

# LET'S GO! STREET SCENE

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## MUSIC NOTES



CHRISTINA FUOCO

## Seeing Danzig: good for laugh

I admit I was a geek in high school. I got great grades and hardly missed any school. But I had this punk rock side to me. (Or at least what was defined as "punk rock" to high schoolers back then.)

I went home from school, did homework and watched videos on this little-known show "MTV." The gloom and doom of bands like The Smiths, Duran Duran, The Cure and Depeche Mode really, ironically, pumped me up.

While I was in college, my love for that music grew stronger. Dancing in the darkened ballroom and City Club has been substituted for Pantera, Prong, Orange 9mm, Rage Against the Machine, and Clutch concerts.

I guess that's why going to see Danzig, Korn and Marilyn Manson seemed pretty funny. I could "check up" on the people whose anger festers like the original City Clubbers and who wear black because they mean it (not because it's trendy).

I figured how bad could it be? I've been writing about music for nearly six years so I've been thrown in all kinds of weird situations that now make great party stories.

I figured that seeing Danzig, Korn and Marilyn Manson would be pretty harmless. Like everyone else with MTV in the world, Danzig's video for "Mother" is embedded in my mind. I was nearly craving to see Glenn Danzig come out looking like the Michelin tire man screaming the chorus.

As I stood in the line that wrapped around the building, girls in "Clockwork Orange" makeup passed us by. The promotion people for Z-Rock, which was celebrating its on-air anniversary, walked around handing out balloons. Nobody accepted the challenge. (I guess it might ruin the makeup job.) Squinty-eyed guys were throwing their chains on the ground because they couldn't take them in.

It was cool six years ago at City Club, but seeing the children of the night walking around in bright daylight was as uncomfortable as seeing Dracula sunning himself.

It really hit me how that whole "black" scene had changed when I walked into the State. Knowing I was going to Danzig and I guess not thinking that morning I threw on an off-white thermal dress and lights, black Doc Marten boots and a black leather coat. In a sea of black tar, I looked like Glenda the Good Witch from "The Wizard of Oz."

Souvenir stands sold Marilyn Manson T-shirts with the logo of the Salvation Army modified to say "Satanic Army." (A quick lesson about Marilyn Manson. The five men take first names of famous women and last names of mostly murders — i.e. Sara Lee Lucas, Twiggy Ramirez, Madonna Wayne Gacy, Daisy Berkowitz and Mr. Manson.) Other T-shirts have pictures of leader, Mr. Manson, with fake blood coming out of his mouth. For \$10, you, too, can take home a poster of Glenn Danzig in his shirtless glory (of course) and wooden wings strapped to his arms.

Inside the theater proper, I sat through hours of choreographed head-banging and watched the mostly male crowd body surf up to their alleged devil-worshipping band. One guy in the "Davis & Butterfield"-sanctioned crowd proudly wore a shirt that read "Freak."

The most mind-boggling thing of the night was when the first band Korn stepped on stage. During their song "Chutes and Ladders," the lead singer stepped on bagpipes. Now, I just got back from Scotland and I didn't see any bagpipes there. But here I am at a head-banging, devil-worshipping contest and this guy with dreadlocks pulls out bagpipes.

Having seen Marilyn Manson before, I used that as my rest period. But I finally got to see the good old Michelin man. I'm sorry to say that seeing him sing "Mother" wasn't as funny as I thought.

I was right. Going to Danzig, Korn, and Marilyn Manson was good for a laugh. The next time I feel nostalgic, however, I'll happily go to City Club, veg on the couches, and smell the aroma of Clove cigarettes and "alternative" perfumes.

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## Ned's Dustbin: From boys to men

■ Barely 20 when they formed eight years ago, Ned's Atomic Dustbin concentrated on being popular instead of getting to know themselves. Recording their latest album "Brainbloodvolume" changed all that.

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

Despite forming eight years ago, members of Ned's Atomic Dustbin are just getting to know each other.

"People are very kind of inside themselves a lot," singer Jonn (no last name) said via telephone from his home in England. "This didn't hit home until they returned from touring in support of 'Are You Normal?' and began work on 'Brainbloodvolume.'"

"When we sat down to write the third album and talked about what kind of music we liked, we were amazed and frightened to death," Jonn said. "We realized that we're really not into the same stuff at all anymore. We had little in common musically."

To ease the fear and nervousness, Ned's Atomic Dustbin recorded "Brainbloodvolume" in the leisurely pace of two years.

"What we had to do in the two years is see if we could work with those tastes and see if we could work together," he said. "We certainly came up with something we're all pleased with."

For "Brainbloodvolume," Ned's Atomic Dustbin stripped away most of its heavy pop influences and replaced them with a more industrial, corrosive — and sometimes even hip-hop — sound. The first single, "All I Ask of Myself Is That I Hold Together" is just as combative as the video set at a demolition derby. The youthful angst of "Are You Normal?" and "God Fodder" is long gone. Rational fear and rage as well as heartfelt sentiments take its place.

"Instead of having one single energy rush, we wanted to make songs that would carry their own mood so we could create a series of different kinds of emotions," Jonn said. "I want this to be the kind of album that makes the hair stand up on the back of your neck."

Learning more about each other was a tough job for Ned's Atomic Dustbin who barely knew themselves when the band formed in November 1988 at a West Midlands college dorm. A majority of the band, who named themselves after a skit from the Spike Milligan and Peter Sellers BBC series "Goon Show," was barely 20 while drummer Dan was 15. Two



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Jonn

years later, they hit the stage of England's prestigious Reading Festival in front of 60,000 screaming fans.

"We were very young and we (hadn't) actually become our own individual persons ourselves let alone know each other," Jonn said. "It was 3½-4 years when things started happening for us. We were having a laugh and enjoying being famous. There wasn't a lot of communication going on and that's a really difficult thing to do."

There's still a comedic edge to them. A few years ago they contributed their version of the Bay City Rollers' single "Saturday Night" to

the soundtrack of "So I Married an Axe Murderer."

"What we did was we took a horrendous song and made it quite bad. It was a lot better (however). It couldn't be much worse. I was horrified, but I thought it would be nice to do something with Mike Meyers," he said. "When I heard the song I was absolutely horrified. It was one of the worst songs ever. We just polished a turd."

Pushing sense of humor aside, their live show, which hits St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit on Tuesday,

May 9, has a certain sense of new-found maturity as well, Jonn said. "(During) Ned's gigs in the past, our heads were down and we thrashed it out to the end. This time we're working a bit more dynamics into the stuff."

Jonn admits that "Brainbloodvolume" is Ned's Atomic Dustbin's best work to date. It was a refinement of their musical craftsmanship as well as a polishing of their rough-edged personality.

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Ned's Atomic Dustbin and Orange 9MM play St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit, on Tuesday, May 9. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. for the all-ages show. Tickets are \$10 in advance. For more information, call (313) 961-MELT.

## Still rockin' with Dokken in the '90s

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

Nobody will admit it, except under intense pressure. It doesn't matter if the person being asked the question is a singer/songwriter, a 20-year-old college student, or a die-hard alternative rock fan. Chances are good that if you went to high school or junior high school in the '80s, you were a fan of Dokken.

Just thinking about them singing "In My Dreams," "Into A Fire," "It's Not Love," "Heaven Sent" and "Dream Warriors" is probably conjuring up images of fedoras and poker-straight long brown hair.

Well, good news. Just like Arnold Schwarzenegger, they're back — and selling out clubs around the United States. Their Ritz show Friday, May 12, is due to being sold out.

"I got to admit secretly we felt that there was more of an audience than a lot of people perhaps were willing to give to us," said bassist Jeff Pilson, via telephone during a tour stop in Kansas City last week. "We were born in the '80s. Everyone stamped a big 'no' on bands in the '80s. Everyone told us we were going against the odds. But we kind of said all along, I think there's an audience out there."

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## Have a listen

To hear music by Ned's Atomic Dustbin (message 3), Dokken (message 3), Downer's Groove (message 4), Big Chief (message 6), The Bucket (message 6), Mary Katzen (message 7), and Orange 9mm (message 8), you can call the Street Scene Music Line at (313) 963-2025 on a touch-tone phone. Fast-forward to the corresponding message by pressing 33. To repeat a message, press 4.

■ "Most bands are not using harmonies. It's almost a taboo thing. We have to do those vocals because that's who we are. There are three singers in the band. OK, it's not the most hip thing. But I'd rather be a trend-setter than a trend follower and be a positive influence for once."

Jeff Pilson  
Dokken



Dokken sans fedoras: Many '80s rock fans are all in their glory now that the original Dokken — Mick Brown (clockwise from left), Jeff Pilson, Don Dokken and George Lynch — have reunited.

"Harmonies have always been a highlight or a trademark of the band; we didn't let that disappear," he said. "Most bands are not using harmonies. It's almost a taboo thing. We have to do those vocals because that's who we are. There are three singers in the band."

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Dokken and Universal Stomp performs at The Ritz, 17500 Frisco, Roseville, Friday, May 5. Tickets are \$17 in advance and doors open at 7 p.m. For more information, call (610) 778-0404.