

**broke**

무료

IN KOREA

2012

issue 15

**no excuse noeazy**

**how to put on a show**

**mixed blood yuppie killer  
veggers essence**

ANIMAL ANTHEM

*cult of  
veru*







# Letter from the Editor

CROSSWORD  
ANSWERS

Issue 15

December 2012

This zine is published at random intervals. Sometimes we go for months without anything, and sometimes you get two in one month.

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Contributors are always welcome.

Yarr, this zine be keel-hauled using ye olde pirated copy of Adobe InDesign CS, matey.



This issue's been bottled up inside of me for a couple months now. But finally my gastroenterologist got tired of my constant complaints, so we had it removed, and here it is in your own two clean hands.

At some point in September I knew what the next issue of Broke would be about. It might've been when I was sitting in Olympic Stadium watching 144,000 religious folk deliver me a message via mass games and fireworks. I had to share some of my discoveries because it's simply too fascinating. I got to know some interesting people who stood up and played an activist role in protecting their community, and a lot of what we did I learned through punk.

Our music scene is growing right now, and while I can't exactly say it's strong or on firm ground, there are a lot more new bands, and we're seeing more younger people coming out. This is fantastic, and by the time we do the next full-length Broke, many of those bands will be ripe for interviewing.

But in this brief growth spurt, there's been a lot of in-fighting. I try to keep the negativity out of Broke, at least that negativity which is looking inward, but it disappoints me to see friendships ending over such trivial things as a bit of money, or differences of opinion, or even simply ego. Just remember: to the K-pop-loving masses, we're all the same. And there aren't many of us, so do we really have the luxury to burn what few bridges we've built? Swallow your pride and suck it up -- and if you can't, wait a couple months and try again.

Oh yeah, and I totally am not directing that comment at the situation with Powwow and SuperColorSuper. Some very negative personality traits were coming out there, and I doubt it's possible to tuck them away again. Don't know who I'm talking about? Flip through the pages and you'll see things exactly how I see them through my eyes.

Lately I've felt my patience wearing thin, and what's even more alarming, Jesse's patience wearing thin.

Last issue, we welcomed back Broke co-founder to Korea after a five-year absence which mostly saw him stitching people back together in the desert and hunting in the backwoods of America with his wife Yumi and their dog Suki. Broke has changed a lot since Paul left, and he remarked on how it was mostly me doing everything. True, it's easier for me when I can minimise the number of people I'm counting on and waiting on. For this issue I reached out for more contributors, and we got a lot more newcomers on board. Robin Kenson provided plenty of photos, and I'm not sure why Jen Kreis has never written for us before. Douglas Lee did an excellent job of interviewing Noeazy, and Mike Shumaker went above and beyond interviewing Mixed Blood while also facing drama at work which caused him to change jobs, switch visas, and move to a new home. We welcome the first contribution of the Secret Punk, who will hopefully add something a little more candid to the pages of future issues of Broke. Oh, and if you're wondering what band he's talking about in his column, I'm pretty sure it's Calbones.

We had much more help from translators working on decoding Korean content, but it was Chris Yoo who suggested going the other way, providing Korean-language content for our English-challenged friends. He translated Dave Hazzan's scene report published originally in Maximum Rock n Roll, one of the world's most important punk zines.

Lately, Broke has evolved special themes for each issue. I think it started with the "Special Edible Issue" that helped us win two million won from the government for our food tour. I don't know how it came about. First I whored out four pages for our own financial gain, and then a thinly woven thread on food found its way through to the other pages.

Then there was the prison issue where I gave Park Jung-geun a soapbox to stand on (he's since been found in contravention of the National Security Act and sentenced to a ten-month suspended sentence, which means that for the next two years if he does anything the government disagrees with, he'll serve those ten months in prison. I think all we can do is hope the next president is not the daughter of a prominent dictator.

For this issue, the theme that runs through many of the articles is cults. Not just the ones we know that ring our doorbell, but a sincere inward look at whether we're all in a cult. Is punk a cult? Is Verv a cult leader? These are worth mulling -- maybe not because they're true, but we should humble ourselves from time to time and subject our own beliefs to the same judgements we heap on others.

This whole Mannam thing came out of nowhere and became a major part in my life for a couple months. First and foremost I was fascinated by their Olympiad, which is the next best thing to witnessing the Arirang Festival Mass Games in North Korea. It was fascinating to watch, knowing their true nature as a front for Shonchonji, as they denied it at every turn and then sent out more invitations to a world-record-breaking World Peace event that was very obviously the Shinchonji Olympiad. The activism that arose to uncover the true nature of Mannam was incredibly successful, as a little bit of attention caused cataclysmic breakdowns. I wonder if they learned their lesson about exploiting people's ignorance. They certainly paid the price.

If anyone from that religion is reading this -- and I know you guys like to keep close watch over your critics -- hi! Sorry for making your lives a bit more dramatic, just as I'm sure you're sorry for making ours. See you at the Festival for Restoring Light and Heavenly Culture 2016!

Next time I'm finally going to do a photocopy-art issue of Broke in Korea. I used to be pretty handy with a photocopier, but I have absolutely no idea what I'm doing. Expect it to be very very soon, before enough information saves up and I have to do another infodump again like this issue or the last one.

Jon Twitch  
Broke in Korea Editor

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# 한국에서 온 보고서!

2012. 8. 16  
Dave Hazzan 의 글로 전하는  
Maximum Rock n Roll 독점 한국  
음악씬 보고서

번역: Chris Yoo

최근 급격히 부유해지고, 민주적이고, 오픈마인드를 갖게 된 한국. 그곳에서는 새로운 펑크씬이 발전하고 있다. 아직 기에는 미치지 못하지만, 무언가 진행되고 있는 것은 사실이다.

서양에는 북한의 싸이코 독재자들로, 아시아의 다른 지역에서는 성형된 팝스타들로 알려져있는 한국은 아직 그에 걸맞은 펑크씬을 가지고 있지 못하다. 서울 시내에만 천만 명의 사람이 살고, 그 주변 수도권에는 천삼백만 명이 살지만, 공연이 열리는 밤에는 채 300명도 보기 힘들다.

서울은 매우 큰 도시라 어떻게 묘사한다는 것이 불가능하다. 도시의 동쪽과 북쪽방면은 상대적으로 개발이 덜되어 원초적인 모습을 가지고 있는 반면에 한강의 남쪽은 더 새롭고 인조적인 모습이고, 서쪽은 그 중간이라고 할 수 있다. 그러나 이것은 너무나도 일반화시킨 것이다. 남쪽의 강남은 성형수술의 천국으로 눈을 커지게 하고 로를 세우고 x구멍을 포박할 수 있는 최고의 장소지만, 그 바로 옆에서는 우습게도 ‘빌라’라고 불리는 허물어져가는 연립주택가에서 노새 같은 모습의 노파들이 쓰레기를 주우면서 존재하지 않는 연금을 충당하는 모습을 볼 수 있다.

중산층 지역으로 둘러싸인 서울 북동쪽 홍대 지역은 한국 유흥의 중심지이자 한국 펑크씬의 고향이다. 7월 장마철의 아주 혼잡했던 밤, 바(bar)로 둘러싸인 홍대 놀이터에서 리스, 백화난만조, 험백스의 무료공연이 있었다. 옆에 위치한 대학교에서 이들은 따은 홍대는 한 한국여행 홍보책자(Visit Korea)에 따르면 “한국 초년 방문화의 중심으로, 젊은이들이 모여드는 서울 특유의 클럽들이 많이 밀집해있다.” 한국 펑크 공연의 3분의 4 정도도 역시 홍대에 집중되어있다.

캡틴 북보이즈와 레드버거에서 연주하는 홍구씨는 자신의 주간 직업을 “실을 판다”고 묘사했는데, 그에 따르면 씬은 “홍대에만 있다. 한국 펑크 씬이 홍대다!” 홍구씨는 이렇게 말했다. “씬이라고 부르기도 부끄러운 정도예요. 활동중인 밴드는 몇 개뿐이죠.”

씬의 규모는 말할 나위 없이 작고, 모두가 씬을 키우고 싶어 한다. 그러나 큰 씬을 직접 본 경험이 있는 사람들은 이것을 일종의 축복으로 여기기도 한다. 알래스카 오지 출신의 Jonah Love 씨는 밴쿠버에서 학교를 다녔다. Jonah 씨는 서울은 밴쿠버보다 공연은 적지만 관객은 더 많고 사람들이 음악에 더 열광한다며 다음과 같이 말했다. “놀러 나온 많은 사람들은 관객수에 전혀 신경쓰지 않아요. 그저 좋은 음악을 듣고 싶어 할 뿐이죠.”

그날 밤 외국인과 한국인의 비율은 1:4 정도 되었는데, 공연을 보러 온 건지 그냥 지나가던 건지는 사실 구별하기 어렵다. 씬에서 이미지가 차지하는 부분이 너무 크다고 불평하는 사람도 있지만, 각각각색의 옷을 입고 있는 사람들이 있었다. 대부분의 사람들은 근처 가게에서 사온 맥주캔을 빨고, 요령있게 테이블을 세워놓고 소맥을 마시는 친구들도 있었다. (한국에는 바깥



“Fuck youuu, Robin Kenson!”

에서 음주를 금지하는 법이 없다) 사람들은 웃고 있었고, 싸움 같은 것도 없이 밴드를 정말로 즐기는 듯 보였다. 밴드들은 전부 훌륭했다. 대부분의 사람들이 이 씬에서 느끼는 분위기는 친밀함이다.

30세의 Caroline Pardue 씨는 미국인으로 여기서 2년째 영어를 가르치고 있다. “한국사람하고 외국인들이 같이 어울리는 것이 너무 좋아요. 다른 곳에서는 이 사람들을 한 명도 만나지 못했을 거예요. 하지만 음악이 우리를 이어주죠. 음악이 문화적 장벽을 전부 허물어주거든요.” 다른 사람들도 혼자 공연을 보러 갔다가 스무 명의 새로운 친구들과 같이 나온 경험이 있었다.

하도그 가게에서 일하는 20세의 박하루씨는 Pardue 씨와 비슷한 생각을 갖고 있다. “여기선 모두가 친구예요. 스킨헤드, 펑크(punks), 락커, 여자들도요!” “여자들도요” 라는 말이 서양에서는 진부하게 들리겠지만, 남녀차별이 매우 심한 한국에서는 의미가 있다. 다른 어린 여자분 임예씨도 말할지, “씬이 작아서 모두들 친해요. 스킨헤드 공연에도 가고, 크리스마스 공연, 하드코어 공연, 아무데나 가고 음악도 전부 들어요. 왜냐하면 친구니까요. 보통 다 똑 같은 사람들이거든요.”

물론 여기에 모두가 동의하는 것은 아니다. 실을 파는 홍구씨는 과거에는 펑크들이 모두 함께했지만 어느 순간 이미지에만 신경을 쓰는 일부 한국 펑크들이 인터넷을 점령하고 “난 스킨헤드야! 스킨헤드는 이렇게, 펑크는 이래야해!” 라고 스스로 정해버렸다고 했다. “오년 전에는 모두가 함께였어요.”

자신의 이름을 “하운드”라고만 밝히길 원하는 한 18세 친구는 이 씬에 너무나 많은 “가짜 펑크” 밴드들이 많다고 하며 이렇게 말했다. “스스로를 펑크라고 하고 싶다면 정치적으로 좌파여야 해요. 이곳에는 [펑크 씬 안에서] 파시스트가 많아요. 다른 펑크들은 날 비난하죠. 짜증나요.”

치기 어린 소리로 들릴 지도 모르지만, 나는 어린 하운드씨를 존중한다. 그는 입술에 두 개, 코 중격에 하나의 피어싱이 있고, 가슴팍에 내가 읽을 수

도 없는 핑장한 타투가 있었다. 이 정도는 캘리포니아에서는 공연회계사들도 들 중 한 명쯤은 했을 정도로 흔하지 않거나 다름없다. 이것은 한국 사회에서 펑크의 더 큰 이슈를 던져준다.

한국 사회를 크게 정의하는 것은 유교사상이다. 종교보다는 사회의 철학으로서 자리잡은 유교는, 당신이 사회 계급구조의 어디에 위치해 있는가에 관한 것이다. 젊은이는 연장자를 따라야 하고, 여자는 남자를, 학생은 선생을, 자식들은 부모를, 직장인은 상사를 따라야 하는 등의 규칙이 있다. 이것은 심지어 한국 펑크들 사이에서도 존재한다.

이것이 추가되는 것은 집단에 자신을 맞춰야 하는 한국 사회의 어마어마한 압력이다. 자기 본연의 모습으로 있는 것은 대부분의 한국인들이 아주 싫어하는 것으로, 무조건 주변에 들어맞아야 하기 때문이다. 그러지 못하면 배척당할 것이고, 그것은 일자리도 없고, 생계를 유지할 수 없고, 그 다음엔 살기 위해 길에서 공병이나 쓰레기를 주워야 하는 것을 의미한다. 과거에 비해서 상황이 많이 나아졌기는 하지만, 아직도 별로 좋지 않다. 예를 들면, 1950년대의 미국이 지금의 한국보다 훨씬, 아주 훨씬 자유로웠다.

이것은 다이나믹한 펑크 씬에 전혀 도움이 되지 않는다. 한국은 만들어진 그룹들이 텔레비전 “아이돌” 쇼에서 부르는 질 낮은 팝음악으로 포화상태이고, 그 그룹들은 그들의 비참한 커리어 동안, 혹은 더 이상 팬베이스를 유지할 수 없을 정도로 “귀엽지” 못해지는 그 순간까지 노예계약에 팔려가야 한다. (그런데, 이 팬베이스는 남녀노소를 구분하지 않는다.) 주변에 맞추어야 한다는 압력은 “케이팝”에서 벗어나기가 매우 어려움을 의미한다.

임예씨는 이렇게 말한다. “펑크는 한국사람들에게 사실 매력적이지 않아요. 펑크 쇼를 볼 기회도 별로 없고요. 너무 케이팝 뿐이예요.” 홍구씨는, “미디어는 팬클럽 전부 케이팝, 아이돌 뿐이죠. MTV도요.”

그런 데이나 오프스프링 같은 미국의 기업화된 “펑크” 밴드에 대해서 어떻게 생각할지는 몰라도, 그들은 중

중 사람들을 더 좋은 펑크 음악으로 인도하는 문이 된다. 한국의 텔레비전이나 라디오에서는 이런 밴드들을 매우 찾기 힘들다. 가끔 틈새를 뚫고 나오는 경우가 있지만, 미국을 등에 업은 독재자들을 몰아낸 직후인 1988년, 사람들은 자신이 원하는 음악을 듣기 시작했다. 물론 1990년대까지도 검열은 계속되었지만 말이다. 크라이닝과 노브레인 같은 한국 최초의 펑크 밴드는 90년대 후반에 나타났는데, 서양에서는 펑크가 생긴지 이미 20년 되었을 즈음이다. 그들은 이제 전설 대접을 받으며 가끔 텔레비전에도 출연하지만, 한국사람들이 주로 그들을 접하는 방식은 유튜브(YouTube) 비디오 링크를 통해서다.

또 다른 1세대 밴드 리스의 원종희 씨는 크라이닝과 노브레인은 한국 펑크를 메인스트림으로 올리기 위해 길을 내고 있다고 한다. 그는 이것이 나쁜 것이 아니라고 강조하는데, 특히 순응의 굴레를 쓰고 있는 한국에서는 말이다. 이런 1세대 밴드들은 “메인스트림 음악으로 매끄럽게 전환되려고 노력하고 있다. 이것은 아주 자연스러운 일이고 한국 음악에 있어 매우 필요한 것이다. 왜냐하면 팬들이 백화점에 가서도 원하는 음악을 고를 수 있어야 하기 때문이다.”

이것이 확실히 없는 사람도 있다. 하운드씨는 아마도 이것을 가짜 펑크라고 할 것이고, 수년간 씬에 몸담았던 Jon Dunbar 씨는 이것은 그저 새로운 형태의 케이팝을 만들 뿐일 것이라고 주장한다. “케이팝 인터넷 사이트는 한국 언더음악의 존재를 인식하고 있습니다. 그것을 케이인디라는 참비열한 명칭으로 브랜드화 시키더군요. 케이팝 밴드들 언더음악을 인식하기 시작했지만, 그들은 대부분 언더음악을 그저 새로운 종의 케이팝과 구별할 수 있는 안목이 없어요. 케이팝, 케이인디라는 단어를 보시면 한국(Korean)이 먼저고 음악의 구체적 종류는 두번째거든요. 이미 남은 것이 별로 없는 한국 언더음악 씬이 이런 함정을 피해갈 수 있기를 바랍니다.”

한국 펑크씬의 두번째 중대한 장애물은 의무 징병제다. 모든 신체건강한 남성은 2년간 군대에 가야하고 야심적



거부권은 인정되지 않는다. Dunbar 씨에 의하면, “군대는 대다수 한국 남성의 20대 인생의 큰 걸림돌이고 주로 20대 남자들로 구성된 밴드에도 역시 걸림돌이다. 2년 동안 밴드가 사라지는 것은 드문 일이 아니다.” 이렇게 흩어진 밴드는 재결성하지 않는 경우가 흔한데, 왜냐하면 군대에 갔다 온 후에는 인생에 더 진지해져야 하고 취직을 해야 한다는 인식이 생기기 때문이다.

원종희씨는 이렇게 말한다. “군대에 갔다 오고 나면, 이제는 놀러 다니는 소년에서 어른이 되었고 부모들이 압박을 가합니다. 어른은 서류를 쫓아다니고, 돈을 쫓아다니죠.”

일부 평쓰는 징병제에 동의하기도 한다. 스카썬스의 남범주씨는 한국전쟁이 아직 공식적으로 끝난 것이 아니기 때문에 군대는 “국민의 의무”라고 주장한다. 반면에 하운드씨는 아마도 군대에 갈 바에야 한국을 떠날 것이다. 누가 어떻게 생각하던 간에 군대가 많은 밴드를 해체시키는 것은 사실이다.

섹스 역시 썬을 잘게 쪼개버릴 수 있다. 한국에서는 전 애인과 “그냥 친구”로 남는 것이 터부시된다. 친구들과 갈라지고 있어야 한다. 원종희씨에 따르면 작은 공연장에서 혹시나 전 애인과 마주칠까봐 사람들이 더 이상 나타나지 않는다고 한다.

마지막으로 직장 문제가 있다. 한국인은 일을 많이 하기로 유명하다. 일을 많이 하는 것이 항상 생산적인 것은 아니지만, 월급을 받는 한국인은 직장에서 하루 최대 16시간 까지 일한다. 이것이 무엇을 의미하느냐면, 학교를 졸업하고 나면, 군대에 가고 (고추를 잘 렸다면), 그 이후 펑크 락을 할 시간은 거의 없이 평생 지겨운 일만 하는 인생이 보장되어 있다는 것이다. 키스와 비서스너드에서 연주하는 강준씨는 서울의 한 IT 회사에서 근무한다. “오늘(토요일)도 회셨고요, 보통 매일 12~13시간씩 일합니다. 정말 힘들어요. 퇴근하고 나면 펑크나 밴드 생각은 나지도 않아요. 그냥 차고싶죠.”

“하지만,” 그는 덧붙었다. “오늘 같이 공연을 보면 펑크, 락, 그리고 내 밴드 생각이 나고, 다른 밴드친구들이 저를 찾아요. 기분이 훨씬 나아져요.” 원종희: “한국에서는 모두가 아주 바빠요. 캘리포니아나 호주 사람들같이 한가롭지 않습니다. 모두가 스스로를 몰아붙이죠.”

Jon Dunbar 씨는 한국 펑크씬에는 전문직 사자가 거의 없다고 한다. “제가 살던 곳에서는 최고 인기 펑크 밴드 멤버 중에 공학 학위가 있거나 의대 공부를 하는 사람도 있었는데, 한국 펑크씬은 주로 낮은 사회계층의 사람들로 이루어져 있습니다. 그들은 어린 나이에 한국의 교육 및 취업 시스템에서 벗어나죠. 한번 길을 잃으면 남은 일생 동안 다시 따라잡을 기회는 거의 없습니다. 주류에서 벗어날 이유는 많지만, 비주류에서 사람들의 생계를 유지시킬 만한 것이 별로 없어요. 한국 사회가 바뀌지 않는 한, 수많은 사람들은 계속 가망 없이 살아가는 겁니다.” 원종희씨 같은 사람들처럼 타투 아티스트 또는 다른 사업으로 생계를 유지하는 경우도 있지만, 서구에 비하면 더 어려운 삶이다.

하지만 펑크가 이런 사회에도 어울리는 점은 있다. 원종희씨는 이렇게 말한다. “이 나라에서는 모든 것이 참 빨리 이루어져요. 그건 펑크락의 공격적인 비트와 어울리죠.” 이것은 한국에서 메탈의 인기 역시 설명한다.

어떤 의미에서는 이런 모든 압박 속에서도 펑크가 더 큰 현상이 아닌 것은 놀라운 일이다. 박하루씨는 한국 펑크씬에서는 “분노를 표현할 수 있다고” 한다. 어떤 면에서는 다른 곳에선



Babylove, the van Dangos, Kingston Rudieska, and Josh Roy pose at Club Ta in October.

그럴 수 없다는 말이다.

놀이터 공연 다음날, 도시의 동쪽 끝에서 다른 공연이 있었다. 빌어먹을 인공위성 시스템 정도는 있어야 찾을 수 있는 지하실 공간에 위치한 클럽의 이름 DGBS는 반공산당 센터(대공본실)의 한국어 약자다. 대공본실은 과거 한국 CIA (정보부)가 운영했고, 그곳에서 무슨 일이 일어났는지는 아무도 정확히 모르지만 소문에 따르면 과거에 반체제 학생들을 고문하는 곳이었다고 한다. 아이러니하게도 클럽의 이름을 그것에서 따온 것이다. 장상건씨에 의하면, “지금은 소리 고문을 이용한다.”

일곱 밴드가 출연했고 입장료는 한 사람당 15,000원 (13달러 정도) 이었다. 터무니없이 비싸게 느껴질 수도 있는데, 여기 씬에서는 그 정도 가격이 비싸다고 생각하는 사람은 아무도 없고 그 정도 입장료가 일반적이라는 것을 감안하길 바란다. 놀이터 공연에 출연한 밴드에 비해 훨씬 비상업적이었지만, DGBS에서의 공연은 뜨겁고, 시끄럽고, 공격적이었다. 관객들은 (가져왔다면) 맥주를 각자 가져왔고, 이 공연에는 외국인보다 한국인이 훨씬 많았다.

일본 슬러지 밴드 Zothique 가 출연한 것은 흥분되는 일이었다. 이것은 그들의 첫 내한 공연이었는데, 기타리스트 및 보컬 슈스케 시모나카 씨는 한국 씬에 칭찬일색이었다. 전달 서울의 한 작은 클럽 로우라이즈에서의 공연 후 시모나카 씨는 이렇게 말했다. “일본에서는 이런 분위기를 느껴본 적이 없어요. 훨씬 DIY 적인 분위기였어요.”

그는 덧붙었다. “일본에서 언더 음악은 전부 돈으로 하는거예요. 무료 공간이 없고 클럽과 라이브하우스밖에 없어요. 스튜디오 이외에는 연습할 공간이 없죠. 돈이 많이 들어요.” 사람들은 자기 장비를 직접 가져와야 하고, 경쟁적이다. “한국에서는 모두가 서로를 돕는 것 같아요. 썬을 유지하기 위해서 모두가 자기가 할 수 있는 일을 하는 것 같아요. 최소한 전 그렇게 느꼈어요. 여기는 공동체가 있어요.”

한국은 습관적으로 스스로를 일본에 비교하는데, 시모나카씨는 자기가 한

국에 대해 지나치게 많은 칭찬을 하고 있는 것을 모르는 것 같았다. 한국인은 일본과 일본인에 대한 역사적 편견을 가지고 있다. 그것을 표현하기에 증오는 너무 강한 단어일지 모르지만 그렇다고 너무 강한 것도 아니다. 이 이슈는 1910년부터 1945년까지 이루어진 일본의 한국 강점, 2차 대전 중의 위안부 문제, 그리고 현재 독도 영유권 문제 등에 걸쳐있다. 독도는 동해 상에서 한국이 점유 중인 두 개의 섬으로 한국어로는 독도이고 일본어로는 다케시마이다. (동해는 한국이 일본해를 일컫는 말인데, 이 바다의 이름도 역시 문제가 되고 있다)

하지만 시모나카씨는 그것을 이해하고 이렇게 말한다. “그건 문제되지 않아요. 우리는 그것에 대해 아주 솔직히 얘기하고 웃어 넘기기도 했어요.” 한국인에게 일본에 대한 불만에 대해서 물어본 적이 있는 사람이라면 “웃어 넘긴다”는 것은 그 문제를 일반적으로 다루는 방식이 아니라는 것을 잘 알 것이다.

권용만씨는 최근 공연을 시작한 훌륭한 베이시스트/드럼 그라인드코어 밴드 밤섬 해적단에서 드럼을 연주한다. 그는 씬이 서로 친밀하고 본인이 공연장

에 가면 환영받는다고 이야기하는 반면 밤섬해적단은 “한국 펑크 씬에서 유리되어있다”고 한다.

“[썬은] 이제 친밀해요. 전에 스킵 크렐이라는 곳이 있었어요.” 스킵 크렐은 홍대의 오래된 클럽으로 현재는 문을 닫았다. “어렸을 때 스킵 크렐에 가면, 공연은 훌륭했지만 그들이 얼마나 서로 친했는지는 잘 모르겠어요. 스킵헤드나 마초들이 많았는데, 그래서 그분들하고 친하게 지내기는 어려웠죠. 그들은 난폭한 형제들이었어요. 거기서 스킵헤드한테 맞은 친구들도 있었어요.”

원종희씨는 내가 인터뷰한 다른 평쓰들과는 다르게 이야기했는데, 씬이 엄청나게 단결되어 있지는 않다는 것이다. 하지만 덧붙었다. “홍대 공연에 가면 환영받는 느낌이 들어요.”

한국 펑크 씬은 거의 그 규모로 정의되는 것처럼 보인다. Dunbar 씨는 이렇게 말한다. “한국 언더음악 씬에는 단순히 성장할 공간 자체가 없어요. 뮤지션도 충분하고, 클럽도 충분하고, 전 부 충분합니다. 관객만 빼고요.”

따라서 이 이야기는 교훈은 이것이다. 한국에 가면, 공연에 가라. 그리고 즐겨라.



Bamseom Pirates go to jail.



# Veggertarians

Jon Twitch

Translated by Elijah Kim

These guys have been patiently waiting for the last two years for everyone to sit up and take notice.

Their unique combination of garage, punk, and hardcore has endeared them on people in the scene looking for something fresh, and they quickly became a favourite at shows. I knew this issue of Broke had to spotlight them.

**Broke:** Why exactly did you change the band name from the Beggars to the Veggers?

**Izno:** The name gave off a not-so-serious and pitiful vibe so we thought about changing the name for a long time now. We changed our name thinking that this time getting ready for our album and demo would be our last chance. As of yet, we aren't sure if we are satisfied or regretting the name change.

원래 이름은 The Beggars라는 이름으로 꽤 오래 활동을 해왔었다. 하지만 이름에서 풍겨져나오는 가볍고 불쌍한 느낌으로 인해 꽤 오랫동안 고민을 해왔었고 이번에 앨범 및 데모준비를 하면서 이름을 바꿀수 있는 마지막 기회일 것 같아 바꾸게되었다. 아직은 이름 바꾼것에 대해 만족이나 후회는 없는거 같다.

**Broke:** Are you vegetarians?

**Izno:** None of us are vegetarians. Truthfully we changed the spelling to the Veggers without any purpose.

아무도 채식을 하는 사람없다. 사실 우리는 아무생각없이 The Veggers라는 이름으로 스펠링을 바꾸게 되었다.

**Broke:** According to your website, you guys began in 2010, but it seems like only this year that everyone's been getting excited about the Veggers. Why did it take so long?

**Izno:** Truthfully, when we first formed in 2010 no one in the Hongdae scene knew who we were. The musical tastes of each of the bandmates were so different, it was literally impossible for us to get a unified sound.

At the time we were in the mindset that we were going to do everything from jazz to electronic and even brutal grind, which of course is impossible. Back then, we were going to a lot of weekday auditions and the reaction was not good. Looking back, we aren't surprised with the reaction we received. For the longest time we performed that way, only developing our current sound about a year ago. As our lineup became stable, we found the common ground between our varying musical tastes and develop a sound that I think more and more people are starting to have an interest in.

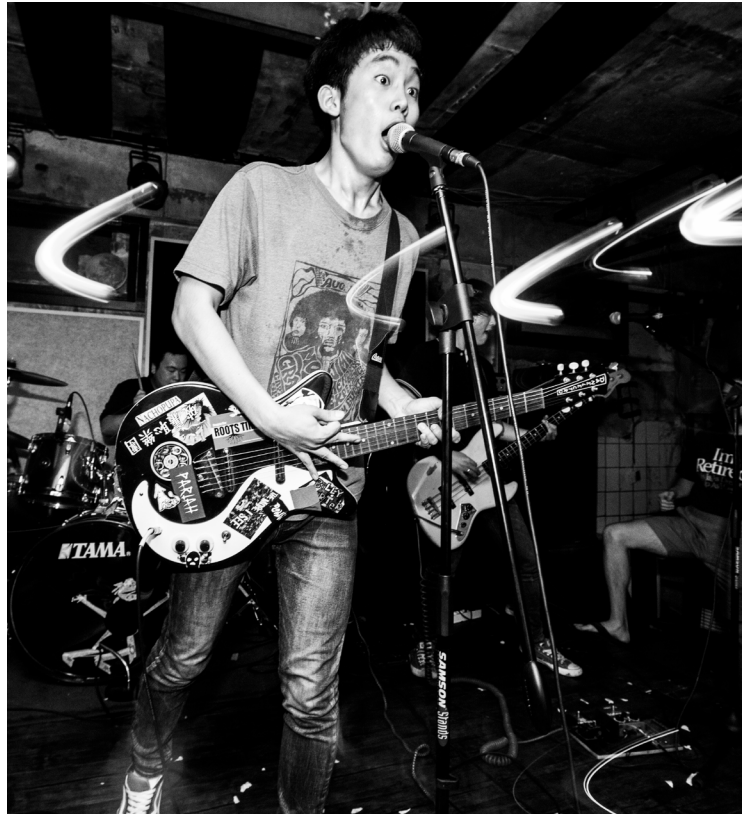


Photo by Robin Kenson.

사실 우리가 2010년 처음 결성을 하였을때는 홍대 씬에 아는 사람이 전혀 없었다. 당시 멤버들 모두 음악취향이 너무 달라 하고자 하는 음악을 도저히 통일시킬수가 없었다. (멤버 교체도 상당히 많았다.) 당시 우리의 모토는 “제즈음악부터 일렉트로닉 그리고 브루탈 그라인드” 까지 다해보자는 말도안되는 마인드를 갖고 있었다. 평일 클럽 오디션을 자주 보러 다니던 시절이었는데 언제나 반응이 영 시원치 않았다. 어떻게보면 당연한 결과인듯. 이렇게 한참 활동하다가 본격적으로 밴드 색깔이 정해진건 1년정도 되었다. 현재의 멤버로 서서히 구축이 되가면서 서로간의 음악적 교집합을 찾았고 덕분에 좋은 공연에 많이 참여할 수있게 된 것 같다. 그 결과 여러 사람들과 교류할수 있는 기회가 잦아졌고 그러다보니 우리에게 대해 흥미를 느끼는 사람들이 점점 많아진것 같다.

**Broke:** I'm guessing Izno isn't your real name. What about 유새우 and 표담? It sounds like everyone in the band except the rhythm guitarist has a nickname. Can you explain why you guys have nicknames?

**Izno:** We started using nicknames because using our real names seemed a little too serious and calling each other by our real names seemed difficult. For instance, for me I look similar to Pariah and Find the Spot's drummer Mizno and my real name is 이준호 so my nickname naturally evolved into Izno. for Yoo Sae-woo, Jae-woo and the Korean word for shrimp sound very similar. There are many numerous reasons why other members use nicknames but I think all of us using nicknames makes it

more personal for us.

본명을 쓰는 것에 대해 뭔가 좀 딱딱한 느낌이 들고 부르기 불편하다고 생각하는 점이 있어서 닉네임을 쓴다. 나같은 경우는 파인더스팟, 파리아의 드러머 미즈노와 생김새가 매우 흡사하고 게다가 나의 본명도 이준호라서 자연스럽게 나의 예명은 이즈노가 되었고, 유새우같은 경우는 새우와 새우의 발음이 비슷하여...뭐 그밖의 다른 멤버들이 예명을 쓰는 거에 여러가지 이유가 있지만 공통적으로 예명쓰는 것에 더 애착을 느끼기 때문에 예명을 쓰는것 같다!

**Broke:** Is this your first band, or have all you guys been in other bands before?

**Izno:** I used to be the bassist for Scumraid. I was in Scumraid because I was into hardcore punk and similar genres. That has helped me a lot with music. We were also in bands back when we were in school. Noh Soon-gyo was the guitarist for Paryumchiakdan.

나같은 경우는 예전에 스킴레이드에서 베이스를 쳤었다.(베거스는 그 이전부터 같이 겸하고 있었다.) 하드코어펑크나 유사장르에 관심이 있어 스킴레이드에서 활동을 하게 되었는데 결과적으로 음악적으로 많은 도움을 얻은 것 같다. 나 포함 다른 멤버들 역시 스쿨밴드나 여러가지 취미밴드 활동을 한적이 있었고 현재 노순규는 파렴치악단의 기타를 겸하고 있다.

**Broke:** I seem to recall your band is in 자립생선음악단 (Independent Musicians Collective), right?

**Izno:** Actually we are not in Jarip. Noh Soon-gyo is part of that organization, and I think because of that tie we get a lot of chances to perform. It's not

our place to subjectively judge the group, but they have been a great help us, continuously performing at shows and getting people interested in us.

사실 밴드자체가 자립음악생산조합에 속해있는 밴드는 아니다. 노순규가 자립음악생산조합에 조합원이라, 그에 따른 친분이나 공연 기회가 많이 생긴듯하다. 우리가 주관적으로 그 그룹을 평가하긴 그렇지만 베거스를 지속적으로 활동할 수있게 하고 사람들에게 관심을 가질 수 있게 한것에 대해 그들의 도움이 매우 크다고 생각한다.

**Broke:** Most of the shows I've seen you at have been in Mullaе or Powwow or DGBS, but not so often Hongdae.

**Izno:** Back in the early days we did perform in Hongdae, but now we perform in Itaewon or Mullaе. I think it is because these are places that our affiliated bands/musicians and promoters are based out of. Lately, we do intend to perform in Hongdae more as we have more interaction with other teams and groups. We like all the clubs except for the few that we really aren't suited for.

예전 초창기때는 홍대 여러 클럽에서 활동했었지만, 지금은 우리랑 관계를 형성하고 있는 기획팀이라던지 밴드/뮤지션들의 활동기반이 대부분 문래나 이태원/대공본실 쪽에 있기때문에 그렇게 보이는 것 같다. 요즘은 또 다른 팀들과의 교류도 좋은 방향으로 흘러가고 있어서 곧 홍대에서도 많이 활동할듯하다. 개인적으로 몇몇 적합치 않은 곳을 제외하고는 모든 클럽을 다 좋아한다.

**Broke:** What can we expect from the Veggers in the future?

**Izno:** We do not have definite plans, but for the rest of this year we will be working on our new album or EP; we are still thinking about and working on a more concrete plan. For our gig schedule you can check out our Facebook page or our homepage. We plan to tour Japan in February. Since we are still young as a band, there are infinite possibilities and directions we can take. Take care of yourself and thanks for the interview. We also wish the best and infinite success for Broke in Korea. Thank you!

구체적인 계획은 없지만 얼마 안 남은 올해 안에 정규앨범(혹은 Ep)이 작업에 들어갈 것 같다. 뭐 어떻게 하고 진행할 건 지에 대해선 우리 스스로 고민하고 있고 그에 따른 방법을 찾아가고 있다. 지난 25일날 조직암살단과의 스플릿 앨범 발매가 여러모로 많은 도움이 되고있다. 우리의 공연 일정은 베거스 페이스북 페이지 혹은 공연홍보페이지에서 자세한 일정을 확인할 수 있으니 많은 관심을 가져주었으면 좋겠다. 2월엔 일본 투어도 예정되어있다. 그리고 우리가 생각하기에 아직은 젊기에 펑크 밴드로서 나아갈 수 있는 방향이 무궁무진하다고 생각한다. 아무쪼록 인터뷰 감사하고 앞으로의 브로크 인 코리아도 무궁무진한 발전을 기원한다. Thank you!



# Metalcore ain't Eazy

## GMC's Youngest Metalcore Band Noeazy

Douglas Lee

From the region famous for its spas (Daejeon), all the way to the rock clubs around the Hongik University area comes the metalcore band Noeazy. Active since 2008, this band consists of five members with lead vocalist Gursong and guitarists HungKi & JeongJun, and has the uniqueness of being the only band under the GMC label with two female members, bassist HaYoung and drummer Yuna.

For this latest issue of *Broke in Korea*, we go backstage to find out more about how the band Noeazy does what they do best.

**Broke:** Now I have heard you guys since the beginning with your first EP album *The Mirror* but now it's time to spill the details. Let's start off with a general question. What type of band are you?

**Noeazy:** We pursue metalcore with various elements, and try to make our shows not just great sounding, but also fun to watch.

**Broke:** Fun to watch, hmm.. then why don't you tell us a brief history of how your band came to be?

**Noeazy:** We started off as a school band that mostly played punk, emocore, and hardcore, and the five of us got together because we wanted to continue playing. Each of us have such different tastes in music, and metalcore was what suited all of us the most.

**Broke:** A common interest, very hard to find these days. Then which song do you think best describes the band and why?

**Noeazy:** "Down with the King" because it contains many elements we all like, and we can jump around a lot. We can best show what our band is about with this song.

**Broke:** Who writes the songs and what are they about?

**Noeazy:** Gursong and Hyungki write the songs, and we all edit together. Gursong writes the lyrics, and in our earlier songs, there were political aspects to the lyrics but these days, they are mostly about attitudes towards life and morals.

**Broke:** Now this is often asked to any bands. Who or what do you think best influenced you guys in both a musical and non-musical sense?

**Noeazy:** musical -- the



*The cover of their 2010 album Discrepancy.*

members are inspired by their favorite bands which are very different, but we all like Lamb of God.

Nonmusical -- *Dexter*, and hardships of work and school and feebleness of graduate students and researchers.

**Broke:** *Dexter*, isn't that a TV show?

Ah yes also we hear there will be a second album on the way. If you were to describe it in simple words, which would you choose?

**Noeazy:** Diversity and variety.

**Broke:** Haha very discreet I see. Then what would be different about the second album compared to the first?

**Noeazy:** We have a story line to the album and attempted to mix different genres of music.

**Broke:** Any particular songs we should look forward to?

**Noeazy:** The last song called "Solemnity," so listen to the whole thing, please!

**Broke:** Then a more technical question here. How do you promote your band and shows?

**Noeazy:** Mostly Facebook and Cyworld. We update our schedules and pictures from whatever fun things we do outside the concert halls, so check it out and "like" our page! :P

**Broke:** Haha I'm sure the readers of *Broke* will be glad to. Then let's talk about the record company you guys are in. When did Noeazy first join the GMC brotherhood?

**Noeazy:** Fall 2008.

**Broke:** And what is it like to be under a hardcore record label?

**Noeazy:** It's fun to have shows together with those

great bands in the label, and it's good to know that we got each other's back.

**Broke:** Have there been any clashes amongst fellow members or within the label during the past?

**Noeazy:** We have many small arguments in decision making but its not a big deal; it ought to happen in bands all the time.

**Broke:** As the youngest band under the GMC label, what advice would you give to fellow bands venturing into the hardcore scene?

**Noeazy:** We don't like being the youngest too much. (We are too old to be the youngest!)

We want to say that labels don't matter, and we should get together to keep the scene alive.

**Broke:** In your opinion what's the best and worst thing about playing in clubs?

**Noeazy:** Best -- the show itself, of course.

Worst -- three of us live in Daejeon, and Hongdae is far!

**Broke:** We heard Noeazy has recently made a compilation album with Japanese metalcore band Gates of Hopeless. What was that like?

**Noeazy:** The recording quality is the best yet, but no one really knows about this album! Please listen. And it was very fun playing abroad and getting to know some great bands in Japan.

**Broke:** Are there any other bands outside of Korea that you wish to make a compilation album with?

**Noeazy:** There are so many bands we would love to work with, so we hope to make com-

pilations with more than two bands if we get the chance.

**Broke:** Then amongst Korean bands, which are your favorite? Or perhaps wish to have a show together?

**Noeazy:** UV! They are funny, cool, we remixed one of their songs, "Itaewon Freedom," and we would LOVE to play it with them!

**Broke:** Here are some questions from the fans.

What are some of your pet peeves?

**Gursong:** I don't like it when people make a lot of noise when they eat.

**Yuna:** I can't stand the bottom of my jeans (the ankle area) being on my bed, so I always put the waist part only when I have to put my jeans on my bed. It just feels dirty!

**HaYoung:** Frequent grammar mistakes, putting spoons and chopsticks directly on the table, being barefoot anywhere other than home, strangers standing too close to me when they don't have to, not having my hand sanitizer when I go outside... the list goes on. (OK now I sound like a freak!)

**Broke:** This question is for Yuna. What's it like to be the only female drummer in GMC?

**Yuna:** Well, I'm not the only female drummer in GMC now; Samchung and Knockdown have female drummers! I was the only one when I first started and it was nice since the other guys took good care of me.

**Broke:** And one for HaYoung. What's it like to be the next female bassist after Maze's MJ?

**HaYoung:** I don't think it's that all that different from being a male bassist; I don't think people treat me any differently just because I'm a girl, and I'm thankful for that! I want to be seen as just a bassist, and not have the adjective "female" follow me around.

Well there you have it. From the City of Daejeon, we hope you'll catch Noeazy at their upcoming shows. If you would like to find their upcoming shows, you can check them out on their Facebook fan page, facebook.com/bandnoeazy

(A thanks to the members of Noeazy for their participation in the interviews, and we hope to catch your shows and listen to your next album.)



# Mixing Bodily Fluids with Mixed Blood

Mike Shumaker

A new taste of punk has recently emerged in Seoul. Mixed Blood are putting on some of the best shows and writing some of the sickest songs within the punk scene in Seoul right now. It shouldn't be a surprise, as guitar player Stu Soop used to sludge out bass for Seoul City Suicides, bassist Matt Randel used to hit it out of the park with the Tremors, and vocalist Cliff used to lead Shellback. Joined by Nicky Bisquits on drums, Mixed Blood takes punk to a level of accessibility that is often lost in the punk/hardcore scene in Seoul.

The band is currently cutting tracks for their debut album -- and yes, it's going to be released on 7" vinyl, as well as DIY homemade CD, along with the possibility of digital download. Release date is still TBA, but that's just because the band is not cutting any corners to get it out ASAP.

Due to my enthusiasm with the band, I made a point to speak with vocalist Cliff and guitarist Stu to get a better idea of how Mixed Blood manages to kick so much ass right out of the gate.

**Broke:** So, why did you decide to cut tracks individually as opposed to a live recording? I'm surprised you're not trying to capture that 'live' feel.

**Cliff:** Studio availability I guess... it's actually a lot easier on my throat too.

**Broke:** You are typically, and perhaps haphazardly, labeled as a 'hardcore' band in the lineup listings -- do you agree with such an assertion? Why or why not?

**Cliff:** The labels of hardcore and punk have been so watered down, so damn much, it really doesn't matter what you call us. I just prefer not being lumped in a category with all the bros. Shit is weak sauce.

**Broke:** At your last show you introduced the band as 'piz-zacore', certainly in jest and in reference to your kickass Mixed Blood sticker. Do you think that incredibly specific genre 'styles' are helpful or a hindrance for the small underground scene in Seoul?

**Cliff:** Micro-genre labeling is like fashion. It's something new every week and usually it's pretty lame.

**Broke:** How do you manage to channel such a strong response from the crowd at your shows? They are intense! Isn't it hard, especially as an opener?



Photo by Robin Kenson.

**Cliff:** I think the biggest part is just giving 100 percent of yourself when you get on stage. If you're going to put yourself out there you might as well give it all you can.

**Broke:** What's the songwriting process like -- are you involved in the musical aspect, or are you dealt a heavy sonic hand to compose lyrics over? Additionally, is the lyrical ambition all you, or is it a democratic effort amongst the entire band?

**Cliff:** We're pretty new so we're still honing our songwriting process, but I take zero credit for the awful musicianship of my bandmates and 100% credit for all the parts that everyone goes nuts to. Matt and Stu help write lyrics though... it's been really rad making music with those two dudes (especially given the fact that I really dug their last two bands). I should also add that I always kinda look for a response from our drummer Nick when I sing a new part to figure out if something sucks. It's a brutally honest way of getting feedback.

**Broke:** How much do early '80s punk/hardcore bands -- i.e. Minor Threat, Black Flag, etc. -- influence the band/songwriting, if at all?

**Cliff:** 100 percent again. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for the classic era of hardcore punk and even the original wave of punk

rock that came before that. Know your fucking roots son; that's why so many bands fucking blow, because they refuse to acknowledge where this shit originated, and when you lose the roots of hardcore punk then it just becomes another form of fashion for these trendy pukers to exploit.

**Broke:** You're playing to a predominantly Korean audience, often as an opener, and manage to get the room slam dancing almost immediately... This, I perhaps naively assume, seems like a challenge that you are very well-suited to. Any thoughts?

**Cliff:** We opened once so far and it sucked. I think it comes from playing a solid line-up and having kids there who genuinely care about the music. The ensuing chaos just comes organically.

**Broke:** So, what do you think of the underground music scene in Seoul -- as both a participator and spectator?

**Cliff:** No comment.

**Broke:** So you've put down four sick-ass shows, well done! What's your agenda for upcoming shows? Any plans to venture out of Seoul just yet, or even Korea?

**Cliff:** Yeah, we have plans. I'll let you guys know when we know! Check our Facebook (not very punk I know) page for the most up-to-date info.

**Broke:** So, departing from

several different bands over the years (Seoul City Suicides and Black Leather Lagoon) how do you feel playing in Mixed Blood? Has your style changed at all?

**Stu:** Well, I played bass tones in the Suicides and drums in the Black Leather Lagoon so it's not so much about a changing style, although over the years your style will seem to change as your proficiency on an instrument improves. I learned to "kind of" play guitar in my teens by listening to bands like AC/DC, Ramones, Kiss, GBH, Misfits, etc. I knew early on that I'd never be a guitar god shredder guy. It just wasn't me. I'm more of a minimum effort/maximum response guy.

Playing in Mixed Blood is great because I get to channel a lot of aggression and energy into my guitar playing and it has to be filtered out in less than five chords. I've been fortunate to be in bands with good, like-minded musicians and all around good dudes over the years since I've lived in Seoul.

**Broke:** You are well-suited to playing without effects, on different amps, at different venues, etc, without a sound check and the tone is always killer! Is there a secret to this or do you just get lucky?

**Stu:** I reckon I'm lucky, I dunno... I never really like using a lot of pedals. I'm a big fan of getting your sound out of an amp alone although I used a digitech pedal to play the bass tones on a guitar during the Seoul City Suicide days... but then again, I wasn't trying to get a guitar sound, get it? But mostly when I play guitar I prefer not to use pedals. I can understand maybe one pedal if it's an amp with no gain or distortion, but the way I see it is that the power coming through the patch cord out of your amp loses some intensity and "hotness" with each pedal that it has to go through. Those "punk" bands with huge pedal boards always get me...c'mon, guys...really? It makes more sense to me to modify your guitar and turn some knobs on your amp. But, really, to each his own. I suppose at some point it's a matter of what you're trying to accomplish. I do love to bust on my guitar player friends about their foot pedal collections though. Probably why they all hate me, haha.

Being in a band is something everyone should do regardless of musical talent. Hey you with the face...yeah, you reading this--Go start a band!



# Powwow! Right in the kisser!

Jon Twitch

You've probably all read the announcement from Powwow now--if you haven't, direct your attention slightly to the right.

Powwow was originally formed as a partnership between booking collectives Open Your Eyes and Super-ColorSuper (SCS), but after having trouble with one of the owners, they had to go their separate ways. Now, the four remaining owners are trying to get back to the thankless task of bringing live music to Seoul while dealing with money, a club screaming for redecorations, and the stench of scene politics and drama.

"Many people still associated Powwow with SCS and we found a statement to be necessary to inform that was never the case," says Don, one of the four owners. "Not everyone is well-connected to social networks and the news totally bypassed them. When Sean left it was somewhat quiet to the public, but was complete chaos internally due to several factors, both positive and negative."

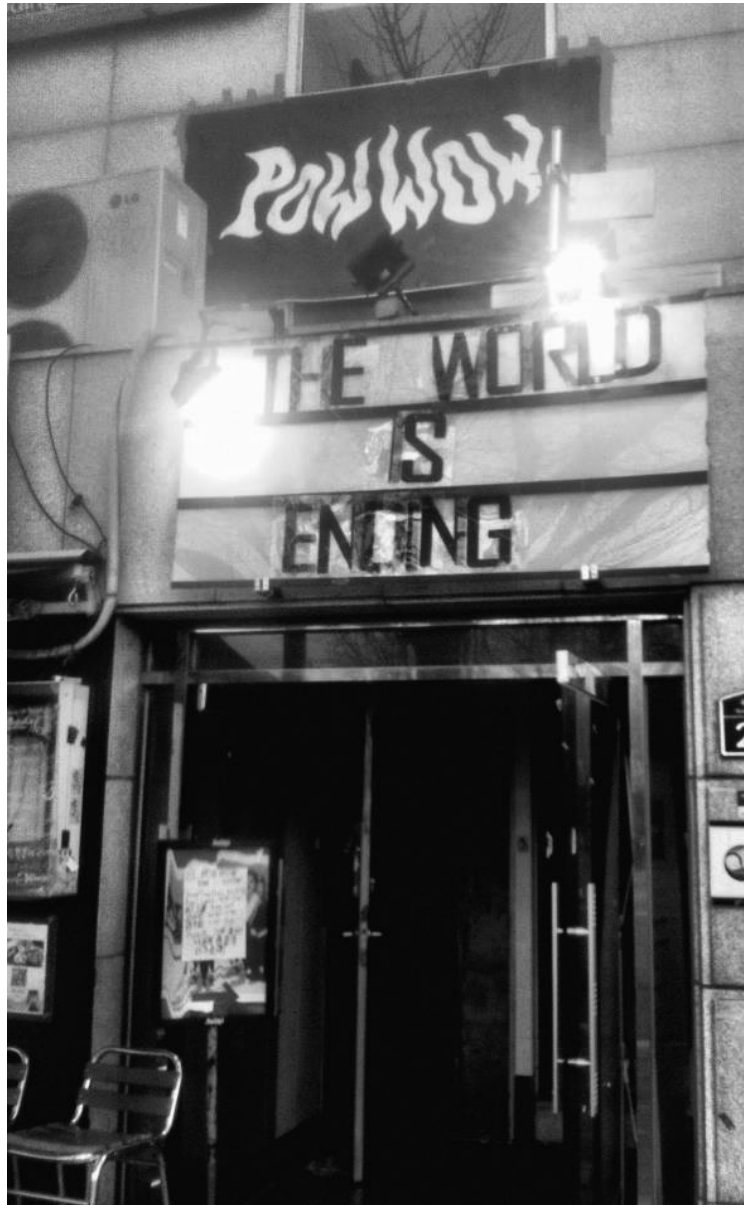
"I wanted to tell a lot more of the story in the notice," shares co-owner Alex, "but Kiseok and Don, who I grudgingly admit were completely right, thought we should just be professional and avoid public drama. Ask me sometime in person though."

To fill the gap left behind, they brought in Jen Kreis, a Canadian university instructor who has years of promoting experience back in Canada, cofounding the non-profit organisation Rock For Humanity to benefit Toronto's homeless. "I got a call from Ki in October saying that Powwow was restructuring and going through some management changes," she explains. "It sounded like a good opportunity to get more involved in the progression and expansion of Seoul's music scene, so I went in on it."

Coming in after the drama had moved away, she wants no part of it. "My vision is for the progression of Powwow."

Together, the four owners share all duties and responsibilities of running the club, including finances, promotion, running the shows, and creative direction. "And of course, enjoying the shows that go on at our venue," adds Jen.

"Mostly I juggle flaming torches while riding a unicycle and wearing a fez," says Alex. "But when I am not



doing that, I help out with whatever needs to be done." Frequently before shows Alex can be seen climbing the awning over the entrance to update the sign, a dangerous job especially considering one of the former owners was hospitalised during sign changes when the old sign fell on her head.

Rather than butt heads over every decision, the four promoters take turns organising shows, allowing each other's musical preferences to shine through.

While Jen and Kiseok (lead singer of the Geeks) obviously have a huge bias toward hardcore, Don and Alex are open to much different genres.

"Powwow represents a lot of different music scenes and that's evident in the shows we've put on in the past," says Jen. "We support both foreign and Korean indie, rock, punk, hardcore, blues-rock, and experimental bands

(just to name a few genres). It also helps that the guys and I have diverse tastes in music."

"I hope it can bypass the conventional one genre rule for a venue," says Don. "I would like to put on more electronic, hip hop, art, concept parties, markets, and films."

"The genre that is kind of my pet rock is Korean indie," says Alex. "I love putting together shows with these great small Korean bands I have seen in my wanderings around the music scene. I don't really care how many people come (though everyone should come and see them!). I just really want to help promote these bands and do whatever I can to share this great music."

He enjoys playing with the venue lighting during shows, which are all controlled by a big panel on one of the walls filled with switches and faders. "Hardcore shows are

hard for me, because though the music is great, they never want any lighting effects!" he admits. "I'm always like, "...not even a little smoke?" And they respond with, 'No! We are hardcore you silly man, we don't need your damn smoke or lights!' I then sulk in the corner and feel useless."

The venue opened near Noksapyeong Station, a small distance away from the main live music district of Hongdae and right inside the main foreigner area.

"It's a little tucked away from the main Itaewon strip, but I think that's to our advantage," says Jen. "We attract less of the mainstream crowd and more of the people who just want to see a good show. I like the fact that Powwow has become an alternative venue to the sometimes over-packed Hongdae scene. Powwow's got a chill vibe that I think people and bands enjoy."

Alex was wary of the area, not being a frequent visitor to Itaewon and harbouring a negative image of the area, but he was surprised once he got to know the neighbourhood. "There are some really nifty shops and restaurants around us," he says. "The area seems to be developing fairly rapidly."

He feels guilty making bands drag all their gear out of Hongdae for Powwow shows, and frequently offers pick-up services in his car.

"I think Powwow can offer a lot to the Korean music scene," says Jen. "In terms of diversity of music covered at our shows, an alternative space to the Hongdae/Hapjeong area, both night and matinee shows happening on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and other music- and art-related events."

So far, Powwow has built up a unique group of contributors, supporters, and collaborators, and still nothing is completely set in stone there.

"Powwow can be anything," says Alex. "We are really flexible and can change ourselves or tailor ourselves to fit just about any scene. Our niche is music and creativity. We don't want to lead; we just want everyone to contribute together. I know I sound like a silly hippie or something, but honestly, when there are not a lot of resources to go around, the more we pool, the more success we can all have. A rising tide raises all ships, that sort of thing."



# Just the Essentials

안녕하십니까,  
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시간내서 읽어 주셔서 감사합니다!

First, thank you to all the bands and music lovers who have joined us at POWWOW so far. We are just an empty, strangely painted room without each and every one of you.

We would really like to clarify to everyone once and for all that WE ARE NOT A SUPERCOLORSUPER VENUE. In fact, we were never a SUPERCOLORSUPER venue to begin with. We do understand why some people are still confused about it however. Yes, it is true that Sean Maylone USED to be member of POWWOW, and we did have some shows with SCS. But as of a few months ago, that relationship no longer exists in any way.

We decided to go our separate ways due to differences in our management styles. POWWOW now has absolutely zero association or involvement with SCS.

We hope this clears up some misconceptions people had about us. POWWOW is simply run by a few regular people with full time jobs who happen to really, really love music and have a deep respect for the vibrant and diverse Korean music scene. So we would like to welcome all great Korean bands who play with everything they have. Please feel free to come to POWWOW and make music with us!

Thank you so much for reading,

POWWOW

Jon Twitch

Translated by Jae Kim

After having booked the Essence for a couple shows in October, I knew I'd gone too long without interviewing them. First time I heard them, they played a familiar musical style that hasn't really been properly introduced in Korea yet. Since then they've moved more toward traditional punk, and I admit I was hoping they'd claim the vacant throne of Korean mod band. But anyway, bassist/vocalist Woo Jungho does a good job of explaining why they are a punk band.

Broke: Why did you choose the name "The Essence?"

Jungho: When we were making our band we couldn't feel any ROCK from the songs we heard on street and the songs from the musicians called 'BAND' so we wanted to make a true band, and started to ask ourselves 'what is the essence of the band?' and that was our start. We wanted to show the roots not the branches.

우리가 밴드를 결성하던 시기에 거리에서 많이 들리던 음악들과 소위 '밴드'라 불리는 그들의 음악들에서도 '록'을 느끼기 힘들었다. 그래서 '제대로된 록을 하고 싶다', 그렇다면 '록의 본질은 무엇인가?' 하는 두 질문에서 밴드를 출발하게 되었고 그와 더불어 '제대로된 록을 보여 주겠다'는 의지를 보여주겠다는 의도를 가지고 밴드를 만들었다. 가지가 아닌 뿌리를 찾고싶고 보여주고 싶었기에 이 밴드의 이름을 The Essence로 정했다.

Broke: Your website describes you guys as "Punk, Garage, Rock'n'roll, Blues, Brit pop, Post punk, New wave, Classic rock, Alternative." When I first heard the band, I thought "This is power pop!" Why isn't that included?

Jungho: You can feel that way because we were affected by many kinds of music. But we prefer a more rough sound, so we didn't include power pop. Recently we are more focused on aggressive and basic sounds so you will find less 'power pop' in the Essence from now on.

많은 음악들에서 영향받았기에 당신이 그렇게 느낄 수 있겠다. 그러나 우리는 좀 더 거친 표현방식을 선호하기에 굳이 Power pop을 전면에서 내세우지는 않았다. 게다가 최근들어 더욱 원초적이고 공격적인 사운드에 무게를 심고있어 앞으로의 에센스에서는 그런 느낌을 덜 받을것이다.

Broke: I've seen you advertise one or two events as "mod." Do you like the label "mod" or is it just a convenient label?

Jungho: Early on the Essence was based on punk and still wanted to express different



Photo by Ken Robinson. I mean Robin Kenson.

kind of sounds, but it is true we were affected by bands like the Jam. I guess that's the reason we look like a mod band, but we are not, It is just a part of our band. If you come to our future shows you will find out we are not a mod band for sure.

밴드 초창기의 에센스는 punk에 중점을 둔 채 다양한 사운드를 표현하고 싶었고, 'The Jam' 같은 밴드들에 영향을 많이 받았던 것은 사실이다. 그 때문에 모드 밴드로 보일 수도있겠으나 그것은 우리가 표현하는 사운드에 한 단면이었을 뿐 모드밴드는 아니다. 앞으로의 라이브를 보러온다면 모드 밴드가 아니라는 것을 확연히 알 수 있을것이다.

Broke: The music I've heard you play has been very different aesthetically from punk, but is clearly closely related. What's your relationship with the punk scene like?

Jungho: We are not CLOSE to punk. We ARE a punk band. Then what the hell is the punk scene? Any kinds of music named, called punk? Or the bands who wear punk clothes on stage? I don't think so, and that's why I don't care if they like us or not. 'What is punk?' is the obvious and boring question. However following will be the last answer. how much longer will we follow the '70s, '80s, and '90s punk music? How boring is that? we need to express the sound of

the present with the essence and spirit.

우리는 펑크밴드에 가깝지 않다. 펑크밴드이다. 그렇다면 도대체 펑크 씬이라는 것은 무엇인가? '펑크'라는 단어를 붙인 사운드들은 모두 펑크 씬에 포함되는것인가? 혹은 펑크 록에 입고 공연하는 밴드들은 모두 펑크밴드인가? 적어도 난 그렇게 생각하지 않기에 그들이 우리를 좋아하던 말던 상관없다. 펑크가 무엇인가를 논하는 것은 매우 지루하고 뻔한 얘기만 우리가 생각하는 펑크는 옛 그대로의 답습이나 재현이 아니라 펑크의 스피릿과 본질을가지고 현 시대의 사운드를 표현해내는 것이다. 도대체 언제까지 70년대, 80년대 혹은 90년대 펑크 음악을 그대로 따라하며 코스프레만 할 것인가? 그것은 너무 지겹다 (That is too boring).

Broke: Tell me about your background. Where do you guys work?

Jungho: I am a uni student, majoring in Portuguese for grad school. Guitar Ahn Byung-hoon is a sociology student, so the lyrics he wrote show that part of him. The drummer is also a student majoring in music. He's the only one who's actually studying music in school.

나(우정호)는 대학에서 포르투갈어를 전공하는 학생이며 대학원에서 미학을 전공하기 위해 공부하고 있고, 기타 안병훈은 사회학과 학생이고 그라는 가사엔 그런 면들이 녹아있다. 드럼 역시 학생인데 실용음악과에 다니고 있으므로 우리 중 유일하게 음악과 관련된 전공을 가지고 있다.



# The Star-Spangled Animals

Jon Twitch

For the last long while, the members of Animal Anthem have been bouncing around the local scene trying to make an impression. Born of presumably greater bands (Sean -- Shellback, Bialy -- Pornotarium, Oh Baeng -- ...Whatever That Means), we were all ready to kind of forget about them, always be constantly going through this exchange:

"Who's up next?"

"Animal Anthem."

"Meh, never heard of them. I'm staying outside."

But actually they kind of surprised everybody by secretly ruling. That means we had to bag 'em and tag 'em for the next issue of *Broke*.

**Broke:** After Shellback ended, you formed All Kids Make Mistakes. How did you get from there to here?

**Sean:** We formed All Kids Make Mistakes after Shellback hit a fatal rough patch. Our sole purpose was to play at the last ...Whatever That Means show, so we didn't really have any solid future prospects in mind. Bialy wrote a couple songs, we rounded up some friends (Ki from the Geeks was our one-time bassist and Jina from Billy Carter jumped on second guitar), practiced for a couple of weeks and managed a short set that ended up not being a disaster. A generally positive response turned our thoughts to something a little more permanent. Dave Basnett, our original drummer, had to take a trip back home for a couple months so we started looking for a drummer to stand in for him. A couple of my friends mentioned that Hyunjin Hwang, the drummer for 99anger, might be interested in doing a side band for a bit. I had met Hyunjin before, but only briefly and I doubted that he'd be willing to drum with a band in its infancy, but I figured that the worst he could say was no. I wrote to him and he responded almost immediately, saying he'd be happy to do it. He also put us into contact with his longtime friend Seung Jin Lee, who plays bass with the pop-punk band Counter Reset. After a couple practices and shows we realized that Hyunjin wasn't going to be a temporary thing. He showed an enthusiasm and dedication to the band that took us completely by surprise. We all became fast friends and somehow established a cohesion that made songwriting close to effortless. Jina had plans to go travel in England for a year, so we eventually



*Photo by Robin Kenson.*

found ourselves short a guitarist. Oh Baeng from ...Whatever That Means expressed interest in playing with us so we got in touch with him and ended up with the line-up we have today.

**Broke:** I think everyone was expecting the band to be basically Shellback minus Cliff. But having seen you guys it definitely looks like a different band.

**Sean:** There could never be a Shellback without Cliff. As far as the attitude and image went, he was the band. Most of our current members were friends or friends of friends who were open to the idea of doing music with me and Bialy. We did snag members from a couple of bands (...Whatever That Means, Counter Reset, 99anger), but in Korea, playing in more than one band isn't a huge deal. I mean, look at Hong Gu...

**Broke:** How was it decided you'd be the singer?

**Sean:** We couldn't find a singer and I'm not a very good guitarist. It just kind of happened.

**Broke:** Do you have more creative control with this band than with your previous bands?

**Sean:** I wouldn't really call it control. The thing I love about being in this band is that everyone gets equal representation in our sound. We all bring ideas to the table, and nobody snubs anybody else. The writing process is pretty intuitive and nobody really

ever dominates it completely.

**Broke:** Your bandmates consist of one Polish guy and three Koreans. How is communication in the band? Do you prefer having a mixed band like this, or was it easier back when Shellback was all foreigners (which I think it was early on, right?)?

**Sean:** I really don't think speaking the same language necessarily equates to smooth communication but everyone in the band understands Korean and English to some extent. If there are any huge complex ideas that need to be conveyed, we sometimes resort to using Bialy as a translator since he's fluent in both languages. The thing is, communication during practice is done mostly through the weird instrument sounds we make when we're trying to explain how a certain part should sound and it works surprisingly well. Ideas flow openly in spite of the sometimes blatant language barrier, and we usually get each other through a mixture of English, Korean, mutual understanding and onomatopoeia. Oh, and Bialy mutters to himself in Polish occasionally...

**Broke:** How did you arrive at the name Animal Anthem?

**Sean:** Choosing a name for a band is a giant pain in the ass. Our initial name (All Kids Make Mistakes) literally came from us scrolling through songs on our iPods until we found a title that sounded cool. Well, at the time it sounded cool, in

retrospect... well, yeah, it was a stupid name.

For a long time we couldn't come up with anything that didn't sound cheesier than that. We'd bring new ideas every week, but nothing stuck.

I was on the way to practice one night, sitting on the subway, when a name just kinda popped into my head. I wrote it down, looked at it, and didn't cringe. I took this as a good sign so I thought into the words a bit, discussed it with my bandmates, and we all decided that it worked.

In Korea, I feel there's a general sense of restraint that's really hard to break out of. It's present in the music scene as well. You can see it when you have these great bands pouring themselves out and an audience that just kind of stands there. Here, it's more outwardly apparent, but I think everybody, regardless of cultural background, cages a part of themselves for one reason or another and sometimes it's something they would be better off not repressing. My sincere hope at this point is that somehow I can find a way to write songs that will speak to that part of people and offer some kind of catharsis. The caged birds, the raging bulls, the mad dogs from hell. All the things that people deny in themselves in order to lead a "normal" life, those are the things I want to connect with. The animals we all carry around.



# Parents, Lock Up Your Yuppies

Jon Twitch

Yuppie Killer, because why not? I pan their CD in this issue, even though they're a good band full of good guys. Pushing the very definition of deadlines, they got their answers back to me the night before we go to press.

I sent off some questions to Iain, and he shared with the other guys so they could all work on their answers together.

**Broke:** First, why did you choose the name? Were your parents murdered by yuppies in front of your eyes?

**Yuppie Killer:** Boring answer, we like the band Annihilation Time. Long-winded answer: blah blah throwback to '80s names blah blah Iain went to boarding school for a few years blah.

**Broke:** On your Facebook page you say your band interest is "making punk stupider again." Can you explain what you mean by that?

**Yuppie Killer:** It was just a cute little thing to say, like "Death to False Metal" or "Seoul-centric new media label" or whatever the hell kids are hocking these days. In terms of achieving it, it's all about the little things: running into walls, heavy metal parties, not over-intellectualizing anything, hanging out with Dave of Assassination Squad etc. etc. Think of it like a Death by 1000 Cuts for Dummies, if you will.

**Broke:** With songs about drug-addicted possums and surf cops, I have to ask where you draw your inspiration from, or if this is just part of the whole "making punk stupider again" thing.

**Yuppie Killer:** There really isn't a difference between any of those songs. Serious points can be made through satire and none of us hate the world all the time or view hardcore as merely a vehicle towards sloganeering or monochromatic viewpoints. That's too regressive, eh. We don't mind if people think we are fucking around with the lyrics. The last thing we would want to be accused of is insincerity, though. There is a pathos or a "deeper meaning" beneath the surface of each song; it's just a little more obvious in say, "Wall of Breakdown," than the bit about thieving marsupials. I think we mostly prefer more abstract art. I can't speak for Tim's lyrics, but I prefer the freeform mind-fuckery of "Rudimentary Peni" over say, "if AIDS don't get you, the warheads will."

Anyway our two main crite-



Photo by Robin Kenson.

ria are is it fast enough and is it loud enough? If it makes us feel sexy too then that's obviously a bonus. a bronus.

**Broke:** Did you all know each other before? How did the band form? Were there any previous incarnations/buried members we don't know about?

**Yuppie Killer:** Tim used to sing for Used Cassettes until they kicked him out for not doing enough black tar, or something. Iain and Jason met each other at Bulgasari last April and were together in a sloppy shoegaze band called Adrenochrome for a little while. Then their bassist quit in September. That same night the three of us got drunk at the local and decided we wanted to start a hardcore band. We played our first show two weeks later after recruiting Jay, who now plays bass with those dicks in Ass Squad.

**Broke:** You guys have played a lot of foreigner-type gigs like HBC Fest, but recently you've been doing a lot of shows in the punk scene, especially hardcore. Where do you think your band belongs? In one particular corner, or just everywhere?

**Yuppie Killer:** Four of our seven gigs so far have been hardcore shows. Our second gig was at Freebird where we magically got banned for getting blackout drunk and telling too many tales about Ja-

son and Tim's adventures on Dokdo (they visited during Chuseok.) The show ended with one of us throwing up on our bassist's arm. Jason also stole all of the Wasted Johnny's beer and smokes because he is an elemental force of nature and really likes beer and smokes.

None of us really give a shit about who we play to. We're just as happy playing to hardcore kids as to the teacher crowd. We're all locked into this coffin together.

**Broke:** Was it hard to get booked for shows and get people noticing you?

**Yuppie Killer:** Cliff contacted us for our first show two hours after our first practice, and we've been criminally lucky since then, I guess. Maybe it helps that we drink too much and always want to talk obscritan bullshit with people at shows and stuff. Or it could be that we're nice people. Shows in Seoul are easy as long as you aren't an asshole. On that note, it's nice to have dudes like Cliff, Yongjun, and yourself putting on shows. Bravo, sirs.

**Broke:** What bands do you like playing with the most? What bands do you like playing with the least?

**Yuppie Killer:** We like playing with bands that are better than us, which widens the

playing field considerably. We all especially love playing with the Veggers, the Kitsches, Something Fierce, Love X Stereo, and Scumraid. At the risk of sounding a smidge misogynistic, we love playing with female musicians here because they tend to be in more interesting bands. We hate playing with Ass Squad because they smell bad, stole our useless bassist, wear pyjamas in public, and don't play enough notes live. Also, Dave totally bad touched Jason's penis once.

In conclusion, if the guy(s) from Beatball are reading this, we want to play a show with Look and Listen and Mukimukimanmansu. We will pay you in beer and smokes.

**Broke:** Since you guys are a foreigner band, I know well enough to ask how long you all plan on sticking around. Is there an expiration date for the band when one or all of you leave?

**Yuppie Killer:** Jason is returning to Valhalla in March (or Saskatoon, either way, it's white people and snow.) Tim and Iain are going to be here for a while. We don't consider ourselves a foreign band; it's a somewhat self-defeating dichotomy to subscribe to. We'll gladly invite anyone into this band as long as they are a good laugh and have a robust anus.



# No Excuses for No Excuse

Jen Kreis

What do you get when you put a bunch of Korea's top hardcore and punk bands in one venue for a good cause? One hell of a show. And it wasn't the first time Townhall and GMC Records pooled their best bands and resources together in the name of hardcore for a good cause. Often these two much-respected labels team up to bring out some of the greatest overseas touring bands to Korea, not to mention produce some off-the-hook compilation records and sign some of Korea's most talented hardcore, punk and metal bands.

So when the Godfather of Townhall Records and singer of No Excuse, Hwang Kyusuck, was involved in a serious car accident, again, Korea's punk and hardcore family got together to help out a friend. And the result? A night of pure rock fury with money raised to help ease Kyusuck's medical costs.

Since Kyu was stuck in the hospital recovering from back surgery, he couldn't make it out to the show. But I got a chance to catch up with him beforehand and ask him a few questions about Korean hardcore, what he does best at Townhall Records, and how he sees the shape of Korean punk and hardcore to come.

**Broke:** What year was Townhall Records founded? How did it come about and why did you decide to start a punk/hardcore record label in Seoul?

**Kyusuck:** I began my business of hardcore album distribution in 2001 under the name Apes-Distro. To start with, I only imported famous overseas hardcore albums and sold them on this website, but over time I wanted more. At the time I was living in Anyang. I did some booking and invited some famous hardcore/punk bands around Hongdae to share the stage in my town. I also teamed up with some friends in Anyang and started the band, Bless the Urban. Throughout this time, I thought that we need a certain label to make my group more official. The name "Townhall" was chosen out of nothing special. I just liked the sound of it when I heard it from the song "Poison Idea." Also, when the Geeks got back together after everyone had finished their military service, they released a discography album, collaborating with Kawaii Records in France. As a fan of the Geeks, I grew to think how I myself could begin to make albums overseas. I concluded a contract with Kawaii Records and created the Geeks' al-



Townhall Records show in Powwow for Hwang Kyusuck, November 24. Photo by Robin Kenson.

bum, *From the Start*. It became the first album produced under Townhall. Since then, I've produced many Korean bands' Hardcore/punk albums and have had quite a few opportunities to put those bands on stage. I've never stopped doing what I do except for times when I've had a lot of work with my other job and (of course) my wedding day.

**Broke:** What influential bands have you brought to Korea over the years to play with Townhall bands?

**Kyusuck:** Townhall Records' bands are all important, but it's also cool to have rival bands come from overseas to play shows together while operating the label. At One Stroke (Japan), FC Five (Japan), Fragments of Clarity (Japan), Inside (Japan), As We Let Go (Japan), Broken Rust (Japan), No Turning Back (Netherlands), CDC (USA), Killing Time (USA), and Backtrack (USA) are some of the bands that have come over to Korea. Also, Ki (The Geeks), who operates Open Your Eyes Booking, has collaborated with and brought out bands like Sick Of It All (USA), Champion (USA), and Terror (USA).

**Broke:** Due to a car accident, you've been recovering in the hospital for the past month or

so. Has this experience held you back from keeping up your ambitions with planning next year's round of shows?

**Kyusuck:** In fact, it has. We had a plan to launch the new album by Strife (USA) *Witness A Rebirth* in November, but this has been delayed to December. And the Bullshit Fest show happening in Busan on December 15 is still a go, but unfortunately I won't be able to make it down there. What's worse, we had to turn down some offers from overseas labels. But we plan to carry out the shows scheduled for next February. I guess I should be fine by that time.

**Broke:** Can you give us a sneak peak as to what people can expect for the new year?

**Kyusuck:** As for albums, many bands have their own plans to release new records. The Geeks have just finished recording their next album, and Combative Post, Pariah, No Excuse, Things We Say, and Find the Spot will follow suit. We're in talks right now to bring out Search (California, USA) to Korea in mid February, as part of their overseas tour. And a few more overseas bands are in talks to visit Korea. As soon as deals are solidified, we will be more than happy to let you know.

**Broke:** Let's talk a bit about your band, No Excuse. When did you guys start up? Who called up who? (Since Victor was fronting Things We Say with Jae ripping guitar next to him, and Dokyo was repping one of GMC's top hardcore bands, 13 Steps).

**Kyusuck:** I think it was around late 2007 that Jae and I thought about starting a heavier hardcore band after getting a lot of influence from other NYHC bands. We produced our own songs influenced by No Warning and Cro-Mags (laughs). Back then, the group started with four members -- ImYoung (The Geeks) on drums, Hakui (Vicious Glare) on bass, Jae, and me. As far as I can remember, our first show was when Down To Nothing (USA) and As We Let Go (Japan) came touring in Korea back in March 2008. There have been a lot of changes to our members since then (and we are currently recruiting a new drummer), but for now the band is made up of me, Jae (Things We Say), Dokyo (13 Steps) on bass, and another guitarist, June (Linus' Blanket). It's like this and I'm thinking that it's going to stay this way for good (since our members are well matched).

**Broke:** A hardcore/punk



benefit show is being held in your name this weekend (November 24) at the newly renovated concert venue, Powwow, near Itaewon. Townhall bands Things We Say, Find the Spot, Burn My Bridges, and GMC Records' 13 Steps, along with the Kitsches, Smoking Barrels, Pariah, Seoul Mothers, Animal Anthem, Last of the Diehards, and Townhall's debut first-signed Youth Crew heavy-hitters, the Geeks (*From the Start*, 2004), will all play this show. What do you think about that?

Kyusuck: Frankly speaking, I didn't believe it at the beginning when Ki told me that he was going to hold a benefit show for me, because he mentioned it as if it was a joke, and I felt grateful for him just to say it. Knowing how hard it is to put on shows like that, I didn't expect much. Then when I saw the line-up, I was amazed. I am so thankful for both those who made this show happen and those who came out to the show. I've realized that all those years and all my efforts for Townhall were not for nothing.

Broke: What do you see in the future for Korea's hardcore/punk scene? What do you hope for?

Kyusuck: Well, I've always hoped for Korea's hardcore scene to expand to the greater public but that's easier said than done (laughs). I personally have a hope that many more young people will pay careful attention to our music and its message. Hopefully we can attract more concert goers and people to check out albums and just add to the overall mania.

Broke: Any words of wisdom you want to pass on to your brothers and sisters in Korea?

Kyusuck: I always tell my college friends and my buddies involved in music to just "Do what you (really) want." If a person can't devote himself or herself to what they really like, what else can they do with passion? I have always kept this idea in mind since establishing the label and starting my own band. It was also this passion that gave me the strength to go against the sometimes opposing beliefs of family members as well. That's it!

As much as he hopes for the continued success and progression of Korea's punk/hardcore scene, Kyusuck would also be proud to know that the benefit show was a huge success. The show, which was held at Powwow, was packed with concert goers, supporters, other crews' band members, friends and family, and some first-timers. The show was captured by Ken Robinson -- a new to the punk/hardcore scene photographer whose raw and hon-

est photography has garnered some serious respect. The bands all performed up to the hype which was building up to the show weeks in advance.

But one of the best treats of the night came when No Excuse took to the stage as the Special Guest, with Turn For Our's singer, Han Saem Seo, taking over lead vocals. The guys even switched it up to much of the delight of the crowd, with Dokyo playing drums, Jae on guitar and Sang June on bass, playing many crowd favorites off their "You Gots to III" album. People were definitely treated to their monies worth. Hwang Kyusuck would be proud!

한국의 top hardcore 밴드들이 좋은 명분을 두고 한 자리에 모인다면 어떻게 될까요? 그야말로 멋진 무대가 되겠죠. Townhall과 GMC레코드가 하드코어라는 이름으로 회사의 최고 밴드들과 자본을 투자하는 것이 처음은 아니었습니다. 이 명망 높은 두 회사는 훌륭한 해외 투어 밴드들은 한국 무대에 세우기 위해 종종 협력합니다. 멋진 compilation records도 함께 창출해 만들어 내는 건 말할 것도 없고, 한국의 가장 재능있는 하드코어 메탈 밴드들과 계약을 맺기도 합니다.

그러 Townhall Records의 대부분의 황규석 씨가 심한 교통사고를 당한 것에 다시 한국의 하드코어계가 No Excuse의 싱어를 돕기위해 함께 모였습니다.

규석씨는 허리 수술 회복으로 병원에 있어야 했기 때문에 직접 무대에 설 수 없었지만, 본지 기자가 그를 미리 만나서 현재 한국의 하드코어의 위치, 어떻게 잘 이끌어 갈 수 있는지, 한국의 하드코어의 미래는 어떻게 보느냐에 관해 물어 볼 수 있는 기회를 가졌습니다.

Broke: Townhall Records는 몇 년도에 설립되었나요? 어떻게 서울에서 하드코어 레코드 회사를 시작할 결정을 할 수 있었나요?

규석: 2001년부터 Apes-Distro라고 Hardcore album distribution을 운영을 시작했습니다. 해외의 구하기 어려운 하드코어 관련 앨범을 수입해서 판매한 하던 사이트였는데, 점점 욕심이 나더라고요. 당시 살던 경기도 안양에서 홍대의 하드코어/펑크밴드를 초청해서 공연을 부킹도 하고, 또 안양의 친구들로 Bless The Urban이라는 하드코어밴드도 만들어서 활동도 하게되면서 레이블이 있어야겠다는 생각이 구체화되었습니다. Townhall이란 이름은 Poison Idea의 곡명에서 가져왔고 단지 어감이 맘에 들어서 선택을 했고요. 그러다 마침 군대 제대를 한 The Geeks 멤버들이 새로이 활동을 시작하면서 디스크그래피 앨범이 프랑스의 Kawaii Records란 곳에서 발매된다는 소식을 접했습니다. 기스의 팬으로서 "한국의 밴드가 해외에서 앨범이 발매되는 것에도 나도 무엇인가 서포트할게 없을까"라는 생각에 디스크그래피 앨범인 'From The Start'를 프랑스인 Kawaii Records와 공동발매하게되면서 저희 타운홀레코드 첫 번째 발매작으로 제작을 하게됩니다. 이후부터는 계속 한국의 하드코어 밴드의 앨범을 발매하고, 공연을 주최하고 지금까지 활동을 해오게 됩니다. 중간 중간 직장때문에, 결혼때문에 잠시 멈춘 적은 있어도 계속 운영을 해오고 있

네요.

Broke: 지난 몇 년동안 어떤 영향력 있는 밴드들이 Townhall bands와 연주하려고 한국에 왔었나요?

규석: 타운홀 레코드와 함께 하는 모든 밴드가 소중하지만, 그래도 레이블을 운영하면서 좋아하는 해외의 밴드를 초청해서 공연하는 것만큼 멋진 일도 없는 것 같네요. 그간 At One Stroke (JPN), FC Five (JPN), Fragments Of Clarity (JPN), Inside (JPN), As We Let Go (JPN), Broken Rust (JPN), No Turning Back (Netherlands), CDC (USA), Killing Time (USA), Backtrack (USA) 등이 떠오르네요. 그리고 Ki(The Geeks)가 운영하는 Open Your Eyes Booking과도 협업으로 Sick Of It All (USA), Champion (USA), Terror (USA) 등을 초청하고 했네요.

Broke: 교통사고 때문에 지난 한달간 병원에 있었는데 이 사고 때문에 내년 사회공연을 이끌려던 계획이 차질이 생긴 것 없나요?

규석: 네 11월에 발매예정인 Strife (USA) - 'Witness A Re-birth' 라이선스앨범이 사고때문에 연기가 되어서 12월에 발매예정입니다. 그리고 12월15일 부산 Bullshit Fest와 함께하는 타운홀레코드 공연도 내려갈수가 없게 되었네요. 내년 2월에 공연이 예정되었는데 있는데 이걸 아직 시간이 있고 몇가지 확정되지 않은 사항들이 있어서 무리없이 진행될수 있을듯 해요. 그 외 해외에서의 이런저런 offer들을 거절할 수 없이 없어서 아쉬움이 많이 남네요.

Broke: 내년 공연에서 사람들이 될기대할 수 있는 지 약간의 맛보기를 주실 수 있으세요?

규석: 앨범으로 말씀드리자면 지금 많은 밴드들이 내년에 신보를 발매할 예정입니다. The Geeks도 정규앨범 녹음을 거의 끝마쳤으며, 그외 Combative Post, Pariah, No Excuse, Things We Say, Find The Spot 등등이 신보를 발매예정 에 있습니다. 그리고 2월중순에 Soul Search (California, USA)의 내한공연이 이야기중에 있습니다. 그 외 내한공연을 이야기하고 있는 몇밴드가 더 있는데 구체적으로 결정되면 알려드리도록 하겠습니다!

Broke: No Excuse는 언제 시작했나요? 누구 누구에게 전화했죠? (Victor가 옆에서 기타 연주하는 Jae와 함께 Things We Say를 리드 하고 있었고 Dokyo가 GMC의 최고 하드코어 밴드 13 Steps를 대표하고 있었어요).

규석: 2007년 말이었던 것 같아요. 그때 저와 Jae 둘이서 NYHC에 영향받은 헤비한 하드코어밴드를 만들어 보자란 생각에 No Excuse란 밴드를 결성했습니다. No Warning과 Cro-Mags를 카피하며 자작곡을 만들어 나갔네요. ㅋ당시 드림에는 Imyoung (The Geeks), 베이스에는 Haku (Vicious Glare) 이렇게 네 명에서 연습을 하고 시작을 했어요. 첫 공연이 아마도 2008년 3월에 있었던 Down To Nothing (USA), As We Let Go (Japan) 내한공연인 걸로 기억하고 있습니다. 이후 나중에 몇번 멤버교체가 있었고 지금 역시 드림이 공식이지만 현재 멤버는 저와 Jae, 베이스에는 Dokyo (13 Steps), 또 다른 기타에는 June (라이니스의 담요) 이렇게입니다. 아마 이 멤버로 끝까지 갈 것 같다는 생각이 들만큼 잘 맞는 것 같아요.

Broke: 이번주말 (11월 24일, 토요일)에 새롭게 단장한 이태원에 있는 콘서트장 Powwow에서 당

신의 이름으로 하드코어 자선 쇼가 열리더라고요. The Kitsches, Smoking Barrels, Pariah, and Seoul Mothers와 함께 Townhall bands인 Things We Say, Find The Spot, Burn My Bridges, and GMC Records' 사의 13 Steps, 그리고 The Kitsches, Smoking Barrels, Pariah, Seoul Mothers, Animal Anthem, Last of the Diehards, 그리고 Townhall의 가장 인기 그룹이자 처음으로 계약했던 Youth Crew 장르의 The Geeks가 모두 이번 무대에 오르게 되는데 그 부분에 대한 특별한 의견이 있으신가요?

규석: 처음에는 병문안을 온 Ki가 장난으로 benefit show를 주최하겠다고 이야기했을때는 믿지 않았어요. 말 한마디라도 고마웠거든요. 실제적으로 공연을 만들어간다는게 쉬운일이 아니었기에 별 기대를 안했는데, 라인을 보니 정말 대단하군요. 스낵점이라면 공연을 만들어주고, 찾아주고 한 모든 이들에게 감사할 따름입니다. 그래도 오랜 기간 타운홀레코드를 운영해온게 컸기거리는 아니었구나라고 고스녔네요. ㅋ

Broke: 하드코어/메탈 장르의 반응이 어떻다고 생각하시나요? 한국에서의 하드코어 음악의 미래는 어떻다고 생각하시나요? 특별히 바라는 점이 있으신가요?

규석: 글썽요. 항상 바램이지만 한국의 하드코어가 점점 더 썩어 커져기를 바라고 있죠. 하지만 현실은 그러지를 못하니^^ 개인적인 욕심이라면 좀더 어린 많은 친구들이 하드코어의 메세지와 음악에 귀 기울여주었으면 좋겠어요. 또 음반이든, 공연이든 mania들이 더욱늘었으면 좋겠어요.

Broke: 다른 사람들에게 전하고 싶은 평언이나 말씀이 있으신가요?

규석: 저는 항상 음악하는 친구들이나 대학동창이나 아직까지도 이야기를 해요. Do what you want. 자신이 진정으로 좋아하는 것도 못하면서 세상에서 무슨일을 제대로 하겠다고 말이죠. 어릴때부터 이런 생각을 품으면서 레이블도 운영하고 밴드도 해왔던거 같아요. 집안에서 반대를 해도, 욕을 해도 말이죠. 네 여기까지입니다!

한국의 하드코어/펑크 음악이 계속적으로 발전하고 성공하길 바라는 만큼 이번 자선 무대가 대단히 성공적이었다는 것에 규석은 뿌듯해 했습니다. 이태원에 새롭게 내부단장한 Powwow에 세워진 이번 무대는 콘서트 팬들과 지지자들, 다른 밴드 사람들, 밴드의 가족들과 친구들 심지어 이런 콘서트에 처음 와 보는 사람들로 빈틈없이 꽉 메워졌습니다. 이 장면을 Ken Robinson이 카메라에 담았습니다. Ken Robinson은 솔직하고 여과없는 사진을 찍는 전문인으로 이 분야 많은 사람들에게 존경을 사고있는 하드코어 음악에는 문외한에 가까운 사진작가입니다.

함께 준비한 무대는 공연이 가까워지면서 대중들이 기대했던 것 보다 훨씬 뛰어났습니다. 그러나 그 날 밤 무대의 하이라이프는 역시 No Excuse가 "특별 손님"으로 Turn For Our's singer 서한샘과 함께 리드 보컬로 선 공연이었습니다. 드 밴드의 멤버들이 서로 역할을 바꾸면서 공연은 한층 더 빛을 발했습니다. Dokyo가 드림을 연주하고 Jae가 기타를, Sang June이 베이스를 연주했습니다. 가장 인기 있는 You Gots to III album을 연주하면서 관객들은 확실히 지불한 가치 이상의 대가를 받는 느낌이었습니다. 황규석이 자랑스러워하는 것이 당연.



# Escape from Hongdae

## Korea's underground music scene seeks to expand

Jon Twitch

Park Youngsoon has made the trip to Seoul for live music many, many times. From his hometown of Cheongju located in Korea's interior, it's about 120 kilometers to the metropolis—that's about two hours by train, two and a half hours by bus, or 15 days on foot.

The lead singer of streetpunk band Attacking Forces, Youngsoon has been commuting to the Seoul district of Hongdae for over a decade to perform in live music halls. "I used to commute with my bandmates before, but now I travel alone to Seoul since all the other current members live there now."

Youngsoon's trek highlights the sad reality facing Korea's underground music scene, that being a brain drain of talented musicians out of the provinces into the capital city. In such a small country with such an efficient transportation system, it's easier for everybody to just funnel into one place than to foster musical communities throughout all cities.

"Back in the day, there was a time when the local scene was stronger," says Youngsoon's bandmate and best friend Park Jonggo, who plays guitar. "For example, collectives like Omado Crew from Daegu or MF Crew from Cheongju were very strong and cool and had local characteristics."

Brian Hough, an English teacher from Canada, moved to Cheongju in the mid-2000s when underground shows were held monthly in Cheongju. He also made connections with other local scenes outside Seoul and began booking local shows under the brand "Cheongju Rock City."

"It's certainly challenging



*The alleys of Mulla are not known for their nightlife.*

to do it," he says, "but when a show goes off and people come out the energy level is usually that much higher just because it's a much more unique occurrence than it would be for those same bands to be playing in Hongdae, where they probably play on a weekly basis."

Soon he was getting requests to put on shows in larger nearby cities like Daejeon and Cheonan. But still, he found it hard to compete with Seoul, a city whose circle of influence engulfs over half the country's population. "We often found that our biggest challenges when we would put on a show wasn't competition from other clubs or even a lack of interest," explains Hough, "but in trying to convince people to stay in town on a Saturday night and support building their own local scenes rather than just going to Seoul."

In attempting to expand on Seoul's live music culture into other cities, he's paradoxically struggled to maintain their autonomy. Though there's no shortage of Seoul bands willing to tour the country, they end up unwittingly luring in the locals who desert their hometowns in droves. "There have been a number of amazing bands that have come from cities outside of Seoul," says Hough, "but it's usually only a matter of time before they relocate to the big city."

Youngsoon and Jonggo's band slowly transformed from hometown heroes into a commuter band. "We are usually introduced as a Cheongju local band but it's been three years since we had a show in Cheongju," says Youngsoon. "We were tired of endlessly trying to attract local crowds without any success."

Instead, most of their shows are in Hongdae, Seoul's trendy university district known for its nightlife. This is common for bands all over the peninsula, who descend upon the Seoul district each weekend.

"No one can deny the fact that the center of underground music in Korea is Hongdae," says Jonggo, who recently moved to Seoul for his career. "If a band goes to Hongdae from outside of Seoul, you never doubt their passion for music."

Since the early '90s, most of Korea's rock bands got their start in Hongdae's dingy basement venues like Club Drug, Blue Devil, or Slugger. Hongdae Playground, a small triangular city park just across the street from Hongik University's main gate, has long been considered the nexus of the live music scene, serving as a meeting point, outdoor venue, flea market, and in the summer months an all-night hangout.

"I think Hongdae had its heyday during the late '90s to mid-2000s," says Jonggo. "At the time, everything was new, alive, and creative. When we arrived in Seoul, it used to be very exciting. How about now? We are busy escaping Hongdae as soon as the show ends. Rather, we go to Hapjeong or Sangsu to drink these days. Since the money came in, this place is going downhill."

In recent years, Hongdae has become a victim of its own success, as rising property values lead to gentrification, with franchises and expensive new concert halls replacing small businesses and small venues one by one.

That's one of the reasons the Korean music scene is weak," says Seo Kiseok,



*Youngsoon regularly treks to Hongdae for shows.*



*Kiseok of the Geeks is one of four owners of Powwow.*



lead singer of hardcore band the Geeks. "On the surface it looks great -- there's lots of money coming in -- but underneath it's not so good. It's good having a central location, but it's bad because people get complacent. Because it's so centralised it doesn't help grow local scenes."

"Hongdae is a land of opportunity, but at the same time, it is a place for love and hate," says Hwang Kyungha, guitarist of the post-punk band No Control. "Currently, most of the commodities are concentrated in Hongdae, such as practice rooms, clubs, and government-sponsored events. For these reasons, it is not easy for producers and musicians to work outside of Hongdae."

As Hongdae continues to grow, Kyungha is finding it harder and harder to book shows, as most venues don't want to take a chance with cutting-edge bands, instead opting for safer, more popular acts. "Minority genres cannot even survive in Hongdae," he says. "It is not healthy to have such a concentrated area for all genres of music [but] there are no other choices except Hongdae for Korean underground musicians."

"Many bands try to conform to whatever is popular in Hongdae, which is why the media and public only talk about the Hongdae scene," explains Youngsoon.

Jongo puts it more bluntly: "Hongdae is now a place for losers. Drinking beer in the playground under the beautiful sunshine is just a memory now."

"For a lot of old-timers like me, it's sad," says Kiseok, who has years of experience promoting shows in Hongdae. "Hongdae's turning into another downtown where people just get wasted all the time and it's all about getting laid. There used to be a lot of people who cared about culture, but right now it's fading."

Recently, Kiseok teamed up



*Brian Hough puts on shows across Korea.*



*The commute between Mullae and Hongdae.*

with a collective of promoters to open Powwow, a new live club in Itaewon, the main foreigner district of Seoul. "We wanted to create a scene outside of Hongdae," he explains. "People can come to Itaewon instead of Hongdae. I think that's the first step. You need to get out of Hongdae first and change your mindset. I know how tough that can be. We need for anyone to break the pattern."

Kyungha has also been struggling to expand the underground music scene outside of Hongdae's confines. He co-founded the Independent Musicians Collective, which promotes shows in other districts, including Myeongdong, Mullae, and the Korea National University of Arts campus. "In retrospect, I think it's been a failure," he admits. "However, it is still in progress. One obstacle is that people feel distant about places other than Hongdae. When the location is

inconvenient, psychologically, people feel distant even if it is not far away physically. This is something neither the producer nor the musician can solve."

Another even more unlikely place that's developing its own music scene is Mullae, a steelworks district in southern Seoul, separated from Hongdae by the Han River which bisects Seoul. Slated for demolition, the neighbourhood has been shutting down one shop at a time, and many of the spaces are being replaced by art galleries and live music venues. One such venue is Alternative Space Moon, which was co-founded by Katrin Baumgaertner, a half-Korean artist from Germany.

"I think it's important that music and art are not just in one district, because it should be no rare animal in the zoo," says Katrin. "Artists came to Mullae because it's cheap, you can be loud, and it's a good place to work. There is a grow-

ing arts community with every kind of art...music to painting to dance to sculpture, movie, performance, etc."

But Mullae can only offer a temporary solution, as its expiration date approaches. "Nobody knows how long it will last...but I think the important thing is not only the area. There already started to be a network between people. I think it's a good place to show and create a kind of underground every country needs...a place of communication between artists and musicians and the public."

As Korea's music scene finds itself rotting at the core, its supporters look outward for new venues. But the effort and energy it would take to escape Hongdae, required from not only organisers and musicians but also fans, would be great enough to reverse the flow of the Han River.

Hong9 could not be reached for comment.



*Mixed Blood play in Alternative Space [Moon].*



*Something Fierce undress in Alternative Space [Moon].*



# Slouching Towards Shinchonji

Jon Twitch

A couple days after  
16 September 2012

So, how was your week-end? I went to a breathtakingly grand event at Olympic Stadium which, depending on which side you entered or how you were invited, was either the Shinchonji National Olympiad or the Mannam World Peace Festival.

For the last several months, Mannam recruiters have been out wherever foreigners congregate, handing out pamphlets about Mannam's many activities and teasers of an upcoming World Peace event on September 16 that would break a world record. I was approached at the World Cup Stadium GS25 while my parents were visiting, and while I wasn't interested in expanding my social commitments, I saw the opportunity for a good news article for work. My first article about Mannam talked about affordable Korean-language classes, placing Mannam side-by-side with the Korean Cultural Centers and numerous migrant workers organisations. I had no problem giving the Mannam recruiter my contact info and receiving occasional event invitations; in the quest for fresh article ideas that belong on a government news website, I need to cast a wide net.

Anyway, months later I started hearing that Mannam had ties with a Korean church outside the mainstream, Shinchonji. Evidence has been offered here and there, from first-hand accounts to analysis of their symbolism and practices, not to mention the presence of Shinchonji higher-ups in the upper echelons of Mannam, not the least of which is Lee Man-hee, leader of Shinchonji and honorary chairman of Mannam. This was not a hidden fact, but recruiters weren't up-front about it, and it wasn't long before a lot of the original pages supporting the link were made to disappear.

I looked into it a bit, and was surprised to find how many of my friends had also been contacted by them. This group had reached a surprisingly large portion of the expat population, which is actually quite an achievement I can't imagine has been duplicated by anyone other than...immigration?

Anyway, fast-forward to the record-breaking event on the 16th. Some online sources originally had it billed as the International Day of Mannam and/or 1st Mannam World Peace Race, or increasingly as the World Peace Initiative, but some sources advertised the sixth quadrennial Shinchonji National Olympiad. It was often marketed towards foreigners as a celebra-



*Lee Man-hee addresses followers and confused foreign guests at the world's largest birthday party. Note: the horns were not digitally added. Image used without permission from [ateachersvoicekorea.blogspot.kr](http://ateachersvoicekorea.blogspot.kr)*

tion of the United Nations Day of Peace or some such platitude, when in reality it was a birthday celebration of their aging pastor. To be honest, I wasn't taking much interest until I saw what that last one was. Mass games! Large-scale card stunts, like the Arirang Festival in North Korea, only this one was in South Korea! Oh yes, now I totally wanted to go.

I'm not really moved by the religious content (no more than I would be from its North Korean counterpart's serving of Juche), but I find the logistics of planning and executing such events infinitely fascinating, not to mention aesthetically stimulating.

My Korean coworkers and friends are terrified of Shinchonji, but I thought it would be a positive service to them and others to show what really goes on at an event like this.

But would I be allowed in, despite not being a member or a believer? Sure, why not? The recruiters were handing out free tickets to foreigners by the spool. I decided that the best way to go would be to attend with my friends from the blogging and publishing community so we could maintain our own subgroup cohesion, rather than doing something stupid like attempting to infiltrate a Mannam group.

Mannam released a statement and apology a couple weeks before the event acknowledging

its collusion with Shinchonji but maintaining that they are still two independent organisations. I went to a press conference where we were filmed from all angles at all times while Lee Man-hee spoke of his version of world peace: "If only everybody shared the same beliefs and goals, there could be world peace."

I received a press pack at the press conference that showed they had obviously decided last-minute to switch strategies, now that the news was out that Mannam was part of Shinchonji. The press kit had the names Mannam and Shinchonji and their respective logos. But

here's the weird thing: Shinchonji was stuck on by a sticker, as if they had decided after printing that they better just go ahead and have the name there or get accused of blatant deception. The press pack also had the Ministry of Unification listed among its sponsors, but as soon as the MOU heard they'd backed a group that could be traced back to Shinchonji, they pulled out. But it was too late to get their name taken off all Shinchonji's stuff, and their name would still be up at the Olympiad two days later.

And all the while that Mannam was coming clean and Lee Man-hee was talking about world



*Exhausted SCJ performers rest in front of the stadium.*





peace through assimilation, Mannam recruiters were hitting the streets to bring in more foreigners. They even had people at airports to catch foreign visitors getting off the plane, because presumably those people hadn't been warned about Mannam yet. Many were drawn in because they support world peace, others for the promise of free food, but not many of them knew they were attending a world-record-breaking religious ceremony.

Sunday came, and I showed up early in the morning looking for the press booth. They let us in without checking in or assigning press passes at all, as each of us arrived at different times in the morning with different sizes of hangovers. We stayed all morning, marvelling at the spectacle on display all around us. It was like watching the Pied Piper as he leads all the kids out of town and following after him rather than trying to stop him.

We saw a spectacular card performance depicting the destruction of Babylon and the birth of Shincheonji. It was a spectacular performance told in an overpowering medium (tens of thousands of colour-coded human pixels). I've seen the same performance before in North Korea, and even if you don't agree with their message, it's impossible not

to feel something. It short-circuits your ability to think rationally, and you come dangerously close to having a very Verv-like sob.

After that, we sat through several long boring speeches we couldn't hear over the sound system. The cameras aimed at the emcees were set up so that there would always be foreign Mannam members in the background, or even people in the press section, meaning my image was broadcast to the whole stadium many times.

We lasted until the Mass Games, when thousands of SCJ kids took the field to run around and hold up colour-coded flags representing things related to the Bible. Then we left a little after 1pm, feeling very unwelcome and mindfucked.

Over the next day videos started appearing on YouTube of the Shincheonji performances, mislabeling them as Mannam or World Peace Festival despite their clear religious messages. People still didn't know they'd attended the Shincheonji National Olympiad, the Sixth World Peace Restoring of Light Heavenly Culture Festival. Shincheonji has had six Olympiads, but this was Mannam's first time participating. Apparently there was some discussion high up in the ranks about how the number six gives away the true nature

of the event.

A lot of people claimed that the two events were going on side by side, but it would be impossible for anyone to find the seams where Shincheonji ends and Mannam begins without doing some extreme compartmentalising. Other than the seating of course -- we sat on one side and the colour-coded SCJ followers sat across from us, and we could never go back and forth. Washroom breaks were scheduled so that the stadium was always filled. It was a very heavily coordinated event, even moreso than its North Korean equivalent.

By Tuesday, blog posts started going up, presumably as soon as the bloggers had recovered their thoughts and were able to think clearly again.

Actually, several people still hadn't realised what they'd attended, not understanding the speeches and assuming it really was some big peace festival with parts in Korean they couldn't hear.

But the truth was, it wasn't about us foreigners, or tricking us into attending. This was about Shincheonji and its members: glorifying their religion and their leader who is the only one who can get you into Heaven. This was about making those members busy and keeping them exhausted so they couldn't think critically. We were just there to give them a worthy audience.

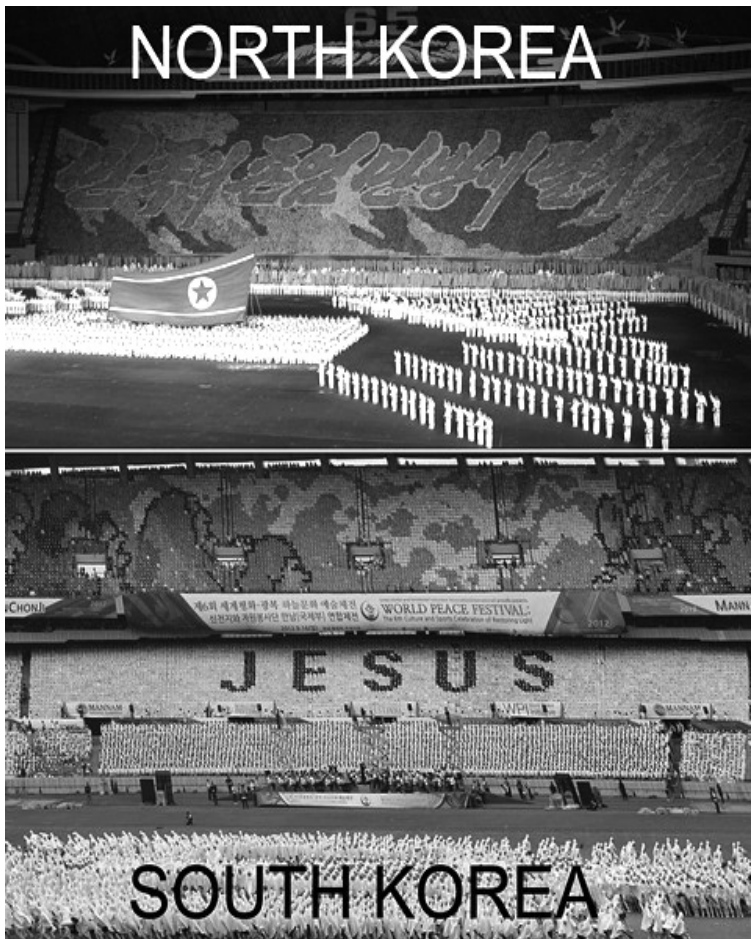
So we went, we witnessed, we photographed, and we ran. I briefly thought about not posting these pictures for fear of

ruffling Shincheonji's feathers. However, having seen the widespread foreign response to being invited under false pretenses, I don't think I'm saying anything unprecedented or controversial.

This is in no way intended to disparage their religious beliefs; everyone has the right to worship (or not worship) however they see fit, and if they want to put on a great mass performance like this every so often, I say go for it, because it was spectacular. I question the personal commitment required of all Shincheonji members, but there are worse ways to exploit your followers. In the worst case, it's no worse than what North Korea does (a high bar!).

On the other hand, it's disingenuous how Mannam lured foreigners there. I decided afterwards to limit my criticisms to specifically this lack of transparency, nothing else. That is all I really have a right to criticise, and just that one little thing became a very big thing that shook their church to its very core. I'd like to say they learned their lesson, but I know they haven't. But so many others have. Some have left, and many have avoided it altogether.

If you're looking for a genuinely unique spectacle, you couldn't do better than Mannam and Shincheonji. Granted, they have a lot to learn about PR. If you are considering getting involved with Mannam (or for that matter, any charity group), I encourage you to do some research first so you can make an informed decision.





# Ringside Seats to Doomsday

Jon Twitch

Recently with all the cult hubbub, I got to know someone I've been aware about for years. Peter Daley, cult watcher, the guy who probably knows more about Korea's numerous fringe religions than anybody else. And they know him. He's been intimidated, threatened, spied on, and given free T-shirts.

As the information about Mannam started spilling out, Peter was there to save information and host it on his website, [www.jmscult.com](http://www.jmscult.com). His activities have helped reveal the deceptive practices of cults and his information campaigns have provided a doorway for people to escape cults, not an easy process in any way.

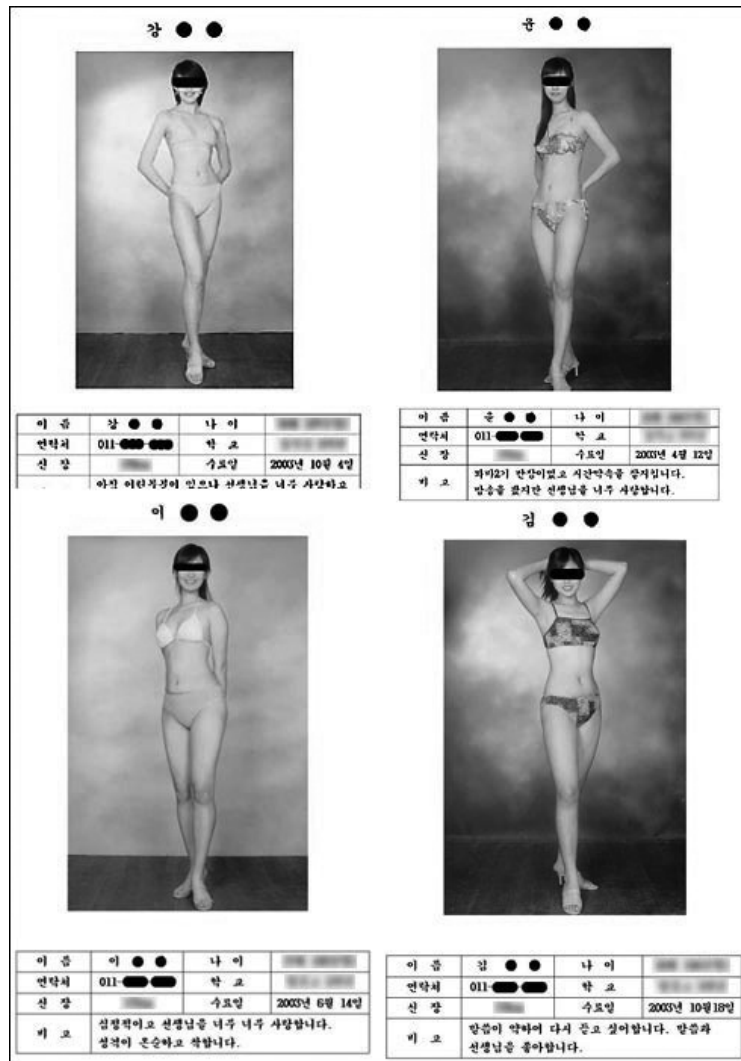
I first started to pay attention to him when he was raising awareness about Jung Myung-seok (JMS), whom I refer to as the Rape Messiah, for, well... Maybe we better ask Peter about that.

Broke: For our more lascivious readers, can you explain why I call their leader the "Rape Messiah?"

Peter: I prefer "Heaven's Rapist" myself. Early criticisms of Reverend Moon's Unification Church involved allegations of sexual assaults directed at young female members during purification rituals. Adam and Eve were apparently real people who were kicked out of Paradise because they had sex. The only way a woman can cure herself of that original sin and guarantee a ticket to heaven is to have sex with the Messiah. Jeong, a former Moonie, began his own cult in the 1970s centered around such purification rituals. They don't make those teachings public of course, but the signs are all there, not the least is the fact the leader is now in jail for rape. And while the allegations against Jung mirrored allegations made against Moon decades earlier, Jung's cult is really quite unique. Every aspect of it served to help him rape young women and then intimidate them into silence. His organization was essentially a raping machine.

Broke: How did you first encounter JMS, and what got you to pay attention?

Peter: My first year in Korea (2003) was spent in Geumsan, a small town south of Daejeon. Upon arrival my roommate and fellow teacher joined a local church that held services outside town at a secluded mountain retreat called Wolmyeong-dong. A few months later



Top: the banner for [www.jmscult.com](http://www.jmscult.com). Bottom: a catalogue of JMS members for Jung to choose from. Both images provided by Peter Daley.

I found myself at that retreat after a friend invited me hiking. I was asked several times if I studied the Bible and each time my negative answer was met with surprise.

"Then why are you here?"  
"She invited me hiking."

There was no hiking.

Most of the 2,000 in attendance were female university students. That was nice, but their Beatlemania-like reaction to a photo of Jeong Myeong-seok, their absent leader, shown on a giant screen at 2am was quite disturbing. I discovered later he was hiding in Asia wanted for rape by INTERPOL

and Korean authorities.

What really got me interested was the fact that there was almost no English information about JMS at the time despite branches worldwide, an upcoming event at the University of British Columbia, and a fugitive leader. And there was my roommate who quit the cult around the same time. Her former cultist friends followed her around town, waited for her at regular haunts, and told her God would kill someone in her family for her betrayal. She almost had a nervous breakdown and spent many nights in her room crying. I

gained a lot of motivation from witnessing that and began the site which grew into [www.jmscult.com](http://www.jmscult.com).

Broke: I thought I remembered you said that Jung Myung-suk was holed up in your town. Can you explain that situation, and the events leading up to his arrest?

Peter: Sorry, I think you're remembering that wrong. I lived in his hometown in 2003, but he had left Korea several years earlier. He was eventually arrested in China in 2007, eight years after fleeing Korea. During those years he spent time in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China with early short stays in Europe and America. He was arrested in Hong Kong in 2003 for illegal entry after members of the Korean anti-JMS NGO Exodus tracked him down. He was granted bail and subsequently disappeared. Japanese media reported a sighting of Jung in Costa Rica in early 2007, and there is footage of police with machine guns searching for him. Several months later he was arrested in China. He was deported back to Korea where he was found guilty of raping several members and given a rather measly ten-year sentence.

Broke: What was the impact on the cult, with their Rape Messiah in jail?

Peter: An American member told me at the time that they were all in shock. They really believed he would be cleared despite eight years on the run and rape allegations from every Asian country he spent time in. But that shock was short-lived as the leadership soon put its spin on events: the trial was rigged, the judges and media biased, the victims later recanted their testimonies, and my favorite "Jesus was persecuted too" so therefore the persecutions are proof that Jung is Jesus 2.0. The positive was that he could no longer rape young women. Aside from that the cult carried on as normal; they were used to an absent Messiah.

Broke: How important was your role in all of this?

Peter: I had nothing to do with his arrest, but my site was mentioned in a few news reports. Turkish reports carried several photos from my site which was a nice surprise. My site has certainly helped people leave and stopped others from becoming further involved.

Broke: The first I heard of your activities was when you posted on Expat Korea about busloads of cultists coming to



# with Peter Daley, Cult Watcher

your work. What was all that about?

Peter: That was Jungshim, a doomsday cult based near Hongchun, Gangwon-do. In 1999 its two founders, Mo Haeng-ryong and his wife Park Gwi-dal along with 44 senior members were arrested for defrauding members. The couples were found guilty and sentenced to ten years jail. According to the BBC the fraud amounted to \$90 billion. That's a lot.

In 2008 the British newspaper *Telegraph* began investigating Ki Health (now called Innersound), Jungshim's London branch. After Ki Health was informed of the upcoming article for their response, they attempted to remove critical material from the Internet, most of which was on my site. A female member pretending to be one of my students with a scheduling problem called to schedule a meeting. She arrived with seven elderly Korean men wearing expensive suits. I braced myself for a very serious scheduling conflict.

My visitors identified themselves as representatives of Jungshim and hand-delivered a letter from Ki Health which denied any relationship to Jungshim and threatened to sue me for suggesting they were. My guests repeated the legal threats and denied any association with Ki Health. They ordered me to remove material from my site immediately -- and if I refused busloads of Jungshim members were at that very moment on their way to my place of work, Keimyung University, to protest. They promised to call off the buses if I surrendered then and there. I secretly hoped the buses would arrive, but they never did. They also threatened to sue me and to get me fired. A slight physical altercation followed. After talking to my boss, who was very concerned for my safety, I removed the material from my site. There's a very informative thread on Rick Ross's cult awareness site if you want to read the material I removed from my site.

Broke: More recently, you turned your attention toward Mannam and Shinchonji Church of Jesus (SCJ). How did that get started?

Peter: I was contacted by a Mannam recruiter through my job as International Relations Coordinator at Keimyung in October 2011. We met for lunch and I was asked to help them devise ways to bring foreigners to their wonder-



*Jung Myung-suk in China while on the run from INTERPOL.  
Photo provided by Peter Daley.*

ful events. The brochure she gave raised a few alarm bells as did her requests. I asked her if Mannam was related to any kind of church, to which she responded with a very clear no. I didn't quite believe her, but apart from a few cursory Google searches which didn't yield much I left it at that. She later told me she joined Mannam fully aware that SCJ leader Lee Man-hee was its leader. I guess she didn't think that constituted a connection to a church.

In July 2012 a member on [www.ExpatKorea.com](http://www.ExpatKorea.com) made the connection between Mannam and the SCJ cult. A week earlier I had read reports of Lee Man-hee's "I'm the

Messiah and We're Already in the Afterlife" American tour, but I didn't connect him with Mannam. By then Mannamers were everywhere inviting foreigners (and only foreigners) to free picnics, free Korean lessons, free discos, free everything else. Had we won some cosmic lottery, or were these free events serving the cause of the parent cult?

I came across a Korean news report about Mannam's connection to SCJ and I asked Nathan Schwartzman over at [www.asiacorrespondent.com](http://www.asiacorrespondent.com), to translate it. His translation was read quite widely and it encouraged others to do further research. Zachary Downey in particular did some



*Pin the flag on the Dokdo, a fun activity at Mannam events.  
Photo actually taken by Peter Daley.*

great work and Michael Aronson (the Seoul Subway Song guy) brought it to the attention of his fans. Word spread and Mannam went into a justified panic. I should point out that Kyla Polanski and Ahrum Lee, an English Education major, found the connection earlier and wrote about their experiences for Three Wise Monkeys and [onenGLISHforums.com](http://onenGLISHforums.com).

Broke: How many Mannam events have you attended?

Peter: Four. The first on August 17, 2012 consisted of a free bus to Gumi where free food was served and free badges distributed for the benefit of the many Mannam cameras present. I didn't realize it at the time, but all the Koreans present where Mannam/SCJ members. It was a manufactured event in an environment totally controlled by the cult. I left after about an hour, turned off by the Dokdo booth where children were encouraged to put little Korean flags on little models of Dokdo. I thought I had escaped, but on the way to the station a Korean male pulled up in a car beside me. "Would you like to go to a cool party for foreigners?"

I attended three events the first weekend in September. A "Fun Fun Fun '70s/'80s Disco" at Yeouido whose sole purpose was to distribute more tickets to the upcoming September 16 event. Security guards with secret-service-like earpieces were present to ensure Koreans not involved with SCJ/Mannam could not gain entry. The next event was a ten-kilometer run for charity co-hosted by the Seoul Flyers Running Club and Mannam International Running Club (MIRC), the latter populated by several SCJ members. The third event was a "Fun Fun Fun Festival" near Dae-gu Stadium. Only foreigners from non-English-speaking countries were invited, a direct result of growing awareness amongst native English speakers that Mannam was a SCJ front. Again the focus was on getting people to the September 16 event.

Broke: Why should people care that SCJ is pulling the strings? Why not accept all the free stuff and just pose for the pictures?

Peter: Well I'm all for free stuff, but cults don't give away free stuff. Sure you may gain some free meals, T-shirts, and some conditional friendships, but the cult wants something in return. Mannam wanted to fill Seoul Olympic Stadium for its leader's giant birthday party and ensu-





Whenever Peter puts this shirt on, he spontaneously combusts.  
Photo provided by Peter Daley.



ing promotional videos. Such videos only serve to help SCJ further its cause, which is essentially the enrichment of its leader at the expense of its followers. That doesn't bother everyone; I've come across expats who care only about the free Mannam soccer balls they get to kick around on weekends. Participation in Mannam aids indoctrination of SCJ members. As a demographic primarily here to teach the youths of Korea, the last thing we should be doing is aiding their indoctrination into a cult.

**Broke:** What has been your favorite moment/anecdote/statement that came out of this whole Mannam/SCJ affair?

**Peter:** The sad-puppy-dog look on the faces of MIRC members when their request for the obligatory group photo was met with a loud collective NO by members of the Seoul Flyers.

**Broke:** Your actions in concert with several others have certainly succeeded in disrupting Mannam's activities. Is it too soon to call it a victory? (Insert your light meets light pun here.)

**Peter:** Well when you consider Scientology is still going strong and that Aum Shinrikyo still exists after gassing the Tokyo subways in 1995, I think a clear victory where we see the group disbanded is unrealistic. Hopefully we have succeeded in raising awareness that Mannam isn't what it appears to be and awareness of SCJ and Lee Man-hee, the leader of both organizations. Someone leaving the group is a victory. Someone choosing not to take part in a Mannam event is a victory. Anytime information a cult wants hidden is made available is a victory.

**Broke:** You've been very open about your actual identity. Do you ever fear for your safety, privacy, or livelihood for your activities?

**Peter:** Being threatened at my place of work sure came as a shock, but apart from that no. There's a certain freedom that comes with using your real name -- you don't have to worry about covering your tracks, and it does force you to be more accountable for the material you put online. We've seen a few examples of intimi-

dation from SCJ and Mannam recently and those just provide further motivation to share more information. I may regret that attitude one day, but until then c'est la vie.

**Broke:** What advice would you give to someone who's being bothered by a cult?

**Peter:** I think those activities are more designed to keep members busy rather than to recruit. If you are bothered by them, learn the Korean word for cult (사이비 교회). They hate that.

If there is one thing we should learn from the whole Mannam fiasco is that invitations to join cults are not always so obvious. Sophisticated cults will offer what people want.

Another lesson is that direct recruitment may not be the goal. If a cult can get what it wants from you without indoctrinating you to believe their messiah is immortal, it will. I'm guessing most who attended Lee Man-hee's birthday party in September via Mannam had never heard of him. Yet they're in his propaganda videos cheering as though they believe he is the immortal messiah he claims to

be. General rule of thumb is to be suspicious of unsolicited offers from strangers.

**Broke:** What about for someone in your position, who's for lack of a better word engaged in cult-busting? What works? What doesn't?

**Peter:** The more information the better. A significant amount of material from a variety of sources can be very effective in helping people leave cults and stopping others from further commitments. You never know what comment, photo, video, or even joke will flip that switch in a cult member's head. I don't seek online arguments with members, but they sometimes happen. While they might not help the person you're arguing with, there's always the possibility someone else will see it and see their group in a different light as a result.

**Broke:** How should you conduct yourself in the presence of cult members? Are there any rules you go by?

**Peter:** If you're trying to help someone leave a group, labeling their group a cult is usually counter-productive.

One guy in Germany spent two years in JMS with the goal of getting his ex-girlfriend out. Helping someone leave can be very easy or almost impossible depending on their level of involvement and how valuable the member is the cult.

If you're trying to get some questions answered, it's better to not be aggressive and just ask natural inquisitive questions. Members of some cults can be quite open about their beliefs and practices when asked nicely even though their group may hide such details.

**Broke:** Do you deal with a lot of people who are in cults or who have lost family members to cults?

**Peter:** Yes, I'm in contact with several families at present who live in Western countries and have children under the influence of Korean cults. It's heartbreaking because there

Great! I'd like to tell you about my organization, Mannam! We are a volunteer group with high-infinite resources to spend on privileged English teachers. We offer activities and photo ops for foreigners who can provide us with free advertising and implicit endorsement.

We are run by a secretive Korean church, but we promise not to try to convert you. Our honorary chairman is also the leader of that church, and our official chairwoman is high up in that church too. Don't worry, we prefer our members to be Korean. We also have events in the name of World Peace, although our leader's definition of World Peace is unity under his leadership. In a world without diversity. Anyway, we offer free language lessons, repetitive walks for awareness, Fun Fun Fun disco parties, running clubs, soccer...

Excuse me, sir! Can I talk to you for a minute?

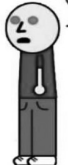
Uh, sure...



## Comic from MANNAM BY MIKE & ME

Wait, soccer? I like soccer.

Great! We're glad to have you join us. I'm sure you'll be a wonderful member of Mannam.



Does this sound similar to your first Mannam experience?



are no easy answers. Imagine your daughter is convinced a serial rapist is the messiah and efforts to warn her result in her believing you are under the influence of Satan. There's not much I can do except provide as much information and advice as possible, and connect them with others in the same position and with people who can help like specialist counselors. For many parents, it simply becomes a waiting game. The best they can do is not give the cult reason to turn their child against them, something I hear SCJ is particularly skilled at, and patiently wait for their child to realize they've been deceived. It can be a long and stressful wait.

**Broke:** I've heard it said that the word "cult" is used as a pejorative by more mainstream churches. What are your thoughts on that?

**Peter:** Some churches do use the term to disparage other groups with different beliefs. The term "destructive cult" doesn't concern a group's beliefs, but their practices such as deceptive recruiting, psychological persuasion, exploitation of members, and an unaccountable leadership which claims to be the sole source of soul/life-saving knowledge.

The "all religions are cults" argument shows complete ignorance of the subject. The difference between a benign church not led by a sociopath

and a destructive cult is the difference between catching a cold and catching Ebola.

**Broke:** Presumably you're not chasing after every little cult. What makes you decide to look into a cult? What makes you take action?

**Peter:** Exposing lesser-known groups is more worthwhile than adding to the information on well-known groups like Scientology and the Moonies.

Cult members who feel upset at something I've put online often say things like "But what about the Catholic church and the paedophile cover-ups?" ie "Why don't you go after the bigger well-known groups?" Which information is

more valuable?

**Broke:** I've been hearing a lot about the Church of the Heavenly Ajumma lately (하나님의교회 세계복음선교협회). What do you know of them?

**Peter:** Her husband was another Korean messiah who died a very unmessiahly death: he choked on some tteok. His wife took over messiah duties upon his death and called herself the Heavenly Mother. It's nice to see a woman getting into the male-dominated field of Korean messiahshipping, but I've heard some disturbing stories about that group.

**Broke:** Are you actively looking for the next cult to lock horns with?

**Peter:** Absolutely.



**MANNAM BLOSSOMS HOPE IN SA**

2012.04.07 7:00~9:00pm  
Korea University  
Science Library Building, 5th Floor Auditorium

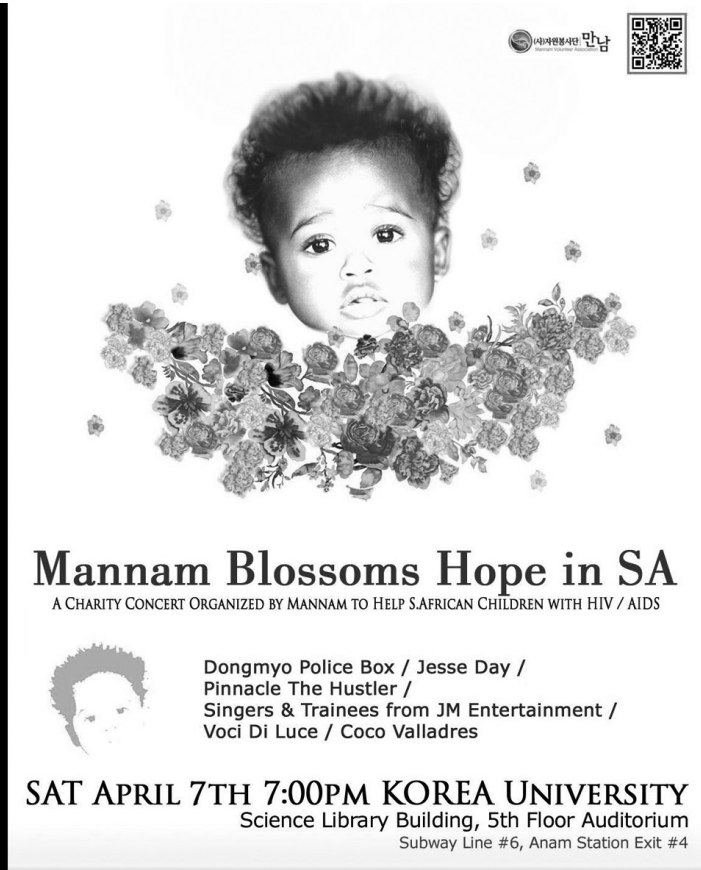
**When Light meet Light there is Victory**



**MANNAM BLOSSOMS HOPE IN SA**

Dongmyo Police Box  
Jesse Day  
Pinnacle The Hustler  
Singers & Trainees from JM Entertainment  
Voci Di Luce  
Coco Valladres

**MANNAM**  
Volunteer Association



**MANNAM BLOSSOMS HOPE IN SA**

A CHARITY CONCERT ORGANIZED BY MANNAM TO HELP S.AFRICAN CHILDREN WITH HIV / AIDS

Dongmyo Police Box / Jesse Day /  
Pinnacle The Hustler /  
Singers & Trainees from JM Entertainment /  
Voci Di Luce / Coco Valladres

**SAT APRIL 7TH 7:00PM KOREA UNIVERSITY**  
Science Library Building, 5th Floor Auditorium  
Subway Line #6, Anam Station Exit #4

Mannam wishes to help children and teenagers who were born with AIDS unintentionally, many were transmitted HIV/AIDS from their parents. We believe donations will make them keep their hopes, eventually making their dream come true in the future, like many other children and teenagers.

All donations collected from the charity concert will be used for South African children and teenagers via Al-Noor orphanage center.

Al-Noor orphanage center is a government registered organization, taking care of children & teenagers with AIDS.

[www.alnoororphanage.org.za/index/html](http://www.alnoororphanage.org.za/index/html)

Expat artists from Hongdae and Itaewon area will perform.

**Thank you so much for the enquiry. We however regret that we do not know of this organisation. We are also not aware of any organisation that has a name that resembles or is similar to ours.**

**We encourage our donors to get in touch with us via email or phone so that we can confirm the fundraisings taking place. This will also help avoid/reduce bogus fundraisers.**

**Yours in the service of humanity  
Alnoor team**



# Location, Location, Amplification

by the Secret Punk 비밀핑크

“Hey, I heard these guys don’t even practice!”

Yeah, thanks. I can tell to be honest. So, hopefully, can everyone else. They sound like something a little worse than garbage; the musical manifestations of a retarded dog dry-humping your old couch. And yet people lap it up: they cheer, they shout, they swig beer and pat each other on the back triumphantly when they’re finished.

I’ve seen quite a few gigs at some of the spaces down by Mulla Station and whilst I should point out that not all the bands there are like this, too many of them □ for my tastes anyway □ fall in to this trap of over-indulgent nonsense. Let me be clear here, I’m not talking about bad bands or simply bands I don’t

like, I’m talking about the bands where the singer just unleashes a Tourette’s-esque stream of noise for seven minutes, the guitarist bashes aimlessly at his guitar -- often picking up a spoon to be Dadaist or artistic, and the drummer just wallops away at the speed I used to jerk off to when I was 15 years old. Sometimes they try to appear like real musicians by wearing masks or suchlike but they aren’t really fooling anyone.

It reminds me of a really bad school sports day. The kind where everyone gets a prize, even the fat kid that fell over and took five minutes to walk 50 metres with his egg in a spoon before breaking it all over his face, shitting his pants and then crying. Why are these bands on stage performing such ri-

diculous noise with no effort to produce anything coherent or musical in the slightest and, more importantly, why are people supporting it?

Location is important because if this band were to do such a thing in a venue in a more discerning part of town, they would rightly be derided by the audience. Sure, there might be a novelty shock factor to be had from doing it once but this would soon disappear. If you play in music venues, you’re expected to provide something of merit. You’re expected to perform for a set period of time. You’re expected to demonstrate that you’re a credible band that has at least given some time in effort and practice to your art.

If you are a band, play in different places. Test

yourself by stepping in to the unknown. This is what real bands do. If every time you play, your mates come and tell you it was great regardless of what you actually sound like, you’re not really achieving anything other than massaging your own ego. Play to audiences that aren’t necessarily interested in your style of music or your leather jacket. Try to win them over. Try to turn them on to something.

Location, Location, Amplification. There are some great stages, not only in Seoul but around this whole country. You don’t need a van to lug amps and drum kits everywhere. You’ve just got be willing and slightly more than able than some of the groups I’ve seen recently.

## K-pop, K-indie, K-Stop it Already

Jon Twitch

Just when you thought it was safe to like Korean music, they come up with a reductionist new way to promote it. Introducing: K-indie. The nation-branding answer to a musical style they don’t understand. You might argue “A rose by any other name,” but I’m against the strategy of using this term and what it means to music.

The Korean government can’t promote its various cultural assets fast enough. Everything is getting K-branded faster than a herd of new cattle on a dude ranch. As well as the obvious K-pop, there’s been K-drama (TV shows), K-movie, K-food (a conspicuously awkward rebranding previously done under the name Hansik), K-classics (Korean classical musicians, that is, Koreans playing western classical music), K-literature, K-water, and even K-roads (which is exactly what it sounds like, nothing more). The reason for branding these things all the same is for simplicity and because it looks good in a lazy civil servant’s PowerPoint presentation, not for effective marketing strategy.

Obviously all these terms come from the perceived success of marketing K-pop, itself a derivative term of J-

pop. It seems reductionist for Korea’s indie music scene to hitch itself to that trailer, especially considering one of the main appeals of indie is that it is supposedly NOT cut from the same cloth as K-pop. Instead, under this new branding, K-indie can be seen as a subdivision of K-pop, promising the same kind of product but subordinate to the more popular K-pop.

K-indie itself is a name that embraces the K-pop dream, of serving one’s country with supposedly distinctly Korean music, and ultimately having that one moment in the spotlight just like Psy, appearing on NBC’s Today Show and exclaiming “대한민국 만세!” There is one well-worn path in this direction, and it’s judged not only by sales and YouTube hits but also what’s fleetingly in vogue right now. Following that path gives your music an expiration date, sacrificing greatness for fleeting grabs at fame.

I’m tired of hearing about those stupid audition TV shows, where K-indie bands battle each other for a seat at the big boy’s table. We’ve already seen bands -- talented bands, to be fair -- arise from this arena, including the likes of Toxic and Busker Busker (best known for a song about the Yeosu Expo, a noble leg-

acy for sure). They have been initiated into K-indiegarten where they can win the hearts of the K-pop masses. They now share its fanbase, as well as all the limitations that go with it -- loss of creative autonomy, dignity, privacy (raise your hand if you know which member of Busker Busker recently got married!).

This weekend, Crying Nut is competing in the finals with other bands like Byebye Badman, Juck Juck Grunzie, and plenty of others on the EBS show Hello Rookie. Is “Rookie” what you want to call a band that’s been playing since 1995? They were playing their instruments before most modern K-pop stars were toilet-trained.

This is a surrender of not only dignity, but also creative control and control over your own image.

You don’t foster talent and creativity in the reality TV format. Creativity is accomplished in a garage or a practice studio where experimentation can be done without consequence. On reality TV, you’re at the mercy of the TV audience, so bands that want to win must serve their limited tastes. We’re surrendering the creative choices over to the unengaged TV viewers.

It won’t be long before all those participating bands be-

gin sounding the same, and then it will spread all through all live halls. And after that, maybe the only way to start a K-indie band will be years of practicing in rock star academies run by major record labels, where only the few top achievers win a spot on a K-indie band to have a go at a career by playing the same committee-written hit singles that every prior K-pop band has churned out.

Anybody in a band in Korea needs to think what success means to them. Is it about making good music to enjoy with your friends, or is it about having your own signature dance to teach to Ellen DeGeneres on her talk show? If it’s the latter and you dream of devoting your life to furthering Korea’s soft diplomacy foreign policy, go for it--add that hyphenated K and make music until you hate it.

Meanwhile, I call for white man’s fatwa on using terms like K-rock, K-punk, K-hardcore, etc. Let’s keep this shit from being infected by government-propelled nationalism-lite.

Let the title “K-indie” be used only to indicate those bands that turn their backs on independent and underground music and audiences for a shot at the big times under the K-pop model.



# The Cult of Punk

Jon Twitch

There's been a lot of talk about cults these days, and I'm certainly partly responsible for that. The word can be seen sometimes as a pejorative, and it may seem like a tactic by more mainstream religions to maintain their monopoly. But there's no actual reason a cult is intrinsically bad, unless you consider the behaviours of some of the more obnoxious cults. A cult offers a much more intense religious experience, with the potential to connect directly to a charismatic leader (of course, some cult leaders are far from charismatic, no matter how many olympiads they host).

The definition of a cult can easily be stretched to cover a lot of different groups, not just religious cults. So, just for the hell of it, let's see how punk stacks up as a cult.

**Focus on a living leader**

Cults are unique in that they require living people to worship; once the cult leader is dead, goodbye cult. Punk is similar in that it revolves around a select few; if they disappear then the herd either dissipates or refocuses. While it should be obvious that punk is less based around an idolisation of rockstars than most other genres, it is still clear that there are certain leaders who are held up by the collective community, whether for their music or for some other personality trait or ability. And more importantly, punk thrives by having its leaders walk among its followers, unlike more mainstream religions and bands whose members are too big to sign our autographs.

**Withdrawal and isolation**

Cults maintain cohesiveness by isolating their followers from the outside world. This can be achieved through many active and passive ways.

First of all, group cohesiveness keeps everyone together from the inside. Members make each other feel welcome and maintain close ties with one another. Newcomers to cult meetings are often surprised at how warm and welcoming everyone is; this is deliberate.

Second, the group is presented as under siege from the outside world. The outside values are presented as wrongheaded and/or immoral, and the group is given the impression that without their attention and care, their group will cave in

to the outside pressures. In all honesty, whether in both cults or punk, this probably does hold true.

Both factors help maintain a hearty us-vs-them mentality which can be seen at some point in almost every punk. We've all known (or been) punks who look down on outsiders, seeing ourselves as exceptionally good and others as unenlightened masses. It is true that most people in the punk scene mainly socialise with other members. Even I've underestimated many people based on their lack of interest in the music I like.

**Personality changes**

Family members of cultists often observe major changes in behaviour and personality of their loved ones as they take on the collective cult personality. Certainly the discovery and absorption of punk causes behavioural changes to take place, even if it is through freeing up of inhibitions. Getting into punk teaches certain behaviours, whether they be as simple as vulgarity or parroting certain opinions, or getting a new wardrobe and dressing up punk.

**Dress codes**

Well duh. Cults remove individuality by demanding conformity to the group dress code. Punk attempts to increase individuality...by demanding conformity to the group dress code.

**Communal living**

Most cultists live regular lives with their families or even just on their own. But there are options for members who find it unbearable to exist among the suppressive persons any longer; whether that's living at the official cult headquarters or maintaining a household strictly for believers; either way, they're giving over a large chunk of their life to the group. Certainly every city with a punk scene has seen its share of squats or just punk houses, and Korea is no exception. This may help members of the group cut ties to their family and outsider friends, and put membership in the group ahead of prior personal goals.

**Rejection of old, conventional values**

One of the best ways to create a new, cohesive group is to mark oneself as opposed to a commonly held belief. Cults may challenge sexual mores,

or religious beliefs, or even something as simple as what to wear. Punk is entirely based on rejection of mainstream ideas, even often good ones.

**Mind-numbing techniques**

Cults do what they can to keep their followers weak: services at strange hours at night to induce sleep deprivation, poor diets to physically weaken them, repetitive actions to dull their minds. Well, in the punk scene we have shows that sometimes go on for way too long, and most of us drink way too much there. It's a bit more of a stretch but for certain bands to encourage chanting and singing of songs ensures that the adherents are vocally affirming their membership in the group and support of its ideals, at the cost of independent thinking.

**Intense study encouraged**

Cults claim that they have all the answers, and that only through their teachings can the truth be learned. Adherents spend large amounts of time studying cult materials to pursue this message. Certainly the same could be said for the appeal of punk music, which often contains a very polarising but motivational message that dictates particular world views. Looking at the body of punk music, both local and historical, it's clear that certain ideas, phrases, and words are favoured heavily which help direct listeners in certain directions.

**Information control**

As a member of a cohesive group, there is a spoken and unspoken understanding of what information is irrelevant to the group or even harmful. For instance, cultists may not be able to read anti-cult materials because that stuff was written by sinners. Likewise, it's not very punk to listen to Phish or Nickelback, so those materials are spurned, and any member who is caught listening to bands like that is ridiculed. By extending its values outside the realm of music, punk can approach a totalitarianist level of beliefs.

**Orchestrating childlike behaviour**

In order to ensure childlike obedience to the group, various childlike behaviours are encouraged. Certainly one could compare this to moshing, providing a safe space for adherents to uninhibit their bodies

and potentially open themselves up to harm. This form of playing certainly encourages a type of behaviour.

Of course, there are many other reasons why punk is not very cultlike.

**Punishing doubt and dissent, attacking independent thought**

Although punk might limit your thoughts a bit, you can't say it prevents independent thought. For every punk band out there, you'll find handfuls of punks who are outspoken in their hatred of it. Nothing is sacred.

**Deception**

Many cults use deception to trick people into coming to their events, and by the time they realise they're in a cult, it's too late. I don't think punk could ever be accused of being outright deceptive. You can usually smell punk coming from miles away.

**Guiltless deserters**

If you stop going to shows, you probably won't hear from anyone about it, unless it's when you show up again and suddenly everyone remembers how long it's been. Not so with a cult, where if you miss one meeting even for legitimate reasons, you face increasingly harassing behaviour from its members.

**Wealth hogs**

Cults tend to suck in all their followers' money, to the point that people have to sell property just to have enough to tithe.

But this is punk we're talking about here. What wealth?

**Authoritarian**

There can't really be said to be one person or small ingroup that controls punk thought. Sid Vicious? Most punks readily admit what a scumbag he is.

**Altruism**

Cults don't really engage in altruistic behaviour. Scientology doesn't have Narconon, just as Shinchonji doesn't have Mannam, because they want to make a difference. At best they do it to glorify themselves. Punk, on the other hand, is crammed full of causes-of-the-week. Food Not Bombs, Rock Against Racism, even this weekend's Punk Rock Toy Drive. We're not doing it to glorify punk in the eyes of the public or even our own acolytes.

# How to put on punk shows

An interview with Jon Twitch  
By Jon Twitch

Originally this guide was going to be put together by both myself and Brian Hough, but he hasn't had time to give his answers, either due to being too busy or because he's still reeling from the financial hit he took bringing Thee Oops here. I hope he can get over it, because every promoter has their failures. Hell, my most recent show (the cancelled Doha show) lost me a bit of money. But if experience is the best teacher, strap yourself in because we're PhD candidates.

I first started putting on shows simply because there was no one else to do it. My first show was the Slackers tour in 2007, which was definitely starting big. After that, I continued doing shows simply because I realised that if I wanted a show done a certain way, I'd have to do it myself.

I think the reason I've maintained a pretty good reputation as a promoter is that I don't do it too often, only putting on the occasional show if there's a good reason. I avoid the drama and it never becomes a boring routine for me.

Being a promoter definitely makes it harder to enjoy going to shows. Suddenly it feels a lot more like work, which can be a stressful revelation to have. But once you feel that, it's probably too late. I remember seeing Dori go through that change at our Spot New Year's show, where it slowly dawned on him that he's at a show but he's also at work.

## Where to Start

In order to put on a show, there are three fundamental things you need more than anything else: a venue, a date, and bands. This being Korea, usually you don't have to worry about equipment unless you're working with a band with unusual needs, like a ska band or something, or you're putting on a show somewhere that isn't a traditional venue.

More important also, to me, is having a reason to put on a show. I don't do regular weekly shows, but usually work them around some sort of event, whether that means a foreign band touring, a friend's band needing shows, a charity event (have I ever actually done one of those?), or a Broke in Korea release. I start with that impetus and make decisions from there.

## Choosing a Date

It's best to start with the date and go to a venue with that

in mind, rather than to get a venue and decide on date. But if you're flexible and haven't invited any bands yet, it's fine to find out what dates will work for a particular club.

Booking something like a Christmas or Halloween show must be done way, way in advance. I remember in early October asking DGBD if they have any available Saturdays in December, and it was already too late.

Late-night shows are usually best targeted at foreigners, who are more used to going to shows that last until 2am. Shows that end before the subways close are much better for general Korean audiences, especially underage Koreans.

Obviously the best dates for shows are Saturdays, but Fridays and Sundays can both be okay too. Later on Friday is good to give people time to get there, and earlier on Sunday is good to let people go home earlier. The other weekdays are obviously much less busy, but venues rent out for cheaper and also you'll have far less competition. The farther away from Saturday night your show is, the less it'll be favouring foreigners.

## Finding a Venue

Finding a venue can be frustrating. It's best to book far in advance, because even a venue that you have a good relationship with will have a first-come-first-served policy. Be prepared to settle for second choice, or even third or fourth.

Some venues carry built-in audiences with them and have certain expectations about music genre. You wouldn't expect to see metal in Club Ta or hip-hop in Spot. Not to say there's no room for flexibility; Club Crack started as a hip-hop club and has been a useful venue for many a hardcore show. Offering a show in a novel venue can be an excellent way to bring people out, but it's best not to overdo it with certain places.

Also, trying out newly opened venues can be great, and they'll generally charge less until they start to be more established. The new venue can be an attraction to draw some people to the show, although I've historically had better luck experimenting with venues with foreigners than Koreans.

It's also important to have a good relationship with the venue owner, both professionally and musically. Back in the day, before Skunk (and even during Skunk if you wanted to find a different venue), there were no clubs receptive to punk. You'd

get shows in places like WASP where the owners really despised punk and would play hip-hop on the PA between bands. The only reason they allowed punk shows was because our money was as good as anyone else's.

Most venues have their own staff working the bar, and they may be able to provide their own door people and maybe even security. It's best to get this all figured out in advance, or you might end up scrambling to find an emergency door person.

## Rental Agreements

Traditionally, Korean venues have rented out to promoters for a one-time rental fee. At places like Skunk and DGBD circa 2007 when I brought the Slackers over, it was between 500 000 and 700 000 won for Saturday nights. This can be pretty rough, because it puts a bar for you to get past which might not be easy. Failure costs dearly in this system, so it's not good for putting on punk shows.

Nowadays more clubs are willing to split the door money. So if the show is 10 000 won, you each get 5000. This pays for the staff, and I've noticed that clubs that offer this deal almost always have their own people to work the doors, making your job 50 percent easier. Some clubs want a guarantee, because they don't want to be brought down with you if you totally flop, which I think is a reasonable thing to ask.

## Booking Bands

I've always thought the magic number of bands is anywhere between four to seven, with both those numbers especially having an appeal to them. Three is okay if you have really good bands, two is acceptable on a busy night, and anything over seven is going to be a long show.

One reason why it's good to start putting together a show in advance is the amount of time it takes to contact bands. No band member will or should immediately answer yes, so you have to be patient while they ask every other member, forget, and eventually reply. There's no harm in sending reminders, and I've discovered that you get faster replies through Kakao Talk than Facebook or e-mail.

It's best to contact a band and keep a spot open for them until they reply, one way or the other. Otherwise, maybe you'll get impatient and invite a second band, and then the first band will say yes. To

start, only send out invites to the number of bands you want playing. Chances are a bunch of them won't be able to make it, then you can send a second wave of invitations.

Sometimes a band wants to know what other bands you've booked. This can be tough if nobody's RSVPed yet, in which case I just name the other bands I'm waiting to hear back from.

Some bands will ask for a guarantee, money that they receive for playing. Unless you're going for a big show, there's not really much point. And no use to let a band walk all over you; if your opener wants a guarantee, find another opener.

My favourite shows are diverse in genre and level of experience. Most other shows are run by a label or a club, and they tend only to offer shows to the bands in their tight circle. I'm ever-trying to break the circle by mixing together bands that don't play together very often, booking bands that are new and haven't had many offers for shows yet alongside established bands, and finding bands that don't play often enough. It's best to avoid bloc shows that are 100 percent one genre, whether that be all skate-punk or all hardcore; break it up by adding a disparate element.

## Price

One of the most important things I try to offer is a low price. There are foreigners out there who don't know the difference between paying 5000 won or 50 000 won for a show, but the same can't be said for Koreans. My favourite door price is 7000 won, which was what we usually had to pay during Skunk Hell's golden age, but that can be a huge pain to make change for. I don't think anyone has a problem with 10 000 won these days, which is still cheap compared to a lot of clubs.

Some promoters offer advance tickets at a lower price, which can be purchased by direct bank transfer, but I'm really not a fan of doing this. Too much hassle, too many ways it can go wrong.

## Promoting

These days the first place you should advertise shows should be the same place you go to find out about other shows: Facebook. Start an event page, send invites to friends, where it out on relevant group pages. It's a shameless business, so get used to trying to sell things to your friends.

Even though almost all pro-



moting is done online now, and almost all of that through Facebook, there are several other avenues you can pursue.

It's still standard for every show to have a poster, even if they don't get printed. The art of making posters has perhaps been lost, but that doesn't mean you need to break out the sharpies to come up with a good event poster. I got good mileage out of defacing a safety sign from a construction site in Photoshop. Remember to always proofread your poster to make sure you list venue, date, time, and price.

When I was young, back before the Internet controlled all our lives, scouting for posters on telephone poles was the best way to find out about upcoming shows. Not so anymore. Chances are if you put up posters, they'll be covered up by the time you reach the next block.

Better are smaller handbills, which are more effective, since people will have it in their pockets later. Rather than standing somewhere and handing them out to random passersby--which in Korea has a very, VERY low success rate--I think it's best to target sympathetic businesses, where your flyers can be available to anyone stopping by, and those people are more likely to be interested in your show than a random Hongdae person. You can also hand out flyers at a show; it's best to stand by the door and give them out, or better yet leave them at the merch table or with the person running the door. But if they're at a show already, then they're probably likewise exposed to the usual SNS promotion avenues.

#### Responsibilities at the Show

A promoter is extremely busy at shows, even if it's hard to tell. Part of a promoter's job is to identify problems and fix them quickly. You might be having fun, but it's the promoter's job to keep things going so that you can continue to have fun. It's a job that makes it hard to socialise, because you're literally interrupting their work. I learned long ago not to too actively occupy a promoter's time, and only talk with promoters if they're the ones initiating it.

Your job is to make sure the needs of the band and the venue are met, sometimes acting as a messenger or supervisor. If the venue has a problem with something guests or musicians are doing, they'll probably tell you. If the band desperately needs something, they'll probably come to you.

#### Sound Check

It's the promoter's job to make sure everyone shows

up for sound check. Once the bands are in the venue setting up, this part of the promoter's job is done. A good strategy for which order bands sound check is last-to-play, first-to-check. Some bands don't have time for sound check, in which case they'll have to do it quickly before their set.

It can actually be very stressful, because you feel useless not having anything to do and you're worried about the show coming up. Once the doors open, that's when things get really stressful, unless everyone shows up early and the place fills up for the opening act.

#### Guestlist

The promoter should be responsible for the guestlist, deciding whether the bands have a plus one, whether to let in reporters or photographers for free, and whether the club regulars get in for free. Skunk Hell used to be infamous for letting their regulars past the door, but if you're the one paying the rental fee it's your money and your decision whether to risk offending them. This should all be established in advance.

#### Doors

The doors are something that a promoter might have to control. It's possible the venue provides a door person, which is more likely in cases where you're splitting the door money. But if not, you need to have someone doing it for you. It's usually not a good idea for the promoter to run the doors, because anything could call you away at any time. I make a terrible door person because I can never tell who's supposed to be there or not.

It's the promoter's job to decide when the doors open. Usually a lot of shows have doors at one time and the first band half an hour later, but I don't see the point of all that waiting around. Better to have the first band start right away and get people inside.

Back home, a lot of shows would keep the doors open until the headliner, and then abandon post and let anyone who comes in late get in free. Very nice thing to do, and worthwhile unless the door person is provided by the club.

It's important to keep track of the number of people paying, and have a stamp or marker to figure out who's paid. It's always possible someone could find a way to fake this, but my shows are so cheap and so small that it would be really stupid for anyone to try.

Also, the promoter should visit the door person frequently, if not stay camped out there most of the show. I like to help out the door by collecting the money frequently. In my nearly nine years in Korea, we've

had the money go missing from the door once back at Skunk, and once at a reggae night at DGBD someone threatened the door people. A promoter carrying the money at least makes a moving target, and one with a bit more anonymity. Make sure you have a good pocket, though.

#### Security

If you have money and alcohol, you may have trouble. Having an actual security staff seems excessive, but it's helpful to note the locations of your biggest friends in case of a problem. That might include anything from people starting fights, sneaking in, excessive roughness in the mosh pit, too much heckling or mouthing off, damaging venue property, sexual assault, or Verv talking about Kurds. Alcohol will almost certainly be a factor, so be sure if you need to confront someone you have ample backup, even if it's something minor, because anything could spin out of control quickly.

#### Merch Table

A merch table is usually the responsibility of the bands that have merch to sell, but they'll be pretty ineffective at making decisions on this without your input. It's smart to find out what they need, help them choose a place, and gather up whatever equipment they need. Hopefully they have someone they can designate to work the merch table, but if not you're the best person to find someone trustworthy.

#### Setting the Pace

It's your job to set the pace for the show, making sure the next band is ready and all the members are there, and knowing how long the sets will be. Things go wrong all the time and people are late or disappear, and sometimes bands use delay tactics because they want to play later when more people are there. You might need to make tough choices to keep the show going. It helps to make a list at the beginning with the band order and estimated set times. No show can ever stick perfectly to the schedule, but it gives everybody the idea. It's best to make estimates that everyone plays short sets and the breaks are quick, because it's far better to have a show run a bit late than to end early, and far better for people to show up for one band and find they're early rather than late.

#### Alcohol

Alcohol is how almost every club makes money. It even makes me wonder why they would charge rent to a promoter, considering the promoter is bringing them customers.

If the venue has a bar, they'll also have employed

bartenders. At no point should you have anything to do with that part of the business at all, beyond a few creative choices.

Some venues offer free drinks, drink tickets, etc to bands. It's your duty to figure out if there's free alcohol for musicians (or negotiate a deal), and it might as well be you doling out the drink tickets, because everybody likes the person with the free drinks.

A lot of shows use the promise of one free drink with entry to lure more customers. I've always found this a bit lazy, and not a great motivation for a lot of people. For non-drinkers, it means they have to pay more for a show and get less than everyone else. I'd rather keep the door price low and let people make their own decisions about drinking.

I'm even less of a fan of those free cocktail hours so popular at places like Spot and FF, mainly because I think they get people too loaded which can cause all sorts of problems: fights, barfing, passing out.

Also worth mentioning: should the promoter drink? Well, I'm an alcoholic, so I continue to drink throughout a show, but I try to keep it to a minimum and I do it more to calm my nerves than to get drunk.

#### Profits

There's really no point in putting on shows for the purpose of making money. If you're poor enough that it helps, then you probably shouldn't be taking risks with your money anyway.

I don't feel the need to walk away with all the profits mainly because I'm not desperate for money. That said, I try to at least cover all my losses, because putting on shows should at least be sustainable.

The first things you need to do with any profits are pay off the club and any bands you had any kind of deal with. If they want money for playing, they should probably bring it up in advance. Offering a guarantee to anyone can be risky because it increases the risk for you, but it's worth it if the band can bring out more people.

Once all the debts have been paid off, it's nice to have money to split between the remaining bands. I got into the habit of doing this following the 2012 New Year show, when I let Dori handle the money and he chose to pay off the bands who played late. In this sort of case, it's best not to make any promises beforehand, in case you can't pay at all due to losing money or just can't pay an impressive amount. If no promises are made and you still hand a bit of money to the bands, they'll really appreciate it. Consider it like giving a tip.

# Reviews

# Attacking Forces



## Some Kind of Youth

Some Kind of Youth  
v/a  
DIY  
Jon Twitch

I picked up this homemade compilation CD at the Halloween show in Hongdae Playground put on by Some Kind of Youth, and it took me by surprise.

First, it shows that there is new blood in the punk scene making new music, and they somehow managed to record a few songs competently. I'd say this CD sounds even better than last year's World Domination, Inc compilation, which I thought had a slightly muffled sound. But with this album, you're right up close with them.

Rudy Guns are a new band that play ska-punk, but might be better served by picking one. If their drummer learned how to play ska they could be a very fun energetic ska band, and if they got away from the novelty of trying to play ska their rhythm would make a lot more sense. We'll see where they go from here.

Dead Buttons has an interesting song, "Why Don't You Kill Me?" At first I assumed it was a very out-there cover of "Loser" by Beck, and even after a few songs I bought that's

what it could be. But aside from lifting a few lines from the song, it is in no way related to Scientology's best country/hip-hop/rock musician. It almost feels like a medley of otherwise unrelated songs.

Somehow the Veggers song "Hostel" is much more poorly recorded. After the crispness of Rudy Guns and Dead Buttons, it's hard to tell that this is one of the underground's fastest-growing bands. I guess we can hope they come up with a good recording soon, because I'd really like to hear it.

The Swindlers and Love X Stereo seem to have both reused songs that were on previous recordings. Kind of an odd choice both on behalf of Some Kind of Youth and the bands, and it feels like they take up room that could've been better spent on more new bands to discover. Anyway, it's good that they're supporting new artists and kids who are just getting started.

This CD, plus the Halloween show, has convinced me that Some Kind of Youth has their act together, so I hope they keep putting on shows and making recordings. This is the young blood we need!

Decade  
GMC Records  
Jon Twitch

This album isn't named Decade for no reason: it marks the tenth birthday of Attacking Forces, one of Korea's most consistently great bands. Over the past decade they've produced three great full-length albums, always writing new stuff but never straying too far from their original intents. I wasn't ready for this album because I still wasn't bored of their last one, Beer, Blood, and Boots, which I think represents AF at the top of their game.

This album, while great, feels a bit more slow and relaxed, a victory lap after a decade of playing (even if vocalist Youngsoo and guitarist Jongo are the only original members remaining). And remember that their previous album had one acoustic song, "We Stand Proud Today," but that song had more of a beer hall singalong feel to it and less the wistful sentimentality of much of this album. Aesthetically they've moved out of the bar and into the recording studio, and as they got older their style matured.

The album starts with a three-minute intro instrumental, a conceit that too many Korean bands have had that doesn't accomplish what they hope it does. It reminds me heavily of the Clash instrumental "Time is Tight," only with the interesting addition of a taepyeongso, a traditional Korean wind instrument similar to an oboe that is played by Seong Shiyoung of 49 Morphines. Seong's taepyeongso appears later in the album on "Trench Bed Part 2 홀로 죽어가는 병사의 노래 (Song of Soldiers Dying Alone)," where it is used much more effectively.

It's taken me a little longer to absorb this album, largely because the lyrics are all in Korean, and the order of the songs doesn't seem to have any rhyme or reason. In particular three songs right in the middle are all prefaced by "검은바다 (Black Sea)," something I don't quite understand. This includes "감판위의 눈물 (Tears of the Deck Above)" with memorable guest vocals by Kim Yeji, and "상실의 바다 (Sea of Loss)" which is probably the best song

that exemplifies what they're trying to do on this album. The songs all seem to be about the sea, but knowing them and having visited them in landlocked Cheongju, I don't see the connection.

Conceptually I don't get it and organisationally it feels like it doesn't fit with the rest of the album. Still, all three songs are a high point on the album. I guess it's kind of like how this zine has a bunch of punk articles, and then in the middle is all this cult stuff, so maybe I shouldn't talk.

For those who want to hear something more like their earlier music, "The Kids" is a fun song with lots of energy and some great guitar work. There's also that cover of "이 악물고 (With Clenched Teeth)" from Dirty Small Town.

This album might not impress your friends overseas quite as well as their last two did, but it'll grow on you over repeated listens.

Overall I found myself strongly liking the last half of the album more than the first half, and I'm looking forward to getting to know the songs a lot better.

## Mr Headbutt

Mr Headbutt  
Netizens Must Die!!!!  
independent  
Jon Twitch

I haven't heard Mr Headbutt's music, despite having interviewed them and been to at least one of their shows (but hey, Verv-wrangling takes precedence). As far as I knew they're a bunch of semi-talented English teachers living in Daegu who don't take this very seriously. Then suddenly I've got a 13-track CD in my hands, competently recorded, crammed with fun, fully realised punk songs.

It really has been a long time since we had a new band that was playing basic, unpretentious, non-cerebral but immensely enjoyable punk music. This is the kind of stuff you can just listen to and enjoy without

having to think about microgenres or labels or scene politics. They're just old-school and let's leave it at that.

The songs are all great punk anthems, usually on the fun side of punk. Most songs are that essential drunk-punk sound most foreigners probably remember from home and love. Some songs like "Die Today" or "Beaten Down" take on a less humorous vibe, but then there's the intensely funny "Robot Girl," where they sing about being in love with a robot while an AutoTuned Korean girl says robotic things in the background ("I'm not programmed for love," "Don't touch my USB"). If that is really AutoTune, it's the first time I've approved of its use in a punk song. Its presence on the al-

bum helps make the whole thing that much more memorable.

It's funny seeing a band in Mr Headbutt's position releasing a full-length. I would've thought the temptation would be to release their music one EP at a time, but commendably they held out and put together something much more memorable.

Everything I know about the guys too suggests they're a welcome addition to the small Daegu scene, joining the few local bands and helping raise everybody up, demonstrating how easy it is for a band to make a CD and tour across the country. Case in point, their CD release tour will take them back and forth between Daejeon and Daegu three times each, with a finale in Powwow.



# Nahu

Eternal Recurrence  
Of Carnage

GMC Records  
Brandt Lenning

Nahu are a three-piece grindcore band somehow from South Korea. Well, not grindcore exactly as every blast beat feels like a whole lot of setup for an inevitable breakdown or two-step part which is really where these 21 songs want to go in the first place. It's not bad though, and, even on first listen, you can almost see the faded stickers on their guitar cases and amps; Assuck, Bolt Thrower, Napalm Death. Presumably loading into some coffee shop or club, creating a scene where there wasn't one before.

# Yuppie Killer

Studio B Demo  
independent  
Jon Twitch

This is exactly what it says it is: a demo recorded in a practice room. It's a mess of heavy distortion and barely discernible vocals. It's impossible to hear the lyrics or appreciate it for anything beyond possibly training new members how to play their songs (as long as they don't need to hear the lyrics). You can't even tell what genre they're playing.

There isn't really any need for demos this poorly recorded anymore. I hope they work toward making a better release in the near future that can be listened to so we can learn to appreciate their music.

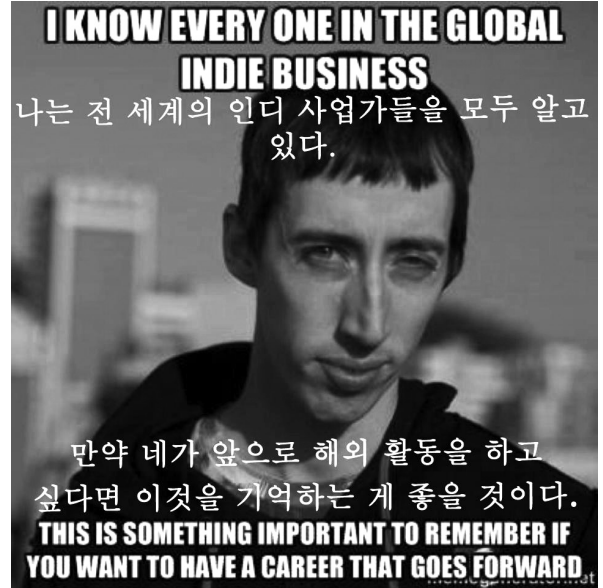
# Scumraid

Time to Resist Crisis  
2012 Demo  
Jon Twitch

Yes, this is an obnoxiously loud recording. But where Yuppie Killer and Veggers went wrong, Scumraid managed to pull off a recording that captures their texture. The vocals are distorted, but the guitars are in focus at times, and the drums are crisp, even if the whole thing is buried under fuzz half the time.

Maybe I'm going easy on them because this is a tape though. It lasts even less time than their set, and the liner notes are made with obvious care.

Anyway, that's 12 songs I hope they re-record later.



**I KNOW EVERY ONE IN THE GLOBAL  
INDIE BUSINESS**  
나는 전 세계의 인디 사업가들을 모두 알고 있다.  
만약 네가 앞으로 해외 활동을 하고 싶다면 이것을 기억하는 게 좋을 것이다.  
**THIS IS SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER IF YOU WANT TO HAVE A CAREER THAT GOES FORWARD.**

# Parasigggggght

# What you say?

Jon Twitch  
with help from 나선생님

In the first issue of Broke, Nevin Domer created the column "Say What?!" Now we continue that tradition in this new column, "What you say?"

In this space we look at the lyrics of Korean punk (or miscellaneous) songs and do our best to translate them into English. Sometimes this is... not easy.

공격대 - 이악물고 (With Clenched Teeth) (Dirty Small Town cover)

I really wanted to do an Attacking Forces song, and the decision of which one to do was made for me when I discovered that this particular song was a little more grammatically easy than the others, thanks to a repetitive verb ending. This song was originally a Dirty Small Town number, and if you don't know the significance, please find somebody knowledgeable and ask them about it.

후회하지마라 서러워하지 마라  
Do not regret Don't be sad 스스로 행해온 일 자책하지마라  
Don't beat yourself up for what you have done  
주저 앞지 마라 포기하지마라  
Don't settle Don't give up  
눈시울 붉히지 마라  
Don't blush and cry  
시간을 되돌릴 수는 없는 거지 목 매이며 울어대도 소용없겠지  
There's no turning back the hands of time even if you're brokenhearted and crying

자신의 마음에 정직한 순간 모든 건 잘 돌아가겠지

In their minds all honest moments will come back  
후회하지마라 서러워하지 마라  
Do not regret Don't be sad 스스로 행해온 일 자책하지마라  
Don't beat yourself up for what you have done  
주저 앞지 마라 포기하지마라  
Don't settle Don't give up  
눈시울 붉히지 마라  
Don't blush and cry  
생각 없이 보낸 날들 한심했던 그 모습들 부정해야 소용없지 이 악물고 버텨가라

Denying the days without thinking and when you were pathetic is useless.

Let's persist with clenched teeth  
실망하지마라 아쉬워 하지 마라 과거는 묻어두고 현실을 직시해라  
Don't be disappointed Don't feel loss Bury the past and face reality  
불안해하지마라 움츠리지 마라 약한 모습 접어둬라  
Don't be afraid Don't cower  
Stop being weak  
후회하지마라 서러워하지 마라  
Do not regret Don't be sad 스스로 행해온 일 자책하지마라  
Don't beat yourself up for what you have done  
주저 앞지 마라 포기하지마라  
Don't settle Don't give up  
눈시울 붉히지 마라  
Don't blush and cry  
눈시울 붉히지 마라  
Don't blush and cry  
눈시울 붉히지 마라  
Don't blush and cry

Midnight Smoking Drive -  
Moonrise Blues

I've been very curious about the content of this song for a while now. Ever since being exposed to translations of K-pop girl group songs at a riveting lecture at the RASKB by Korean punkologist Stephen Epstein, I've wondered if Korea's underground music acts could rise above the insipidity of mainstream feminism. To be honest, what we found was a set of imagery-inducing lines that have little to no logical progression, which were almost equally incomprehensible to 나선생님 as they were to your friendly neighbourhood editor. But yeah, if the aim was to compete with K-pop girl groups, then Songhwa just did the equivalent of picking up Joan of Arc and piledriving her through a stack of flaming MC5 vinyl records.

Baby 헤매며 지나온 그 많은 날은 넘겨

Let those many days go when you were wandering and passing  
가는 밤의 끝을 잡고 선채로 다시 놓질 않아

I will not let it go again holding the end of the night going  
Baby 무관심한 척 지나갔던 가면 파티 속에

In the masquerade that you passed pretending to be indifferent

병을 안은 채로 꿇어버린 청춘의 노래

Song of youth that penetrated while holding a bottle

Baby 춤추는 도시위로 하늘이 녹아 내려

Sky is melting down over the dancing city

떠다니는 테일랩프들을 건조하게 보며 watching the floating tail lamps dryly  
Baby 하나 둘 떨어지는 작은 별들은 세상에

One two falling stars to the world  
홀로 남겨진 듯 어두운 길 속을 헤매이네

Wandering the dark road as if I'm left alone  
떠오른 달의 조각을 주위담은 온기는 언제나 빛에 취해 흔들리네

The warmth picked up from a sliver of the rising moon is always trembling drunken with light

오 Baby Baby  
Baby 남빛 하늘 아래로 무지개는 흐르고

In a grey sky a rainbow forms  
목을 부러트린 해바라기는 처량하게  
A broken-necked sunflower is desolately

Baby 빈 수조 속에 유리구슬을 넣어 가며  
Put glass beads in an empty tank

넘쳐 흘러버린 레드베타는 꿈을 꾸네  
Overflowed red betta dreams  
떠오른 달의 조각을 주위담은 온기는 언제나 빛에 취해 흔들리네

The warmth picked up from a sliver of the rising moon is always trembling drunken with light

떠오른 달의 조각을 주위담은 온기는 언제나 빛에 취해 흔들리네

The warmth picked up from a sliver of the rising moon is always trembling drunken with light

Baby  
Baby



# The Cult of Verv

Welcome, friend, to the Cult of Verv!

You are here because you seek a religious experience, but you find regular church too dull and you are terrified of all those other cults out there. Or perhaps The Becurled One met you on the subway and dragged you with Him to Dong Cult Park for a recruiting seminar/Russian meal.

It is my pleasure to introduce you to our leader, Verv. Hailing from the obscure East European country of Moldova, He was raised by two dads, one a tannery master and the other a traveling philosopher and preacher. He learned English by watching episodes of Star Trek: The Next Generation, which is still the number one TV show in Moldova two decades later. His favourite character is Lt Cmdr Data's cat Spot. At the age of twelve, He became the first person to fully understand Marxism, and His writings at that age continue to mystify Marxist scholars.

He moved overseas for a modern education, and eventually settled in Korea where He became fluent in 16 languages and studied philosophy. Currently Verv has all the PhDs. Verv is a practicing Christian, so He does not believe in His own divinity -- despite how He may act from time to time.

The Cult of Verv was formed by a select circle of his disciples, who maintain the everyday operations and finances of the cult and each hope to one day form their own cults.

Unlike most mainstream churches, the Cult of Verv worships in the evenings, after the Black-Toothed One has arisen and performed His intricate ritual The Locking Of The Door. Services are held at different locations all the time, so as to keep Him entertained. Services are to begin at 7pm sharp, and if you are late you will receive agitated text messages and calls from Him. But should you fail to find your way, try giving one of His disciples a call because He truly hates giving directions.

At a typical service, Verv sits before all the guests. He does not speak, but fear not -- he will not keep his mouth shut for long. Worshipers bring Offerings of Soju and Chasers for Him to consume. As He accepts your Offerings into His belly, He begins to speak.

At first He wants to catch up with you and know how you are doing. Pleasant conversation is made, and He may tell you about the fantasy novel He is



writing.

Soon, he may start to discuss contentious issues that may bother some worshipers. Common topics are about His opposition to gay marriage, or the war in Iraq, or prostitution in North Korea.

As he winds himself up, the ceremony could take one of many paths, or all of them. If He becomes too imbibed on Soju Offerings, the conversation may take a turn for the worse. He may accuse any with a darker complexion of being

Turkish, the enemy of the Free Nation of Kurdistan.

At some point, He may become almost violent, and it is best to watch Him carefully at this point. He may begin uttering racial slurs, and might try with all His might to offend you.

But fear not, because as soon as it began, it will end. He may start to weep in front of His followers, expressing his sincere caring for all the world and His sadness that He is unable to stop bad things from happening.

A service usually ends with Him reaffirming Life and All That Is Glorious, then everyone worries about his state and has a frank discussion how to get him home. Then they may return to their own lives, whose problems seem insignificant compared to Verv's.

The Cult of Verv does not demand your obedience, and other than the occasional Offering of Soju or Chaser, there is no tithing. All are welcome to the Cult of Verv, but be careful if you look Turkish.





# The Search For A Soul

Verv  
28 November 2012

I remember well growing up and believing that there was something inside of me that was no less than an invisible yet luminous light -- a mysterious thing called a soul. But not a soul so much in the religious sense that perhaps my ancestors believed in but rather in the manner of speaking that Americans and modern Westerners have taken to.

The soul has ceased to be a religious concept but is now some secularized, sanitized word that refers to that something inside of us that makes us into the special individual we were promised we were as children. We grew up thinking that we were on some magical journey to adulthood and that, one day, we would stumble upon this miraculous sense of self that would give to us a great resolve...

The soul is a pseudo-religious, New Age concept based loosely in Christendom that we have all just accepted as a part of our American (& Western) narrative & values. Not to mention, it is almost a vital part of our consumer culture.

As a young punk rocker in the American midwest I was convinced I was walking the road of the righteous -- a resistance to consumer society, to materialism; a resistance to the superficiality that surrounded me. We were partly defined by alternative fashion and our underground tastes in music and often literature and film. We were rebels, and we had souls. Real, powerful, true souls -- uncorrupted by materialism, uncorrupted by superficiality. And in a few more years, just around the corner, would be this magnificent adult enlightenment that I saw in the smiles of my father and other elders when they smiled -- that knowing, dismissive smirk that while not being disrespectful was, at the same time, vaguely condescending and somehow nostalgic.

On my personal journey since then I ended up finding myself serving in the

Army and having much of my mental life and physical reality stripped down to a stark, mechanical existence; bare bones, bare everything. I felt naked in front of the mirror of existentialism -- at first the newness, the shock of it was amusing and entertaining for its shock value but after a few months (then years) and a liberalization of standards imposed on my life I found myself stuck, again, searching for a soul -- still, the memories of yesteryear's angst knocking on my mind's door more often than I wanted.

It has only been recently that I have begun developing that fatherly smirk.

I still find myself in a world of punk rock & metal music; too much alcohol, too much tobacco. Blaring walls of sound and incoherent screaming, violent and jerky slam dancing. Long hours spent at unchristian hours discussing politics, religion, philosophy... Soul stuff.

I thought, by now, I would have found my immutable individual character shining like a bright light somewhere in my mind or heart -- something that I could define, something that I could know completely. Existing almost as a static object that was immune to the raging fire of passion and the cold numbings of apathy, isolation and existence as a monad.

The soul -- what is it? Where is mine?

It seems to be some loose collection of personal experiences; it is a collection of personal connections to friends, family. Strangers, even. A river unending thought... It is seemingly even in my possessions -- as if capitalism is there to laugh up its sleeve at me that part of my personal existence is derived from the range of products I choose to consume... In the end, I seem to be no better off than those who live their lives with shallow gossip and Louis Vuitton handbags. I thought that somehow my soul would be some transcendental portion of the

Oversoul that was so far divorced from the Sex & The City postmodernism...

A portion of Buddhist philosophy is the only thing that has illuminated the question a bit further...

All things are empty. Formless. Fake. Unreal. In their temporariness they grow and they wither and they die. They come back as different things. Flowers growing in dog shit. Withering and joining a garbage heap to be burnt and flow into the sky then into the depths of some water to give nourishment to a bottom feeding sea creature, joining a different chain of literal birth and rebirth... All things interwoven, connected. Ever changing.

Whatever a soul is, there is some truth in this...

I'm a mere collection of things with which I identify. My soul is a compilation of various mental impacts. If anything, I strive to be the best parts of my friends & family.

As matter is recycled in the great garden of Physical Reality, my soul is hard at work recycling the souls and characters of others... For simplicity's sake, I am Jacob Michael Verville -- a name applied for the identification of a solitary being amongst many. In the greater scheme of things, I am not unlike a computer's code tasked with selecting, adapting, changing & molding other souls all together into my own self-ness.

Taking in souls that are themselves doing the exact same.

My soul is a large gathering of peoples sitting around a fire -- a fire that is my heart & mind. They've journeyed there through books and films and, more importantly, by being the souls that came in body to be by my side for a time. Each moment of my life is a grand discourse between these countless influences, and I take what I wish of their offerings into the Fire that burns as a furnace, giving me the fuel for my thoughts and my actions.

As such, a great duty looms clearly in my mind...

the duty to give something positive to the lives I bump into. A lesson of sorts. I cannot really say it is a lesson I am teaching but rather it is a part of a greater lesson we're all learning. A great teaching, indivisible in its Truth yet countless divided and put into a myriad of things.

The duty, as far as I understand it, is to pick and choose well, and to share

this with others. For whatever we share, whatever we show -- whatever way we decide to impact -- that is how we understand what our soul is, and what we are. It is as close as we get to the immutable light within -- an imperfect, flickering flamed refined by an inner Something at the work of choosing from the outer Everything that has come into us.

There is nothing static and unchanging for us to grasp -- there is only that around us which we can take in, change and form in the loosest possible uses of the phrase,, and then put out into others.

Let's not think of such a grand, imaginary concept of the perfect, true essence of oneself existing somewhere inside of us... Let us rather think of the collective essence of all our selves as living beings that come together around a fire inside us. There, and only there, can we approach the concept of a soul -- not so much as an individual, knowable essence but as a grand story & teaching we help unfold as living creatures.

Whether we believe in liberation of souls from Samsara or our membership in the Body of Christ, or whether we believe in nothing other than the days that we have here and that which transpires amongst us... Our soul is ours in our free will to choose our inspiration, our influence from others, and to project to the rest of the world. It is imperative that we choose wisely -- for our actions and words, our story, will be recycled in one corner of the non-tangible universe in the lives of others.

# Want to write for Broke in Korea?

Just grab a pen and write your article in the blank space below! It's that easy!

We are looking for writers, artists, cartoonists, and translators for the next issue of Broke in Korea.

The next issue will be themed on art. We're going to do away with this whole InDesign look and make the zine using photocopy machines. It's going to be old school, the way your grandma's punk zines looked.

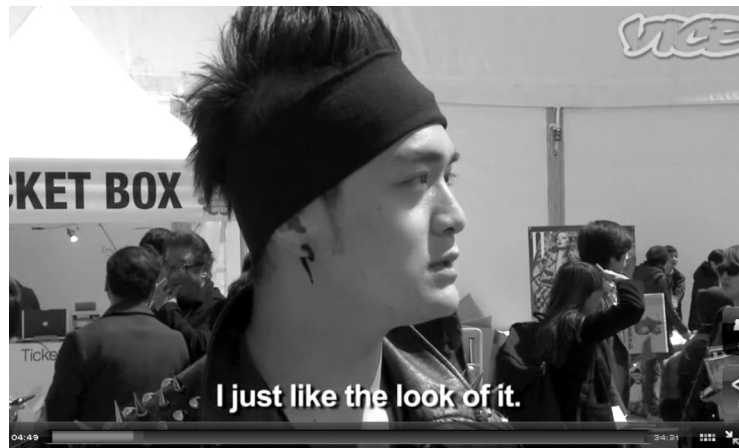
Your ideas are welcome. As you can tell by the comics in this issue, we at Broke aren't so good at the whole illustration thing. Help out and fill our pages with DIY art!

## THE VICE GUIDE TO GETTING BIMONTHLY BOOTFUCKED

Last month, I began work on an article about Vice Magazine, that bastion of deliberate ignorance used to sensationalise the smallest things. My article came across as spiteful, which is fair because I do have an axe to grind with them -- for starters, I never got a whisper of credit for all the photos I lent to the photo essay titled "south korea - punk here is like it is everywhere else"). So the article was cut, but I couldn't help mentioning them again because the topic of Korean punk has been once again dragged into Vice's hipster clutches.

They sent a reporter named Charlet Duboc to report on Fashion Week in Seoul, where she blundered her way through Seoul in an attempt to make interesting content at the cost of accuracy and fact. It's all the sort of thing we've come to expect--she goes to Dongdaemun Night Market where she has trouble grasping the idea that commerce would work differently than whatever she does back home, she laughs too much at the jingles played in the subway, and then she spots a Korean punk and decides to interview him.

That's when things get funny. He claims he only dresses this way because he



*In case Vice is petty enough to attack me for using their image, take a look at Alex Hoban's "South Korea - Punk Here is like it is Everywhere Else" article and look for where you attributed my photos to me, then take a long look at yourself in the mirror.*

likes the way it looks, and has absolutely no interest in punk music.

"If people dress like you," she explains to him, "it means they follow a punk rock lifestyle, they believe in a kind of anti-establishment way of life."

"The reason why I dress this way is simply because it's my fashion," replies the Korean "punk," "but in terms of being an outlaw, I'm far from it."

She thanks him and tells him "You're the most polite punk I've ever met," then she concludes that punk is a shallow thing in Korea that has nothing to do with music or rebellion or whatever it's supposed to

be about these days. Koreans are totally disconnected from it, and that's wacky. Vice-wacky. "The punk admitted himself that his look was only skin-deep," she concludes.

So anyway, if you're exposed to enough K-pop, the punk she interviewed might look familiar. It's Taeyang, a member of the Korean boy band Big Bang, who I reported on last issue about their newfound interest in punk fashion, dressing up in studded leather jackets complete with back patches repping Recharge, Misfits, Adicts, Vice Squad, and GBH. Bands that they clearly have no interest in.

So there this reporter

was, interviewing one of the least interesting members of one of Korea's biggest manufactured musical acts, and she's asking him about punk. He was probably wondering when she'd change topics and ask him about Big Bang.

She interviews punk hairstylist DonaldK, who does a marvelous job of setting things straight and taking a much-needed shit on K-pop's artificiality and role in nation-branding. Really, I don't think anyone could've said it better himself.

Faced with contradictory evidence, she finds a way to put a Vice spin on it, minimizing DonaldK's authority by calling him "the loneliest punk in the world." Because obviously she got it right the first time about Korean punk when she interviewed a guy who probably doesn't even know it exists.

Anyway, she's done a marvelous job reporting that Korea has no punk scene to speak of, and for that, I think a proper boot-rogering is in order.

I know it's hard to hold something like Vice accountable for its bullshit reporting, but for fuck's sakes people, remember that this shit is "for entertainment purposes only."





### SPECIAL BROKE IN KOREA OFFER!!

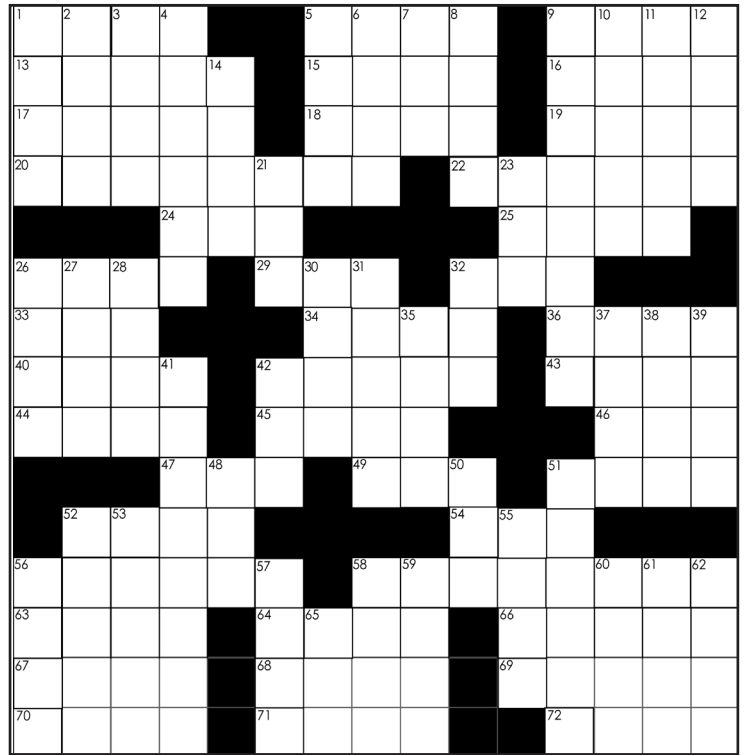
If you want to get a tattoo paid for by me, Jon Dunbar of Broke in Korea fame, here is a special offer for the first person to claim it (offer may be extended in the future).

I will pay for you to get a tattoo of my name, with the following rules:

- Maximum cost 50 000 won, so it won't be huge.
  - I am only paying for "Jon Dunbar," nothing else. And not that comma.
  - I claim no editorial right on the rest of your body. So, if you want to get the word "sucks" tattooed under it, you're totally free to do so on your own dime.
  - It can be a font and script of your choosing. So whether you want it in all caps or Comic Sans or a language we both don't know, it's all good. I will be double-checking to make sure it says what it's supposed to. The way I see it, even if you get my name printed in Arabic, at some point someday you'll meet an Arabic speaker and you'll feel compelled show them an odd tattoo, and that'll be worth my while.
  - It has to be somewhere on your body that you're comfortable showing me, and that I'm not too uncomfortable looking at.
  - No tramp stamps. Unless you are a tramp, and female. In which case, I would consider paying a bit extra for the words "Property of" to be added in front.
- Contact Badass Bomi to claim your Jon Dunbar tattoo.

Badass Bomi  
 Japanese / Old School / Custom Tattoos  
 010-5729-9919 qhal21@hotmail.com  
 facebook/badasstatoookorea

# Broke Crossword



### ACROSS

- 1 Openings
- 5 Goes with grand or body
- 9 It puts the lotion on its skin or else it gets the \_\_\_ again.
- 13 Measurement increments
- 15 Columbus state
- 16 Japanese skinhead hard-core band
- 17 Proportion
- 18 Othello honkey
- 19 A killer of yuppies
- 20 Shinchonji' s trap
- 22 Mannam' s chairwoman Kim
- 24 Public ad
- 25 Relieved
- 26 No\_\_
- 29 Crying \_\_
- 32 Visual \_\_
- 33 Fake psychic Geller
- 34 Dull
- 36 OB beer brand
- 40 Descartes or Levesque
- 42 \_\_ Time
- 43 OB competitor
- 44 Steers
- 45 Club Ta owner' s band
- 46 Pesticide
- 47 Something Fierce drummer
- 49 Kung \_\_ chicken
- 51 Nazi Rudolf
- 52 Laborer
- 54 SCJ leader Manhee
- 56 State full of creationists
- 58 Kyusuck' s band
- 63 Name withheld
- 64 Dubai leader
- 66 Scratchy' s rival
- 67 Writer Curtis
- 68 Oriental drum
- 69 Roof repairer
- 70 Russian king
- 71 Be obedient
- 72 Guitar holder

### DOWN

- 1 Southern Seoul dong
- 2 Butt-related
- 3 Unfortunate
- 4 Ren' s friend
- 5 US HC band
- 6 Mixed Blood guitarist
- 7 Fraudulent insurance corp
- 8 New club \_\_ Night
- 9 \_\_ County Gun Club
- 10 Nebraska city
- 11 Surveilled
- 12 \_\_ Kleine Nachtmusik
- 14 Soaks up
- 21 \_\_ Stuart Donaldson
- 23 Goes with New or Stone
- 26 Eurozone currency
- 27 Hongdae train line
- 28 This
- 30 Japanese noodle
- 31 Soldier
- 32 MBC competitor
- 35 " \_\_ boy!"
- 37 Helper
- 38 AIDS, herpes, hep, etc
- 39 Band performances
- 41 Fastener
- 42 Jihwan or Jinsuk
- 48 Cellular code
- 50 \_\_ Stompers
- 51 Frantic
- 52 Wang
- 53 Gay bomber
- 55 Hipster bar near play-ground
- 56 \_\_ Punk
- 57 Toy brick
- 58 Four plus five
- 59 Group sex
- 60 California university
- 61 " \_\_ Leaving Home"
- 62 Bronte heroine Jane
- 65 Mafia

# Merry Christmas, Assholes!



Skinhead Santa's sack is full. Won't you help drain Santa's sack? There's a special present in it for you!

Have you ever wanted to visit an abandoned amusement park? Well, now's probably your best chance since Seoul Dreamland was destroyed (and I didn't even find out about it until it was 99 percent gone!).

Yongma Land is in eastern Seoul, at the foot of Yongmasan. Easiest way to get there is to go to Sangbong Station (Line 7, Jungang and Gyeongchun Lines) and tell the taxi driver to take you to 용마공원 주차장. The park is closed but the mountain has many public hiking paths. I won't say much more than that.

The park has been abandoned for at least a year, and the rides are all still sitting there. They've even shipped in rides from other closed parks that are all just left to the elements.

The place has become popular for photography among Koreans. There seem to be workers still in one building, so it's best not to go too crazy there. If you start smashing things, the park probably will go into lockdown and a lot of photographers are going to hold whatever your demographic is responsible.

## Raiders of the Lost Abandonment: What You Should Know About Taking Things

Jon Twitch

Lately there's been a moderate increase in urban exploration activity in this country. It's still largely foreigner-based unfortunately, but it's probably only a matter of time before you start seeing more Koreans involved.

As I meet with new people and take them on an explore, I often find I have to clarify my stance on various issues known by many urban explorers and groups as what are heavily-handedly referred to as "ethics." These rules exist to protect yourself, protect other explorers, and protect the locations.

I follow a loose collection of rules that haven't been written down before. Writing them down now I'm surprised how many there are. These are obeyed loosely, and I've prob-

ably broken each of them some point.

1. It's okay to take if you wouldn't think twice about taking it from an active location. Matchbooks, business cards, brochures, these are things that are begging to find their way into your pocket. I also have a tendency to get emotionally attached to beer glasses, so yes, many of my glasses at home come from abandonments.

2. It's less bad to take if there's a lot of them at the site. A box full of 500 demo CDs isn't much different than a box full of 499 demo CDs.

3. Strongly consider not taking it if it's part of the location's aesthetic. Things hanging on the wall are better left there, but things hidden away in drawers or lying on the floor are fine.

4. Don't take it if it's something you could potentially find useful. Things I have been tempted to take but didn't: awesome cassette deck in the shape of a sports car, various musical instruments, working record player (later, the owner came back and claimed it). This in particular includes reselling stuff; leave that to the scrapers.

5. The exception to that rule is if it's related to photography. For instance, I helped myself to a perfectly good lens cap in perfect condition that I found in an old apartment.

6. "It's going to get demolished soon" is not a valid excuse. The legitimate property owner could come back at any time.

7. Don't get in the habit of it, or you're going to end up with a very filthy apartment. I

have one drawer of stuff from abandonments. It's not full, and I hope it never gets full and I have to start a second drawer.

8. Don't brag about stuff you take or what you've found. Yes, you've probably found one or two cool things. But keep it offline, and away from newbs. We don't want people who are new to exploring to think we fully condone souvenir-collecting. This is especially important in a country like Korea where this whole concept is new.

9. Don't be a jerk to others, within reason. I've seen people take stuff that I personally would not. I might make a comment or two, but the only power I can really exercise is to make decisions about who to invite next time.

10. Above all, don't get caught.