

JULY 1978: No Fun played before the midnight stoner showing of *Fritz the Cat* at the Vogue Theater. The crowd was split between all the people who were about to start Louisville's punk scene and the old guard hippies--who previous to this night were the crowd closest to many of our sensibilities. For the Louisville culture wars of the 70s, this event drew a line in the sand. Bruce, our leader, broke a pane of glass, miked and loud, to start things off. Fortunately I was wearing, as usual, an army helmet, for we were pelted with all manner of missiles by the surprisingly riled up wasted masses.

1978-1981: After I joined the Babylon Dance Band we had to work hard to find places to play. A sample of where we found ourselves:

The Kentucky State women's prison at Eddyville (there were actually women who chose to go back to their cells)

The TAP (teenage pregnancy) school's morning assembly (we induced labor in one young mom)

The St. Stephen's Catholic middle school graduation (where we were threatened with the police because of our obscene gyrations and general unwillingness to play Billy Joel covers)

Willow's (a strip bar replete with multiple poles)

The Schooner- a bar where the sign at the front door admonished all ye who enter to check your guns at the door. We had to supply music for a neighborhood ritual called the "mop dance" -a sort of musical chairs meets hot potato game where patrons passed around a mop, we stopped the song, whoever was holding it sat down, we started the song again....repeat until one person is left. What happened at that point I can't remember but it probably involved whisky bought for and by someone...

The Iroquois Hideaway (later the South 40)- a biker bar we managed to turn into a punk clubhouse for a season. One night a fellow drove his Harley onto the stage through the front door and Chip, our singer, jumped astride mid-song. Another night the BDB, the Blinders and the Endtables threw together a gig in mere hours because we heard ex-Louisvillian Bowie insider Lee Black Childers was in town. We did not manage to coax him to our event.

At the South 40, punks, workingmen, bikers and brainiacs all mingled for a time in peace, curiosity and mutual amusement. Playing here usually meant the BDB did four sets in a night. Bloody hands. Applying NuSkin to wounds to keep going. Wood chips from the hole Tim dug in his bass on the floor. Doing an instrumental while Chip raced outside to throw up out of supreme exertion, not excessive drink.

ANTIETAM

1995: Near the last night of a tour : We played the Satyricon in Portland. During the last song of the set I managed to headbang my damn head into the tuning pegs of my spare Les Paul on its stand. A major goose egg formed on my forehead before "Hardly Believe" was even over. There was a great response and Tim and Josh motioned to return to the stage, having no idea what had happened. I made it through two more songs and had to leave, a befuddled mess. After the appropriate "oh my Gods" they put ice on my head. It turns out that Fred and Toody of Dead Moon were at the show and we were already huge fans. They invited us to stay the night at their house. Even being the mess I was - it turned out I probably had a slight concussion- the was a Red Letter Night. That was the night I got schooled in the spirit and the stance of being a Lifer.

It was nothing more earth shattering than hours of good talk, some beers and for those who smoked, a seemingly endless supply of cigarettes. But in the setting of their place, seeing the lathe in the living room, the walls and staircases lined with amps, the fact that Fred had to get up to meet the sand truck so he could make a sandbox for his grandkid-- with myself then turning 40, it was a big affirmation for my plan.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY -2008

I was sitting at my day job in the library one day and an email popped up. It was from someone who worked at the BPL doing a summer music series. They were asking us to headline one. I called right back and asked if this had anything to do with the fact that I had worked in libraries for over 32 years and she said no-she had no idea!

We had just put out *Opus Mixtum*. This was a chance to play the whole record. We added Josh Clark and Ira to augment us and Mark Howell and Katie Gentile recreated their album parts. It was the biggest Antietam Big Band ever. But almost as much fun as playing was the staging.

I did reconnaissance the day before. I went to the BPL and found, much to our delight, that they still used the Dewey Decimal System. I think it's a much sexier codifier than the Library of Congress protocol. So that night Tim and I stayed up making a giant chart for the stage. Tim, and ultimately, audience members when he finally got distracted, would flip the pages after each song. The songs each had a call number assigned to them by Dewey Subject areas, a subject heading and a Brooklyn neighborhood to promote use of the branch libraries of the Brooklyn system. Say:

"Turn It On Me"

642.56 K34.

--Oceanography.

Flatbush

We promoted their after school services And we apparently got 25 people to get library cards after the show! I will always remember how there were people there just for the entertainment who had no idea who we were. There were three-year olds and seventy year-olds. Hipsters and just folk. A little boy whose eyes were glued to me the whole set who was sitting with his grandma in the front row. It was cool to play some place other than a club again and just perhaps happen to strike someone unaware.