

SCREEN SCENE

STREET BEATS

Planet B.A.D.  
F-Punk  
— Big Audio Dynamite

Everybody loves the Clash, but does anybody care about Big Audio Dynamite? Mick Jones has been asking this musical question for years — a decade, to be exact, since the British singer/songwriter left the highly influential Clash and formed the first incarnation of B.A.D. in 1985.

In the Clash days, Jones was usually relegated to playing second banana to Joe Strummer. But when taking a rare lead vocal, his songs proved more melodic, brighter, and usually more popular ("Train In Vain," "Should I Stay Or Should I Go?").

Coming after the proletarian punk and white reggae of those glory years, B.A.D. probably seemed like a radical departure. With an interracial lineup, ridiculous early-'80s sportswear and an emphasis on dance music with dubblings in techno, B.A.D.'s old stuff sounds fairly common now. Precursors to English pop acts like Jesus Jones and the Farm, the band's greatest strength has also been its songs, as the greatest hits compilation "Planet B.A.D." (Columbia) documents.

Its debut single, "The Bottom Line," is classic B.A.D. — electronic beats and a sing-along chorus, tempered with just enough guitar to give it all guts. For all of his old band's working-class grunting in the '70s, Jones' buoyant optimism shines through in most of "Planet B.A.D." "C'Mon Every Beatbox" finds him reuniting with co-writer/producer Strummer for a stirring update on "Dancing in the Street," and here his background works for him. If such a risky venture came from some young unknown, it would be laughable. But given



Jones' long stint in one of rock's greatest politically oriented groups, "C'Mon Every Beatbox" sounds like the sentiment of a world-weary man who has found solace, if not salvation, in dance music.

"Planet B.A.D." sings in the middle, but picks up again when it reaches the its raucous second half of "The Globe's" classic single "Rush," Jones' reminiscences on his past. From the serious ("If I had my time again, I would do it all the same") to the silly ("Somehow I stayed thin, while the other guys got fat"), "Rush" contains all the best reasons to like B.A.D. Coupled with the strangely familiar sampling on "The Globe" and "Looking For A Song's" busy rhythms, the album's final barrage of hits is its most captivating. Although indirectly documenting both Jones' hair loss and his decreasing popularity, "Planet B.A.D." also stands as a testament to his post-Clash accomplishments.

The album's last song, "I Turned Out A Punk," also serves as the opener on B.A.D.'s latest "F-Punk" (Radioactive), and is an abrupt stylistic change. The soundbites and techno blips that once served as the core of its sound have now been banished solely to intro and occasional flourishes. The album sounds like it was cut live as a straight, guitar-based four-piece, then handed to the band's D.J. with strict instructions to "Keep it under 30 seconds."

This seems to have strengthened B.A.D.'s work. Perhaps sparked by the renewed interest in the Clash, Jones has made the closest thing to a rock record since "Combat Rock." The cover art even saves the pastel lettering of "London Calling," and save for its low political content and joyful tone, "F-Punk" could have almost been passed off as a Clash album and not many would have noticed.

Or complained. "I Turned Out A Punk" can only be described as fun-filled venom. "Vitamin C" is a stuttering, spitfire account of Jones' childhood medications. Recalling the old "Clash City Rockers" riff, "Psycho Wing" takes stabs at the National Front, saylams, and more. A hidden rava-up of David Bowie's "Suffragette City" seals it: "F-Punk" is a keeper.

Whether a new record label pushed him for a more consistent album or his rock 'n' roll spirit has simply resurfaced, a new flame has been lit under Jones and B.A.D. Meanwhile, the calls and offers for a Clash reunion will probably keep pouring in, and he'll keep turning them down. Smart move. The public may not like B.A.D. nearly as much as the Clash, but if "F-Punk" is any indication of Jones' new direction, it's their loss.

—Todd Wicks

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Dubious honor: Members of Tool and Failure formed the Replicants — from left, drummer Greg Edwards, guitarist Paul D'Amour, keyboardist Chris Pitman, and bassist/vocalist Ken Andrews — as a side project but turned into a vehicle to record cover songs. Tool singer Maynard Keenan appears as guest vocalist on the Replicants' version of Paul McCartney's "Silly Love Songs."

Replicants formed by happy accident

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

You could say that the Replicants were an accident waiting to happen. After completing a world tour together, members of the platinum-selling rock band Tool and rising stars Failure sporadically jammed together without any intentions.

That evolved into a demo session when ex-Tool guitarist Paul D'Amour, and Failure's bassist/vocalist Ken Andrews, drummer Greg Edwards and keyboardist Chris Pitman recorded some songs to test out Failure's then-newly purchased recording equipment.

The result was "pretty cool," D'Amour said, provoking them to make a side project out of the Replicants.

"I guess it was kind of an accident really," D'Amour said of the collaboration. "We were all so caught up in our regular projects with Tool and Failure that we needed a release on the side."

The Replicants started out doing their own material, but they didn't have enough time to devote to writing songs.

"So we said, 'Let's play some covers for fun.' ... It was neat to do songs by artists that we always admired but we wanted to change them a little bit more toward our way of thinking," D'Amour said.

Its eponymously titled debut on Zoo Entertainment is an 11-song tribute to some of their favorite artists. "Replicants" kicks off with a monotone, guitar-driven cover of the Cars' "Just What I Needed," and works its way through Neil Young's "Cinnamon Girl," Steely Dan's "Dirty Work" and Syd Barrett's "No Good Trying."

"We just like started playing a whole bunch of different songs. Some of them worked, some of them were cool. We just kind of picked and chose and to see which ones were the most fun to play," D'Amour explained.

Tool singer Maynard Keenan jumps on board as guest vocalist for a musically abrasive 7½-minute rendition of Paul McCartney's "Silly Love Songs." Keenan sings "I love you" more frighteningly than romantically, perhaps because it isn't exactly one of

his favorite songs, according to D'Amour.

"We had to have Maynard on the album. Maynard hates Paul McCartney so much I thought I'd play a little gag on him. He said he'd sing whatever we chose so he had to do it. It was either that or 'I Like Boys' by Missing Persons. He chose Paul McCartney."

Missing Persons still makes its way onto the album, however, with an industrial version of "Destination Unknown."

The D'Amour-Keenan collaboration could be one of the last. D'Amour, a native of Michigan's Upper Peninsula who now lives in California, has since left Tool due to "communication problems, personality conflicts. The same old crap."

"It was just kind of one of those things where we weren't seeing eye-to-eye. I kind of really had done as much as I felt I could with that kind of music and I was ready to do something a little more outside than that. They were more interested in 'Under the Sun Part II.'"

Tool begins work on its follow up to "Underworld" March 1 and expects to

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release the album in late summer. D'Amour, meanwhile, has opted to pursue his own musical avenues.

"It's going to be my original music. I can't even describe it at this point. Right now I'm working with Chris and Greg, who are also in the Replicants, and another guy, Brad Laner of Medicine. We'll see what happens."

One thing that won't be happening is a Replicants tour but D'Amour said a few songs may pop up on Failure's next tour. A second album may be in the future.

"We had talked about it actually just before Christmas. It would be fun to do another one of those records some day."

Guitars have short life in Fathers of Id

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO  
STAFF WRITER

Looking out onto a sea of unfamiliar people at the Undercurrents music festival last year in Cleveland, Fathers of the Id singer/guitarist Sean Ike asked the audience what most would think to be a peculiar question for a musician:

"Does anyone have a guitar?"

He had kept up his tradition of accidentally breaking guitars but this time didn't have a spare.

"This was, at that time, the most important show of our career. The first song was so out there. There was so much energy involved that I just swung the guitar around my head without thinking. The next thing I know it's in two pieces on the ground," Ike said.

A good Samaritan loaned him a guitar to finish the show, a showcase for music industry folks and fans.

Had the owner known Ike's history of breaking guitars, he probably would have been apprehensive about offering the instrument. But it's not like Ike made conscious decisions to break three guitars within a few years' span to be a rock god or something.

"When Sean plays, he's not really rooted much in the material world," said drummer Marko Smith. "He kind of spins around, (doing) this whirling dervish weird thing. Some things don't come back from there in fact."

For the most part, Ike just gets lost in Fathers of the Id's blend of funk, soul and rock produced by his three-

piece band which also includes bassist Gustav Hoffman.

The three Detroit residents are transplants from Ohio, where they met while attending Miami University.

Forming in October 1992, the band got its first potential big break the following summer when a friend of Ike's asked asked if Fathers of the Id wanted to play a Grateful Dead cover song in "A Reason to Believe," a date-rape drama that was being locally produced.

In no way similar to the Grateful Dead, Fathers of the Id agreed to perform in a bar scene but ditched the Dead song for the more appropriate cover of "Hey Joe" by Jimi Hendrix.

Last fall — nearly two years after the movie was wrapped up — Fathers of the Id made its big-screen debut in "A Reason to Believe," produced by twentysomething Doug Tirola, whose credits include assistant production coordinator on "A League of Their Own."

The independent film, which had a brief showing in Ann Arbor late last year, was done for \$171,000 and starred television sitcom actress Allison Smith. Although in limited release, the movie earned press in Rolling Stone and Elle magazines, as well as The New York Times.

Upon graduating from Miami University, Hoffman, Ike and Smith moved to Detroit in early 1994 and almost immediately began setting the groundwork for Fathers of the Id's future in Detroit.

As a start, Ike attended a Detroit Musicians Alliance meeting. The

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newcomer went into the meeting hoping to network with fellow musicians, and left as the organization's vice president for 1994-95. Last November, he was elected president with Hoffman and Smith as co-vice presidents.

Still, between all that, Fathers of the Id found time to record their debut EP "Boungela." The title is Wolof, one of the traditional languages of Senegal, for "I love you."

"The reason why we named it anything was because we used it in terms of the group of friends that we got (since moving to Detroit)," Ike explained.

The six-song tape explores the band members' wide variety of musical influences which range from jazz to rock to free-form funk to soul.

Although all four members write songs together, Ike said "somehow lyrics end up on my notebook first and then we go into musical notes and feel what we're feelin'."

"Soul Kid," a song which shows the similarity between Ike's and ex-Living Colour frontman Corey Glover's vocal range, kicks off the six-song release. The band tears through the straight-ahead funk rock of the socially conscious "Chewing Gum," the

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lazy groove of "Procrastination" and the musically maniacal "Who Will Rise Up."

In early December, the band was honored for one part of its multi-dimensional sound with the Detroit Music Awards "Best Punk Band" prize.

Fathers of the Id will soon return to the studio to record a full-length CD. Ike said that the album will be a departure from "Boungela."

"It's going to be noticeably different from the first release — in maturity level and the number of songs. As far as being three musicians, we're going through different things and growing as musicians and (we'll) finally bringing it to a new batch of songs."

Fathers of the Id performs at The Foundry, 18000 E. Warren, Detroit, with Skinhorse and Snake Oil, Saturday, Jan. 20. Doors open at 8 p.m. for the 18 and older show. The cover charge is \$5. For more information, call (313) 886-8960. The band also plays at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27, at New Way Bar, 23130 Woodward Ave., Ferndale, (810) 841-8870; and 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3, at Magic Bag, 22918 Woodward Ave., Ferndale, during Mental Landscape's CD release party, (810) 544-3030.