

Final Cut looks to be cut above

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

The Final Cut's Tony Srock likens his hard-edged alternative outfit to being prophets in their own land.

"William Tucker (of Thrill Kill Kult) said it best, 'Napoleon wouldn't have been anything he conquered France,'" said Srock, squinting amid the gray smoke produced from puffing on his Merit cigarette at the Metro Music Cafe.

Understandable, if not commendable. The trademark Detroit rocker by previous definition has been a leather-clad, beer-swilling dude who's driven by "Got-a-gig-gonna-get-signed-to-a-record-deal" state of mind.

More so, there's always the descriptive sound — grunge, fast lead — derived from worshipping of local music deities MC5 and Iggy and the Stooges.

With The Final Cut, the old image quickly becomes skewed a kind of like when the TV's horizontal hold goes on the Fritz.

Drum beats direct from the dungeon, savage sounding guitars welded like machetes, cryptic vocals, primal lyrics, anchored with judiciously used technology — this is The Final Cut. This is also a Detroit band with the sought-after record deal, a new record and a whole lot of new friends including the aforementioned William Tucker.

"Consumed" is being released Tuesday, May 5, on Vancouver-based Network Records. The LP features guest appearances by members of hardcore techno's advisory board, including vocalist Chris Connolly of Revolting Cocks and vocalist Ogre from Skinny Puppy.

"WE DIDN'T plan to have Ogre on the record," said Joe Lafata, who is a former member of the Aristocrats and joined forces with Srock in 1989. "We just had a big party at the studio and he was there. We asked him and he said, 'Yeah sure.'"

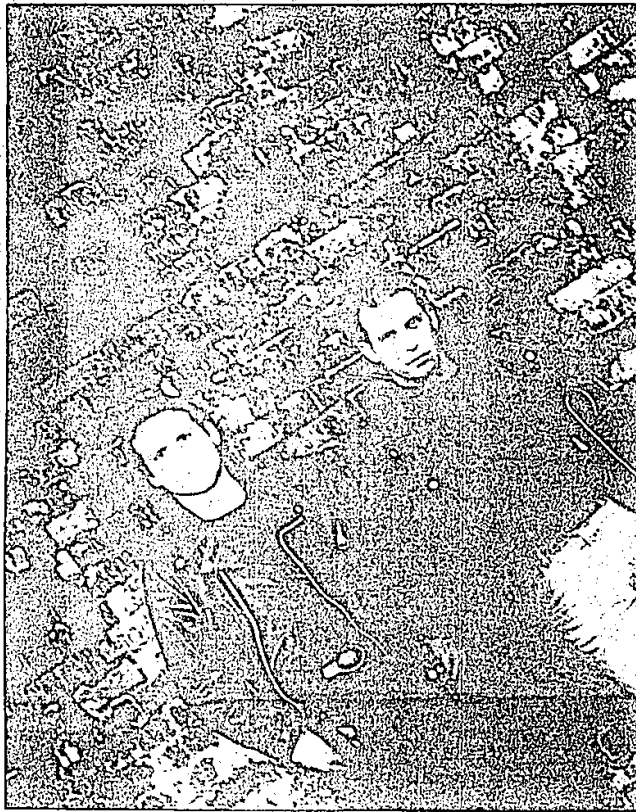
Lafata hastens to add some of Ogre's vocal tracks for "Broken" were incompressible due to the celebratory nature of the moment and had to be cut.

Guest appearances are merely a sidelight on "Consumed." Perhaps they lend credibility, but the foundation for The Final Cut's useful assault was already well laid.

Srock formed The Final Cut with fellow DJ Jeff Mills in 1988, releasing a pair of techno dance floor hits "The Bass has Landed" and "Take Me Away" on their own label Full Effect Records. A European-only LP, "Deep into the Cut," followed and further endeared the outfit in dance clubs.

However, Srock and Mills parted company. Mills went on to front techno outfit Underground Resistance while Srock followed his muse with Lafata, who shared in similar interest in hard-edged alternative music.

"I WAS A white kid from the suburbs and most of the Detroit techno was coming out of the inner city."



Tony Srock and Joe Lafata are The Final Cut, a hard-edged alternative outfit which will perform Friday, May 8, at the State Theatre.

said Srock, who calls Mills one of the most creative and talented people he knows. "I'm not saying that was a definitive problem. I was outsider to begin with because I wasn't around the people who created that scene. I found it hard to be accepted as one of them."

"Then I got into the harder edged alternative stuff. It came to point where Jeff Mills and I were at a creative impasse."

The Final Cut veered more to humanistic approach opposed to solely using technology, opting for live guitars, bass and drum to reveal a personality to the music. Songwriting was still largely based on finding

a sinuous rhythm and constructing lyrics and guitar lines around it.

But only after a deal fell through that would've made Full Effect Records, a division of Relativity Records, Srock and Lafata concentrated solely on making The Final Cut successful. Full Effect also had local acts such as the Lab Animals and Substation on its roster.

"I always loved the label more. Joe always loved Final Cut," said Srock, who hasn't given up the notion turning Full Effect into an epicenter for Detroit alternative music. "I get just as much satisfaction releasing someone else's album as I do my own."

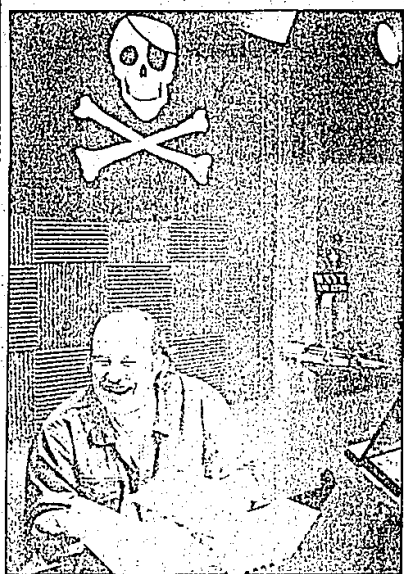
Network Records (Skinny Puppy

and Sara McLoughlin) noting the band's success in Europe signed The Final Cut. The band immediately went into the studio to record "Consumed," which has Srock and Lafata buzzing.

"The brilliance about Final Cut is no one can pigeonhole us," Srock said. "There's so many diverse songs. There's so many different avenues this band can take."

Undoubtedly, one will lead out of obscurity.

The Final Cut will perform Saturday, May 9, at the State Theatre, 2115 Woodward, Detroit. For information, call 961-5450.



photos by BILL HANSEN

Bob Bauer may not be playing rock'n'roll these days, but he hasn't faded out of the radio scene. Now, he's host of "BackTalk," the latest dial-and-chat show on WXYT-AM.

He swaps discs for chat on XYT

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

He says he's not a hippie, yuppie or puppy. Nor is he a Republican, Democrat, a conservative, a liberal or a lifetime subscriber to any particular ideology.

Bob Bauer is a radio talk show host, and therein lies a few of the trumps.

The longtime rock'n'roll disc jay has turned to the dialtone squall of talk radio, debuting recently with "BackTalk," 5-9 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays on WXYT-AM (1270). Like most dial-and-chat shows, "BackTalk" is designed to cause some listener state, rattle a few phone cords along the way and, in Bauer's case, inject some humor into the proceedings.

Unlike most radio talk show hosts, though, Bauer presents himself as a philosophical Socrates or a social Napoleon. He's not being erudite or oversteering either.

"I'm not here to change the world," said Bauer, who left WJLZ-FM last year after 15 years at the AOR station. "When we set out to do this, I really didn't see myself being anything to anybody."

"I'm not here to deliver the word. I'm here to open up conversation between people."

NOT JUST anyone, mind you. "BackTalk" target audience is the 30s to mid-40s demographic range, the one that leaves advertisers salivate.

A guy dressed in blue jeans and a sweatshirt whose fraying long hair is held up with a rubber band and whose previous calling was growling out the name of Led Zeppelin's tunes may carry instant credibility with an audience already suspect of government and authority figures.

At least that's what station executives are banking on.

"I think talk radio for the next generation will have to be a combination of entertainment and information," said Michael Packer, director of operations at WXYT-AM. "Across America, we have a lot of talk show hosts who are very informative, but not necessarily entertaining."

SOMEWHAT, there is a sense of wonderment with Bauer, who views talk radio as a welcome career change.

"I was just bored with doing rock radio," Bauer said. "I did rock radio for 13 years and I've been in the rock business for 23 (years). I still enjoy rock'n'roll. I still like all that stuff."

As far as the broadcasting goes, I got tired of playing the same old Stones, Zeppelin and Seger tunes day in and day out. I wanted to progress.

A Vietnam veteran, Bauer started out in the business doing news for Armed Forces Radio while in the Navy. His first job out of Specs

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IN CONCERT

Monday, May 4

- **Mirror Image**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor
895-2747
- **Paradise Jazz Jam**
With Larry Smith at Alvin's, 5756 Cass
Detroit
832-2355

Tuesday, May 5

- **Tequilla Mockingbirds**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor
895-2747
- **Chisel Brothers with Thornetta Davis**
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit
832-2355
- **Claw Hammer**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor
966-8353
- **Ride**
With Snowdrift at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit
541-MELT

Wednesday, May 6

- **Let's Go Bowling**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor
895-2747
- **Destruction Ride**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor
966-8353
- **Phish**
St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit
Tickets are \$12.50 in advance
961-MELT

Thursday, May 7

- **Uncle John's Band**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor
895-2747
- **Wit's End**
With the Luck Inc. and Pinnock Pyp at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck
831-0070
- **Holy Cows**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor
966-8353
- **Sun Ra and his Arkestra**
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, across from Wayne State University, Detroit. Tickets are \$15 in advance. Show times 8 and 11 p.m.
832-2355
- **Park the Karma**
With The Oqueup at 3D, 1815 N. Main, Royal Oak
569-3344

Friday, May 8

- **The Erj**
Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor
895-2747
- **Mick Taylor**
Sully's, 3756 Greenfield, Dearborn
446-1920
- **George Bedard and the Kingpins**
Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit
832-2355
- **Incurables**
Garden Bowl, 4140 Woodward, South of DIA, Detroit
833-9850
- **Granfalloon**
With Theomady Dogs and Jazz Nerds

at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck

- **Happy as Clams**
With Bonanzas at Lili's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck
576-8355
- **Volobents**
With 20 Mile Train at Finney's Pub, 3965 Woodward, Detroit
831-0070
- **Third World Cowboys**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor
966-8353
- **Assembly Required**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor
966-8353
- **The Cobb Brothers**
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor
761-1493
- **Buffalo Tom**
St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit
961-MELT
- **Harmonica Shah and the Bluesmatics**
13 Torritus, 26551 Evergreen, Southfield
353-0950
- **The Rationals**
Blind Pig, 208 S. First, Ann Arbor
966-8353
- **Tony Williams Quartet and The Benny Green Trio**
The Ark, 637 1/2 S. Main, Ann Arbor
761-1493
- **James Wallin**
Murlocks, 2086 Crooks Road, Rochester Hills
552-0950
- **Moisture**
With the Wires at Finney's Pub, 3965

Saturday, May 9

- **Commander Cody**
Sully's, 3756 Greenfield, Dearborn
446-1920
- **Moisture**
With the Wires at Finney's Pub, 3965

at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck

- **Vertical Pillows**
With Original Sins at Alvin's, 5756 Cass, Detroit
832-2355
- **Noc Barrage**
With Surge to the Union, Happy Accidents and Grayhaven at Paycheck's Lounge, 2932 Caniff, Hamtramck
874-0969
- **Frank Allison and the Odd Sox**
Lili's, 2930 Caniff, Hamtramck
874-0969
- **The Dead Band**
Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac
557-6294
- **In Autumn**
With Those Who Drain and 'The Splitter' at Hamtramck Pub, 2018 Caniff, off I-75
363-9700
- **Harmonica Shah and the Bluesmatics**
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