

“**T**here are people obviously on drugs and very drunk on stage, there are women go-go dancers with their breasts hanging out—what the f— is this stuff?”

A pisshead is screaming in my ear. I am transfixed by a long-haired, bearded dude 100 yards away who is staring me in the eye, clutching his groin and giving me the “devil sign”. Do I know him?

Later on, a deranged individual tells me how you make records in Chicago these days.

“This big, fat motherf—ing asshole of a slob cop comes staggering into the studio desperately trying to score some DRUGGGGGSSSSSSSSSSSS! So we says—get outta here, you fat fascist slob son-of-a-bitch PIG! And he says, pleeeeeeeeeeease! OK? And he’s looking pretty desperate plus he’s got a gun, y’know? So we says, OK, you fat disgusting scumbucket, we give you the ‘ludes if you scream on this record we’re doing like IS THAT AN EARRING? ARE YOU A FAGGOT? And he says what’s the name of the band so we tell him—1000 HOMO DJ’s, like Y-Y-Y-YEEEEEEEE HAH!”

These are *der*-ranged times. Frankie Knuckles and friends mate Euro-industrial pseudo-disco with the hedonistic flicker bombp-f of gay Hi-NRG and a shit load of other stuff and gives us House. House spawns Acid, mates with Detroit Techno and takes over the hip Brits like some disgusting *Star Trek* style intergalactic disease, makes Belgium fashionable, kills the Kyliemonster stone dead and fills our charts with 121 bpm faceless but f—able dancepop.

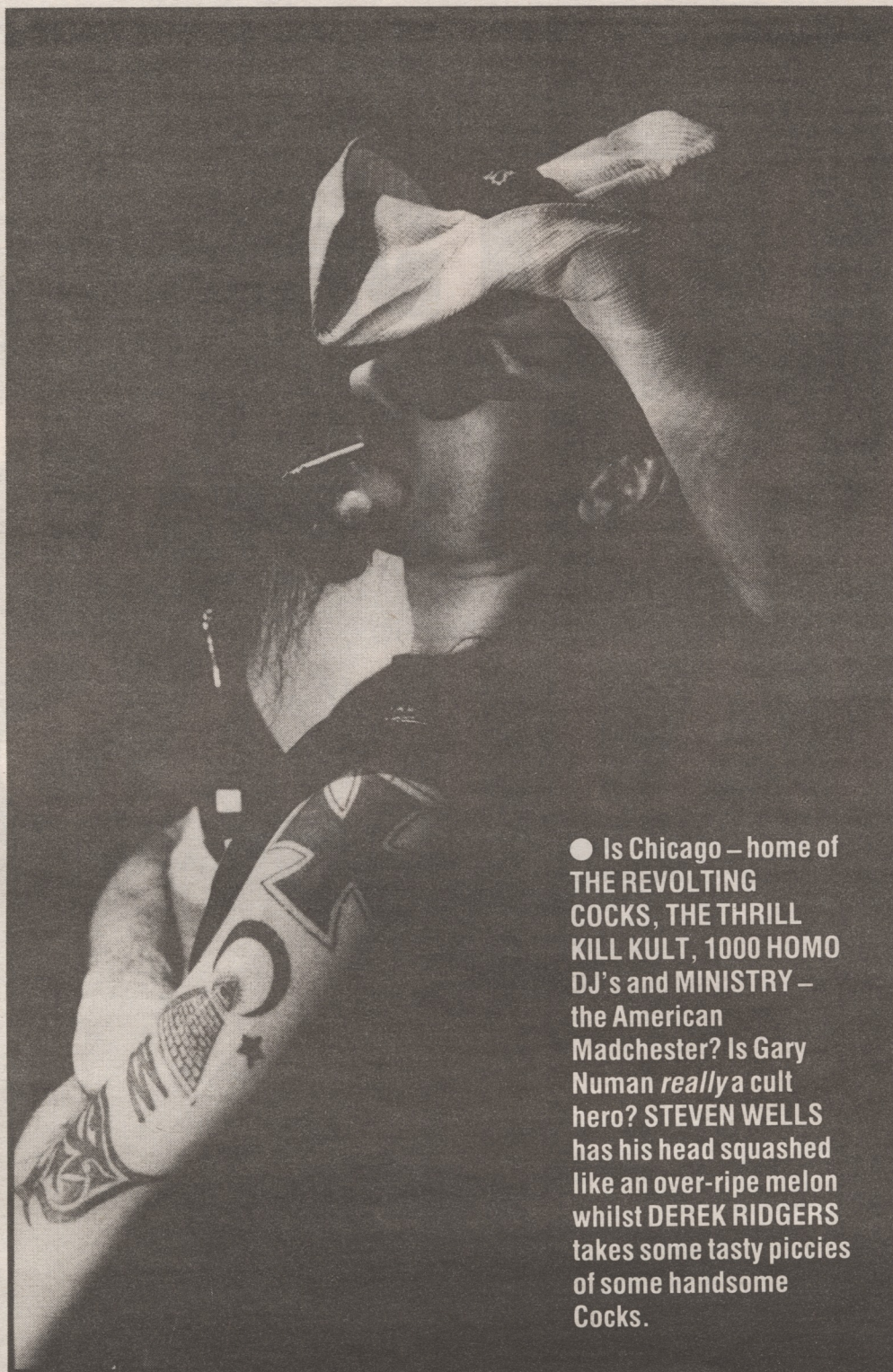
Assorted Manc council estate scum, festering in the rich soup of accumulated hip at the very bottom of the pop food chain, piss all over the traditionally dominant middle class art scholars with the first white pop music ever that you can dance to without looking like a black persons’ worst cheese’n’acid nightmare. All bow down and worship the liberating E. It takes a nation of chemists to turn us black.

For the first time since 1978, the British charts are pissing on their American cousins, the birthplace of rock’n’roll is once again a stumbling, straw-sucking barbaric hinterland containing only a few besieged bastions of Brit-style cool, one of these is Wax Trax records. This is where White, Black, Gay and Hardcore Chicago meet. This is The YANK MADCHESTER. Home of THE REVOLTING COCKS.

“I WONDERED if people who are dedicated Hardcore fans would like MINISTRY. And they do, they really get into it! They have no scruples!”
Chris Connelly, REVOLTING COCKS

Yes, this is PUNK ROCK. And yes, this is DANCE MUSIC. This is ACID PUNK. In 1979 rock radio jock Gary Meyer launched the “Disco Sucks” campaign with a ritual record smashing at Chicago’s Comiskey Park baseball ground. The crowd, who’d each brought along a “disco” record to destroy, went berserk, invaded the pitch and rioted, leaving the ground littered with shards of shattered “faggot” and “nigger” records. Real Men listen to AC/DC and The Sex Pistols. Dance music is for pussies.

THE REVOLTING Cocks sound like The Butthole Surfers being shafted with studded dildos by Gary Numan’s Belgian cousins. When asked to describe the band, singer Chris Connelly mumbled “errrrr... acid and whiskey! Acid and whiskey!” as he flashbacked to the time when he was remixing the now banned version of Olivia Newton John’s ‘(Let’s Get) Physical’ for the brilliant album ‘Beers, Steers And Queers’ and



Tattooed Love God Al Jourgensen

● Is Chicago—home of THE REVOLTING COCKS, THE THRILL KILL KULT, 1000 HOMO DJ’s and MINISTRY—the American Madchester? Is Gary Numan really a cult hero? STEVEN WELLS has his head squashed like an over-ripe melon whilst DEREK RIDGERS takes some tasty piccies of some handsome Cocks.

CHICAGO THRILLIN’ NOISE

spent half the night puking up an overdose of magic mushrooms into a bog that turned into a snapping porcelain acid-horse’s head and tried to eat him. They are *that* kind of band.

Chris’s dad was a fervent Catholic and a Detective Chief Inspector in the Hong Kong fuzzi who decamped to Edinburgh after the Triad put a price on his head for smashing up their heroin labs. There he spawned. By 1979 little Chris was a militant Crassstifarian screamer in anarcho-technoprisoners Finitribe. In 1986 he was grabbed by The Cocks and whisked to Chicago. At the centre of a vast web of funky punk substance abuse, sexual exhibitionism and knob gags sits the evil spiderman Al Jourgensen. He is the sick genius behind “the degenerate Traveling Wilburys”, the gaggle of leather clad scruffs who shed band names like a gang of hyperactive speed-crazed lizards in a pottery kiln.

Al (aka Alien) looks like a cross

between Zodiac Mindwarp and Frank from *Blue Velvet*. The man’s track record is legendary. THIS is the man who drove the po-faced “art-terrorists” Front 242 off-stage by spraying them with piss. A punk rocker once tried to freak Al out by hawking up a huge wobbly greener into Al’s beer. Al drank it. He is *Spinal Tap* meets The Bee Gees on Angel Dust. He’s inflicted his deranged production values (ie, he has none) on Hardcore heroes Gwar, Jello Biafra (LARD), Fugazi (PAILHEAD) and... do I want some heroin? WHAT?

Alien Al is on about ten waiting lists for various organ replacements, he alternately defends and blatantly exhibits his deranged diet of killer drugs. The man is a genius. He is in the studio working with “straight edge” Ian McKaye (no drinks, no drugs, no casual sex, no tea, no coffee, no cigarettes etc) when he suddenly needs to go to the bathroom. Ten minutes later he needs to go

again. Snotk! Must be getting a cold! And my bladder’s playing me up real bad! Got to go to the bathroom again! Al wipes the white powder out of his trembling nostrils.

“Al,” says Ian, “I know what you’re doing in the bathroom. And, believe me, I don’t care!”

This is kinda like Mary Whitehouse saying she doesn’t mind if you wank in front of her. Al Jourgensen is a white satanic Frankie Knuckles, a Tony Wilson in Charlie Manson clobber. He is Phil Spector crossed with Ghengis Khan’s roadies. He insisted on being photographed sat on the snapping white porcelain acid-horse’s head with his trousers down around his ankles, a bible in one hand and a hypodermic needle in the other. This is a man who makes Al ‘Creepy’ Crowley look like Suzanne Vega’s Auntie Flo. This is the most important (white) record producer in American WHAT?

WAX TRAX is owned by Jim Nash and his partner Dennis. Dennis’ dad was a *real* bank robber and a mate of Jerry Lee Lewis. Both he and Jim come from good ole Southern families.

James Eastland Nash was the first member of the US Who fan club. He spent the ‘60s managing various Anglophile “punk bands” like The Mods and the first half of the next decade as a “glitter queen”.

In 1974, he and Dennis opened the Wax Trax shop on \$200 and their record collections. A trip to the premiere of The Alternative Miss World resulted in a meeting with Jim’s all-time hero, Divine.

“Later we were in this dead tacky New York movie theatre watching *Polyester* and you know the bit where Stiv Bators comes in and rips up all that awful tacky plastic furniture with a knife? This woman behind us goes—Oh my god! What’s he doing to that lovely sofa! I’d give my right arm for furniture like that!

“And her husband turns to her and says—‘Oh Honey! Simmer down! That’s *stunt* furniture...!’”

Ten minutes later Wax Trax had signed Divine to record the epic schlock single ‘Born To Be Cheap’ and it’s been downhill ever since. Around 1981 Wax Trax was approached by Al Jourgensen’s “band” Special Effect.

“They were the first American band to pin down all that doomy gloomy Certain Ratio-Bauhaus shit. I was into all that bullshit—early Killing Joke, ‘United’ by Throbbing Gristle, ‘Being Boiled’ by The Human League...”

Shortly afterwards Front 242 signed an American deal and the barmy Belgians, along with Jourgensen’s “proper” combo, Ministry, became the label’s mainstay.

WAX TRAX AND CENSORSHIP:

● A FILM separator wouldn’t handle The Revolting Cocks because of the name and because they feared they might lose their contract with Chicago’s Moody Bible Institute. Jim told

them to “get your minds out of the f—ing gutter!”

● The Cock’s live album ‘You Goddamn Son of A Bitch’ came out at about the same time as Big Black’s ‘Songs About F—ing’. Both records were effectively “banned” by sections of the industry.

“The original CD plant was owned by this sicko band leader, one of those twisted Walt Disney kinda people...”

At the next pressing plant they tried they ran up against Thelma. Thelma was a born again Christian who strongly objected to the picture of a topless woman kissing a dog on the Cock’s ‘Big Sexy Land’. She also wasn’t too hot on the track ‘Satan, Bugs Bunny And Me’ and, can you believe it, the extra bonus CD track ‘Kill The Christian Swine.’

“I said fire her! Fire Thelma! Fire the crazy bitch! It’s that simple!”

● GREATER THAN ONE’s 12 inch single ‘I Don’t Need God’ was blacked by the mastering lab (“The f—ing *mastering lab!*”).

● A lot of stores refused to stock the brilliant anti-fascist MUSSOLINI HEADKICK punk-dance record ‘Themes For Violent Retribution’ because it had a swastika on the cover.

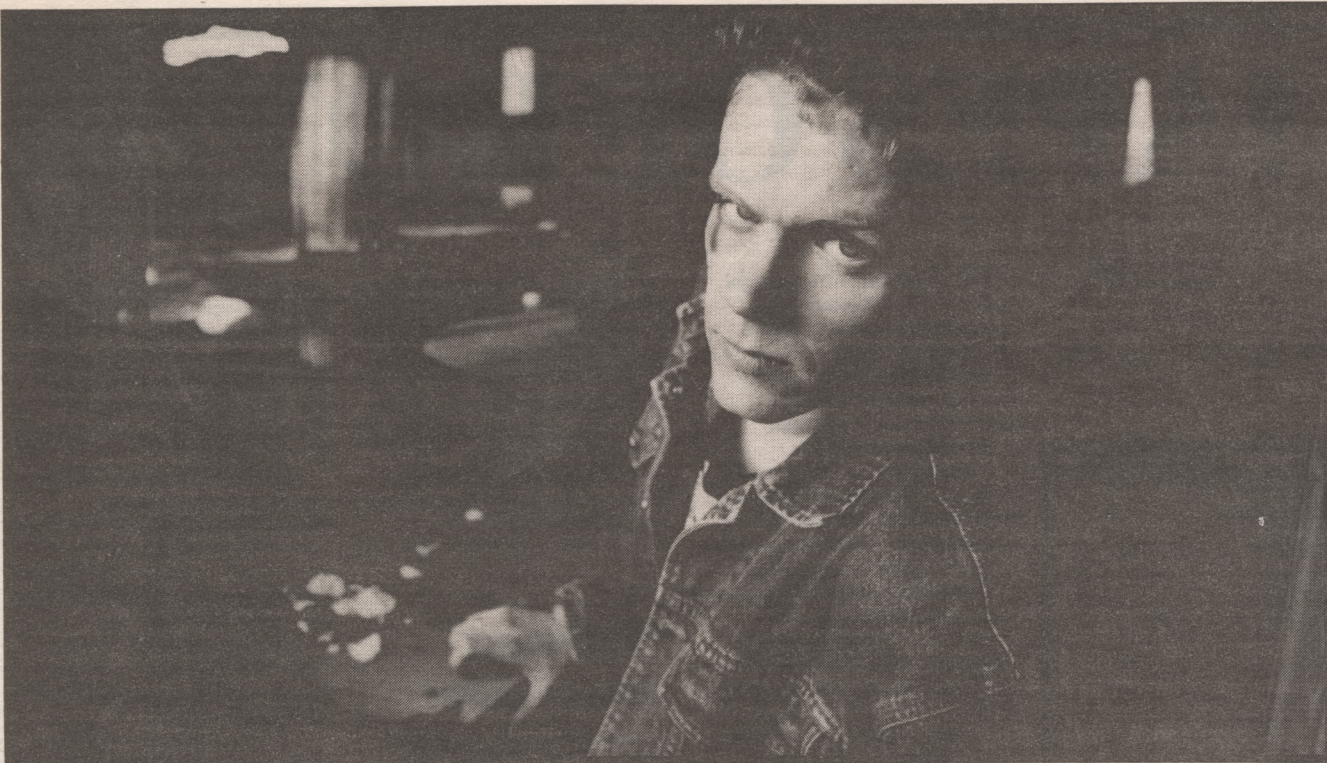
● Soft rock/soft porn station MTV wanted to bleep the word “goddamn” out of a KMDFM track before showing it on their after midnight show *120 Minutes*. Wax Trax responded by replacing “Goddamn” with “Marxist”. MTV agreed to the change. “I mean who the f— is watching MTV after midnight who doesn’t use that f—ing word a thousand times a day anyway for f—’s sake? It’s not 1953 anymore! Bullshit!”

● Tipper Gore personally objects to Ministry. Music like this, she claims, is threatening 14 million children. This is true. Al Jourgensen is Santa Claus with a chainsaw.



Thriller Killer Culture

Al (aka Alien) Jourgensen looks like a cross between Zodiac Mindwarp and Frank from *Blue Velvet*. This is the man who drove Fron 242 off-stage by spraying them with piss.



Cocksure Chris Connelly

The Revolting Cocks are a "giant ongoing party with the tape recorder going . . . like riding a drunken Terodactyl . . . disco for psychopaths."

WHEN, IN 1985, Wax Trax put out COIL's version of 'Tainted Love' they brought down upon themselves the wrath of certain sections of the "gay community". One video company kicked up a stink because they claimed that the image of "gay stereotype" Marc Almond tossing away a piece of half eaten fruit was portraying gays, in an era of growing AIDS related hysteria, as "callous" love-'em-and-leave-'em-to-die types.

This is total bullshit. Some of the Wax Trax staff are gay, as are some of the people in the bands—the whole label reeks of irony. It's not a coincidence that Chicago, the Wax Trax home town, has a strong and militant gay community, nor is it a coincidence that Chicago is important as a centre of DANCE MUSIC (it was rumoured for a long time that gays were the only white folks who could dance without upsetting the horses, hem hem).

Nobody ums and awes about 'Beers Steers And Queers' or 1000 Homo DJ's. We are talking about a reclaiming of pejorative imagery (kinda like Niggers With Attitude), the irony is obvious (kinda unlike the arty farty nazi-chic of Joy Division or Mute Records or the tedious ho-ho aren't-we-daring shit-headedness of Rapeman).

CHICAGO IS a radically divided house. You have no idea what it feels like to be a white music journalist in a segregated city where rumours of the "mutant rap scene" are rife. FRUSTRATING!

Wax Trax is far from a melting pot—all the staff and band members are white in a city with a majority non-white population. Yet Frankie Knuckles is an old customer at the Wax Trax shop, picking up on the likes of Kraftwerk and Soft Cell and rare Euro-disco and techno imports that he and others would meld with Hi-NRG and black dance music, salsa and Philly to make House.

Cabaret Voltaire came over to work with House DJ Marshall Jefferson. Jefferson was ill and the Cabs were instead kidnapped by Jourgensen for the stunning ACID HORSE single 'No Name, No Slogan'. Chris Connelly (Cocks and Ministry) sees no direct connection between his music and House, claiming that Detroit Techno is far more of an influence. Hell, I'm no expert but when you listen to the music the Wax Trax bands deliver you're listening to a multi-cultural orgasm of Hardcore, Euro-dance, New Beat, Metal, Techno, House—a screaming, mongrelising, multi-cultural mish-mash of miscegenation.

If the free-lance chemists ever come up with a version of Ecstasy that not only feels like rocket fuel has been injected into all your major arteries but *doesn't* make

you pour your heart out and kiss and cuddle wankers you wouldn't normally piss on if they offered you a million quid to do so, then the accompanying music is already in existence.

Without the dumb divides that exist within the US music scene there's no saying *where* this music could go. As it is The Cocks and co can only look with envy at the multi-racial Brit-rave scene. Jourgensen cuts most of his stuff at the Trax studio—birthplace of 70 per cent of Chicago House, and he regularly "catches" black producers "stealing" his drum samples—"which is kinda ironic" and pretty much as it always has been, the history of most of popular music is about the economic theft by white musicians and capitalists from black artists but *artistically* it's about whites stealing from blacks stealing from whites stealing from blacks . . . with the UK as the superspiv, selling the Yanks back their own mutated culture.

So it kinda goes like this. No Wax Trax = no imported Euro-frob = no House = no SAW + no Madchester—you still want to know why you should check this label out? Huh? OK, so this IS NOT the Yank Madchester. The Cocks, Ministry and The Thrill Kill Kult are far too funky punky to dent an American chart still totally bunged up with shite, Chicago is too far away from LA and the Rotting Apple to be taken seriously (most Yanks still haven't heard about House) and, in the States, they've got a rock press you wouldn't want to wipe your arse on.

"Oh f— no!" says Jim Nash "they haven't got a f—ing clue! This one time *Spin* magazine's 'independent' editor more or less told us—you guys don't *look* independent, you don't sound independent. They wouldn't even write two words about Front 242 and it's crazy! But I'm not crushed, it's their loss after all!"

And he's right because the Wax Trax bands are at the cutting edge of "white" American independent music.

CHRIS CONNELLY from the Cocks and Ministry delivers to Wax Trax the title track of his solo album which he claims is heavily influenced by Scott Walker. He departs as the tape is put into the machine. When played it turns out to be Rod Stewart's 'D' Ya Think I'm Sexy'. Sung by Rod Stewart. "I've got to stop drinking so much," says Chris.

It is five in the morning and Al Jourgensen has stuck me in the middle of two huge speakers in the Trax studios whilst he blasts me with the latest 1000 Homo DJ's tracks. He screams along to the words—directly into my ear—dribbling saliva down my neck, brushing me with damp and hairy lips. Chicago's Christopher St

Club is arranging an Orgasm Competition with prizes for the longest, the loudest and the quickest cum. Cynthia Plastercaster has so far tried *three times* to take a plastercast of Chris Connelly's dick. And three times the mould has failed.

The Thrill Kill Kult give me an interview. One of them looks like Jack Barron, one of them looks like Alexei Sayle and the other looks like and talks like the deranged metalhead out of *Talk Radio*. They talk absolute shit, they are stoned out of their boxes and getting more stoneedddd. There is a giant plastic hammer-head shark on the wall. We arrange the photo session at Trax studio. The band go to an Italian restaurant. The Revolting Cocks are a "giant on-going party with the tape recorder going . . . like riding a drunken pterodactyl . . . disco for psychopaths . . . playing footsie with extremist forms of socialism and camouflaged racism (!!!) . . ."

And so far we haven't even mentioned CONTROLLED BLEEDING or JOINED AT THE HEAD or . . . "There are no rules," says Chris Connelly, "there are no cliques" and he's right, despite

the attempts by music journalists to contain the current explosion with a new set of barriers, a new set of snobberies. This is NOT Dancecore. But the label will do. For now.

They used to say that if you remembered the '60s then you weren't there. If you know what's going on in the '90s then you aren't HERE, dude. Tangerine Dream are hip, *Tubular Bells* is the year's most sampled record, all the hippies who spent Thatcherism skinning up and listening to Frank Zappa have teamed up with the no-hope punk rockers to make hit records.

Black American folk are raving about Gary Numan (AAAAAAAAAAAAARGH!). Every prejudice you ever held about BLACK music or WHITE music or DANCE music or ROCK music or POP music or GAY music is being mashed into a Pol Pot puree by an audience of 16-year-olds, we are living through the last days of something—call it Rock 'N' Roll—and the thousands of maggots that chew upon the corpse are far more interesting than the cadaver itself.

WHAT THE F— IS GOING ON? I dunno, but Wax Trax are a pretty disgusting part of it.

the railway children · native place

the new album featuring 'every beat of the heart' and 'music stop'

'Poised on the cusp of a major breakthrough...they haven't ditched the trademark jangling guitars, but there's more colour, more attention to detail...this will introduce The Railway Children to a much deserved wider audience.'

NME

STOP PRESS... The Railway Children will be playing live at HMV, Oxford Circus, London—5.30pm, Thursday 28th June, and will then be signing copies of "Native Place".

