L.A. There are a lot of Mexicans in L.A. that come to our shows.

Have you ever played the Greek before?

No, not yet. We're excited about it.

Do you consider Placebo to be icons in the gay world?

I don't know. I guess that's for the gay world to decide. We've never tried to hide anything. As far as the lyrics to our songs are concerned, they're not gender- or sexuality-specific. We lower the topic of sexuality quite a lot, but also the topics of love, pain, and revenge. We're not Scissor Sisters, though. The drummer is cute.

Tell me about Hotel Persona.

It's my side project that I'm doing with another guy who just happens to be gay. We've done some remixes and one of them is of [a song by] She Wants Revenge, who are touring with us. And we also DJ quite a lot.

Are you going to be DJing anywhere in the US?

It's pretty hectic, the schedule that we have. It's a lot of traveling and a lot of shows and not a lot of days off, so I don't know. If I have the energy, I'd like to.

What kind of music are you playing when you DJ?

Well, I did "Filthy Gorgeous," Scissor Sisters. I did a lot of Depeche Mode remixes, P.J. Harvey, Soulwax, Vitalic.

What song did Hotel Persona remix for She Wants Revenge?

"Tear You Apart."

Is that your favorite She Wants Revenge song?

Well, it was the one that they asked me to do, and I was like, cool, yeah, I like it. We've known Justin for a long time. We used to be on the same label in the U.K. He raps on one of our tracks on Black Market Music as well. We've been in touch and we're friends, and that's how this whole tour came about.

What do you think of Bloc Party?

They did a remix for us. Well, they wanted to so we let them. I think they're cool, you know. Out of a lot of the bands that have come out lately, they are one of the better ones. Do you think he's gay, the singer?

What are you going to dress as for Halloween?

It's coming up, isn't it? I'm going to go to this amazing transvestite shop in

Boystown in Chicago and get some really good heels. There is a cross-dresser inside of me and he needs an outing as often as he can—a raving drag queen. I've got the legs for it.

Placebo will be playing the Greek Theater with She Wants Revenge on Oct. 22. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster.

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=687>

## The Dresden Dolls Fuck the Backrow

**No, see—that's the name of the show**

BY AARON MONTY

If Trent Reznor and Tori Amos had two musical love children that were raised by Dashboard Confessional, they would sound a lot like the Dresden Dolls—Amanda Palmer and Brian Viglione. Their latest, *Yes, Virginia*, blends punk rock, piano cabaret, Brechtian styling, and wanton androgyny into a Bowie-esque rock opera.

True to form, Palmer has eschewed the typical rock 'n' roll tour, opting instead to present a "night of short films and Dadaist vaudeville" on Wednesday, August 2, at Cinespace in Hollywood, along with Panic! at the Disco. I had a chance to chat with her about the show, which she's charmingly calling *Fuck the Backrow*.

FRONTIERS: Tell me about the show.

AMANDA PALMER: *Fuck the Backrow* is my salvation in life right now. The response from people has just been unbelievable. The contrast between these opening slots that we're doing with Panic! at the Disco and the FTBR shows is literally going from giant soulless venues filled with teenagers that seem to have their camera phones super glued to their hands to these great independently run venues with our own sound who are all just so warm and human. It's been such a great lesson for me to be toggling between these two environments.

Do you have any surprises in the works for the L.A. show?

Every night is a surprise because the performers and the MCs are different in every single city. We've been switching it up every single night. [Dresden Dolls drummer] Brian [Viglione] has actually been joining me for most of the dates, and I would guess that he will show up for the L.A. show. Prince Poppycock and Kitty Diggins will also be there—old-timey high-end burlesque.

Have you ever heard of a drag queen named Jackie Beat?

[Unintelligible]

What? I missed what you said.

That should be off the record anyway.

What was your most memorable experience on tour with Nine Inch Nails?

Oooh! Trent Reznor's birthday coincided with the show in Boston, which is my hometown. So I enlisted one of my performance-art friends from Boston, who is sort of carrying the torch for me as the living statue in Harvard Square, to come over to the Orpheum Theatre, and we found this empty coal-boiler room, near where the catering was. We rigged up this surprise for him where she set up her

entire living statue in the dirty coal room with no lights in it. Then we lured Trent Reznor down there. We sent him into the room alone. He peeked into the room and she was standing there all candlelit with a cake for him and some presents. It was the only time on tour I actually saw him smile. He is a very serious guy.

How do you feel when people compare the Dresden Dolls to the White Stripes?

It's an obvious starting place for people that don't really know much about us, because there are obvious superficial similarities. It actually used to bother me a lot more. Then I went to see them live and I understood that even though we have very little in common fundamentally musically and genre-wise, there is a stage energy and a very particular kind of chemistry and tension when you put a guy and girl on stage like that, and it's a set of drums and an instrument. It's a similar kind of conversation and we are sort of speaking the same language, even though we are talking about very different things.

What do you think of Panic! at the Disco?

They are sort of like the Band of Christmas Past for me in a way, because I remember being their age. I remember being that age and wanting nothing more than to be discovered and skyrocket the way they have. But never have I seen firsthand the realities of what happens when you're a teenager and one minute you're at home with your parents and the next minute, before you even have a job or an apartment or a life, you're on a tour bus and on a stage before 10,000 people. So I look at them and I look at us, a band with a slow-growing but devoted fan base, and I look at the difference at the quality of interaction between us and our fans and them and their fans, and I think if we're on this tour for any reason cosmically, it's to give me an appreciation for our fans and our situation as a band that I couldn't have possibly appreciated unless I had seen this.

Do you know how many hits your MySpace page has?

I have no idea. Do you?

Fuck the Backrow, a night of music, burlesque, and fan-submitted cinema, is coming to Cinespace on Aug. 2. Tickets are available at [www.dresden.dolls.com](http://www.dresden.dolls.com)

<http://www.frontierspublishing.com/mag/index.php?o=art&article=1295>

## Freeballin' with Deadlee

### HomoRevolution's mastermind lets it all hang out

BY AARON MONTY

In an environment full of bragging, bling, and bikini-clad bimbos, it's tough to find a hip-hop artist who actually stands for something that we gays can raise our 40-ounces to. Deadlee, who bills himself as "the Queer Bastard Child of DMX & Lil' Kim," is ready for his assault on the gay community, headlining the HomoRevolution Tour, the first organized regional tour of LGBT rap and hip-hop artists. The multiracial lineup includes an interesting array of artists: Johnny Dangerous, Tori Fixx, U.K. hip-hop artist Mz Fontaine, QBoy, L.A.'s Salvimex, Bigg Nugg (the first serious "bear" rapper), JFP, and transgendered artist Foxxjazell.

Deadlee aims to cause an uprising of awareness for gay hip-hop artists with the HomoRevolution Tour, where he will be promoting his latest release, Assault with a Deadlee Weapon. "Gay people are standing up in entertainment finally. Gays doing are doing hip-hop. The next step is politics." A longtime champion for gay rights, Deadlee lives proudly in Echo Park and works day-to-day with gay youth at the Jeff Griffith Youth Center in Hollywood.

In his music, Deadlee is not afraid to openly call out other hip-hoppers like 50 Cent and Eminem who use such words as “faggot” or “gay” derogatorily. “Kids have always used terms like ‘faggot’ and ‘sissy’ in a belittling way,” he says. “People use the term without necessarily thinking of sexuality, but they have to be checked on it nowadays because it affects so many people.”

Deadlee believes in changing the public’s minds and perception of gay people, but understands that sometimes celebrities like Ann Coulter and Tim Hardaway work against the gay cause: “[Coulter] is the crap on my shoe. People like her create a sick environment.” When asked what he thought of Tim Hardaway’s public statements on homosexuals, Deadlee responds, “You’d think that black people would be sympathetic to the gay struggle. It’s hard to understand why he would publicly make such statements. It kind of disgusts me that he would throw that bomb. It’s just ignorant.” Expect to hear some slams on them in his music.

Aside from his noble cause, Deadlee is just a regular gay man living in Los Angeles. He listens to “my girls” Fantasia, Mary J. Blige, Pink, and Missy Elliot: “I just feel girls are gutsier in music.” He likes anyone that can “just get down singing,” though. You might catch him in the afternoon at El Jalisco Bar in Hawthorne (where he swears you can find “the coldest Coronas in the city for only \$3.50”), “crotch-watching at MJs,” or at the Spotlight in Hollywood.

Deadlee’s self-expression is not only revealed through music. He also dabbles in stand-up comedy, performing on Latino night at the Laugh Factory and at Drunk on Stage at Akbar. A card-carrying member of the Screen Actors Guild, Deadlee is a rapper and an actor. He has spent the last year making film-festival appearances in support of the homo-hop documentary Pick Up the Mic, which he is featured in. He also appears on the Logo network’s documentary series Hip Hop Homos. “Women like Rosie O’Donnell and Ellen have broken down barriers in comedy,” he says. “And I am grateful for that.”

His next release, slated for late 2007, is title Intifada (Arabic for “uprising”). While Assault has a more serious tone, Deadlee promises there will be some funky, danceable tracks on Intifada, maybe even some comedic interludes. The track he is most excited about is called “Duh-Dun, Duh-Dun,” and is a shout-out to guys who don’t wear any underwear. He created the song with fellow HomoRevolutionary QBoy; expect to hear it in the clubs.

The HomoRevolution Tour kicks off in San Diego on March 29, stops at L.A.’s El Cid on March 30, and continues to eight other cities in the Southwest. More info: [www.homorevolution.com](http://www.homorevolution.com).